Chapter IV

Population Transfer: Policy and Practice

The Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile termed China’s population transfer as a ‘final solution’ to the Tibetan problem. The object of this policy is to reduce the Tibetans to an insignificant minority and thwart any resistance against China’s rule. In fact, the Dalai Lama had accused the PRC of practising a form of ‘genocide’ by relocating millions of Chinese settlers into Tibet. He said, ‘Tibetans today are facing the real possibility of elimination as a people and a nation’.¹

Tibetans claim that since the PLA invasion of 1949-50, the PRC has undertaken a deliberate policy transfer in order to implement its political, economic and strategic policies. The Tibetan plateau provides a commanding position in central and southern Asia, giving China access to the entire Indian sub-continent. It is said that China’s motive became apparent when within months of occupation of Tibet Chairman Mao Zedong announced plans to dramatically increase the population of Tibet.² He proposed a five-fold increase, which could only be achieved by means of massive population transfer from China to Tibet. Since then the Tibetan population have been steadily diluted by an increasing Chinese influx.

China however denies that it had planned to carry out a ‘final solution’ policy

¹ Times of India, 7 October, 1989,( New Delhi).
² Addressed by Liushar Thupten Tharpa, printed in Renmin Ribao, November 22, 1952. Quoting speech by Chairman Mao Tse Tung, Union Research Institute, Tibet, 1950-67, Document 9, p. 45 (Hong Kong 1968).
and declares all accusations as baseless. The government justifies their policy by citing the need for Chinese personnel, both skilled and unskilled to help develop the economically and culturally 'backward' Tibet. It claims that due to the need to construct Tibet, personnel of Han and other nationalities have been elected to serve in Tibet. Most of them are highly educated professional and technical personnel who have made contributions to the economic and cultural constructions in Tibet. According to the Chinese, the Tibetan people have welcomed these personnel.

**Territory and population of Tibet**

Tibetans claim that since 1951, Tibet has been divided into numerous zones for the purpose of administration. Today, more than half of the country is under Chinese provincial administration.

Tibet's northeastern province of Amdo which incorporates the Kokonor region, has been renamed Qinghai and is administrated as a separate province of China. The Chinese provinces of Gansu, Sichuan have annexed relatively small areas of Amdo and Tibet's eastern province of Kham has, for the most part, been annexed by the bordering Chinese provinces of Yunnan, Sichuan, Gansu. Within those provinces, the Tibetan areas are administrated as 'Autonomous' prefectures and districts, inhabited by up to four million Tibetans. Central and Western Tibet, comprising slightly more than half the nation including the entire U-Tsang, is administered as the 'Tibet Autonomous Region' (TAR). This area includes the

---

Tibetan capital Lhasa, and the major cities of Shigatse, Gyantse and Chamdo. Naturally, when Tibetans give their population figures, they include the Tibetan population of the whole Tibetan inhabited area, and is not limited to TAR alone.

However, the PRC considers that the TAR, which was proclaimed on 1st September 1965, comprises Tibet. So, generally, the official population statistics published by PRC refer only to TAR.

In its *White Paper*, China dismissed the Tibetan claim over ‘historic’ Tibet. It says ‘the Dalai Lama clique has also contended that geographically Tibet extends for beyond the boundaries of today’s TAR, including areas inhabited by the Tibetans in Sichuan, Qinghai and other parts; making a total population of six million. This so-called Tibet major is an attempt to partition China. As a result of long historical changes, ethnic Tibetans have settled not only in Tibet but also in the areas of Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Yunnan provinces. But those areas are not under the jurisdiction of Tibet in the past and the former Tibetan local government never administered any Tibetan inhabited areas beyond Tibet (TAR). From the 13th century onwards, the central government of Yuan and Ming dynasty further defined administrative divisions in Tibetan inhabited areas. During the period of the Republic of China, the Tibetan inhabited areas beyond Tibet remain under the jurisdiction of the provinces where they were located. These administrative divisions basically remained after the founding of the PRC. In the Tibetan inhabited areas of the four provinces of Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Yunnan, ten Tibetan Autonomous

---

prefectures and two Tibetan Autonomous counties were set up.\(^5\)

As to its population, the Tibetan government-in-exile give the Tibetan population figures on the whole of the Tibetan plateau as six million. Tibetans say that the Chinese themselves had put the population of Tibet at 6.34 million in their 1953 population statistics. Distribution is as follows: Qinghai; 1.67 million, Kham; 3.4 million and TAR 1.27 million.\(^6\) This would put Tibetan population at more than six million. However, statistics show that over 1.2 million i.e, more than one-sixth of the population died as a result of Chinese occupation of Tibet mostly between 1956 and 1976.\(^7\) This happened after the crushing of the Tibetan national uprising in 1959 and the flight of the Dalai Lama and some 100,000 refugees, when China adopted a repressive policy throughout Tibet. China's hard measures led to the death of a large number of Tibetans, though there is no record of accurate figures. Many Tibetans suffered and died during the famines of 1958 through 1961 as a result of government policies, when the "Great Leap Forward" went into full effect. A large number of Tibetan prisoners forced into hard labour with scanty grain rations were starved to death and some were driven to suicide. For example, according to Prof. Dawa Norbu, in Sakya, after the failed revolt, three inmates killed themselves within a few weeks. A monk jumped into the toilet pit and stabbed himself in the heart. Thereafter, officials confiscated the prisoner's weapons, a former official managed to hang

---

\(^5\) *White Paper on Tibet* FE/1494 C1.


himself with a belt, and another monk tore his robes into shreds, fashioned a noose and hanged himself.\(^8\)

On the other hand, China says that the Tibetan population including Tibetan in Tibet and Tibetan inhabited areas of other provinces failed short of the 6 million estimates. They claim that when China conducted the first national census in 1953, the overall Tibetan population including those residing in Tibet totalled 2.77 million.\(^9\)

In its reply to the UNCHR, China stated that ‘Tibet did not have any accurate census data when Tibet was liberated in 1951. The figures of the population provided by the local government of Tibet was 1 million. When the first national census was conducted in 1953, Tibet had a population of 1 million as reported to the census organization by the local government of Tibet. By the time the second census was conducted in 1964, this figure increased to 1.25 million, not including 67,000 people who had escaped under the threat of the rebels during the armed rebellion in 1959. The third national census in 1982 found that the Tibetan population had reached 1,892,000. The result of the fourth national census in July showed that the Tibetan population was 2,196,000 of whom 2,096,000 were Tibetans. The population of Tibet increased by more than one time between the period of 1953 and 1990.’\(^{10}\) China declared the 1990 national census gave a count of 4.59 million Tibetans in the whole of Tibet. It says that as in Tibet, the number of Tibetans in other areas had grown

