

**RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TIBET: ONE STEP
FORWARD, THREE STEPS BACK**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIAN AND
PACIFIC AFFAIRS
OF THE
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UNITED STATES SENATE
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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TIBET: ONE STEP FORWARD, THREE STEPS BACK

TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2000

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIAN
AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met at 10:03 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Craig Thomas (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Senators Thomas and Kerry.

Senator THOMAS. Good morning. I think we will go ahead and begin.

The Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs is meeting today to examine and discuss the situation in Tibet and what progress, if any, is being made by the central Chinese authorities in Beijing to safeguard the human, religious, and economic rights of the people of Tibet. I will keep my opening statement brief so we can hear from our witnesses, which is the more important thing in this hearing.

At least for some time, this is the first subcommittee hearing dedicated solely to the topic of Tibet. I believe it is a good idea to make it more visible. Many people are interested in what is going on in Tibet and yet some of these other things sort of overshadow it sometimes.

In addition, it is the first hearing on Tibet as a topic since the creation of the Office of Special Coordinator for Tibet within the State Department. So, I believe it is overdue.

There has been a great deal of focus in the Congress on China, of course. Most of the focus, not surprisingly, has centered around trade, WTO, and granting China permanent normal trade relations [PNTR] status. It is true that some of the debate on the trade bill in the House mentioned that China's current policies on Tibet were difficult and a problem. But I believe, in general, Tibet has sort of fallen off our radar screen and hopefully this hearing will raise its profile.

I wish I could say things have gotten better in Tibet since I became chairman of this subcommittee in 1994. I am not sure that they have. China's treatment of Tibetans, especially those with religious backgrounds, continues to figure prominently in the State Department's religious human rights reports, hardly an encouraging distinction. Beijing still obstinately refuses to sit down with the Dalai Lama to discuss the wide range of issues facing the Ti-

betan people, and insists on installing their own Panchen Lama, much to the despair of some of the Tibetans.

There is one area we have arguably improved. That is the economy. Yet, of course, it has its down sides in the tradeoffs that have taken place there. It has raised the living standards apparently for Tibetans, but at some cost to their tradition and cultural identity.

So, I hope this morning we can bring ourselves up to date on the situation in Tibet, what steps the U.S. Government, through the Office of Special Coordinator for Tibet, is taking to ensure that Beijing both halts its violations of accepted international norms of human rights, and resumes the kind of dialog that is meaningful with the Dalai Lama.

I also would suggest that, for those of you who are testifying, if you have a vision of where we want to be, it would be good to share that. It seems to me in the things we do around here we get all involved, but we are not always clear as to whether the things we are doing are going to lead to our perception of where we ought to be, not only in this instance but in many. So, if you would give that some thought as we go, I think that might be useful.

Let me welcome, first of all, the Honorable Julia Taft, Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues from the Department of State. Ms. Taft, welcome. Glad to have you here.

STATEMENT OF HON. JULIA V. TAFT, SPECIAL COORDINATOR FOR TIBETAN ISSUES, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. TAFT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am really very pleased that you are holding this hearing. We have a number of initiatives that are underway, but as you mentioned, sometimes the issue of Tibet does get eclipsed by other higher profile questions, and the fact that you are holding this hearing I think will help bring a balance to that.

I was appointed 18 months ago to serve as Special Coordinator for Tibet and have had really two primary goals. One is to promote the substantive dialog between the Chinese Government and the Dalai Lama and his representatives, and second, to help sustain unique culture, religious, and linguistic heritage of the Tibetan people. Both of these tasks, as you have noted, are quite difficult.

Disputes over Tibet's relations with the Chinese Government have a long and complex history dating back centuries. Rather than focusing on this historical perspective, I would rather just focus on the current circumstances in Tibet and highlight some of the major developments over the past year.

As our human rights report on China for 1999 makes clear, tight controls on religion and other fundamental freedoms continued and intensified during this year in which there were very many sensitive anniversaries and events. The report documents in detail widespread human rights and religious freedom abuses. Besides instances of arbitrary arrests, detention without public trial, and torture in prison, there was also an intensification of controls over Tibetan monasteries and on monks and nuns. Religious activities were severely disrupted through the continuation of the government's patriotic education campaign that aims to expel supporters

of the Dalai Lama from monasteries and views the monasteries as a focus of anti-China separatist activity.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees reported last year that 2,905 Tibetans left Tibet during the year and went to India via Nepal. The Tibet Information Network [TIN], reported that approximately a third of all of those refugees had left to escape the campaigns and to pursue religious teaching in India. In fact, Tibet's two most prominent religious figures have left Tibet in the past 20 months reportedly for religious persecution reasons.

The 14-year-old Karmapa, who is the leader of the Kagyu sect and the third most revered leader in Tibetan Buddhism, left Tibet in late December and arrived in India on January 5 to pursue religious teachings in India.

Agya Rinpoche, a former abbot of Kumbum Monastery, a senior Tibetan religious figure and an official at the Deputy Minister level, left China in November 1998. Among the reasons he said he left were the increased pressure on Kumbum Monastery, including the stationing of 45 government officials and imposing stringent patriotic re-education requirements. It was demanded of him by the government that he support and legitimize the campaign of Gyaltzen Norbu, the boy recognized by the Chinese leadership as the 11th Panchen Lama. For these reasons, he left.

