CHAPTER - 4

CONGRESSIONAL INITIATIVE

In the late 1980s Tibet became a recurring issue in congressional consideration of matters relating to China. A number of factors have contributed to congressmen’s greater interest. These include: the Dalai Lama’s and the Tibetan community’s ongoing political activities; reports of human rights abuses and China’s continuing repressive social and political controls in Tibet; and the lack of consensus among US policymakers over what US policy should be toward China. On matters involving Tibet- as on many matters involving China- congressional views have been at odds with those of the White House. As a matter of official policy, the US government recognizes Tibet as part of China and has always done so, although some dispute the historical consistency of this US position. But the Dalai Lama has long had some strong supporters in the US Congress, and these members have continued to put pressure on the White House to protect Tibetan culture and accord Tibet greater status in US law despite Beijing’s strong objections.

Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives wrote a letter addressed to the President of United States on February 17, 1989. It says “We are writing to wish you success in your visit to Asia later this month and to ask you to raise the issue of human rights in your consultations with Asian leaders. In particular, we urge you to discuss with Chinese officials recent and ongoing violations of human rights in China especially against Tibetans”. This letter then cites few cases of human rights violations in Tibet and urges the
President to express their concern for the continued denial of basic human rights to Tibetans, including freedom of expression, assembly and association, and the continued imprisonment and mistreatment of many Tibetans solely for the nonviolent expression of their political views. It further says "In addition, we hope you will stress to the Chinese authorities the need to exercise utmost restrain in dealing with future peaceful demonstrations in Tibet."  

On March 3, 1989 congressional staff delegation issued a report based on its visit to Tibetan refugee settlements in India and Nepal. Purpose of the visit, made during November of 1988 by an eight-member bipartisan congressional delegation, was to investigate the current status of the Tibetan refugee population. The report had six findings. Few important among them are as follows:

1. Serious human rights abuses continue in Tibet.

2. The unique and ancient Tibetan culture is at risk on two fronts: in Tibet and in the refugee communities.

3. Negotiations among representatives of the Chinese government and the Central Tibetan Administration should continue to be supported.

In the first week of March 1989 a large-scale violence erupted in Lhasa. Unarmed demonstrators carrying Tibetan national flag and chanting pro-independence slogans were fired upon by automatic weapons. Many Tibetans were killed and many more got injured. Martial law was imposed.

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1 Tibet Press Watch, February 1989, p. 14
later on and foreign media and tourists were not allowed entry into Tibet. There was a widespread condemnation of the excessive use of force by Chinese authorities.

Senator Claiborne Pell submitted a resolution in the Senate on March 15, 1989 that the Senate:

- Condemns the recent use of violence against unarmed Tibetan demonstrators on March 5, 6 and 7, 1989;
- Expresses sympathy for those Tibetans who have suffered and died as a result of Chinese policies in Tibet over the past four decades;
- Urges the People’s Republic of China to respect internationally recognized human rights and human rights violations in Tibet;
- Urges the People’s Republic of China to lift the government imposed restrictions on foreigners;
- Urges the Administration to propose that a United Nations observer team monitor the situation in Tibet;
- Urges the United States to make the treatment of the Tibetan people an important factor in its conduct of relations with the People’s Republic of China;
• Urges the United States, through the Secretary of State, to address and call attention to, in the United Nations and in other international forums, the rights of the Tibetan people;

• Supports the efforts of the Dalai Lama and others to resolve peacefully the situation in Tibet; and

• Calls upon the government of the People's Republic of China to meet with representatives of the Dalai Lama to begin initially constructive dialogue on the future of Tibet. (Congressional Record – Senate)

The Senate passed this resolution on March 16, 1989. The Chinese government responded quickly. On March 19, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chinese National People's Congress lodged a strong protest with the United States and expressed utmost indignation at the Senate's "gross interference" in China's internal affairs with respect to Tibet. The statement claimed that Senate's resolution had slandered the Chinese government with its accusation of repression and human rights violations in Tibet, and asked the United States Congress to bear in mind "the overall interests of safeguarding Sino-US relations.²

Benjamin A. Gilman introduced a legislation in the House of Representatives in April 17, 1989 which would ensure that United States military equipment is not used by Chinese authorities in Tibet to support martial law or repress Tibetans in Tibet.