---


\(^{10}\) United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Situation in Tibet: Note by the Secretary General (48\(^{th}\) Session-E/CN/4/1992/37) 5\(^{th}\) Jan 1992. (This contains a reply by the Permanent Representatives of the People’s Republic of China to the UN’s Office in Geneva. The population of Tibet is discussed in paras 38-43).
considerably over the period between the two censuses.11

China also insists that, in Tibet (TAR) there are not only Tibetans, but since ancient times people of different nationalities, such as Han, Hui, Moinba and Lobas as well as people of the Dens and Sherpas. However, Tibetans always constitute the overwhelming majority. On the other hand, Tibetans claim that before 1950, Tibetans populated Tibet exclusively. Even Mao himself reportedly admitted in 1952 that “while several thousand Hans were in Sinkiang, there are hardly any in Tibet, here our army finds itself in a totally disarmed minority nationality area.”12

Hugh Richardson who spent many years in Tibet in the 20th century also wrote, “Since 1912, no Chinese were in Tibet except for a few traders at Lhasa. There were no Chinese troops and no officials until 1953, when a small party managed to get in, Tibetans regarded them as an unofficial liaison office, and in 1949, the Tibetan government expelled them”.13 According to the Chinese source, the traders in Lhasa before 1949 amounted to fewer than 500 people and included Chinese from Sichuan and Yunnan, but business people from Amdo, a few Muslims and a few Nepalis. Today, Lhasa is flooded with Chinese businessmen.14 Tibetans say that, if nothing else, those reports falsify Chinese claims.

12 Mao Tse Tung Selected Words, Vol.5, pp 73, 74.
14 Zhou Shaoxi, Tang Pu Zhong, Ding Qing Fu, “Paradise of Economic Development”, in Tibetan Literature, vol.1, Natural Resources Department of Sichuan Province 1993, (Chinese Language), translated by TYC.
Scale of Population Transfer

Tibetans claim that China have probably sent over 7 million Chinese into Tibet, in addition to the almost 400,000 troops they maintain in the country.\textsuperscript{15} With the Tibetan population at 6 million the Chinese have already outnumbered them on the Tibetan plateau. Recent reports from Tibet and China also show a steady and alarming increase in the transfer of Chinese into Tibet.\textsuperscript{16}

Since 1949, the government encouraged a large number of people to migrate to the country’s northeast and northwest regions. The Chinese government in order to attract settlers into Tibet introduced several incentives. The government raised wages for Chinese personnel working in Tibet to 87 percent higher than what they got in China. As an incentive, the government promised favourable treatment in pay and home leave to those who go to work in Tibet, Qinghai and other Tibetan plateau areas for a long time.\textsuperscript{17} The government also promised special benefits, exclusively to college and secondary technical school graduates moving to the ‘Tibetan Qinghai plateau’. Tibetans say that this is certainly a move to encourage the younger generation to work in Tibet. Further, in order to make them stay over in Tibet, the government announced that ‘those who wish to stay on after 8 years, enjoy further pay raise...those who have worked there for more than 20 years and stay on after

\textsuperscript{15} Heritage Foundation, "Why the World is Watching Beijing Treatment of Tibet", Supra, note 14; The Economist, May 23, 1987.
\textsuperscript{17} "Volunteers to work in border areas" Beijing Review, September 12, 1983, p.7
retirement will have pension increased by 10 percent" 18 A special effort is also being made to retire Chinese Army personnel and their families into Tibet.19 Since then, the Beijing Review reported on 27 February 1984, that the Tibetans are now "fighting shoulder to shoulder with the large number of Hans who have sacrificed the comforts of their hometowns and dedicated themselves to modernising the Tibetan areas".

The TAR had the lowest concentration of Chinese civilians in Tibet. And it is precisely to this region that the Chinese are being encouraged to migrate. In the entire Lhasa administrative area, Tibetan sources put the Chinese population at 630,000.20 Chinese settlements have been constructed alongside all major Tibetan cities and towns while many Tibetans are made to move to the underdeveloped and arid parts of the country.21

Tibetan and Western tourists reported that there were some 85,000 Chinese in Nagchu, 320,000 in the Chamdo area, 170,000 in the Shigatse area, 93,000 in Lokha and 150,000 in Ngari. They claim that Chinese similarly outnumbered Tibetans in most other towns and cities.22 Also in the countryside, virgin forests were reportedly cleared to accommodate exclusively Chinese communities. Thus, in Powo and Kongpo some 280,000 Chinese are reported to have settled.23 But the Chinese

---

20 Letter from General Secretary Information Office, October 25, 1986.
23 Letter from Secretary General Information Office p. 25, 1986.
government source gives the Tibetan population of the TAR as 1.99 or 2.1 million,\textsuperscript{24} and the number of Chinese registered colonizer as 76,000.\textsuperscript{25}

In 1979 and 1980, Chinese figures showed that there were 130,000 Chinese cadres, i.e. government employees in the TAR alone. These figures did not include Chinese military personnel and private settlers.\textsuperscript{26} Estimates of Chinese troops in the TAR at the time varied from 150,000 to 600,000.\textsuperscript{27} Following Hu's inspection tour in 1980, it was announced that 8.5% of all Chinese cadres would be withdrawn within three years.\textsuperscript{28} But due to heavy opposition from the cadres, that policy was reversed, resulting in a massive influx of Chinese into Tibet, particularly in the TAR.

Tibetans claim that China's economic development policies are attracting more settlers into Tibet. More and more Chinese settlers are coming to Tibet with no intention of returning to China. \textit{Radio Lhasa} announced on 14 May 1985, that over 60,000 workers, were on their way to the TAR, where they would be employed in the departments of electricity sector, in schools, hotels, cultural institutions and factories.

