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**"Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person"  
Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations 1947.**

**"We have no rights, not even our bodies"  
Tibetan woman, 1989.**

**Campaign Free Tibet Working for independence**

**INTRODUCTION BY PAUL INGRAM**

Paul Ingram is Secretary of Optimus, an organisation chaired by Gerald de Pré. He has fought

for the cause of Tibetan independence for the last 14 years, and has publicised Chinese human rights in Tibet.

'Children of Despair' is the most comprehensive report on coercive birth control policies in Chinese occupied Tibet, a country which the NEW INTERNATIONALIST (March 1992), described as "one of the last outposts of colonialism." Few people or organisations seem willing to admit that the Chinese FORCE Tibetan women to be sterilised, or to have abortions, or will entertain the perspective that their policy is one of planned cultural genocide against the Tibetan people, supplemented by an enormous influx of Chinese settlers. Yet there is a great deal of evidence and detailed testimony, which indicates that this has been Chinese policy in Tibet for many years, and, without wishing to make detailed political analogies, would there have been such reticence on the part of so many people if whites had been sterilising and aborting Black babies in South Africa for the last 25 years, so that they could perpetuate a racist state? One somehow doubts it. Amanda Southern, Director of Optimus Women's Section, recently asked what such people would have said if the USA had invaded and occupied Mexico in 1950, under the Monroe Doctrine, and that then proceeded to flood the country with American colonists, while sterilising Mexican women of child bearing age.

Furthermore, Tibet is a country the size of western Europe, with a population of about 5-6 million. What possible point can there be in inflicting such policies upon the hapless Tibetan people who are so small in number and whose country is so vast? The Tibetan mayor of Lhasa, capital of Tibet, Mr. Lhoga, publicly criticised the Chinese in March 1989, saying that such policies were unnecessary and misconceived. Those who deny the brutality and the violence to be found in China's birth control programme, both in Tibet and in mainland China, might care to reflect upon the words of Deng Xiaoping, the 'Butcher of Beijing' on the subject of birth control, "Use whatever means you can, but do it". Tibetans have felt the full impact of those words.

Mrs. Taphe Adhi, who spent nearly 20 years in Chinese prisons, where she was regularly raped, refers to the case of a neighbour whose child was killed by a pre-natal injection, as part of Chinese coercive birth control policy. The baby, her first, was born alive, "cried a little and then died in a tub". Another Tibetan woman Dhukar Tsering, from the Kokonor region of Amdo, East Tibet, was ordered to have an abortion, and injected into the stomach several times. The baby was still born, and "straight away thrown into trash can."

Other accounts speak of Chinese sterilisation gangs, paid according to a bonus system, roaming the country and INDISCRIMINATELY sterilising Tibetan women and aborting their babies, irrespective of whether or not they, have had children. There are many harrowing accounts of the panic throughout villages when the sterilisation vans arrive, and pregnant woman trying to hide in their homes or in the fields. Often they are found, but if they manage to escape the village, or evade the Chinese, their houses are pulled down and their names taken.

The 'Thirteen Testimonies' forwarded by Optimus to Amnesty International in January 1987, contained reports of tourists seeing foetuses lying in a hospital's public toilet and thrown into the storm drains of Chamdo's public hospital. This account was supplemented by the testimony of a Tibetan doctor who spoke on television, without consent of the Chinese, and gave details of compulsory sterilisations carried out upon Tibetan women at Chamdo hospital, and of Tibetan women being forcibly sterilised after pregnancies of 3 or 5 months and even later. Not surprisingly, Tibetans refer to such places as 'butchers shops', (Dispatches C49.11.88). Other accounts speak of truck loads of Tibetan women being taken away and an English nurse, Valda Harding, witnessed this happening in Lhasa, and gave a detailed account of what she saw.

Coercive birth control policies in Tibet have sometimes provoked riots which the Chinese have savagely repressed. It is reported that one Tibetan woman died after an operation that went wrong in the 'Autonomous Prefecture of Huangnan', and a resident stated that young shepherdesses had been pursued through the countryside, and taken away in trucks. "The treat our girls like animals, sometimes they take them just to do experiments on."

A recent film in the US on TV Channel 5, featured the testimony of a Tibetan lady doctor who was forced to carry out the sterilisation of her compatriots, and who had to watch 50-60 forced sterilisations of Tibetan women every week, before escaping to India. This film was shown to Mr. Cheng Huai, Councillor at the Chinese embassy in Washington, who dumbfounded by material of this nature, broke off the interview and stated "... it's no good. I really don't know. I have to look into this." Perhaps Mr. Cheng Huai should read October 1990 edition of the TIBETAN REVIEW, which would certainly assist his researches. He would encounter the testimony of this Tibetan woman, Tashi Dolma, who was compelled to have an abortion and whose baby was scraped out of her body with a rotating appliance by a Chinese doctor, Cho Yi-chin. No anaesthetic was given, and she has been in constant pain ever since. She was only a few weeks pregnant, but Tashi Dolma stated other Tibetan women 6 or even 7 months pregnant have been subjected to such barbaric treatment (see picture).

Yet another account, described as "a particularly poignant interview", concerned a report given by two monks from Amdo, East Tibet. A Chinese birth control team set up a tent and Tibetan women were forcibly sterilised. Medical care was given to those who went peaceably, those who resisted received none, and even women 9 months pregnant had abortions. The monks claimed that ALL pregnant women had abortions, followed by sterilisation, every woman of child bearing age was sterilised. "We saw girls crying, heard their screams as they waited for their turn to go inside the tent, and saw the growing pile of fetuses build outside the tent, which smelled horrible". They further added that the Chinese birth control team DID NOT ROUND UP ANY CHINESE WOMEN LIVING IN THE VILLAGE and there is no doubt that most, if not all of these fortunate Chinese women, were new settlers in this area, and could bear children.