You mentioned in your opening comments about China's economic progress, and this is true. Although China has devoted substantial economic resources to Tibet over the past 20 years, we have to recognize that China's poorest region is still Tibet. Language problems severely limit educational opportunities for Tibetan students. Illiteracy rates are said to be rising sharply, and most non-urban children are chronically undernourished.

Recent reports suggest that the privatization of health care, increased emphasis on Chinese language curriculum, and continuing Han migration into Tibet are all weakening the social and economic position of Tibet's indigenous population. Lacking the skills to compete with Han laborers, ethnic Tibetans are not participating in the region's economic boom. In fact, rapid economic growth, the expanding tourism industry, and the introduction of more modern cultural influences have also disrupted traditional living patterns and customs, causing environmental problems and threatening the traditional Tibetan culture.

Because of the deterioration of the Chinese Government's human rights record, the U.S. Government introduced a resolution focusing international attention on China's human rights record at this year's session of the U.N. Commission of Human Rights in Geneva in March. Unfortunately, the Chinese countered with a no-action motion, which effectively blocked discussion and resolution of this vote.

In addition to addressing the human rights situation in China through multilateral fora, the President and Secretary Albright have continued to urge the Chinese leadership to enter into a substantive dialog with the Dalai Lama or his representatives. President Jiang said at our June 1998 summit in Beijing that the door to dialog and negotiation is open as long as the Dalai Lama publicly affirms that Tibet is an inalienable part of China and that Taiwan is a province of China. Despite our repeated efforts to fos-

ter such a dialog and the willingness expressed by the Dalai Lama to enter into discussions, the Chinese leadership has not followed up. We remain committed to pushing this issue even though at this point we are seeing no progress.

We have also continued to raise individual cases of concern. Probably the most notable was the whereabouts of Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, who was the boy that the Dalai Lama has recognized as the Panchen Lama. He and his parents have been held incommunicado for the past 5 years. This past fall, we received some very disturbing reports that the boy had died in Gangsu province and was cremated in secrecy. As soon as we heard this, the embassy made formal representations expressing concern about his whereabouts. We subsequently heard from the Tibetan exile community. They did not believe that these stories were true, but we have continued to urge the Chinese to at least show this child to some international community figure just so that we can assure his safety and well-being. We want him identified. We want him returned home freely. To this date, the Chinese Government has continued to refuse any direct confirmation of his well-being.

In response to an inquiry from Congress, the Chinese Government acknowledged the whereabouts and earlier ill health of Ngawang Choephel. He is the Tibetan ethnomusicologist and former Middlebury College Fulbright Scholar who was incarcerated in 1996 and is now serving an 18-year sentence on charges of espionage. Throughout the past year, we and Members of Congress have continued to raise the plight of Ngawang and have urged that the Chinese release him on medical grounds as a humanitarian gesture because of his illness.

We have also been pressing for his mother, who is Sonam Dekyi and living in India, to be able to go and visit her son. This is very important because, according to Chinese law, a parent can visit a child in incarceration, and we are pressing that this be done. We have heard recently that the Chinese have agreed to allow this visit to go forward. We want to thank very, very much both the House of Representatives and Members of the Senate who have been very helpful on this.

Now, among the things that we have been working on to get a vision of where we want to go is to figure out if it is just the United States who cares about the Tibetan issue. I have spent quite a lot of time meeting with representatives from other countries, particularly Western countries, who also have constituencies that are quite supportive of Tibet and have their own human rights dialogs with China. We think it is very appropriate that these dialogs be pressed forward with the Chinese and we are also exploring how we can join forces with other members and parliaments in the West to be able to send a very strong signal to China that we believe they must go forward with the dialog.

In my full testimony, I go into a number of details on what we have been doing with other countries and all parliamentary fora, but I would like to spend a couple of minutes talking about what we are doing as the U.S. Government to actually physically help the people that are in exile and help those that are still in Tibet.

In January, I visited Dharmasala in my capacity as Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees and Migration. The purpose of this

trip was to evaluate the \$2 million that we spend on assistance programs to Tibetan refugees, and I can assure you this money is well spent. We had an opportunity to meet with many of the members of the Central Tibetan Administration and found a really overwhelming sense of good will and a strong community in exile.

What was especially impressive was the fact that so many of the Fulbright scholars who had benefited from the U.S. Government program had returned. Ninety-six percent have returned and are working somewhere either in southern India or in Dharamsala to reinvest what they have learned and to help the Tibetan settlements. I think this shows what an incredible contribution the Fulbright opportunity has given to them.

We also viewed the recent arrivals that had come across the Himalayas into Nepal and then come down to India at the transit center. There the U.S. Government is funding the transit center reception facilities and health care, as well as some vocational training programs. Again, this assistance is very much appreciated.