² "China Rebuffs Tibet Bills By US, EP, Beijing Review. (Beijing), March 27, 1989."
On May 4, 1989 the Senate passed resolution no. 928 establishing a Voice of America Tibet Service and renewing Fulbright scholarships for Tibetans to study in the United States. These provisions became laws on February 16, 1990 (Public Law 101-246).

On May 16, 1989 the House of Representative passed Resolution no. 63 condemning China for the use of excessive and lethal force against individuals engaged in peaceful expression of their political beliefs, urging China to lift martial law, exercise restraint in response to future peaceful demonstrations, admit foreign journalists and human rights monitors to Tibet, allow access to prisons, and to support the Dalai Lama's initiative to resolve the Tibetan situation through the process of negotiations. Consistent with section 1243 of Public Law 100-204, it urged the president to continue to make respect for human rights an important factor in United States conduct of relations with the People's Republic of China. The resolution also urged the executive branch, through the Secretary of State, to call attention to violations of human rights in Tibet. 3

On May 18, 1989 in a major floor statement in the Senate, Senator Patric Leahy detailed a strategy whereby his colleagues would use their influence to secure the release of Tibetan political prisoners. He released a list of 133 Tibetans imprisoned for their political and religious beliefs. He urged every Senator to write letters to Chinese and Tibetan authorities.

3 International Resolutions and Recognitions on Tibet (1959-1997), DIIR, CTA, 1997, p. 42
Senator Claiborne Pell, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, included 3 provisions on Tibet in the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for fiscal year 1990. Important among them is the third one to prohibit selling or transferring defense articles to China that would be used to suppress demonstrations by Tibetans or to violate their human rights.4

On May 18, 1989 Gilman made a floor statement in the House of Representatives “It took us two days to respond to martial law in Beijing, and two months to respond to it in Lhasa...I only hope that our further action in regard to what happens in Tibet will also be timely and strong. I also hope that media representatives will be allowed back into Tibet.”

On June 13, 1989 Benjamin A. Gilman introduced a bill in the House of Representatives which called for trade sanctions and other actions against the People’s Republic of China until human rights and democracy are on a firm footing.

Congressional Human Rights Foundation awarded its Raoul Wallenberg Congressional Human Rights Award to the Dalai Lama in New York City on July 21,1989. Congressional Human Rights Foundation is a bipartisan nonprofit human rights organisation established by Congressmen Tom Lantos and Jhon Porter. While awarding the Dalai Lama Tom Lantos said, “His ongoing efforts to end the suffering of the Tibetan people through

peaceful negotiation and reconciliation have required enormous courage and sacrifice."\(^5\)

Senator Claiborne Pell remarked in the Second International Conference on Tibet in New Delhi on 12\(^{th}\) August, 1989 "The participation of international community is vital to what will surely be a long and painful struggle for democracy in China and Tibet and should explicitly link the lifting of sanctions to the eradication, in both China and Tibet."\(^6\)

The Norwegian Noble Committee decided to award the 1989 Noble Peace Prize to the Dalai Lama. The Committee recognized his emphasis on nonviolent struggle for liberation of Tibet. Senate passed a resolution submitted by Senator Claiborne Pell October 5, 1989 congratulating the Dalai Lama for his Noble Prize for Peace.

Rep. Rose submitted a resolution in House of Representatives on October 13, 1989 that the Congress commends His Holiness the Dalai Lama for furthering the just cause that he has championed, expresses its support for those causes, and congratulates him for being awarded the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize.\(^7\) House later passed this resolution.

United States Senate passed the State Department Authorization Act by a unanimous vote. Besides other provisions this Act provided that "US

\(^5\) Tibet Press Watch, September, 1989, p. 9

\(^6\) Ibid.

\(^7\) Ibid, p. 4
policy toward the People's Republic of China should be explicitly linked with the situation in Tibet, specifically as to whether:

a) Martial law is lifted in Lhasa and other parts of Tibet.

b) Tibet is open to foreigners, including representatives of the international press and of international human rights organizations.

c) Tibetan political prisoners are released; and

d) The government of People's Republic of China is entering into negotiations with representatives of the Dalai Lama on a settlement of the Tibetan question. This Act was passed earlier by the House of Representatives last year.

On March 8, 1990 Senator Pell made a floor statement in Senate "In light of the views of Congress and the Noble Peace Prize Committee, the administration may be persuaded to reexamine its policy towards China and Tibet. Further, I would hope that the President, as leader of a nation built on individual will express the congratulations of the United States to the Dalai Lama on his receipt of this prestigious award."  