Such reports surely add an ominous dimension to Chinese birth control policies in Tibet and the accounts of many tragic Tibetan women whose lives have been blighted and wrecked, call to mind the testimonies of large numbers of women who were sterilised by the Nazis in concentration camps. The words of a Tibetan woman are readily understandable, "WE HAVE NO RIGHTS, NOT EVEN OUR BODIES". Such is the volume of testimony from so many sources, that even the most sceptical should surely entertain the possibility that something appalling is happening in Tibet, which should be investigated.

Any reader, particularly if s/he is a human rights activist, is entitled to ask why it is that such widespread human rights abuses are occurring in Tibet. What is the context within which they are taking place? Why are they still so little known, given the enormity of the crimes and the length of time (about 25 years), in which they have been perpetrated? Why is it that protests groups, various human rights activists, and more particularly, WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS AND NETWORKS, have generally remained silent, despite having had material forwarded to them over a considerable period of time? The rest of this introduction will concern itself with these four related questions.

## **THE CHINESE OCCUPATION OF TIBET.**

The context within which these crimes are taking place is the Chinese occupation of Tibet. This began in 1949/50 and is one of the most brutal military occupations in recorded history. Well over one million Tibetans have perished, INCLUDING NEARLY 100,000 TIBETANS TORTURED TO DEATH, and massacres occurred in the late 1950's and 60's, long before the 'Cultural Revolution', comparable in scale to some of those perpetrated by the Turks in Armenia in 1915. About one in five Tibetans has perished under Chinese rule, a similar percentage to wartime Polish dead.

China is arguably a land empire like the former Soviet Union, and it has occupied other territories too. These included E. Turkestan, formerly inhabited largely by Moslem peoples', China would be less than half its present size, having no border with India, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Korea, and practically none with the former Soviet Union. All these areas, with small indigenous populations, are reported as suffering from coercive birth control policies, and huge influxes of Chinese settlers have been observed.

The Chinese justify their occupation of formerly independent Tibet, as well as the other regions

mentioned above, on the basis of claims made by ancient imperial dynasties. Similar arguments, if followed by the British government, would seek to legitimise the occupation of Southern Ireland with reference to claims made by the English Plantagenet Kings of the 13th century. Great Britain could also attempt to re-occupy the USA on the grounds that parts of it were formally controlled by Britain, before reactionary elements detached it from London's rightful control. Not surprisingly, the Chinese always encounter problems when they try to justify their occupation of Tibet at the United Nations Human Rights Commission, Geneva, as they have been attempting to do since 1985.

Furthermore, Tibet was annexed at a time when many peoples and countries were at last gaining their independence, and since 1945 about 100 such countries have taken their rightful positions in the UN General Assembly. The Chinese occupation of Tibet violates the terms of the UN Charter, which recognises the right of peoples to determine their own destinies. Understandably enough, Tibetans ask why this right should be extended to the Namibian people and the Baltic States, but not so far, to them.

Chinese rule in Tibet was only established after some 400,000 Tibetans died in the 'Twenty Years War' (1954-74), and from the very beginning they attempted to exploit Tibetan mineral wealth, in the true traditions of empire. However, many people are puzzled by the Chinese insistence that Tibet has been part of China since at least the 13th Century, when it is perfectly obvious that for most of this period Tibet was independent. Why is it that the Chinese cannot ever admit this fact? The answer is, of course, that if they acknowledged this to be the case they would expose themselves to the retort that if Tibet has been independent in earlier or present times, it surely has the right to be independent once again. That is why the Chinese cannot admit that Tibet was EVER independent.

Since becoming communist (though they seem to have much in common with a Nazi state) the Chinese have become further embroiled in a dilemma of their own creation. Whatever one thinks of the writings of Karl Marx, or of his explanation of history, there is no doubt that he loathed any form of empire and supported the right of peoples to independence. If he were to return now, he would undoubtedly be truly appalled at what the Chinese have done in Tibet, and, hating any form of imperialism, he would have supported the right of the Tibetan people to independence.

Given this fact, the Chinese have to insist that Tibet has always been part of China, because if they ever admit the contrary, they know only too well that they can be accused of imperialism in the occupation and subjugation of Tibet. They can only deflect such criticism by insisting that Tibet has always been part of China, and if they admit that there have been periods of history when their control was minimal or almost non-existent, they can only rectify this position by insisting that links between Tibet and the 'motherland' were weakened by the intrigues of foreign imperialists.

All in all this is an extremely unstable position, and the Chinese know it. Unfortunately, the world of politics is replete with such dubious interpretations of history and unconvincing sleights of hand, and it is not surprising that those who embrace them often display extreme irritability if their position is ever challenged, since they know that it is ultimately untenable. This is certainly the case with the Chinese government.

Since the early 1980's a spate of disclosures from Tibet has resulted in a greatly increased media interest in Tibet, and references are made more frequently now on television to coercive birth control policies in Tibet, the most recent being on ITV (Viewpoint 11.5.92). The Tiananmen Massacre inclined many more people to listen with open minds to the tragic saga of Tibet, since it was somewhat belatedly realised that a regime which slaughters its citizens in its own capital, and hunts its young people down like beasts will not hesitate to act similarly in remote areas under military occupation, such as Tibet.

The fine, painstaking work of Amnesty International has undoubtedly played a major part in alerting the media and human rights activists all over the world to abuses in Tibet. There has been much exposure given to Tibet in its Newsletter, in its journal 'AMNESTY' in Urgent Action

Bulletins, and two comprehensive reports on Tibet have been issued. One appeared in 1991, and the other, a meticulously researched 60 page document 'PRC -Repression in Tibet 1987 - 1992' appeared in May 1992, and has been widely read and reviewed.