While most of our programs have focused on the Tibetans in exile in Nepal and India, we have also shared the concern of the Dalai Lama about the condition of people in Tibet that have not had a chance to leave. In this regard, Congress last year earmarked \$1 million for programs of cultural and sustainable development for Tibetans in the Tibetan regions and we are in the process now of spending those resources and my office will be heavily involved in making sure that these investments are directly benefiting the Tibetan people. What is particularly interesting—and this is part of our vision too—is that all of those investments will be done in consultation with the Tibetan people and managed by the Tibetan people so that their benefits can accrue directly to them.

During the course of the past year, I have met twice with the Dalai Lama and look forward to seeing him again later this month and in July. I am particularly appreciative, if you are not aware of it, that the Smithsonian Folk Life Festival, is going to feature the Tibetan culture, and His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, will be there for these events. This is a wonderful way to help preserve the endangered culture.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the treatment of Tibetans by the Chinese Government over the past 50 years has been inconsistent with international standards of respect for fundamental human rights. The Dalai Lama has shown enormous courage in his call for genuine autonomy but within Chinese sovereignty. There is considerable common ground between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese leaders. I wish they could just talk together about it and they would find that there is common ground. We are continuing to urge the authorities in Beijing to establish this kind of a dialog.

There are really very significant Chinese interests that could be advanced in moving along toward Tibetan autonomy. Important is that the Dalai Lama is still active and healthy. His prestige is crucial in carrying the opinion of the Diaspora and most Tibetans in the autonomous regions. We believe that the political will does exist to achieve implementation of a negotiated settlement.

China's widespread abuses have been noted widely by the international community, and we think it is in China's interest that they be responsive and that they have a more enlightened policy

toward Tibet. We have to continue on message. We have to keep on pressing this, and it is our sincere hope that, in the remaining course of this administration, we will be successful in getting the Chinese to talk with the Dalai Lama and his representatives.

Let me stop there and answer any questions you have. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Taft follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JULIA V. TAFT

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today to testify on the current situation in Tibet.

I was appointed 18 months ago to serve as Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues. My policy goals are twofold: first to promote a substantive dialogue between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama or his representatives, and second, to help sustain Tibet's unique religious, linguistic, and cultural heritage.

Mr. Chairman as you and your colleagues know, disputes over Tibet's relations with the Chinese government have a long, complex history, dating back centuries. Rather than focusing this testimony on the past, I would like to describe the current circumstances in Tibet, highlighting key developments over the past year, and what I've been doing since my appointment.

CURRENT SITUATION IN TIBET

As our human rights report on China for 1999 makes clear, tight controls on religion and other fundamental freedoms continued and intensified during a year in which there were several sensitive anniversaries and events. The report documents in detail widespread human rights and religious freedom abuses. Besides instances of arbitrary arrests, detention without public trial, and torture in prison, there was also an intensification of controls over Tibetan monasteries and on monks and nuns. Religious activities were severely disrupted through the continuation of the government's patriotic education campaign that aims to expel supporters of the Dalai Lama from monasteries and views the monasteries as a focus of "anti-China" separatist activity. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that 2905 Tibetans left Tibet during the year, and Tibet Information Network reported that approximately 1/3 of those left to escape campaigns and pursue religious teaching in India. In fact, two of Tibet's most prominent religious figures have left Tibet during the past 20 months reportedly for these reasons. The 14-year-old Karmapa, leader of Kagyu sect, and the third most revered leader in Tibetan Buddhism, left Tibet in late December and arrived in India on January 5 to pursue religious teachings in India. Agya Rinpoche, former abbot of Kumbum Monastery, a senior Tibetan religious figure and an official at the Deputy Minister level, left China in November 1998. Among reported reasons for his departure were increased government pressure on Kumbum Monastery including the stationing of 45 government officials, the imposition of patriotic re-education, and a heightened role demanded of him by the Government in its campaign to legitimize Gyaltzen Norbu, the boy recognized by the Chinese leadership as the 11th Panchen Lama.

Although China has devoted substantial economic resources to Tibet over the past 20 years, it remains China's poorest region. Language problems severely limit educational opportunities for Tibetan students, illiteracy rates are said to be rising sharply, and most non-urban children are chronically undernourished.

Recent reports suggest that privatization of health care, increased emphasis on Chinese language curriculum, and continuing Han migration into Tibet are all weakening the social and economic position of Tibet's indigenous population. Lacking the skills to compete with Han laborers, ethnic Tibetans are not participating in the region's economic boom. In fact, rapid economic growth, the expanding tourism industry, and the introduction of more modern cultural influences also have disrupted traditional living patterns and customs, causing environmental problems and threatening traditional Tibetan culture.

Because of the deterioration of the Chinese Government's human rights record the U.S. Government introduced a resolution focusing international attention on China's human rights record at this year's session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) in Geneva in March. Unfortunately, the Chinese countered with a no-action motion which effectively blocked discussion of the resolution and a vote. We succeeded, however, in focusing international attention on China's human rights practices.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

In addition to addressing the human rights situation in China through multilateral fora, the President and Secretary Albright have continued to urge the Chinese leadership to enter into a substantive dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives. President Jiang Zemin said at our June 1998 summit in Beijing that the door to dialogue and negotiation is open as long as the Dalai Lama publicly affirms that Tibet is an inalienable part of China and that Taiwan is a province of China. Despite our repeated efforts to foster such dialogue and the willingness expressed by the Dalai Lama, the Chinese leadership has not yet followed up on Jiang's public remarks. Nevertheless, the Administration remains committed to implementing an approach to human rights that combines rigorous external focus on abuses while simultaneously working to promote positive trends within China. In the case of Tibet, President Clinton, Secretary Albright and all senior Administration officials have repeatedly urged the Chinese to engage with the Dalai Lama to resolve Tibet issues. I am convinced that this principled, purposeful engagement is the best means we have to produce results over the long-term.