The \textit{Beijing Review} further reported in October 1984 that "unsparing help is

\textsuperscript{25} Id., \textit{Some Basic Facts about Tibet} distributed by the Chinese Embassy, Washington D.C. (September, 1987).
\textsuperscript{26} Cited in P.A. Donnet, "Tibetan Traditions Slowly Disappearing" \textit{South China Morning Post}, September 23, 1985.
flowing in steadily from China's most developed region building the much needed labour, funds and expertise to the TAR. Sichuan alone sent 10,000 construction workers. A large number of technicians and skilled workers have also arrived from eight of the provinces and municipalities to join the construction of Tibet's 43 new projects. All phases of construction, including designing, building and interior decorating are handled by personnel supplied by the co-operative and cities and China. In Lhasa alone, 70,000 workers were announced, 50,000 of who arrived by the end of 1984. And thousands more 'peddlers and craftsmen from more than 20 provinces followed'. This influx created a lot of problems for Tibet. Even Mao Rubai, Vice Chairman of TAR, admitted that 'there were about one million Chinese in this area, excluding military personnel'.

Tibetans claim that China's own reports alone indicated that the Chinese clearly outnumber Tibetans in the TAR, although it is difficult to get accurate census data of the Chinese influx into Tibet from the Chinese authorities use of population statistics. Only the Chinese who have formally registered or residents in Tibetan areas are included in official immigration figures. Most recent settlers in Tibet do not register and consequently do not figure in China's Tibet statistics.

State prompted migration policies brought the first civilians into Tibet,

29 Beijing Review, p.15, 1984
33 27 September, 1988, Times of India.
especially to *Kham and Amdo.*\(^{35}\) In the mid 1950's, Chinese settlers from Sichuan were sent to Kham area and those from Gansu were sent to Amdo to settle. They were allotted plots of land by the Chinese authorities for farming.\(^{36}\) Naturally, the concentration of Chinese population is highest in this easternmost Tibetan region.

In 1949, the PLA troops entered Tibet's easternmost border areas and established military garrisons at every strategic point. Soon after, a contingent of civilians' administrative staff and their families arrived, making way for more Chinese civilian to establish themselves by force in large towns and cities.

Prior to 1950, very few Chinese lived in the Tibetan province of Amdo (Qinghai). However, Tibetans believe that Chinese now outnumber Tibetans three to one. The first wave of settlers were sent to Amdo in 1950, and second in the early 80's. The *International Herald Tribune* reported in 1983 that Beijing was encouraging young Chinese to move to Qinghai “by appealing to their patriotism and by offering higher wages.”\(^{37}\) According to official Chinese sources, in 1984 Qinghai had a population of 3.8 million of which more than 2.5 million were Chinese and only 75,000 were Tibetans.\(^{38}\) Less than a year, later the population has increased to 3,974,386 of which still only 750,000 are Tibetans.\(^{39}\) The Tibetan population of Kanlho is officially given as 230,000 of which the Chinese registered in the area number 290,000.\(^{40}\) These figures do not include Chinese military personnel, nor do

\(^{38}\) See *Beijing Review*, vol.27. no.9. February 27, 1984 p.22
they include the inmates of prison camp complex. China sent large numbers of prisoners to Amdo, an area that is referred to as ‘China Gulag’. It is reported that over 1 million prisoners were shipped to these prefectures which were set up to serve as human storehouses for victims of successive Chinese purges. Most of these prisoners were not permitted to return to China on release. Many of them were employed in various factories run by prison authorities. Although the total number of employed in many of these industries is not known, some of them employ upwards of 100,000 people.

A fact-finding delegation to Amdo region in the summer of 1985 reported a “massive influx of Chinese into Tibetan areas” which are now “dominated by non-Tibetans.” A Chinese source, Xinhua News Agency also reported that “large number of peasants from China’s more developed areas are pouring into remote areas to earn a living ... they have found Qinghai, Tibet, Xinjiang viable areas for making furniture, clothes and providing other services.

Kham was the first region to face the assault of the Chinese invasion. Most of the resistance that occurred in the early 50’s started from Kham. It is no wonder that this region is now most threatened by Chinese colonization, with more than 2 million Chinese settlers. They are concentrated in cities and towns, where the percentage is believed to be as high as 75 percent.

---

42 Ibid., See Chart on page 185.
to 3 million Tibetans in the region comprising Kham. The lower altitude of Kham’s eastern valleys, and their proximity to the PRC’s populous provinces of Sichuan and Yunnan, makes widespread incursion inevitable. According to F. Steenhuis, the influx of Chinese settlers into Tibet created serious problems for Tibetan distinct identity. Tibetans are found to be facing discrimination and unemployment.

**Development Project and Migration**

Population movements are always preceded by the influx of military personnel and road construction and communication workers. During the early period of occupation, China developed seven major highways in Tibet. This project employed tens of thousands of workers, mostly People’s Liberation Army personnel, over a two-decade period. Militarisation of Tibet has escalated and there is evidence that in Lhasa, militarisation has gained momentum since March 1994. Approximately, 30,000 troops are thought to have been moved from inland China, one detachment from Lanzhou and two from Changdu. This represents a sixty-percent increase in troops in Central Tibet.

In 1983, China initiated 16 construction projects in Lhasa, to develop the infrastructure for tourist development in Tibet. Projects like UNWEP, Yamdroke

---

Yumtso Hydroelectric power project, the Yarlung Tsangpo River project, one river, two-stream projects etc., and other foreign assisted ventures in the whole of Tibet are being undertaken to attract Chinese settlers to Tibet. The current surge of migration in 1991-92 is because of these development projects. Another 43 major development projects were also initiated at a total cost of 480 million Yuan for the sole purpose of attracting Chinese migration. These are expensive ‘show case projects’ targeting the tourist market. Over 20,000 technicians and large number of construction labourers were initially brought to Tibet from Chinese cities to work on these projects. One analyst of the Tibetan situation observed, “China has a tradition of creating large labour intensive projects in remote areas – serviced and supplied from Mainland China.

China plans to redevelop Lhasa by the year 2000. The development of air routes has been emphasised too. For example, the Gongkar Airport near Lhasa has undergone extensive expansion. By the year 2000, China plans to move 440,000 of its people into Tibet by air. TIN reported that Tibetans are being forced into low-level jobs and are steadily losing earning power. In June 1987, even Deng Xioping admitted that the Chinese were being encouraged to move to Tibet because, according

to him, the local population “needs Han immigrants as the autonomous regions population of about two million is inadequate to develop its resources”. 57

Since 1960, the development of agriculture production of wheat has been the top most priority of China’s policy. However, migration of agricultural workers to TAR was rare. From 1992, there has emerged an influx of agricultural workers in the Central region. According to a Chinese source, “Among the complex issues of the development of Tibet, the production of wheat is of primary importance. When this issue is solved, then there will be no problem in getting technology and personnel from the mainland to go.” 58 It should be noted that wheat is not a staple diet of Tibetans as it is for the Chinese. Tibetans claim that even the UN’s World Food Programme project 3357, is orchestrated towards wheat production in a major way, designed to attract Chinese settlers into Tibet.