Over the years reports from Tibet have indicated the existence of concentration camps, a slave labour complex in Xining (formerly the Amdo Province of E. Tibet), which is the most densely populated gulag in the world, and may have over 10 million inmates, major human rights abuses including systematic use of torture, racial discrimination against Tibetans bordering on apartheid, the gunning down of independence demonstrators in Lhasa, and the extraction of blood from Tibetan prisoners many of whom are women, who have been weakened by hunger, cold, torture and long beatings. Some have reportedly died as a result of forced blood extractions and a considerable amount of material about these abuses has been sent by Optimus to Amnesty International for several years.

It is probably correct to say that the only two areas in which the tragic Chinese legacy in Tibet is still insufficiently appreciated are those of coercive birth control, and deforestation, which is approaching Amazonian dimensions, and it is likely that Martin Moss' timely report will help redress the balance on the first of these issues - coercive birth control.

For about the last 25 years many thousands of reports have reached India and the West concerning the forced sterilisation of Tibetan men and women, and forced abortions carried out by the Chinese upon Tibetan women. Many of these reports are detailed, giving times, dates, names of hospitals, and even the names of doctors and medical personnel. It is probably correct to say that these reports, if taken in their entirety, would fill a fair sized library. Many of these reported have been assembled by the Tibetan Exile Office of Information and International Relations, based in Dharamsala, India, and a considerable number have come from other sources too. Tibetan women who have escaped across the Himalayas, and who have subjected to such treatment by the Chinese, have been examined by Indian and Western doctors. I attempted to summarise much of the available evidence in 'Tibet: The Facts', and agree entirely with Martin Moss when he states that the sheer volume of reports from Tibetan women flatly contradicts Chinese statements that their birth control policy is voluntary. Such policies have been denounced on several occasions in the US Senate, and during presentations made by Non Governmental Organisations (NGO's) at the UN Human Rights Commission, Geneva.

All the available evidence suggests overwhelmingly that the Chinese are following a centrally planned policy of cultural genocide in Tibet, which is aimed at drastically reducing the number of Tibetans in their own country, to such an extent that they cease to exist as a people. This policy is being assisted by the transfer of at least six million Chinese settlers in Tibet (Tibetans call them colonists), with catastrophic ecological consequences. These settlers are pouring into former eastern Tibetan provinces Kham and Amdo, now annexed to China, and into 'Autonomous Region of Tibet' further West. It is this truncated region which the Chinese regard as Tibet, but which is only about one-third the size of the old Tibet. The Chinese leadership has spoken of moving some 200 million of its people into 'western frontier regions', and this bodes ill for the Tibetan people, presaging their effective annihilation.

This then is the context within which such grave abuses are being perpetrated - the Chinese occupation of Tibet.

#### **THE RACIST CONNECTION.**

Why is it that large numbers of Tibetan women are undergoing forced sterilisations and abortions when the Tibetan population is so small, constituting less than one percent of the population of mainland China, and when Tibet is so vast in size? If the programme is voluntary, as the Chinese say it is, why do they not give Tibetan women the option of limiting their families simply by extending to them A HUMANE PROGRAMME OF CONTRACEPTION which is cheap and effective? Such contraceptives as are available in Tibet seem to be dangerous and inefficient. It might perhaps be that considerable numbers of Tibetan women would participate in such a programme, but instead they are subjected to insidious butchery and pain.

Nobody can dispute the fact that in mainland China the government has a critical population problem. It has a population of over one billion people, and a new baby is born approximately every second. Clearly, drastic population control is required, though few would condone the brutality with which it is enforced. The Indian population control programme, with all its undoubted defects, at least allows some media scrutiny, is more humane, and does not possess the racist element so typical of the Chinese.

The issue of Tibetan independence underpins coercive birth control measures in Tibet and, as Martin Moss points out, "they are the coercive policies by a colonial power upon the subject people of a nation under military occupation". However, no understanding of exactly why the Chinese are following these policies will be gained unless some effort is made to understand the nature of Chinese racism, and how deeply it is embedded in the Chinese consciousness. It is only this racism which helps to explain the manic element to Chinese rule in Tibet, and the obsession with coercive birth control in that country.

Chinese civilisation is thousand of years old, and as they evolved the Chinese were aware of no cultural rivals, and came to look upon themselves as the centre of world civilisation, with the 'Mandate of Heaven'. Non-Chinese peoples are regarded with utter contempt, and it would not be overstating the case to say that, in a very real sense, a certain kind of cultural imperialism became inseparable from the Chinese national character. This point has frequently been made not only by historians, but by journalists writing today, in such papers as 'The GUARDIAN', 'INDEPENDENT', 'NEW YORK TIMES' 'TIMES OF INDIA' etc. For example, the people of E. Turkistan (renamed Xinjiang which means 'New Province') absorbed by China on the basis of military conquest, were referred to as 'Shung-nu' translated as 'barbarian slaves.' One only has to see the way in which 'minority peoples' are treated today, to realise that such attitudes of mind invariably persist.

Those unfortunate enough to live in close proximity to the Chinese state found their cultures threatened when strong Chinese emperors moved into northern and western frontier areas and prevented the intrusions of nomadic peoples by building the Great Wall during the -3rd Century. Chinese culture displayed an implacable capacity for permeation and extension, and on various occasions, even those far away have been deeply affected by such expansionist policies. It was these policies which were largely responsible for sending the Huns and related tribes surging westward in a series of shock waves, that uprooted entire peoples, hurling them across central and western Asia and into Europe. Here they burst through the great cloud bank of population between the Caspian and the Danube, sending multitudes reeling towards the frontiers of the Roman Empire, and it was this pressure that finally caused it to collapse.