Greeting friends of Tibet on the occasion of 31st anniversary of Tibetan uprising day on March 10, 1990 Tom Lantos, Co-Chairman of the

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8 International Campaign for Tibet letter dated January 31, 1990

9 Tibet Press Watch, Volume- 2, No. 5, p.15
Congressional Human Rights Caucus, assured "I will do all within my power to keep this issue on the minds and consciences of the American people and the leaders of our country in the Congress and the Administration."10

On April 5, 1990 a resolution (No. 275) was brought in the US Senate that the President was authorized and requested to issue a proclamation designating May 13, 1990 as the National Day in support of freedom and human rights in China and Tibet and calling on the people of the United States to observe such a day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.11

On April 18, 1991 Senator Moynihan introduced the a resolution, commending the president for his historic meeting with the Dalai Lama, expressing that the Congress and the people of the United States stand with the struggling Tibetans and that all Americans are united on the goals of freedom and human rights for Tibet.12

On October 27, 1990 a $1 million humanitarian aid package for Tibetan refugees as part of the Foreign Aid Bill was passed by both House and Senate. The final language provided a minimum of $500,000. President Bush subsequently signed the bill (Public Law 101-513).

On October 28, 1990 an amendment to the Legal Immigration Act, H.R. 4300, that provided 1,000 immigrant visas for Tibetan refugees living in

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10 Letter issued by Mr. Lantos on March 10, 1990.
11 International Resolutions and Recognitions on Tibet (1959-1997), n. 2, p. 44
12 Ibid, p. 46
India and Nepal, was passed by both House and Senate. President Bush signed this bill into law on November 29, 1990 (Public Law 101-649).

On April 18, 1991 United States Lawmakers received and applauded the Dalai Lama in Capitol Rotunda. Expressing the feeling of Congress Bob Dole, Senate minority leader, said, “As His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the people of Tibet move forward on their own great journey, we stand with them and want the People’s Republic of China to hear this message.”

US Senate unanimously passed a resolution that mentioned ten Tibetan political prisoners and condemned the government of People’s Republic of China for their imprisonment.

Senator Claiborne Pell introduced a resolution in US Senate on May 23, 1991 to resolve that “it is the sense of the Congress that Tibet including those areas incorporated into the Chinese provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu and Qinghai, is an occupied country under the established Principles of international law whose true representatives are the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile as recognized by the Tibetan people.”

United States Congress declared Tibet “an occupied country whose true representative are the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government in exile.”

The bill was part of the State Department’s Foreign Relations Authorization

14 International Campaign of Tibet Release April 23, 1991
15 Tibet Press Watch, vol. 3, no. 3, p. 17
Act for the fiscal years 1992 and 1993, which President Bush signed on October 28, 1991. The bill noted that numerous declarations by the United States since the 1949 Chinese invasion of Tibet had recognized Tibet’s right to self-determination and the illegality of China’s occupation. However since the early 1970’s the United States government had done little to recognize the plight of Tibet.

Other portions of the bill were significant such as the definition of Tibet. The bill stated that Tibet included those areas incorporated into the Chinese provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu and Qinghai. Congress cited historical evidence of Tibet’s separate identity from Chinese archival documents and traditional dynastic histories, United States recognition of Tibetan neutrality during World War II among other factors.

Lodi Gyari, President of International Campaign for Tibet called the legislation “an historic triumph for the struggle of the Tibetan people for self-determination.”

Four Senators namely Moynihan, Pell, Paul Simon and Jesse Helms wrote a letter to the President of United States on November 1, 1991. The letter informed about the Dalai Lama’s proposed visit to Tibet, appreciated his efforts for a nonviolent negotiated settlement of Tibet issue and requested the US President to support the Dalai Lama’s proposal to visit Tibet and to

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16 Tibet Press Watch, vol. 3, no. 5, p. 1
directly raise this issue with the Chinese leadership at the earliest possible occasion.

Echoing same sentiment another letter was written to the President by the Congressional Human Rights Caucus in November 1991. Letter supported the Dalai Lama’s approach to resolving the question of Tibet through dialogue, understanding and a steadfast insistence on nonviolence. It requested the President to support the Dalai Lama in his effort to visit Tibet and also urged the President to raise this issue directly with the Chinese leadership at the earliest possible occasion."