We have also continued to raise individual cases of concern. Most notable is the issue of the welfare and whereabouts of Gendhun Cheokyl Nyima the boy recognized by the Dalai Lama as the Panchen Lama and his parents, who have been held incommunicado now for 5 years. When we received disturbing, unconfirmed reports the boy had died in Gansu province and was cremated in secrecy, our Embassy made formal representations expressing concern about his whereabouts and welfare. Although the reports of his death were unsubstantiated and thought to be untrue by the Tibetan exile community, the Administration publicly urged the Chinese Government to address continuing concerns of the international community about the safety and well-being of the child by allowing the boy and his family to receive international visitors, and to return home freely. The Chinese government has continued to refuse to allow direct confirmation of his well-being.

In response to an inquiry from the Congress, the Chinese Government acknowledged the whereabouts and earlier ill-health of Ngawang Choephel, the Tibetan ethnomusicologist and former Middlebury College Fulbright Scholar who was incarcerated in 1996 and is now serving an 18-year sentence on charges of espionage. Throughout the year, we have continued to raise Ngawang's case and have urged China to release Ngawang on medical grounds as a humanitarian gesture. We are aware of strong interest in this case in the Congress. We appreciate the support and cooperation we have received in advancing this case.

WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING OVER THE LAST YEAR?

Over the past year I have made it a point to learn all that I can about Tibetan issues so that I am able to ensure the effective presentation of these issues in our U.S.-China bilateral discussions. I have maintained close contact with the Dalai Lama's Special Envoy to Washington, Lodi Gyari. Throughout the year, I requested meetings with the Chinese Ambassador, however, such meetings have not been granted. I will persevere this year in my efforts to discuss with the Ambassador the Chinese government's views on social, political, and economic issues related to Tibet, as well as explore ways we can help get the dialogue back on track.

I've met with scores of people from like-minded countries, government officials, people from foundations and academia, experts in U.S.-China relations and NGO officials. Each meeting has produced ideas on how to improve the situation inside Tibet, as well as substantive thoughts about how to restart dialogue. Despite the fact that I am the only Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues world wide, my appointment has prompted other nations to identify counterparts to discuss this issue. I realize now that there is a wealth of knowledge and talent around the world interested in helping to improve the situation in Tibet. In fact, I recently visited Brussels where the European Parliament held an all-Party Parliamentarian Session on Tibet to discuss multilateral efforts and how we can best coordinate future strategies.

In January I visited Dharmasala, India in my capacity as Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees and Migration. The purpose of my trip was to evaluate and review the \$2 million in assistance programs the United States provides for Tibetan refugees.

After receiving a very warm welcome, I had the opportunity to meet with many members of the Central Tibetan Administration to discuss the grant. I was overwhelmed by the tremendous sense of good will and community, especially among the younger generation despite the fact that this generation has never even seen Tibet. I learned on my visit that nearly the entire Central Tibetan Administration is made up of Fulbright Scholars. These bright, young adults undoubtedly had much more lucrative opportunities in the United States, Europe or India, yet a remarkable 96%

have returned to Tibetan settlements to make their talents available to the Central Tibetan Administration. Equally impressive is how traditional Tibetan culture is integrated into nearly every facet of daily life.

However, having just been to Nepal in October where I met with new arrivals who were traumatized and had endured great hardship while crossing the Himalayas, I was anxious to visit the transit center in Dharmasala where all new arrivals spend some time before being placed in settlements throughout India. During my visit the center was crowded with refugees. The new arrivals were quiet, but far more animated than the refugees I had seen in Kathmandu just three months earlier. The rooms were crowded, but clean and orderly. Many were wearing the new shoes and dark pants they received after arriving at the Kathmandu reception center. Attached to the transit center was a small, three-room medical clinic for routine medical care.

The USG grant makes a very positive impact on the lives of these refugees by providing support for the reception centers, preventive health care, basic food, clothing, clean water and income-generating projects.

Additionally, I met with the Dalai Lama twice over the past year and I look forward to seeing him either later this month or in early July when he is here for the Smithsonian Folk Life Festival. On a personal note, I would like to express how pleased I am that the Smithsonian has decided to highlight Tibetan Culture at this year's festival. It's through programs like these that people learn to appreciate different cultures and how important it is to preserve endangered cultures such as Tibet's.

During the two meetings I have had with Dalai Lama, he has reiterated his concern about the marginalization of the Tibetan people living in Tibet and requested that I devote some attention to finding ways to improve the lives of those still in Tibet through culturally sustainable enterprises. As I began to narrow down options on ways to be helpful, Congress appropriated \$1 million to support activities which preserve cultural traditions and promote sustainable development and environmental conservation in Tibet. The responsibility of the earmark was assigned to the Bureau of East Asia and Pacific Affairs and my office will have an important role in managing the money and monitoring the performance of these new programs over the course of the next two years.