Had the Romans known that it was the Chinese who were, in a very real sense, responsible for their ultimate demise, they would doubtless have expressed themselves on the subject with their characteristic vigour. Nearly two thousand years later, the Chinese are still displacing peoples and occupying countries, and now they threaten the Siberian wastes and enormous tracts of Northern India, which are difficult to defend. Century after century, stealthily, implacably, often warily, the Chinese advance to the north and defend. Century after century, stealthily, implacably, often warily, the Chinese advance to the north and to the west, in what an African delegate at the UN Human Rights Commission referred to as a 'new Lebensraum'. Like the Nazis, the Chinese continue their endless search for living space and inflict unimaginable misery on those unfortunate within range of their racist malice. It is probably correct to say that only a fanatical Nazi, and there seem to be more of them around these days, or a thoroughgoing Afrikaner racist, could have any real idea of the virtually psychotic nature of Chinese racism, which is arguably far worse since it is far older. Certainly most western politicians, in their simplicity, have little or no understanding of its dimensions, or indeed of China generally.

Allied to this is the fixed conviction that ALL peoples should adopt Chinese style civilisation, together with the belief that if Chinese forces have ever occupied a particular area or country, or even sent forces into it for a brief period of time, then it automatically becomes part of China. On a rare occasions Chinese armies did intervene in Tibet, only to withdraw again or be thrown out by the Tibetans, as happened before and during the First World War. But the damage was done and Tibet was seen as part of China. The fact that Tibet declared its independence counts

for nothing in Chinese eyes.

It is this racism, unchanged in the imperial, nationalist or communist era, that provides the *raison d'être* of Chinese coercive birth control policies in Tibet. After all, it would have been perfectly feasible, and somewhat less troublesome, for them to have simply inundated Tibet with Chinese settlers and left the Tibetans to their own devices, as many other conquering empires and peoples have done in the past in other parts of the world. But such a 'live and let live' policy is quite at odds with their perception of other peoples and their rights. Quite simply, the Chinese do not believe that non-Chinese peoples, particularly the Tibetans, have the right to exist, or if the point is grudgingly conceded, they are granted status of subject peoples, who should be grateful for whatever form of exploitation the Chinese see fit to inflict upon them. Resentment or ingratitude for such largesse invariably provokes draconian reprisals.

Anyone who reads Hitler's 'Mein Kampf' cannot fail to be struck by the similarity of his 'Master Race' philosophy to that of traditional Chinese beliefs, concerning their own racial superiority. It is this that provides a justification (in their eyes) for their abominable treatment of 'minority peoples.' Now that anti Nazi groups are springing up in the West, it is surely not too much to ask that some of them transfer their attentions to the Nazi-like policies of China in occupied territories, with particular reference to coercive birth control.

There are indications that the Chinese are increasingly aware of the adverse publicity and criticism that this policy in Tibet is provoking and they attempt to counter such criticisms with unconvincing rationalisations, which confirm the racist nature of their policies.

For example, Deng Bihai claims that it is far more common for people of 'minority populations' to be "mentally retarded, short of stature, dwarfs or insane" or in some way handicapped, and a recent article in the Chinese press claimed that there are 100,000 handicapped people in Tibet. All this sounds ominously familiar and what is one to make of a Chinese government statement to the effect that the quality of the nation should be improved "with fewer but higher quality births"? No wonder that Tibetans are trembling at the forthcoming onslaught of the "exterminating angels" of medical apartheid.

Any deficiencies found in the Tibetan people are likely to be principally attributable to the effects of the great famines of the 1950's and '60's, in which over 300,000 Tibetans starved to death because the Chinese stole their food, and wrecked their delicate ecological balance which regulated Tibetan agriculture.

Deng Bihai has also claimed that 'minority peoples' are less intelligent since fewer of them receive a university education, but neglected to add that Chinese policies make it almost impossible for most Tibetans to receive a proper education. Other rationalisations of coercive birth control policies in Tibet, such as the statement that they are necessary to preserve the per capita income of Tibetans, call to mind the sentiments of a Nazi sympathiser, who wrote that surviving Jews should be grateful for Hitler's racial policies, since their economic situation was likely to be improved as a result of them. A perceptive analysis of Chinese birth control policies in Tibet is to be found in AMNESTY (Feb/March 91) the journal of Amnesty International.

Hopefully the above makes it clear that the Tibetan people are prisoners in their own country as the result of a military occupation which violates the terms of the UN Charter, and that Chinese coercive birth control policies in Tibet spell cultural genocide for the Tibetan people, and objective assisted by an enormous influx of Chinese settlers. The manic element in this programme can only be understood by what a Tibetan referred to as PREHISTORIC RACISM WHICH HAS NO PLACE IN THE 20th OR 21st CENTURY. As Martin Moss points out there is no doubt that this police is proceeding apace and with success, particularly since 1987. Tibetan population losses of over one million dead should be borne in mind alongside the following statistics. It was reported on the radio that in the new province of Gansu, which contains former Tibetan territory, 63,000 men and women had been sterilised in a two month campaign. The Chinese also announced (29.5.90) that 18,000 women had "volunteered for sterilisation" in the truncated 'Autonomous Region of Tibet' and it seems likely that the Tibetan

population could be reduced by 20 - 50% in one generation.

Any careful evaluation of the situation must take into account the fathomless duplicity of the Chinese, and the ingenious measures to which they resort in order to hide what they are doing in Tibet. For example, there are many reported cases of Tibetan women being sterilised after having only one child, and other reports mentioned earlier, too numerous and detailed to dismiss, speak of sterilisation gangs travelling the country and indiscriminately sterilising Tibetan women. In some areas the Chinese will proclaim a moderate birth control policy for Tibetans, to the accolades of western 'experts' but only issue a derisory number of birth permits. A familiar tactic they employ is to announce retrospectively that Tibetan women in a particular area can have three or four children, but neglect to add that this area has already received the attention of the sterilisation squads, and that most, if not all the women, have already been sterilised.

It is often overlooked that in most parts of Tibet women must be aged 25 before they are allowed to have children, and then they have to have been married for at least four years before being allowed to start a family. If by some chance Tibetan women exceed the birth quotas they are subjected to fines which may total one year's wages, and excess children become non-persons. That is to say they are denied ration cards, and cannot gain any kind of education or employment. They become a shadowy underclass, possessing no rights whatsoever, and there have been many reports of gangs of ragged children tramping round the countryside in search of food and shelter.