On November 26, the House of Representatives voted in favor to condition Most Favored Nation (MFN) trading status for the People’s Republic of China on significant progress in human rights, trade and nuclear proliferation. The human rights conditions specifically referred to gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, religious persecution and restrictions on freedom of press and broadcasts by the Voice of America. The bill, introduced by Nancy Pelosi, would prevent the President from continuing MFN trading status for China under the Trade Act of 1974 unless he certifies that such conditions have been met.17

Twenty-two Senators sent a letter to President Bush asking him not to meet with Chinese Premier Li Peng. Senator Kennedy, who initiated the letter, said “the meeting is unwarranted because it would prematurely restore the

17 Tibet Press Watch, vol. 3, no. 5, p. 2
international image and credibility of the Chinese security forces which continue to... destroy Tibetan culture and silence peaceful dissidents through arrest, torture and harsh prison terms. The Administration should encourage follow-up action to the U. N. Human Rights Sub-commission at the Geneva.\textsuperscript{18}

Senator Paul Simon made a statement in the Senate on March 10, 1992 on the occasion of 33\textsuperscript{rd} Tibetan National Day. He said, "It is time for China to let Tibetans decide themselves whether they wish to remain under occupation by China's People's Liberation Army. The Bush administration and Congress ought to be working together to encourage the new generation of Chinese leaders to peacefully initiate a new democratic order."\textsuperscript{19}

On March 18, 1992, the US Senate unanimously adopted a resolution calling on the US Administration to support human rights in all appropriate international forums. The resolution expressed the sense of the Senate that the United States should support resolution like the one submitted by the European Community recently to the United Nations Commission for Human Rights. The resolution declares concern at the continuing reports of human rights violations in Tibet and call on the Chinese government to take measures to ensure the full observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms of Tibetans. The resolution reaffirms the position of the United States Congress that Tibetans have been denied their right to self-determination and subjected

\textsuperscript{18} Tibet Press Watch, vol. 3, no. 5, p. 4

\textsuperscript{19} Congressional Record, (Washington D.C.), vol. 138, no. 33
to routine and harsh human rights abuses since the Chinese invasion. Senator Paul Simon had introduced the resolution.\textsuperscript{20}

On April 1, 1992 the US Congress appropriated $1.5 million to Tibetan refugees for the year 1992. This was signed into law as part of the continuing resolution providing operations appropriations for FY 1992 (Public Law 102-266).

On July 8, 1992 the House Ways and Means Committee recognized the marginalization of Tibetans in their homeland due to the population transfer in Tibet. (Report 102-658 to H.R. 5318).

On July 21, 1992 the US House of Representative passed the bill to condition China’s MFN, sponsored by Congressman Donald Pease. The bill conditions MFN on improvement in human rights in China and Tibet.\textsuperscript{21}

On July 28, 1992 two US Senator expressed support for Tibetan independence and criticized the Bush Administration for not providing leadership to the rest of the world in championing this cause.

Senator Claiborne Pell, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, noted in his opening statement at the committee’s hearing on Tibet that despite Beijing’s efforts to suppress Tibetan culture, religion and social institutions the Tibetan people have remained true to themselves and

\textsuperscript{20} Tibet Press Watch, April 1992, p. 5

\textsuperscript{21} Tibet Press Watch, July 1992, p.14
entertained a virtuous faith in freedom. Pell said, “American policy unfortunately has not been as true to the Tibetans. Once having supported Tibetan independence, State Department officials now say that Tibet is a part of China. I believe we should return to the principles of our own independence.”

Senator Paul Simon said in a statement that there is no basis to assert that Tibet is an integral part of China because a tenuous link in the 13th and 18th centuries. “While the world justly condemns China for its harsh treatment of Tibetans, the world also remains silent on the question of Tibet’s freedom and independence. And one reason why the world is silent is the inexplicable absence of American leadership” said Senator Simon.22

In a report released on August 12, 1992 by a congressional staff delegation based on its visit to Tibetan settlement in India, it was recommended that “the US government undertake a stronger advocacy role for Tibetan human rights, including the right to self-determination, in its representations to the Chinese government and in international forums.” The report also recommended that the Tibet should be a central issue in any new US foreign policy initiatives towards the People’s Republic of China. The US government should also establish more formal government ties with the Central Tibetan Administration of the Tibetan government-in-exile.23

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22 Central News Agency Release, July 29, 1992

23 Congressional Record, Volume- 138, No. 119
On August 14, 1992 ninety members of the House of Representatives sent a letter to Chinese Premier Li Peng in which they strongly condemned the human rights violations taking place in Tibet and urged that "the basic rights of all Tibetans be respected." The letter brought to the attention of the Premier Li Peng the recent reports of the demonstrations that were occurring outside of Lhasa and that at least 69 arrests had been reported in rural areas. Members also denounced the general oppressive conditions inside Tibet and forced sterilization of Tibetan women. The Congressional Human Rights Caucus had initiated the effort.24

On October 6, 1992 US Congress appropriated $1.5 million to Tibetan refugees for 1993 (Public Law 102-391).