CONCLUSION

The treatment of Tibetans by the Chinese government over the past 50 years has been inconsistent with international standards of respect for fundamental human rights. The Dalai Lama has shown enormous courage in his call for "genuine autonomy" within Chinese sovereignty. There is considerable common ground between the Dalai Lama and Chinese leaders. We urge the authorities in Beijing once again to establish a dialogue with the Dalai Lama. There are significant Chinese interests that could be advanced in moving forward on Tibetan autonomy. The Dalai Lama is still active and healthy; his prestige will be crucial in carrying the opinion of the Diaspora and most Tibetans in the autonomous regions. We believe the political will exists to achieve the successful implementation of a negotiated settlement.

Widespread knowledge of China's human rights offenses in Tibet has brought about pressure on China's leadership to explain its Tibet policy to the international community. My impression is that the situation in Tibet deeply troubles China's international partners and foreign leaders and that this is affecting China's diplomatic engagement in Western countries.

Chinese leaders may find that a more enlightened policy toward Tibet would be an important step toward enhancing the respect they have earned from the economic transformation of their country. It is my sincere hope that parties will resume dialogue that looked so promising in 1998. Preservation of Tibet's unique cultural and religious traditions depends on it.

In closing, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify today. I look forward to working with you another year on this extremely important issue.

Senator THOMAS. Very good. Thank you.

Let me go back to what I mentioned. Let us just say that you could cause to happen what you would like to have happen. What would that be? How would you transform the situation into what? What is it you would like to see accomplished?

Ms. TAFT. Well, I appreciate your asking it of me, but my answer—and I do not mean to be oblique—has to be not what I be-

lieve should be the future of the Tibetans, but what the Tibetans believe is their future. And to do that, we have got to find a way to consult with them, to have them consult with the Chinese authorities so they can design their own future.

You know there was a very interesting thing that happened at the human rights meeting in Geneva. We had a roundtable where a number of Tibetan leaders and Chinese exiled leaders and Richard Gere were making presentations to a large, large NGO audience. We were talking about the human rights dialogs, and one of the countries got up and said, well, we are very frustrated. Our human rights dialog is not going forward with China, and we do not want the Chinese to be upset with us because we want this dialog to go forward. A couple of other countries said the same thing. One of the Chinese exiled leaders said, this is all very encouraging that you want to have your human rights dialogs go forward, but the real dialog China needs to have is the dialog with the Chinese people. So, I would just say that we have got to find ways to get to the table the Chinese and the Tibetans.

To specifically address where it will all lead, it seems to me that the Tibetans have been disempowered. They are not decision-makers in their own region. Their education is frustrated and inadequate for them. So, we need to encourage through foundation support, through whatever development assistance can go into the region, to make sure that the young people have vocational education and their own linguistic training so that they can thrive.

We have got to help get economic development in the hands of the Tibetans. There is money going into Tibet but it is going in for Han employees and Han enterprises. It is not going to really help the Tibetans. We have got to see if we can change that dynamic.

With regard to the politics, His Holiness has very clearly expressed his idea about community decisionmaking and Tibetan decisionmaking, and I would like to submit for you his idea of how he would see the transition taking effect. I think his words are obviously much better than mine.

The bottom line is that the U.S. Government believes Tibet is part of China, and so we do not view any separatist future there. But it has to be a future where the people of Tibet are able to come up with their own autonomy, their own control of their social and cultural and linguistic well-being. That can only be done if we get the major parties talking.

Senator THOMAS. Well, I understand. I guess I am a little impatient. I am not a diplomat. But it seems like if the main issue is dialog, that we at least hope we know where the dialog is going. Is this going to be an independent state? You say probably not. It is going to be a part of China. Fine. Let us identify that. Is it going to be like Hong Kong? Is it going to be one country, two systems? As much dialog as you have had apparently with Tibetans, it seems to me like there is not a very clear notion. We talk about these generalities. We want human rights. We want economy. How do you do that? It just seems there ought to be a little clearer articulated position of where we want to go to cause those things to happen.

Ms. TAFT. Yes, sir, I understand that. There are statements that clarify where the Tibetans in exile, led by the Dalai Lama, would

like those conditions to be. The United States has never purported to be the negotiator.

Senator THOMAS. I am not suggesting that we tell them what to do, but we ought to be able to identify so we know. For instance, it seems to me that most of the things that you have done, that you listed, are things that are assistance to refugees and so on. I understand that and that is fine and that is a good thing to do. But that does not necessarily move you toward a resolution. All that does is help the people that are displaced.

Ms. TAFT. Yes, sir, but from a political standpoint, President Clinton and Secretary Albright and every senior official that ever talks to any of the Chinese keep on message pressing the Chinese to talk with the Tibetans.

Senator THOMAS. So, that is our position to talk.

Ms. TAFT. Well, our position is at least try to talk.

Senator THOMAS. I understand.

Ms. TAFT. I have not even talked with the Chinese. They will not even talk with me because they say that this is an internal matter within China. The presentations of our administration have gone forward to say this is important for China to be able to have this dialog.