This project alone has reportedly resulted in the influx of 130,000 Chinese peasants. Tibetan villagers are reportedly being forced to give up their land and vacate their homes to accommodate Chinese settlers. The farmers, often heavily in debt for various taxes are being forced to sign over their property. 59 Initially, cadres and professional workers were brought in followed by skilled and unskilled labourers. Now the Chinese are encouraging agricultural settlers.

Tibetans also claim that China’s open door policy to foreign country acts as a

58 Xizang Xingshi, He Renwu Jiaoyu, De Jiban Jaocai, “Peoples Liberation Army,” Tibet Military Division Political Section, October 1, 1960. (Chinese Language) Translated by TYC.
license for Chinese settlers to migrate to Tibet. The policy brought in much foreign aid, which benefits China. They claim foreign aid even though well intentioned, provides legitimization for China’s population transfer policy.

Moreover, besides the legal workers brought in by the government for economic projects, there are reportedly ‘illegal’ settlers consisting of individuals seeking employment opportunities independent of the government.\(^{60}\) Many of those Chinese in the TAR and provinces are members of the floating population. The government categorised them as ‘floaters’. Thousands of these floating Chinese workers have swamped Tibet, more so after the usual checkpoints into the TAR from the east have been closed down.\(^{61}\) These floaters are reportedly given preferential treatment, jobs and many set up businesses. Many of these business settlers take up permanent residence as they are provided with amenities unaccessible back home and unavailable to Tibetans – access to imported goods such as T.V, refrigerators and the like.\(^{62}\) These floaters are not included in the census statistics either.

In Lhasa alone, the floating population ranges from 40,000 to 100,000.\(^{63}\) The South China Morning Post in 1989 and 1993 noted, that official Chinese population figures consistently failed to include military personnel and those “floaters”. Even the government of the TAR recognised that this migration created problems for the Tibetans. In March 1989, Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, Vice-President of the Chinese

\(^{60}\) Zhao Shaoxi, Tang Pu Zang and Ding Quing Fu, “Paradise of Economic Development” in Tibetan Literature\(^{1}\), Vol. 1, Natural Resources Department of Sichuan Province, 1993 (Chinese Language) Translated by TYC.

\(^{61}\) Indian Express, January 8, 1993, citing the South China Morning Post, (Hongkong).


\(^{63}\) “Idle Transient told to Leave Tibet”, 22 March 1989 and “Warning Over Tibet’s Removal of Check Points”, 6 January 1993, both from the South China Morning Post.
People's National Congress said on Radio Lhasa that, "Today because of so many Chinese shop keepers and settlers coming into Tibet (Some 100,000 of them being in Lhasa alone) great disturbances have been caused to public security." 64

Chinese statistics exclude numerous categories of people such as large number of floating population, military personnel, civilians working in military establishments, technicians and professional staff brought in under official projects, workers registered elsewhere and who have resided in a place for less than a year and those who entered Tibet before July 1, 1985. 65 Tibetans claim that even after excluding these numerous categories of Chinese, by about 1986 Chinese population in Tibet has surpassed its goal i.e. Tibet's population should be increased to 10 million, an estimate made by Mao Tse Tung in 1952. There are 6.2 million Chinese civilians in Tibet, 2.5 million in Amdo, 2 million in Kham and 1.7 million in U-Tsang. In addition there were 500,000 troops in Tibet. 66

Birth Control Policy in Tibet

Tibetans also claim that since 1987, the regime has been outspokenly in favour of population control in Tibet. Over the past years, there have been reports about China compelling Tibetans to adhere to a strict birth control programme that includes forced abortion, sterilisation, and even infanticide. Now these assertions and accusations

64 Radio Lhasa, 23 March 1989.
66 Chinese Reference Material, p.4 (Summary of the Reference Report from Official Statement and Reports from Chinese as well as other Mass Media Sources Concerning Recent Development in China and Tibet). Dharamshala India; Department of International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration, 1985.
have appeared in several related publications with ample evidence, which cannot be simply ignored.

For example, according to Mrs. Dolkar of Dechen Districts who arrived in Dharamsala in 1988, she and 23 women from her district were sterilised against their will and that many hospitals house specific departments which carry out abortions and sterilisations. Most of the children delivered in these hospitals do not survive and the Tibetans refer to them as ‘butcher’ shops.67

In separate incidents, Mrs. Dechen from Village No.2. Seno sub-district reports that, in two small villages in Todung Dechen districts, there are 12 households from which 9 women were subjected to sterilisations. And in the nearby village in Donkar, out of 19 households, 13 women were sterilised against their will. These sterilisations occurred around the end of 1982 and 1983.68 Another refugee report says, ‘they treat our girls like animals, sometimes they take them just to experiment on’.69

Tibetans claim that if the present Chinese policy is successfully implemented, they will, before long be reduced to an insignificant minority in their own land. They claim that, the whole idea of Chinese population transfer policy is to weaken the resistance movement, which will resolve China’s territorial claim over Tibet once and for all. Deng’s comment in 1993 on the subject of problem in Eastern Turkistan is taken as an omen of things to come in Tibet. Referring to the ‘Splittist’ activities of

the Uighurs, Deng noted ‘it is fortunate that in the past 40 years, we have made population proportion such that the splittists can’t really do much.\(^70\) According to China’s *Xinjing Daily*, there are 7.2 millions Uighur to 5.7 million Chinese. It is exactly for this reason that the Dalai Lama refers to the population transfer from China as the ‘final solution’ to the Tibetan problem, threatening to convert the Tibetans into ‘no more than a tourist relic of a noble past’.