In April 1993 visit of United States the Dalai Lama had extensive meetings with members of the House of Representatives and Senate during his short stay in Washington DC. Both the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Foreign Affairs Committee hosted him at functions and provided him with an opportunity to brief the two committees about current conditions in Tibet and how the US could help the Tibetan people.25

On April 29, 1993 Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi and Senator George Mitchell introduced two separate but similar bills to condition China's MFN

24 International Campaign for Tibet Release, August 18, 1992

25 Tibet Press Watch, May 1993, p. 2
trading status. Both bills had strong language condemning Chinese oppression in Tibet and specifically addressing the issue of population transfer in Tibet.26

On June 10, 1993 House of Representatives, followed by the Senate, recommended that $2 million be appropriated for the Tibetan refugees in 1994. Report submitted by the Committee on Appropriations claimed that "the people of Tibet continue to live under a repressive and brutal occupation by China. The Chinese government is engaging in a regimen of population transfer, using economic and other incentives to encourage Chinese to move into Tibet and displace indigenous Tibetans and dilute Tibet's unique traditional culture (Report 103-125 to H.R. 2295)."27

On July 26, 1993 House of Representatives passed a resolution (H.R. 188) strongly opposing Beijing's bid for 2000 Olympics, urging the United States representatives to the International Olympic Committee to vote against Beijing's bid. It urged the IOC to find another more suitable venue for the games.28

Three Senate delegations, including Senator Baucus, Senator Pressler, and Senator Shelby, visited Tibet in August 1993. Senators Baucus and Pressler issued separate reports condemning the situation in Tibet.

26 Tibet Press Watch, May 1993, p. 6
27 International Resolutions and Recognitions on Tibet (1959-1997), n. 3, p. 76
28 Ibid. pp. 50-51
Some members of the US House of Representatives wrote a letter on October 5, 1993 addressed to Mr. John Shattuck, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights. This letter mentioned the noncompliance, by Chinese government, of conditions for the renewal of China’s MFN trading status and requested Mr. Shattuck to raise these concerns with Chinese officials on his forthcoming trip to China and Tibet.

On May 16, 1994 Congressional staff released the report on the visit of the delegation to Tibet and Nepal calling on the United States to use all policy tools to bring about changes in China's policy towards Tibet.

On May 23, 1994 the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives recommended providing $ 2 million in refugee assistance for Tibetan refugees in the year 1995.

On August 9, 1994 Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi's measure to impose targeted MFN sanctions on China failed by a 158-270 vote. Only weeks after President Clinton announced his decision to renew China's MFN status despite an obvious lack of improvement in human rights in China and Tibet, Pelosi introduced HR 4590. If adopted, this legislation would have removed MFN status for all goods produced, manufactured or exported by the People's Liberation Army and Chinese defense industrial trading companies, as well as on certain products made by state owned enterprises. Instead the House adopted a weak measure by Congressman Lee Hamilton, Chairman of House Foreign Affairs Committee. This resolution reiterated Clinton Administration's position of promoting human rights while improving
economic ties with the People’s Republic of China and sent a strong message to Beijing that human rights is now taking the back seat to trade. It also stressed the importance of negotiations between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Government, illustrating the continued commitment of the US Congress on the issue of Tibet.²⁹

On October 7, 1994 Senator Claiborne Pell and Congressman Howard Berman introduced a legislation to establish US Special Envoy on Tibet. Such a position would streamline Tibet policy in the United States and support the Administration’s commitment to human rights and peace in Tibet. According to the legislation the Special Envoy on Tibet would be authorized to promote substantive negotiations between the Dalai Lama or his representatives and senior members of the Chinese government, build relations with representatives of the Tibetan government in exile, and to travel to Tibet and Tibetan settlements. The Special Envoy would report to Congress and the Secretary of State on US policies relevant to Tibet.³⁰