Heinrich Harrer once described Tibetans as "a laughing little people", who had a robust and easy going way of life. But, as Professor Robert Roaf pointed out, "there is no laughter in Tibet now". Many people have been driven out of their minds by a merciless and vengeful bureaucracy that subjects every aspect of their private lives to relentless scrutiny, and in what other country, in what other colonial situation, does a woman have to 'apply' to have a child, or crouch in terror by home and hearth, waiting for a knock on the door and the attentions of a medical Inquisition?

### **SILENCE IS GOLDEN - NON-CHINESE POPULATION 'EXPERTS':**

Why is it then that most non-Chinese specialists in birth control refuse to condemn or even acknowledge its coercive aspects, either in Tibet or mainland China, despite having received much detailed material on the subject? Why is their silence compounded by the Anti-Apartheid movement and virtually all anti-racist groups and organisations of whatever complexion, despite the fact that many of them have received material about it both from Tibetans, from Optimus, Campaign Free Tibet and from other groups over quite a long period of time? ABOVE ALL why have most, if not all women's organisations colluded in a conspiracy of silence? As I remarked before, would they all have remained silent if Whites had been sterilising Black women in South Africa, and aborting their babies under horrendous conditions, to ensure the continuation of a racist state?

The reasons for this disgraceful collective silence are to be found largely in past perceptions of China, together with various mental sets that seem to characterise some of these organisations and movements. Until the early 1980's, and in some cases even until the Tiananmen Massacre, most shades of the political spectrum, and various sections of the media, had their own reasons for ignoring or minimising unpalatable reports emanating from Tibet and other parts of the Chinese Empire, in order to sustain their various illusions about supposed Chinese progress. Even disclosures concerning the 'Cultural Revolution' (1966-76) did not seriously shake their misplaced optimism in the continuing success of Communist China. It is now known from CHINESE INTERNAL SOURCES, that there were ONE HUNDRED MILLION CASUALTIES in China during this period. This includes tens of millions of people who starved to death as a direct result of Mao's policies, multitudes who disappeared in labour camps and prison complexes such as Xining, millions who suffered beatings, torture, detentions, and prolonged public humiliation and floggings (Thamzings), countless people who suffered severe mental damage as a result of political indoctrination and brainwashing sessions, and a million

people who died as a direct result of mob action.

Many detailed reports about the 'Cultural Revolution' were ignored during the late 1960's and '70's and it was probably the single most catastrophic even in human history, overshadowing even the Holocaust. It was only many years later there was a dawning recognition of the enormity of the crimes against humanity, and human rights abuses through out China and its occupied territories, on the part of the media and the various political groupings whether Right, Left or Centre. Optimus, under its Chairman Gerald du Pré is proud to have assisted with this process for a period of some 14 years. Indulgent attitudes towards China have generally been shattered, but they still persist in the area of coercive birth control and there are clear reasons for this. It is surely necessary that such hypocrisy be exposed in order to provide a basis for drastic and far reaching action, which is long overdue.

Material cited in 'Children of Despair', particularly the work of John S. Aird author of 'Slaughter of the Innocent' a book which, for whatever reason is extraordinarily difficult to obtain, illustrates graphically the reasons for the silence, and even collusion, on the part of non-Chinese population 'experts' in maintaining the fiction that the Chinese birth control programme is voluntary, both in Tibet and mainland China. They know that public criticism would imperil their careers (and presumably their bank balances), since the Chinese would be likely to deny them access to population data. The Chinese do not hesitate to hound scholars and professional people to whom they have extended research facilities, and who have been so appalled by what they have learned, that they have ventured to criticise the policies of their hosts. A particularly disturbing example is to be found in the case of Stephen W. Mosher, who lived in a Chinese village 1979-80, and was a young cultural anthropologist. On the basis of his research he challenged current academic orthodoxy and denied that the lot of the Chinese peasantry had improved since the revolution.

He was subsequently expelled from Stanford University. Other researchers have not only lost their jobs, but have had their careers destroyed. It is pointed out in 'Children of Despair', that Tibet is facing ecological disaster as a result of relentless Chinese deforestation and at the end of 1987 the Chinese themselves admitted that they had taken \$54 Billions worth of Timber from Tibet, leaving once verdant and wooded areas resembling deserts of the moon. However, as in the case of population 'experts', many ecologists seem to collude in a conspiracy of silence to conceal such deforestation in Tibet and mainland China, since they know that the Chinese might withdraw research facilities, thus damaging their careers. It is significant that even the glossiest and most comprehensive compilations on ecology, times to appear shortly before the Earth Summit in Rio, made scant allusion to huge deforestation projects in China, and none at all to Tibet. Yet there is little doubt that Tibet is facing 'ecocide' at the hands of the Chinese, who nevertheless manage to blame 'minorities' for environmental degradation, deforestation, and the disappearance of wildlife. This is rather like the Brazilian government blaming indigenous Indian peoples for the disappearance of the rainforests. Ironically, the Chinese are establishing national parks in former East Tibet, in which tourists can hunt to extinction various rare species. Quite a few 'concerned ecologists' have got a lot of explaining to do and two of the few people to speak out on this subject are the American ecologist Galen Rowell, and Chris Catton. The silence and evasiveness of many ecologists closely resembles the behaviour of those who assist the Chinese with their 'demographic researches.'

Such population 'experts' have a general kind of feeling that whatever its supposed excesses, the Chinese population programme is "on the right track". It is "necessity's child" and should be countenanced and indulged and its disagreeable aspects buried in a discrete silence. Their antics closely resemble those of westerners who visited the Soviet Union when millions were starving and many more perishing in Stalin's purges, and returned proclaiming that they had seen "Utopia in action". Unfortunately, the world is full of 'experts' who ignore the obvious when it is in their financial and professional interest to do so, and spend their lives squaring circles in order to validate their preconceptions. In the case of mainland China their silence is disgraceful, and violates whatever professional ethics they may still possess.