However, China officially denies that the government ever formulated and implemented the plan of immigration to Tibet.\(^71\) As Tibet has implemented the economic policies of opening up and reform, recently some Han and Hui people have gone to Tibet to do business as craftsmen. These people are always on the move and are limited in numbers. They have not migrated to Tibet,\(^72\) as Tibetans claim. China insist that the central government carefully limited transferees to more educated and technical personnel, who are specialized in economic and technical functions. These educated and technically trained Han people go to work in Tibet to help develop the local economy and culture, taking turns to work there because of the not so comfortable highland climate and adverse reactions due to the high altitude. Usually they return to the hinterland provinces after a few years of employment in Tibet.\(^73\)

China also denied that political control was the motive behind Chinese transfer

---

70 Deng, "Three Major Problems of Communist Power", in QianShao, a monthly magazine, Hongkong, July 1993, p.18.(Chinese Language) translated by TYC.
73 “100 questions about Tibet ”, *Beijing Review Press* (Peking) 1989 ,pp. 54-55
policy. It consistently emphasized that its main purpose is to promote Tibet's economic development by infusing technical expertise into the region. According to *Tibet Daily*, Han Chinese in the TAR numbered only 75,000 in 1995, that is 3.3 percent of the population, while Tibetans and other minorities totaled 2.31 millions.\(^74\)

At the same time, Chinese official publication media and statements of various leaders, occasionally refer to the government encouragement for the settlement of Chinese nationals into Tibet. The government announced in 1991 that technicians from all over China have gone to work at various construction sites—about 300,000 workers are prepared to join in the ‘Yarlung Tsangpo River’ project.\(^75\) They describe their policies as necessary to bring technical expertise to more backward regions. It is probable that Beijing see it as a convenient means of dealing with the problem of the rural labour surplus and the floating population.

Extracts from Li peng's reports on the Ten Year Programme for National Economic and Social Development (1991-2000) and the 8th Five Year Plan (1991-95) broadcast by the Central People’s Broadcasting Station in March 1991 states: “It is necessary to continue to implement the existing policies of supporting the development base areas and border regions—economically backward areas should vigorously develop agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry, construction of highways, electricity, irrigation and other infrastructure facilities.”\(^76\)

“It is necessary to pay attention to construction of east-west trunk


\(^{75}\) *Beijing Review*, vol. 34, no. 3 January 21-27, 1991. p.6

\(^{76}\) Central People’s Broadcasting in SWB, March 1991, FE/1031 CI/10.
communication lines and promote exchange between the coastal areas and the hinterland commodities, funds, technology and qualified personnel.\textsuperscript{77}

Further in 1992, Deng on a surprise inspection tour of Southern China spoke of the overwhelming need to continue the policies of reform and opening up. This re-assertion of reform policies by Deng was immediately echoed in Tibet. At the meeting of the TAR party committee in July 1992, Chen Kuiyuan the then Secretary of the Party even advocated setting up a framework which would allow and encourage extensive migration into the region to serve the needs of the reform programme. He declared, “To accelerate Tibet’s development we must emphasise opening up and invigorating the market. To do so, we must overcome, as soon as possible, a state of relative seclusion, which is left over from history, we should open Tibet wider to the outside. In other words, we should open up the job market to all fellow countrymen. To accelerate development, we should delegate authority to all prefectures and organisations so that they have the freedom to display their talents and abilities.”\textsuperscript{78}

In Qinghai, Jin Jipeng (the then provincial governor) calls for more rapid economic growth. Opening the provincial conference in April 1992, he spoke of the need for the “Transfer of technology, personnel exchange and capital, and material support” from developed regions.

Alongside economic policies, which were, encouraging migration to Tibet, a large number of population were measures controlling the movement of population

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{78} Tibet Television in \textit{SWB}, 1992 FE/1447 B2/2.
were revoked from August 1992. China justifies this by saying "with the implementation of reforms and opening as well as economic development, the check practice is no longer adaptable to actual situations and has adverse effect on the upgrading of traffic efficiency and the circulation of commodities."\(^{79}\) Qinghai provincial government called for removal of unnecessary checkpoints and outposts in April 1992.\(^{80}\) In the TAR, travel restrictions between the TAR and the neighboring province had been relaxed by December 1992. Hence, traders from outside were able to move from Tibet without restrictions and remained there as long as their business was successful. Regulations governing the acquisition of business licenses were relaxed and simplified in November 1993.\(^{81}\)

Official sources conceded in 1992 that of the 30,000 people gaining work in new individual industrial and commercial enterprises which had been set up in the TAR in 1991, over 25 percent came from outside regions.\(^{82}\) By 1993, the promotion of economic links and cooperative ventures with other provinces and cities in the PRC had emerged as one of the central features of opening up in the Tibetan region. A report gives clear indication of this, "Last year, the regional party committee and government lost no time in taking the initiative to open up Tibet to the outside world by strengthening ties with neighboring provinces and cities, especially strengthening lateral economic cooperation with the coastal area."\(^{83}\)

\(^{79}\) Zhongguo Xinwen She in SWB, 1992; FE/1428 B2/1.
\(^{80}\) Qinghai Ribao in JPRS, 1992; (CAR, 1992–063: 59).
\(^{81}\) TIN, 1994: pp.2-4.
\(^{82}\) Zhongguo Xinwen She, in SWB, 1992; FE/W0220 A2.
\(^{83}\) Tibet's People Broadcasting Station, in SWB, 1994, FE/1939 G7-9.
A report on the work of the TAR government 1993-94 by Gyaltsen Norbu proposed more policies that would stimulate migration: "We will take feasible measures to keep the existing pool of qualified personnel stable by improving their living and working conditions, inspiring their initiative and giving full scope to their intelligence and talents. We will encourage qualified personnel to work at the grass root levels and be at the forefront of production, where they can display their abilities. We will implement preferential policies and adopt measures systematically or freely bring in all kinds of useful qualified personnel, badly needed by our region, to allow such personnel to work in one place or move freely from one place to another, and to employ them on a long term or short term basis with the goal of gradually expanding our pool of qualified personnel." 84

Further Jiang Zemin in 1994, after an inspection tour in "villages and pastoral areas" in Qinghai urged the provincial government to speed up the exploitation of natural resources and to "praise individuals who have their homes in the coastal and other regions to contribute to Qinghai's economic and social development." In other parts of Tibet, Sichuan and Yunnan too, similar encouragement of expanding and opening up to accelerate development were echoed by officials of the region. In Sichuan, Xie Shijne urged "minority nationality districts should lose no time and seize the opportunities to expand the opening up, deepen the reform and accelerate development". 85 As for Yunnan, Pu Choozhu the Yunnan party secretary spoke of population within the context of developing township and village enterprises "in mountainous" and "backward" areas of the province at a meeting in November 1994. 86

---

84 Tibet's People Broadcasting Station, in SWB, 1994, FE/2022 S1/4.
85 Sichuan Ribao in SWB 1994 Fe/2140 G/5-7.
86 Yunnan People's Broadcasting Station in SWB 1994 FE/2167 S1 / 9.
In April 1992, around 130 cadres, professionals were sent to remote bordering countries of the TAR on a ten-year contract. In 1994, it was announced that about 100 graduates of excellent academic performance and good conduct would be assigned to work in Tibet. Further Xinhua reported in February 1995, that 1000 officials and technicians were to be sent to the TAR to help boost the economy.