Senator Moynihan in a statement on the floor of Senate Congratulated A. M. Rosenthal who was awarded ‘Light of Truth Award’, by International Campaign for Tibet, for his work on behalf of Tibetan people. Mr. Rosenthal enjoyed an illustrious career at the New York Times and almost throughout

²⁹ Tibet Press Watch, August-September, 1994, p. 3
³⁰ Tibet Press Watch, October-November, 1994, p. 2
found time to remind American people and government of the continuing struggle of occupied Tibet.\footnote{Tibet Press Watch, December, 1994, p. 5}

March 10\textsuperscript{th} message of the year 1995 from the House of Representatives Congratulated all the individuals and organizations who are involved in helping to bring the abuses in Tibet to the eyes of the international community. Message said "We share your commitment to defending the basic rights of Tibetans, including the right to freedom of conscience, freedom of expression, and freedom of movement, as well as the right to freely elect your political leaders. We vehemently oppose the acts of oppression and persecution perpetrated by the Chinese government against innocent Tibetans. We stand ready to receive your recommendations and to assist you in realizing your goals. Be assured that each and every one of us is committed to bringing pressure on the Chinese government, US government officials and international organizations to improve the plight of Tibetans living in Tibet and elsewhere."\footnote{Tibet Press Watch, March, 1995, p. 14}

On April 3, 1995 Palden Gyatso, a Tibetan monk who spent over 33 years in prison in Tibet, testified before the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights of the House Committee on International Relations. He described China's penal system in Tibet and ruthless torture practices.
In a letter addressed to the President Clinton on April 24, 1995, Congressmen protested recent religious crackdown in Tibet and urged him to raise the issue at all levels with the Chinese. The letter further said “over the past six months there has been a heightened campaign by the Chinese government to stop the spread and practice of Buddhism in Tibet. This was first apparent when the Chinese confiscated all photographs of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on display in city markets and issued a ban on these photos. In November, Tibetans were prevented from contacting the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance who visited Tibet.”

On June 8, 1995 State Department Authorization Bill was passed by the Senate, which provided for the establishment of a Special Envoy for Tibet. Among other provisions this bill urged the President to take actions concerning human rights in Tibet, including declining all invitations to visit China until there is dramatic progress on human rights in China and Tibet and extending an invitation to the Dalai Lama to visit Washington DC. It also expressed a sense of the Congress that one representative of Tibetan organizations should be included in the official delegation of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in September 1995.

Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of Senate Foreign Relations Committee conducted a hearing on Tibet on September 7, 1995.

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33 Tibet Press Watch, May 1995, p. 12

34 Tibet Press Watch, July 1995, p. 9
First to be held exclusively on Tibet since 1992, focused Senate attention on Tibet few days before the Dalai Lama's arrival in Washington. The controversy centered over whether the US had always considered Tibet an integral part of China as Kent Wiederman, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, suggested. International Campaign for Tibet President Lodi Gyari explained this country's varied policy statements and positions since the 1940s. Senator Pell also rebutted the State Department's characterization of United States Tibet policy, arguing that this country had recognized China's 'suzerainty' over Tibet, not 'sovereignty'. Testifying before the committee Prof. Jeffrey Hopkins recommended that US policy toward Tibet should be reversed by indicating to Beijing in clear terms that the United States did indeed take this issue seriously. Also the United States government should back the Dalai Lama's efforts to negotiate a settlement and should establish a Special Envoy for Tibetan issues.35

On September 8, 1995 US Senate unanimously passed a resolution (S. 169), introduced by Senator Craig Thomas, welcoming the Dalai Lama to the United States. It urged the President to meet with the Dalai Lama during his visit to discuss substantive issues of interest to two respective governments and to continue to encourage the government of the People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama or his representatives to discuss a solution to the present impasse in their relations. Senate Foreign Relations Committee received the Dalai Lama on September 12.