However, in the case of Tibet they are exposed to a far more devastating criticism. By refusing to acknowledge or condemn forced abortions and sterilisations THEY ARE ACTIVELY COLLUDING IN A POLICY OF PLANNED CULTURAL GENOCIDE INFLICTED UPON A

PEOPLE UNDER COLONIAL MILITARY OCCUPATION. By their silence and their active participation in Chinese population projects and surveys, they are involving themselves in the planned destruction of a people and are abetting rampant racism. These people would evidently have had no problem in visiting Nazi occupied Poland, for purposes of demographic research and remaining silent about the sterilisations and measures taken to reduce the numbers of subject peoples in occupied territories, EVEN WHEN THEY HAD PROVIDED WITH INFORMATION ABOUT THESE MATTERS.

Unless they unequivocally condemn Chinese population policies in Tibet and withdraw continually from all forms of co-operation with the Chinese government, then human rights activists who are concerned to fight racism, must surely begin campaigns to expose them. Their silence is a political act, and whether or not they care to admit it, they are COGS IN A GENOCIDE MACHINE. Their first tactic will be to deny that Tibet is a country under military occupation in which case they need only be presented with the facts. Their second tactic will be to point out that "China has a serious population problem. Of course we have heard that the programme has defects, perhaps even relatively serious ones." They will then have to answer why it is that Tibetans are being targeted for ANY kind of population control, given their tiny population and the size of their country, and must be made to comment on volumes of well authenticated reports that have reached the West, together with the fact that many Tibetan women who have suffered forced abortions and sterilisations have been examined by professional medical personnel. They will also have to comment on the large number of reports which have reached India over a period of many years, indicating that while the Chinese sterilise Tibetan women and abort their babies in areas in which new Chinese colonists have settled, Chinese women are invariably left alone and are free to bear children, with the inevitable result that the Tibetans will be outnumbered in their own country. This is the traditional Chinese policy of 'Lebensraum', supplemented by the devices of a scientists racist - based eugenics.

Population 'experts' have frequently spared no effort to fudge this issue, and some writers on Tibet have been somewhat less than forthright, perhaps preferring silence and evasion to the possibility of a Chinese denial of research facilities. Tibetans tell me that even a well known Tibetologist is unsleeping in his malice towards the Tibetan cause, having fallen out with his Tibetan relatives by marriage and to all intents and purposes acts as a mouthpiece for Chinese policies in Tibet. However, even he admits a coercive birth control policy in Lhasa, the Tibetan capital. He and other writers of similar disposition adopt the curious expedient of giving great credence to the official statements issued by the Chinese government on the subject of birth control, while simultaneously belittling the testimony of Tibetan refugees. They are following in the footsteps of those who refused to believe the reports of Jewish refugees from central Europe in the 1930's and 40's and who stated that they were 'exaggerating or playing to the gallery' preferring to trust the pronouncements of Hitler's Reich. More recently similar efforts were made, by people who should have known better, to deny that Pol Pot's regime in Cambodia was engaged in wholesale slaughter. The researches of such people in Tibet are, quite simply, untrustworthy. Their methodology is suspect, their affiliations obvious, and bias shines in almost every line of their writings.

As Martin Moss points out, this poses very serious problems for such people, since the Chinese have given at least two contradictory totals for the Tibetan population, a discrepancy which clearly gives grounds for serious unease. If the Chinese themselves are not clear on the numbers and extent of the Tibetan population, those who invest their statements with an unhealthy credence, are likely to be similarly mistaken in the direction and conclusion of their 'researches.'

#### **THE SILENCE OF THE ANTI-RACISTS.**

Why has the Anti-Apartheid movement, and anti-racist groups generally, remained silent about forced abortions and sterilisations in Tibet, which are themselves the horrifying results of a racist policy? As far as I know, none of these groups have replied to, or even acknowledged, material which has been sent to them at various times by Tibetans and western groups.

The answer may be found deep in the psychology of many protesters and anti-racist activists at

the forefront of the Anti-Apartheid movement. The very word 'Apartheid' is obviously derived from the Afrikana vocabulary, and the anti-racist struggle has centred largely upon the still iniquitous South African regime, together with fighting racism in western countries in which black people have settled. It is probably correct to say that there are two main reasons for this particular emphasis.

First, in South Africa racial inequality was actually enshrined as a part of state legislation, unlike almost any other country in the world. Secondly, an indulgence, perhaps to some degree understandable, was often extended to newly independent countries of Africa and Asia, since they were engaged in attempting to emancipate themselves from the often painful consequences of European rule. If they acted in a racist fashion towards others within their countries, most anti-racist groups generally tended to remain silent, even when they were approached by representatives of such oppressed minorities. At the very least it would often happen that those victimised by racism in newly independent countries would have to organise their own struggle before they would be able to interact with the meshes of a wider movement. Of course, there were notable exceptions, and Amnesty International has frequently drawn attention to racism in many parts of the world over a period of many years, so has the Minority Rights Group. But there are others who have been principally distinguished for their long silences.

It is these people who often forget that particularly vicious forms of racism can often be reinforced under the guise of state legislation, which supposedly guarantees racial equality. This is precisely the case in Tibet which provides an example of an occupying power which has established a virtual Apartheid state, while trumpeting to the skies the benefits of its 'enlightened' legislation. The Chinese have always been adept at concealing discrepancies between the real and the ideal, and the racist basis of their colonial administration provides a striking example of their traditional ability to fudge and deceive.

However, it seems that something more is at work here. Anti-racist activists have often displayed an unwillingness to acknowledge the reality of racist oppression, where non-whites have oppressed non-whites, in various parts of Africa and Asia. It seems that for many of them, this issue has, quite literally, to be perceived in terms of Black and White, as is the case of South Africa. Other forms of racism practised by non-white peoples upon each other are often regarded as being 'beyond the pale', and are frequently ignored or only favoured by a minimal amount of attention.