China’s own reports confirm that there has been a return to the practice of transferring Chinese to Tibet. Currently signs of involuntary re-settlement seem to be the practice. Tibetans claim that China’s own reports are a good illustration of China’s continuing plan to re-settlement. In the name of development, thousands of Chinese are flown into Tibet each year, which poses the biggest threat to Tibetan identity and peace in the region. Media speculations and reports about the discovery of coal deposits also induce peasants struggling to make a living from the land to leave and migrate to Tibet.

Tibetans say that evidence for population transfer in the new enthusiasm for opening up the Tibetan region are clear. A high level Tibetan official in the TAR learned in 1992, that’s “When China talks of open door policy for Tibet, it means two doors, not one. There is a little door and a big door. The little door open to the outside world and the big door open to China. The big door will outweigh the little door, and Tibet is more than ever in danger of being engulfed”.

---

88 Zhongguo Xinwen She, in SWB, 1994; FE/2192 G /15.
However, in a statement dismissing claims of Chinese immigration into TAR (in March 1994), the Mayor of Lhasa Lobsang Damdrup was reported to have said, "The flow of people is not necessarily a bad thing and the most important thing is whether it is conducive to the development of Tibet. When Americans were opening up to the west, weren't there many immigrants there?"\textsuperscript{91} Further, even way back in February 1985, the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi announced Beijing's intention to change both the ecological imbalance and the population density not just in Tibet but also in the other sparsely populated outlying regions. Chinese migration should be welcomed by the local population, and should result in a population of 60 million over the next 30 years, in these regions." The report further says, "this is a very conservative estimate. As a matter of fact, the increase might swell to 100 million in less than 30 years."\textsuperscript{92}

China also denies ever practicing population control policy in Tibet. It negates practicing various birth control measures on Tibetan women to stop the growth of Tibetan population as alleged by Tibetans.

In its \textit{White Paper}, China claims that 'The government has special policies on birth control in Tibet. Family planning is not practiced for the farmers and the herdsmen only constitute 80 percent of the region's entire population. The government only conducts publicity campaigns to inform them about rational births and ways to have healthy babies. Since 1984, the regional government has advocated and carried out the policies of two children per couple among Tibetan cadres, workers and staff of

\textsuperscript{92} \textit{Movement Westward}, Ref, Material No.2, Embassy PRC, New Delhi, February 4, 1985.
enterprises and residence in cities and towns. Only 2% of the people in Tibet are covered by the family planning policies. In the process of carrying out family planning the government always persists in the principle of ‘mainly publicity’ volunteering and service’ and prohibits any form of forced abortions. In fact, China claims that the Tibetan population is greater today then at anytime in the past. Before the Chinese take over, government tracts say that Tibet was underpopulated, with only 1 million inhabitants in all of the central region and no more than 1.7 million in Kham and Amdo.

However, according to China, Tibetan population has increased since the liberation. In 1990 in a booklet titled “Facts and figures on the population of Tibet”, there were over 2 million Tibetans in the TAR and another two million and some in Kham and Amdo, some 400,000 elsewhere in China, a total of 4.6 million doubled the 1953 population. By 1995, according to Tibet Daily article, in February 1996, the TAR had a population of 2.39 million, 2.32 million of them permanent residents in 1995. It also claims that Chinese Han in the TAR numbered only 75,000 in 1995, i.e. 3.3% of the population while Tibetans and other minorities totaled 2.31 millions. China says that considering this evidence, Tibetans claim and accusations are ludicrous.

Determining the veracity of either side’s report is a difficult task. However as far as the accusation of genocide, forced abortion and sterilisation that reportedly took place in the eastern region. TIN reported that they found no hard evidence to support the tales, nor any hard evidence that China wants to wipe out Tibetans as a race. Most of the accounts of physical force, deception or infanticide are secondhand, few are corroborated by other reports. Yet the stories persist and TIN found it disturbing

---

Family planning was implemented throughout the PRC in response to China’s urgent need to check population growth. But the regulations give special dispensation to minorities. In the TAR, Tibetan cadres and workers allowed two children with three years spacing between births, and it encourages families to adhere to this by granting a four month vacation to women who can wait the accepted length of time. The government also gives a year paid vacation to mothers who choose to be sterilized after the first child. Couples who defy the two-child limit must pay a fine and hospital cost for additional birth and often face harassment and threat from employers and officials. The additional children receive no registration card and are denied schooling, jobs, free medical care, and are denied normal rights of city dwellers. Goldstein and Beall, two American anthropologists also found that ‘there is clearly a policy of coercive birth control in Lhasa (in 1985), but that in Tibet’s farming and nomadic areas in 1986-88 ‘in a relatively isolated traditional nomadic area called Phala’, they found no evidence of any policy restricting the number of children that herding and farming women can bear and general observation and high fertility are supportive by demographic information for all females in the nomad community. In fact, the Western Changton area of Pala, a nomad woman with large family asked an American researcher to help her get birth-control medicine.

Outside the TAR, regulations also allow Tibetan cadres to have two children,

95 Defying the Dragon, TIN p.199.
97 Ibid. p. 295.
but enforcement depends on local officials. In some counties they are strict holding to the two child limit, hounding families until the wife has an abortion, and even setting quotas on the number of births allowed in a prescribed area each year. In other localities, mainly small towns and peasant villages, officials are more lenient allowing up to three children per family and charging a one-time fine for a fourth.98

The dispute between the two parties on the scale of Chinese population transfer into Tibet remains a sensitive one. The population figures given by Tibetan exiles for Tibet is 6 million and 7.5 million Chinese on the Tibetan plateau, respectively. Asia Watch 1990 broadly accepts the official Chinese census of 1984, which puts the Tibetan population of PRC at 3.87 million, and in January 1988 the Chinese Bureau of Statistics put the number of Tibetans at 4.74 million. Asia Watch says that, while it is true that Chinese settlers are spilling into the Tibetan plateau, Asia Watch still does not have accurate figures for the Chinese on the Tibetan plateau, however, it is undoubtedly below 7.5 million.99 China’s White Paper 1992, claims that only 5 percent of the TAR is non-Tibetans and the Tibetans claim of 2 million Chinese in the TAR, who now outnumber the Tibetans cannot be accepted either. The only broad consensus between Chinese and Tibetan sources is that the Tibetan population of TAR is approximately 2 million.100 The size of Chinese population given by the Tibetan authorities includes those living in areas such as Xining the capital of Qinghai province. This city has not been Tibetan for centuries and it lies outside the contagious territory of Tibetan habitation formed by the various Tibetan

100 Law Asia Report, p. 80, and Tibet: The Facts, p. 36
and semi-Tibetan autonomous areas that occupy most of the Tibetan plateau. Thus, the 7.5 million figures include small stretches of territory on the eastern edge of the plateau that have a disproportionately high concentration of Chinese.