35 Tibet Press Watch, October 1995, p. 7
On December 13, 1995, the United States Senate unanimously adopted a resolution asking the United States government to urge the Chinese government to respect the wishes of the Tibetan people by supporting the Dalai Lama’s selection of the new Panchen Lama, work to ensure the safety of the new Panchen Lama and sponsor and aggressively push for the passage of a resolution regarding the human rights situation in China at the annual meeting of the U. N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva. Senator Jesse Helms, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, introduced the resolution.\(^36\)

Twenty-five members of the US House of Representatives sent a letter to Chinese President Jiang Zemin on January 5, 1996 urging the Chinese government “to respect the long-standing traditions of the Tibetan people and to not interfere in their religious or cultural activities.” The letter also expressed its concern for the safety of the new Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima. This was originated by Congressman John Porter and Congressman Tom Lantos, Co-chairman of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus.\(^37\)

A resolution urging the United States to sponsor and vigorously press for passage of a resolution at the 1996 meeting of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights that called attention to and criticized human

\(^{36}\) International Resolutions and Recognitions on Tibet (1959-1997), n. 3, pp. 56-57

\(^{37}\) Tibet Press Watch, February 1996, p.6
rights violations in China and Tibet, was introduced in the House of Representatives on January 25, 1996 by Congressman Porter.  

On March 1996 the United States Senate agreed to final passage of the State Department Authorization Bill. The bill contained the provision to establish a Special Envoy on Tibet. The entire bill was, however, vetoed by President Clinton on April 12, 1996.  

On May 7, 1996 Dr. Tenzin Choedrak, senior physician to the Dalai Lama, testified before the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights of the House International Relations Committee. Dr. Choedrak had suffered 17 years of imprisonment in Tibet and China.  

On May 29, 1996 a Photo exhibition on Tibet was organized at the Congress. ICT assisted a Seattle-based photographer, Phil Borges, in setting up this exhibition at the Cannon House Office Building on the Capitol Hill.  

On June 27, 1996 House of Representatives passed a resolution (No. 461), which would prohibit import of products, to the United States, made by the companies owned by the People's Liberation Army. The resolution also stated that the PLA was responsible for the occupation and suppression of dissent in Tibet.

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38 Ibid.

39 Tibet Press Watch, April 1996, p. 3
On September 16, 1996 Forty-five Members of Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, asked the Chinese government to release Ngawang Choephel, or give him a fair and open trial. In a joint letter, initiated by Bernard Sanders and John Porter, to Chinese President Jiang Zemin, the Congressmen pointed out that Ngawang’s continued detention is in violation of international laws. Ngawang Choephel studied ethnomusicology at Middlebury College in the United States. In the summer of 1995 he returned to Tibet to make a nonpolitical documentary about traditional Tibetan music and dance and was arrested in Shigatse market.40


The issue of Tibet continued to figure prominently in the agenda of the United States Congress as it reconvened in its 105th session on January 21, 1997. During the session Senator Patric Moynihan introduced a resolution on Ngawang Choephel, which was subsequently passed on March 11, 1997. On the same day Representatives Sanders, Pelosi, Cox, Gilman and Capps introduced a companion resolution to the successful Senate action. “The United States must look beyond political and short-term economic concerns and take a strong stand against China’s long record of flagrant, outrageous

40 Tibet Press Watch, October 1996, p. 3
human rights abuses”, said Sanders. Also on March 11, 1997 Sanders with Representative Porter and forty-two other members sent a letter to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright urging her to secure Ngawang’s release. It also called on the United States to support a resolution at the U. N. Human Rights Commission meeting in Geneva in March-April 1997.41

On April 23, 1997 Representatives Lantos and Porter introduced a resolution welcoming the Dalai Lama to the United States, calling on the President to continue to urge the Chinese leadership to enter into dialogue on the future of Tibet and telling the Tibetan people that the American people support them in their struggle.

The Dalai Lama’s 1997 visit to Washington DC saw a flurry of activities at Capitol Hill. On April 24 the Dalai Lama met those members of the US Congress who were attending the World Parliamentarians Convention on Tibet. On April 25, the Dalai Lama met Speaker Newt Gingrich for a substantive discussion on US policy towards Tibet.42 He also met Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott as well as with Minority Leader Tom Daschle.

On April 29, 1997, the Foreign Policy Reform Act (H.R. 1486) was introduced in the House of Representatives. It contained provisions for a Special Envoy on Tibet, humanitarian assistance to Tibetan refugees, cultural exchange, and scholarships for Tibetan students to study in the USA.

41 Tibet Press Watch, April 1997, p. 12
42 Tibet Press Watch, July 1997, p. 3
On May 15 Representative Wolf proposed a resolution imposing principles of conduct on US companies doing business in China and Tibet. These principles preclude the use of forced labor, prohibit discrimination, protect the environment, prohibit military presence on the premises, promote human freedoms in the workplace, and discourage political indoctrination programs.