This is surely iniquitous and now that there is at least some hope that South Africa will moderate its worst excesses, let us hope that all sections of the Anti-Apartheid movement and human rights activists engaged across the entire spectrum of anti-racist activities, will devote their attentions not only to fighting Apartheid in Chinese occupied Tibet, but to fighting it in India where over 100 million Untouchables suffer from Apartheid rule even though state legislation supposedly forbids it. Little, if anything has so far been done for these tragic peoples, many of whom have forsaken Hinduism and converted to Buddhism in the hope that it will give them a new chance in life. Attention should also surely be focussed on Mauritania, which is the only state in the world whose institutions are based almost entirely upon slavery. These issues are crying for action.

In the meantime, however, the crimes being inflicted upon women in Tibet are arguably in a class of their own, and should surely receive the undivided attention of all those who are concerned to right injustice, and who fight racism in whatever ugly guise it may appear.

## **THE SILENCE OF WOMEN ACTIVISTS.**

Whatever the failures and culpabilities of non-Chinese population experts, who co-operate with China, the relative passivity of some human rights activists, both in Britain and elsewhere, various shortcomings of sections of the Anti-Apartheid and anti-racist movements, it has to be admitted that a forthright and vigorous campaign by women's organisation and networks against coercive population measures in Tibet and mainland China, would have swiftly created an

atmosphere where silence and collusion was virtually impossible. Time and again feminist organisations of one kind or another, have displayed a capacity for analysis, organisation and action that far outshines various male-based organisations. Tibetans have, on many occasions in the past, attempted to bring to the notice of a wide international public the truth about what the Chinese are doing in Tibet. H.H. The Dalai Lama, winner of the 1989 Nobel Prize for Peace, has frequently denounced coercive Chinese birth control in formerly Buddhist Tibet. Various Tibetan women's organisations have sought to publicise the plight of their sisters in Tibet. The Tibetan Women's Association in India has done some good work, and organises demonstrations denouncing these policies in Tibet. Its branches abroad seem to have been hampered by lack of funds, perhaps a lack of understanding of how best to publicise their cause, and a general atmosphere of disbelief that has greeted their efforts.

Occasionally, items about forced abortions and sterilisations have appeared in the press, and it is to their credit that such magazines as 'I to I' and 'Spare Rib' have given some coverage to these issues. Various material has been sent to other magazines such as 'Time Out', but unfortunately such efforts do not seem to have met with any success so far.

Once again, various women's organisations, including feminist groups, have over a considerable period of time, been sent information about Tibet, but little response has been received. More recently, the National Women's Network and 'Change' have been sent material by Amanda Southern, Director of Optimus Women's Section, and by Jeffrey Bowe of Campaign Free Tibet, but nothing substantive has so far emerged.

Why is this? First, the point has to be made that women in mainland China are suffering as a result of the policies of the Chinese government, and they surely deserve the comparison and support of concerned activists everywhere. But this introduction is principally concerned with the plight of Tibetan women, who are suffering under a colonial regime, and it is this which imparts a different dimension to their harrowing predicament. The virtual silence of women's organisation inevitably exposes them to the charges of apparent indifference to terrible suffering inflicted upon women in Tibet, that involves cultural genocide, racism, and a perverted Nazi-like policy of eugenics. However, unlike some population 'experts' these women's organisations are not actively colluding with the Chinese government. Why is it that they have so far remained generally silent in the face of such atrocities?

The answer would seem to be that the issue of ABORTION is an extraordinary fraught one. Until fairly recent times the horror of 'back-street abortions' prevailed in many countries, and still does in various parts of the world. The struggle for legalised abortions was a long and protracted process, and there are now many indications that such legislation may be revoked, in the USA and elsewhere, partly as a result of pressure from Christian Fundamentalist organisations.

Many women's liberation activists seem to fear that to EVER be seen to condemn abortions will expose them to the concentrated fire of the anti-abortion lobby, and weaken their position at a time when abolitionists are clearly gaining strength. However, there is an inner rift in the constitution of their logic, and their refusal to condemn forced abortions further widens the gap between their feet.

Central to their argument is an insistence that women have rights over their own bodies, and the right to have an abortion is an important expression of this. A denial of this right constitutes a grave injustice and is a violation of the above tenet. So far so good. However, if women are entitled to have control over their own bodies, and this includes and implies the right to have an abortion, any woman who insists on such control ALSO HAS THE RIGHT TO REFUSE TO HAVE AN ABORTION, particularly when this is forced upon her by the agents of an occupying power, in a planned policy of cultural genocide. If such an abortion proceeds against the wishes of the woman in question, then her right to exercise control over her own body has been violated.

Earlier in the Introduction the plaintive words of a Tibetan woman were quoted "WE HAVE NO RIGHTS, NOT EVEN OUR BODIES". By definition, similar reasoning should prevail on the

issue of forced sterilisations in Tibet. IF WOMEN DO NOT WANT THEM THEN THEY SHOULD NOT BE MADE TO HAVE THEM.

There is no exit from this impasse for women's liberation theoreticians and activists, since this is the other side of the coin, the right to have, or not to have an abortion. By their silence they are violating the canons of their own logic, and such reticence on their part exposes them to withering fire from the anti-abortionist lobby.

This is because those who reject the eminently reasonable argument that women should have control over their own bodies, and believe that society should annex to itself this right, at least on this particular issue, can now level the following objection. They can ask women's organisations all over the world why it is that they have not protested against forced abortions and sterilisations in Tibet, when such abhorrent practises are clearly a violation of their apparent belief that women must have the ultimate rights over their own bodies.

