

# **A Modern History of Tibet**

## **Dragon Attacks 1949-1959**

Taking the first step toward what has become 50 years of oppression, the China's People's Liberation Army invades Tibet, killing more than 10,000. Repeated attempts by The Dalai Lama to negotiate with China are dismissed.

In 1950, the 15-year-old Dalai Lama is forced into full leadership of Tibet, while in 1951 a Tibetan Delegation is forced to sign the 17-Point Agreement, promising "Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet." During 1959, The Dalai Lama went to China to speak with Chairman Mao Zedong. Mao told him, "Religion is poison...Tibet and Mongolia have both been poisoned by it." Also during this year, the Chinese retaliate against the Tibetan resistance, killing more than 87,000. On March 17, 1959, The Dalai Lama escapes His sacred homeland, seeking political asylum in India. The Chinese declare martial law as thousands of Tibetan refugees begin pouring into India.

## **Smash the Four Olds 1958-1976**

During Chairman Mao Zedong's "Great Leap Forward," Tibetans suffered through the Tibetan Cultural Revolution experiencing some of the worst human rights abuses ever known, under the slogan "Smash the Four Olds:" old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits. Before the Chinese occupation, there are 6,000 Tibetan monasteries in Tibet. After the Cultural Revolution, there are six. Hundreds of thousands of Monks, Nuns and civilians are imprisoned or killed for wearing traditional hairstyles and clothing, engaging in traditional song or dance, or voicing their religious beliefs. Rituals such as prostrations, mantras, prayer wheels, circumambulation, throwing tsampa and burning juniper or incense are strictly prohibited. Anything representing the cultural identity of the Tibetan people is eradicated.

## **A Prison State 1950-Present**

More than 250,000 Tibetans die in prisons and labor camps. Tibetan women are raped, sterilized and forced to have abortions. Children are shut off from Tibetan culture and subjected to beatings by teachers and authority figures. Nun's accounts of their prison experiences indicate they are targeted by the Chinese. They are subjected to extreme methods of torture: Dogs are used to bite them; their faces and torsos are burned with cigarettes; and electric batons are used on their genitals. Tibetan refugee children report that teachers and other authority figures subject them to beatings using rubber clubs, whips, belts, chairs, electric wires and other instruments.

## **Environmental Apocalypse 1960s-Present**

China has inflicted severe damage to Tibet's environment: Toxic waste is dumped into rivers; forests are clear-cut; endangered species are hunted for sport; and nuclear-testing facilities are built. Hundreds of thousands of Tibetans die from famine and disease. The Chinese begin building facilities for the development of nuclear weapons and begin nuclear testing in the Tibetan plateau. In just 30 years, 25 percent of Tibet's forests are clear-cut, putting \$54 billion into Chinese pockets. In the 1980s, this rapid deforestation causes 5 billion tons of soil to be lost to erosion every year, making the Yellow River flood. China currently has at least 300 to 400 nuclear warheads, many of which are in the Tibetan plateau. China declares in 1991 the "Year of Tibet" and begins bulldozing historic Tibetan buildings and homes in the Barkhor, the central square of Lhasa, Tibet's capital.