The Chinese authorities on the other hand, for a long time insisted there were 73,000 Chinese in Tibet. Indeed, since the imposition of martial law in Tibet, Chinese sources had again reverted to citing the earlier figure. China’s White Paper reports “another lie is the claim that a large number of Han migrated to Tibet, turning the ethnic Tibetans into a minority”. With regard to TAR, in March 1989, an official news reported, “The population today is 2.07 million of which around 2 million are Tibetans, accounting for 96 percent or more of the region’s populace. Hans numbered some 70,000 mostly cadres, workers and technicians from all parts of the country supporting Tibet’s construction”. 101

Whatever China says, in the border region of central Tibet where the majority of Tibetans live, the government is implementing a policy of significant urban and industrial development, which involves large scale Chinese migration to the area. While it is true that Chinese and other groups lived, in some Tibetans area in Qinghai and Gansu centuries before the founding of the PRC, the post 1949 settlement has dramatically reversed demographic pattern of traditional Tibetan areas. 102

Chinese statistics show the increase in the Chinese population between 1953 and 1982 in the Tibetan autonomous prefectures and counties in Qinghai, Gansu,

Sichuan and Yunnan. The figures are taken from China's own statistics. These figures indicate an overall 350 percent increase in the Chinese population of specifically Tibetan designated area outside of the TAR. Over the same period, official statistics show that the Tibetan population outside the TAR increased by only 38%, from about 1,503,000 in 1953 to 2,083,456 in 1982.\textsuperscript{103} The report then states, "Chinese outnumbered the Tibetans in the autonomous area in Gansu, and from large and increasingly minorities in Tibetan areas, particularly Qinghai and Sichuan provinces. The balance of the population is made up of other ethnic groups, some of whom are traditional inhabitants while others have migrated to the region with the Chinese. Much of the influx has been associated with exploitation of Tibet's natural resources."\textsuperscript{104}

However, in the rural areas, where more than 80 percent of the population live is solidly Tibetan. \textit{Asia Watch} 1990 reported that it does not believe that the influx of Chinese into Tibet meant that most parts of the region are swamped with new comers contrary to the charge of the exile government. It should be noted that most of the large tracts of nomadic grassland or isolated agricultural areas has very few Chinese settlers. However, the Western parts of Tibet, also have relatively few Tibetans. Chinese population is concentrated in urban areas, and in places of strategic interest as regards security, communication, military and other concerns. But the Chinese population also numbered far more that the government claims because the Chinese government statistics are often dubious. "Population figures did not take into account of what may be very sizable Chinese military presence in Tibet."\textsuperscript{105}

\textsuperscript{103} \textit{TIN}, Defying the Dragon, 79.

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{105} Australian Human Right Delegation in China in July 1991, p.33.
Chinese statistics also exclude private settlers and unregistered floating population in TAR specially in Lhasa and Chinese petty traders and entrepreneurs and their families are hardly included in the census, because of minimum registration requirements for Han civilians, or failure to register formally for other reasons, Chinese civilians in Tibet may not be included in the figures.

In the late 1970’s, the US CIA estimated the Chinese population of the TAR to be about 234,000. The total population of Lhasa alone in 1990 is estimate to be about 150,000 civilians. The majority in Lhasa, more than the 72,000 figure for the entire region of the TAR are undoubtedly Chinese. The Chinese have also dominated other cities and towns in the TAR, such as Shigatse, Chamdo, Naghu and Tsetong. This was before the open door policy took effect, and much before the floating population began to arrive.

The Chinese have reported 120,000 Han civilians in the TAR from 1970s through 1980s, and 250,000 to 300,000 Han including military in the year 1975. The 1995 census citing 79,000 Han in the TAR cannot be valid. TIN and Asia Watch however accepts China’s claim that the Tibetan population has roughly doubled since 1950s inside the TAR and in the eastern region of China proper.

As for Lhasa, according to Barbara Erickson, “anyone who has looked around

---

106 Law Asia Report, p 82.
the city can see that Chinese make up the majority even if the official word is otherwise. Lhasa had a population of about 150,000 civilians in 1990, and more than half of them were Chinese and Hui, taking the military into account some 70 percent of the city is non-Tibetan. An article in a Katmandu magazine *Himal* comes up with similar estimates. It says that in Lhasa in 1994, only 20 to 30 percent Tibetan counting only the civilian population.

The problem arises from Chinese settlement and domination of those places of greater significance for the economic, social and cultural life of Tibetans. Chinese domination of these places threaten to marginalise much of Tibetan life and culture. *Asia Watch* is ‘concerned at what appears to be a deliberate policy to accomplish such marginalisation, as well as at the inherently discriminatory aspects of policies that are aimed at keeping non-resident Tibetans out of Lhasa while allowing non-resident Chinese the right to settle freely in the city’. Analysis of Chinese policies from China’s official sources and statements indicate that a very significant population transfer of Chinese into Tibet has taken place since 1949-59.

Asia watch stated that the majority of the population in Lhasa is clearly Chinese. This fact accounts for the Chinese authorities steadfast refusal to provide any reliable statistics for both the chines and Tibetans in Lhasa. In essence the authority appear to be applying at discriminatory policy aimed at baring Tibetans from coming to Lhasa, while placing no restrictions on Chinese migration into the city. For example, a housing colony in the Tibetan quarters in Lhasa is very badly maintained.