They can then proceed to attack a position that is both contradictory and incomplete. Until women's liberation organisations campaign against forced abortions and sterilisations, both in Tibet and mainland China, they are undermining their credibility, and every day that passes renders their present stance increasingly untenable. An inner consistency and cohesiveness can only be restored to their position through recognising this glaring contradiction, and taking appropriate action to correct it.

In the meantime one can only ask how many Tibetan women have died in agony under the butcher's knife, how many live out their lives in constant pain and misery, how many dreamed of having children and now live empty blighted lives dreading rejection by Tibetan men? It is known that many such tragic women have broken down in hysterics under even the gentlest of questioning, victims of a murderous, bloody handed policy. Others have never recovered from the murder of their children, against which they have fought with all their strength, and have been left with crippling feelings of guilt or inadequacy. Many others are reported to have committed suicide, both in Tibet and India, having escaped across the Himalayas to freedom. It will never be known how many Tibetan women have been sterilised and have undergone forced abortions during the last 25 years, neither can it be known how many are suffering such abuses now, but at the very least the total must comprise many scores of thousands, victims of a pregnant silence. Such atrocities would have been unimaginable in the former Buddhist culture of Tibet, before the Chinese wiped it out.

One wonders what the reaction of women's liberation organisations would have been if such things had happened in Britain, and even one healthy mother has been sterilised or had her baby aborted on the orders of the government. It would have become a cause célèbre. Women's liberation organisations would quite literally, have taken to the streets, and it is quite likely that public pressure would have brought down the government, and the newspapers would have talked about nothing for years afterwards. But the remoteness of Tibet ensures a shroud of silence.

### **A TIME FOR ACTION.**

'Children of Despair' leaves no room for doubt that the Chinese government is implementing a planned policy of cultural genocide in Tibet, despite official Chinese government utterances to the contrary. Those who have had the misfortune to deal with the Chinese government in almost any capacity whatever, will know that most of its members are little more than professional liars, and this is particularly the case with those in charge of coercive birth control policies in Tibet. The Chinese government has almost no hesitation in violating with impunity and total lack of conscience, almost any treaty it signs, and the airwaves positively vibrate with glib and flippant deceptions designed to conceal its genocidal policies in Tibet. The New China News Agency (Xinhua) ably disseminates such systematic disinformation throughout the world, and the Tibetans with their meagre resources find it difficult to combat this immensely powerful and worldwide propaganda machine.

However, since the Tiananmen Massacre there has been something of a 'sea change' concerning perceptions of China in many parts of the world, and the efforts of the Chinese government and their supporters, in whatever guise to fudge this entire issue, are proving increasingly unsuccessful. The almost unlimited indulgence once extended to the Chinese Communist government by many countries, organisations, and protest groups has measurably diminished over the last few years.

Almost the only two issues still afflicted by such mindless forbearance are forced sterilisations and abortions in Tibet, and Amazonian scale deforestation in Tibet (and mainland China). Even so, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the Chinese to conceal the appalling catalogue of horror beyond the Himalayas.

It is to be hoped that non-Chinese birth control 'experts' may be asked to explain their support for Chinese racism and a series of carefully planned and escalated campaigns are now necessary on the part of Tibetans and their supporters. It is to be hoped that those who oppose Apartheid and racism, in whatever form, will assist with this process. However, it does seem reasonable to expect and to believe that women's liberation organisations throughout the world will take the lead. Their silence has been a political act with devastating consequences for women in Tibet. It seems that very recently some of them have entered into a dialogue with Amnesty International in the hope that this organisation will investigate such abuses. However, it is not clear whether activity in this particular area lies fully within Amnesty International's mandate, at least at the present time, as it is principally concerned with the investigation of human rights abuses taking place within prison, or in detention of some form. There is some evidence, however, that a number of Tibetan women may have been sterilised in a prison hospital, but this report has not yet been confirmed.

It is a fact that Amnesty International does MENTION, in its many comprehensive publications, various human rights abuses which do NOT fall within its mandate, such as rape outside prison, or violence used by the military against demonstrators in the streets, etc. Amanda Southern has made the point in an amicable correspondence with Amnesty International's mandate, they too can surely be mentioned, in common with many other human rights abuses, such as those referred to above, that are regularly featured and reported by Amnesty, even though they lie outside its mandate. It may indeed be that forced abortions and sterilisations in Tibet and mainland China cannot at present be investigated, but nevertheless some coverage could surely be devoted to them, without in any sense violating the terms of Amnesty's mandate. There is no doubt that this would inform many people of the existence of such dire human rights abuses, and give hope to the tragic women who live, or rather exist, under Chinese rule in Tibet. Perhaps Amnesty International will consider this as being a constructive suggestion and feature the plight of Chinese women too?

Hopefully this introduction has acquainted the reader with perspective about Tibet which will enhance her or his understanding of 'Children of Despair'. Chinese crimes in occupied Tibet cannot be separated from the psychotic dimensions of Chinese state racism, so similar to Apartheid, and this entire issue is underpinned by the struggle for Tibetan independence. It is only within the context of an occupied Tibet, justified with arguments that fly in the face of all the great independence movements of the 20th century, that the Chinese state can carry out its Nazi-like genocidal policies in Tibet.

Given the nature of Chinese rule over subject peoples and the artful way in which they seek to deceive international opinion, one can be certain that forced abortions and sterilisations will only stop WHEN THE CHINESE GET OUT OF TIBET. But media and publicity campaigns may cause them to begin rethinking such policies, or at least slow them down.

About one hundred countries have gained their independence since the end of the Second World War, the most recent being Namibia and the Baltic states. Whatever the British Foreign Office and its representatives, in whatever guise, may say or do, Tibet has a right to statehood and independence. The stricken Tibetan people need an enormous amount of help and compassion if they are ever to recover from the atrocious legacy of Chinese rule.

The appearance of 'Children of Despair' is both apt and timely, and it is above all a all to ACTION on behalf of a people in whose land laughter has died.

Paul Ingram, June 1992.

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