If you have other suggestions, we are willing to try to do anything, but we cannot force the Chinese to a table that they do not want to set up.

Senator THOMAS. I understand. However, you have said in here somewhere that Jiang Zemin said if they agreed to be part of China, that they would have—do the Tibetans agree to that?

Ms. TAFT. The Dalai Lama has publicly said that.

Senator THOMAS. So, that is generally accepted by the Tibetans.

Ms. TAFT. Yes, but it is not believed by the Chinese. Our sense is if they would sit down together, that the Chinese would be much more understanding of what a Tibetan system would look like. You mentioned the two-China system. There is a different system for Macau. There is a different system for Hong Kong. There can be a different system for Tibet. We do have ideas and a whole booklet of different types of autonomy arrangements around the world that they could choose from or adapt. But we cannot get any agreement from the Chinese to even initiate discussions with us or with the Tibetans.

Senator THOMAS. How do you see the human rights? And, of course, the religious freedom abuses probably are more unique. Do they differ in Tibet from other parts of China?

Ms. TAFT. I think they differ in that there are fewer Tibetans and Tibetan Buddhists than there are other religious sects within China. The focus of the intimidation is mostly on the monasteries and the monks and the nuns that they are not allowing photographs of the Dalai Lama. They are penalizing people who try to worship according to their traditional beliefs. The Chinese have asserted themselves in this interesting religious dimension of reincarnation. Chinese atheists are determining who are reincarnated Buddhists. That is pretty dramatic. And we have documented a number of serious infractions and beatings.

Senator THOMAS. Do you think they treat the Buddhists differently than the Falun Gong, for example?

Ms. TAFT. Probably not. Both bad.

Senator THOMAS. You mentioned 2,900 Tibetan refugees. How many Tibetans are there?

Ms. TAFT. Well, it depends on how broad a geographic swath you have, but about 6 million.

Senator THOMAS. Six million?

Ms. TAFT. Yes, sir. There are about 100,000 that are in India and India has provided very congenial asylum and tolerance for them throughout the years.

Senator THOMAS. So, the Dalai Lama does agree that Tibet is an inalienable part of China.

Ms. TAFT. He has agreed it is part of China. He would like it to be a self-governing, autonomous region of China.

Senator THOMAS. What are your immediate goals in terms of your being the person working with Tibet?

Ms. TAFT. Well, one of them is to try to find really reliable focal points in other countries that care about Tibet. When I was in Brussels at the inter-parliamentarian meeting, all the Europeans were so pleased to know that the United States had a Special Coordinator for Tibet, and I had to tell them I was really quite lonely because I did not have many people to talk to on a reliable basis in Europe. They passed a resolution to encourage each of the parliaments to establish a focal point, and they are doing that.

So, one of the hopes that I have is that we can have a meeting of focal points and discuss what are the best initiatives we can collectively do particularly with our European partners to push together with the Chinese on having this dialog be coupled with something else, whether it is human rights or an economic initiative or whatever. We have got to get all of us to say the same thing to the Chinese about the importance of a dialog. So, I am hoping that will happen.

The second thing is we still have several more months in this administration, and there are other opportunities for us to again press the Chinese on the dialog. Right now the Deputy Assistant Secretary in charge of China is meeting with her Chinese counterparts again to push this. We hope that there will be some breakthrough. When the Dalai Lama is here for his July session, we are hoping he will have senior level meetings and can share with us again his suggestions on how we can push even harder.

Senator THOMAS. When was the Special Coordinator created, this position?

Ms. TAFT. It was created in 1997, and Greg Craig, who was my predecessor, was designated for the first 10 months, and then I have had it for 18 months.

Senator THOMAS. Now, in both cases, you have each had other responsibilities.

Ms. TAFT. Yes, sir.

Senator THOMAS. So, how much of your time is dedicated to this issue?

Ms. TAFT. Depending on what else is happening in the world, I would say I spend 2 hours a day on this issue.

Senator THOMAS. So, it is a relatively small percentage of your time.

Ms. TAFT. Well, I am in charge of refugee issues and humanitarian issues at the State Department as well. So, I have a lot of—

Senator THOMAS. I understand. The point is how much—

Ms. TAFT [continuing]. Other jobs, but I have a full-time assistant. I have the assistance of the people within the State Department who help us and our Economic Bureau as well as in the EAP region. We have in Chungdu—we get very active participation and monitoring from the Consul General there. We work actively with our embassy in India and in Nepal on these issues. I am kind of an orchestra director, but there are lots of players out there who are engaged in this. We try to track all the talking points, all the visits that are forthcoming. We were heavily engaged in the China resolution. In fact, because these issues are so closely related to my other portfolio, I do not split hairs on it. I hope I feel like I have given it all I can.

Senator THOMAS. Would it be fair to say then in the last 3 years or so, 4 years, probably the most imperative task for this has been to promote the dialog, but we have not seen much progress. Is that fair?

Ms. TAFT. That is correct. Yes, sir.

Senator THOMAS. All right. Well, a tough job.

Ms. TAFT. Thank you for your attention and help.