---

109 Barbara Erickson, pp.201-202
110 John Grey, p.11
and it continues to deteriorate, but he Chinese government has not hesitated to construct new housing for the Chinese population. And while admitting that housing in Lhasa is not in good and lacks amenities, the authorities also imply that the need for better housing is but one more reason why ‘transient’ (i.e. Tibetans) must keep out of the city. The recent move aimed at expelling Tibetans from Lhasa is unfairly assigned to shape the ethnic and national makes of the city in favour of the Chinese population.111 As for Lhasa, Himal reported an official count in 1993 that Tibetans owned 10 to 15 percent of Lhasa business, the government owned 8 or 9% and the Han and the Hui owned the rest. A Correspondent of the Asian Wall Street Journal in Lhasa warned: “the most significant threat to Lhasa Tibetan identity comes form recent government efforts to increase the number of Chinese settlers in Tibet- an expression made possible by the new tourist revenue”.112

In contrast with the forced settlements which had taken place in the first three decades since the founding of the PRC, now many Hui and Chinese come on their initiative to make money in China’s newest frontier, taking advantage of economic reforms. Many of these Chinese in the TAR and provinces are members of the floating population. Deng’s economic reforms followed a widespread of migration of the surplus rural labourers into towns and cities of China. Improvements in the mechanism of agriculture brought in increase harvest and improve living standards in China. These people drifted to cities and towns in search of casual work moving in a voluntary basis. And this became a serious problem for the urban areas. In 1989, there was a sudden surge of rural – urban migration in the spring, which led to panic in

111 Asia watch eport; pp.77- 80.
most large cities. China’s only alternative was to encourage the floating population to move to the northern and western region. China now accepts that widespread migration is an unavoidable consequence of economic reforms. And to ease their load, Chinese leadership introduced administrative changes, which includes the removal of the checkpoints, which led to the thousands of Chinese spilling across the border into Tibet. China may not have openly invited the floaters but it did make it easier for the floaters by issuing new business licenses, residence permits and letter of transfer into the TAR, inspite of the obvious discontent in Lhasa. In fact in December 1992, the government took down the roadblocks between the TAR and Chinese provinces and in November 1993 made it easier for new arrivals to get business permits.\(^{113}\) China held in Beijing, its Third National Forum on Work in Tibet in 1994. The Forum called for sixty-two new projects, which would require the importation of Chinese labour. A Tibetan official Ragdi openly welcomed Han in an interview reported in *China’s Tibet*, 1994. He said, “Tibet is a part of China, and thus, is perfectly proper for the Han to move into Tibet. In order to further develop our economy, culture, science, and education. We need more people like this to come to Tibet”\(^{114}\) Moreover, it, opted for a policy to ‘open the door wider in Tibet. Wen Wei Po, reported in May 1992 that one-third of the border counties in the TAR were to be opened for international trade.\(^{115}\).

With Lhasa being made into a “special economic zone”(SEZ) in the summer of 1992, all administrative barriers for Chinese immigration was removed. Thousand


\(^{114}\) For the 3rd National Forum statement see TIN- Serpent’s Head.p.23, for China’s Tibet quotation, see John Grey, p.17.

of individual Chinese from surrounding provinces like Sichuan, Gansu, and Qinghai flocked to Lhasa to set up businesses. The countryside too witnessed further increased in the influx of Hui traders. On 7 October 1994, China announced that a 1957 plan to build a railway link to Lhasa would now be carried out. The effects of this on Chinese migration to the TAR will be enormous: Qinghai had for example, a floating population of 300,000 in 1994.\textsuperscript{116}

The new comers came from Yunnan, Shantong and Gansu and many settled down as farmers. Qinghai, a Tibetan told a western researcher that he had never seen Chinese until 1946, when the Communists were heading toward victory. Now the land where he grew up is filled with Chinese hamlets. Tibetan herdsmen have been forced to pasture their animals higher in the mountains.\textsuperscript{117} ICT found that more than 70 percent of the Chinese interviewed in Kham and Amdo had arrived since 1980. Most of them were restaurant and shop owners. And many areas of Sichuan province, which had Tibetan majority in 1982 census, are now overwhelmingly Chinese.\textsuperscript{118} Chinese party Secretary, Paldron told Barbara that “the school was now enrolling the children of traders even if they had no registration. The parents had to pay a fee of 17 US dollars but for the first time, the government was allowing the children to receive an education in Lhasa.” With such advantage the itinerant shopkeepers, vendors, farmers and repairmen will have no reason to hurry home.\textsuperscript{119} This ten’s and thousands of Chinese spilling into Tibet each year are the biggest threat to the Tibetan identity and peace in the region. In Kham and Amdo the new arrivals are moving into areas

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item Xinhua, in SWB 1995 FEW/ 0370 WG/9
\item ICT for Long March, pp. 7-10.
\item Barbara Erickson, p. 215
\end{thebibliography}
CONCLUSION:

There is strong indication that the migration into Tibet is not just the inevitable consequence of market forces as China claims, but the result of deliberate policies. Most of the Chinese in Tibet were enticed by a wide range of benefits, not available in China. Benefits are mainly of financial nature, higher wages, hardship allowances for people working in the remote mountainous areas, reduction or exemption from some forms of taxation, improve pension opportunities, and so forth. Besides, they also get social benefits like better housing, access to education facilities and longer periods of vacation and leave, preferential birth control regulations for those who live in a ‘high cold and remote mountainous area’. These are certainly incentives to attract the displaced Chinese and Hui, who have now made Tibet their home. Besides, there are government transfer employees, cadres, military, professional workers, technicians, skilled and unskilled workers, road crews and construction teams, who now flood Tibet. There are also prisoners many of who are required to remain in Tibet after release. The recent announcement and statement made by various Chinese leaders demonstrate a return to the practice of transferring large numbers of Chinese staff into Tibet. For example, on 25 February 1995, the official Chinese news agency Xinhua reported that China would “soon send 1,000 outstanding leading officials and technicians” to “44 key counties” in the TAR, and that they would “be rotated every

five years". The government policies of involuntary settlement and coercive population transfer is being stepped up, as the leadership knows that the influx of Chinese into the region helps tighten their hold, making it impossible for the Tibetans to rise up. The Communist leaders have more reason to change the demographic patterns of the traditional Tibetan areas especially after the riots of 1987 and 1989. Tibetans watching helplessly, the endless flow of Chinese over the Tibetan border fear that their region will be submerged in the Han and Hui tide. A news reporter commenting on the destruction of temples and monasteries in the 50s and the 60s stated “The intimidation failed to break the Tibetan dream of autonomy. But where persecution failed, population transfer seems to succeed”. The government in exile also views population transfer as the gravest threat to Tibetan identity.

121 SWB 1995, FE/2239 S1/5.