On May 20, Senator Arlen Specter and Representative Frank Wolf introduced resolution, the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act of 1997. It established a post in the White House with specific monitoring / reporting responsibility for Tibetan Buddhists and others.43

On May 13, Senator Jesse Helms convened the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations to hear testimony on Tibet. Deputy Assistant Secretary Jeffrey Bader testified for the Department of State. There were lively exchanges between Senators and Mr. Bader urging clearer US support for the Dalai Lama's negotiation proposals. Prof. Thurman of Columbia University dealt on China's attack against the Tibetan Buddhist culture. Senator Moynihan reiterated the importance of US humanitarian assistance. She also gave accounts of torture in Tibetan prisons and rape at the Nepal-Tibet border.44

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid. p. 9
On June 3, 1997 Senator Jesse Helms and Russell Feingold introduced a resolution disapproving the President’s decision to extend MFN to China. As expected, on June 24 the House rejected the measure. Nonetheless, many members of Congress were pro-MFN vote against the rising tide of complaints aimed at Beijing.

On June 11, 1997 the House International Relations Committee passed the Foreign Policy Reform Act, which authorizes expenditures and programs of the US foreign affairs activities. The bill provided that the President should appoint within the Department of State a United States Special Envoy for Tibet.

On July 30, 1997 Senator Daniel P. Moynihan, in an address before the Senate, praised the announcement to appoint a Special Coordinator for Tibetan Affairs. He said, "Most importantly, we must focus on efforts to bring the Tibetans and the Chinese to the negotiating table to resolve their differences. The situation requires far more attention within the administration and a special coordinator can provide appropriate attention." Senator Moynihan placed in the Congressional Record the article in the New York Times of July 30, 1997 on the Special Coordinator issue.

On August 17, 1997 a Congressional delegation led by Representative Benjamin Gilman, Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, and including Representative Gary Ackerman and Representative Eni Faliomavaega visited Dharamsala, India, the headquarters of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile. They briefed the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan leadership
on their talks with the Chinese leaders during their trip to China prior to visiting India.

Congressman Frank R. Wolf visited Lhasa and its environs from August 9 to 13, 1997 on an unannounced trip. Mr. Wolf has been a leader in the Congress in the area of human rights and religious persecution, in particular. He released his findings and policy recommendations to the press on August 21, and to the House of Representatives on the first day of the session after the summer recess, ending with the following appeal, “We must demand that China change its policy of boot-heel subjugation in Tibet.”

On September 9, 1997 the House International Relations Committee heard testimony on the ‘Freedom from Religious Persecution Act of 1997’ from Congressman Wolf, Senator Specter and Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, John Shattuck. Following day the Committee heard testimony of Tsultrin Dolma, a former nun raped by Chinese police and Lodi Gyari, President of International Campaign for Tibet.

Representative Frank Wolf, who had visited Tibet in August 1997 as a tourist, launched a campaign to get each member of Congress to follow the case of a single Tibetan or Chinese prisoner of Conscience and advocate for his or her release. On October 28, 1997, the first day of President Jiang Zemin’s Washington visit, the Congressional Human Rights Caucus with the International Campaign for Tibet, Amnesty International and Freedom House

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45 Tibet Press Watch, October 1997, p.3
46 Ibid.
followed the lead of Representative Wolf and kicked off a campaign in the Congress to adopt a Tibetan and Chinese prisoner of conscience.\textsuperscript{47}

On October 30, 1997 Chinese President Jiang Zemin marched up Capitol Hill to breakfast with the members of Congress. The meeting became a tough exchange with congressional critics of Chinese government policies from nuclear arms proliferation to Tibet.\textsuperscript{48}

"The important effect of these congressional initiatives on Tibet has been to start a process in which the foreign policy makers have responded to the Dalai Lama's efforts to mobilize public opinion. The uncritical interpretation of the Chinese intentions has been challenged and Tibetans have got opportunity to influence the analysis and advice available to the US policy-making system."\textsuperscript{49}

In the United Stated Congress has taken a lead in the case of Tibet issue. On many aspects legislative and executive branch do not see an eye to eye. Executive has to take into consideration its trade and diplomatic relations and national security interests before making any statements or taking any actions. Following chapter will analyze governmental responses, their impact and People's Republic of China's reactions.

\textsuperscript{47} Tibet Press Watch, December 1997, p. 13

\textsuperscript{48} Tibet Press Watch, December 1997, p. 3

\textsuperscript{49} Tibetan Review, October 1989, p. 15