Senator THOMAS. Just hold on a second. I think Senator Kerry is out here. He may wish to ask you a question. If he does not, we will got on to the next panel.

Ms. TAFT. If I can just say one—

Senator THOMAS. Let me say I do not mean that to be disparaging, but I think we have to take a look at whether what we are doing is making progress. If it is not, then—I guess I have gotten this feeling a lot lately about all of government. If we keep doing the same thing and we are not progressing, then we ought to really take a look at doing something else.

Ms. TAFT. Well, may I tell you, sir, if you have any ideas, please help. I mean it. The Chinese will not talk to me, but they do talk to our other interlocutors. I think now we have passed over these sensitive anniversaries of last year, which were really very tough, and the bombing of the embassy, which now is behind us. Now with PNTR and the progress on WTO, I think the time is right, and I also believe that their change in attitude about something that we have pressed on, which is the visit of Sonam Dekyi to her son, is because we all stayed on message and we all kept pushing it. So, it seems to me just your having this hearing is a wonderful signal to the Chinese that there is a constituency out there. And we are trying, but we cannot force them to come to a table they do not want to come to.

Senator THOMAS. No, it is true. On the other hand, it would seem, again from an outsider's point of view, that since they know and we know that one of your principal tasks in this job is to bring on the dialog, then they may resist that, but that does not keep our Ambassador to China from talking about it. It does not keep our President from talking about it. It does not keep other people from doing it even though you may find some resistance because they recognize your task.

Ms. TAFT. Oh, but everybody does. I talk with Ambassador Preuer all the time. He was just in recently. He carries on an effort to do this, but they have got to hear it not just from us, but from the French and the Norwegians and the Brits and all the rest of them. That is why I want these focal points to make sure we are all pushing in the same direction. But your help would be very welcomed.

Senator THOMAS. Senator Kerry, nice to see you, sir. We are just about through with Ambassador Taft, but wanted you to have a chance to make a statement and questions if you would like.

Senator KERRY. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My apology to you and to the Secretary for not being able to be here throughout. I guess everybody here is familiar with and used to the process around here.

I am pleased you are holding this hearing, Mr. Chairman. It has been a long time since this subcommittee has focused on the question of the situation in Tibet and the status of talks or lack of talks, as the case may be.

Two years ago this month, the President held a rather remarkable public dialog in China with President Jiang Zemin, and it was extraordinary for the comments solicited from President Jiang Zemin about his recognition of the importance of this issue to the American people and, indeed, his preparedness to have a discussion with the Dalai Lama, with His Holiness. That has not happened, and I think a lot of us have a nagging suspicion that other things are more prominent on the radar screen. No progress has been made at all really since that historic meeting. None. Zero.

So, convince me, can you please, Madam Secretary, that this is really front and center, that this is something that is reflective of a legitimate initiative and effort by the administration?

Ms. TAFT. You started off by talking about all of the other things that are on the plate. We have nuclear weapons discussions. We have Taiwan discussions. We have trade discussions. We have human rights discussions. We have Tibet discussions.

Senator THOMAS. Who has the Tibet discussions?

Ms. TAFT. Well, Secretary Albright, Sandy Berger, President Clinton.

Senator KERRY. Did Sandy Berger have Tibet discussions on his most recent trip a few weeks ago?

Ms. TAFT. He did discuss it, yes, sir.

Senator KERRY. And do you know what the outcome of that was?

Ms. TAFT. The Chinese have indicated that it is not time to pursue this. They do not believe it is the time to go forward.

Senator KERRY. Have they been articulate at all about what the timing issues are or what might constitute the right time to proceed forward?

Ms. TAFT. I wish I could answer that question.

Senator KERRY. I mean, it cannot be so painful to talk.

Ms. TAFT. Well, last year we were told it was not the right time because of all the sensitive anniversaries. Then we were told it was not the right time because of the bombing. And then it was not the right time because we had lots of other discussions of high import from national security and economic standpoints.

I think that all of these other discussions actually complement what we are trying to do, and let me say that while I am very frustrated—you are looking at a very frustrated person here. My primary task of trying to get the dialog going is not working. But one of the things we have tried to do is include this issue in other issues with other voices. In other words, where there are academics meeting with academics, working with them to say please raise this issue so that it has more resonance there. We have done it with religious visitors. We did it with a staff CODEL that raises these questions. The military-to-military discussions have not yet talked about Tibet, but we are hoping that they will get to it. In other words, the Chinese need to hear from the businessmen, the academics, the diplomats, the military folks.

Senator KERRY. Well, speaking of the businessmen for a minute, I am voting for permanent normal trade status. I think the chairman is too. But this raises the question: Should someone perhaps have said, well, we are not going to proceed forward on that until you enter a dialog? These are the linkages that often people bring up. If you tell me that they keep saying it is not the right time, it is not the right time, it is not the right time, it certainly builds a compelling case for the notion that someone has to help—

Ms. TAFT. Tell them it is the right time.

Senator KERRY [continuing]. Create the moment, so to speak. Now, how do you respond to that?

Ms. TAFT. Well, my sense is that the PNTR debate and discussions also with businessmen have been very important for the Chinese to realize that there are international standards of behavior, international rules, and an international community that they have to live up to certain standards for. Now, that is sure on the trade side. But this is all very important. I think the more familiar they become with the international community's rules of engagement and standards of behavior, in this case vis-a-vis trade, they will then start understanding why we find their attitudes on human rights with Tibetans so objectionable. I think this is a process and I am not thinking it is going to be solved overnight, but I think it is really important.

They were very interested in being able to identify—and we are working with them on identifying—what are the laws that the country of China has to modify so that they can come into an ability to live up to the trade standards. They are working on this, and I think we have got to keep pushing them and say, OK, you work on these but you also have to pay attention to the human rights. Eventually if we are all pushing in that direction, sir, I think we will make some progress.

Senator KERRY. What do you think the tools are that are available to us? If I were just to ask you as sort of an academic exercise, what tools are available to the United States, if you were going to make a list of those things that we can use to leverage behavior legitimately, what do you think they are? If we are not going to have the linkage to PNTR, what are the others?

Ms. TAFT. Well, I think some of the things that you are doing are very important. The Fulbright Scholarship Program is very important. I think the support of VOA and Radio Asia, very important. Trying to increase STAFFDEL's and CODEL's. I would like you to

go to Tibet. I think people who go to China ought to be asking to go to Tibet and ask the kind of questions and look and see whether or not there are so many Han that are going in to Tibet or not. It would be very helpful for you to do that.

I think that the pressure and the visibility on the discussions with PNTR has certainly raised the awareness of the Chinese that human rights is an important issue and they have got to be recognizing it. I do not know whether there is any linkage between that and the willingness of China now to offer a visa for the mother of Ngawang Choephel, but I think there probably is a connection there. I think we all have to keep saying that there are connections even though they say there are not. We need to just keep these on the front burner.

Now, the fact that the Smithsonian is having the Folk Life Festival feature on Tibet is certainly not going to go unnoticed by the Chinese. It shows an attachment and an importance that we have to—

Senator KERRY. What about leverage? Those are sort of signals.

Ms. TAFT. Yes, sir.

Senator KERRY. And those are kinds of messages. Is there any clout anywhere?

Ms. TAFT. I have struggled with this. I do not think there is anything that we can do.

Senator KERRY. What about a multilateral effort? Is there not an international community that supposedly shares these values and standards?

Ms. TAFT. Yes, and I am trying to work with them.

Senator KERRY. What are we doing with them?

Ms. TAFT. Well, we are meeting with our friendly parliamentarians. We tried to introduce the China resolution without much success.

Senator KERRY. Do you think the world is enough aware of what happened to that?

Ms. TAFT. I think they were aware. I do not think there was enough discussion as to why no other country would support us on that resolution. We certainly signaled our indication to table it very early on. It was this past January. We had 3 months. Our Assistant Secretary for Human Rights and our representative to the Human Rights Commission and myself and others worked very hard, and at the end of the day, most of the countries said that they did not believe that, for their own economic interests, that they should support it.

Senator KERRY. But really it did come down to the economic interests.

Ms. TAFT. A lot of it was economic and also their interest in not destabilizing their own human rights dialogs with the Chinese authorities.

Senator KERRY. What is your sense, Madam Secretary, of those dialogs? Do you think that they are real?

Ms. TAFT. Well, at least ours is moribund right now. It has not happened since January 1999. Most of the European ones are just forums for chatting and do not have any teeth. Before you came in, we were talking a little bit about this, that it would be very helpful for all the people who are sponsoring human rights dialogs with

China to get together and talk about the question: Are they effective? What are we trying to achieve? Are we just trying to make ourselves feel good, or are we really presenting an opportunity to press these issues forward with the Chinese? I think that needs to happen. I think all of the human rights sponsors have to get together and sort of share their views and maybe even do a common demarche with the Chinese and say we all want to sit down with you together and have at the table Tibetans and Chinese in exile and other people who represent the human rights community in exile.

Senator KERRY. Well, I appreciate it. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

It is a very vexing and extraordinarily frustrating issue. Obviously I know people care about it, but I have increasingly come to the opinion there is precious little unilaterally in my judgment that a country can do. It is a conclusion I am coming to after years of watching this. There is precious little you can do directly to exert leverage. On the other hand, you can directly leverage through that circuitous route of reaching out to the allies. I think it is the multilateral response that really needs to be stronger and it is sorely lacking. There must be better ways, I think, of trying to do it.

But the other thing that is also necessary is, I think, the administration needs to stay constant in keeping it at a high level of concern and visibility, and I think that in a sense is above your pay grade. It is really the President and the Secretary of State directly. It is very ministerial and very directly principal to principal. Absent that, they just slide by with these excuses—well, the time is not right—and they have a polite conversation with you and the heads nod and they go through these perfunctory meetings, but nothing comes out of it. So, I think it is a question of how high it is on the agenda.

Ms. TAFT. I believe it is quite high on our agenda. I believe it is quite low on the Chinese agenda. That is why your voices are very important. You all have very strong relationships with other Asian leaders as well. You raise this. We raise it. I think they will hear that this is not just an internal matter. It really is not an internal matter in our view, but that is what the Chinese think. It makes my position even more difficult because they say, well, how would you like China to have a special coordinator for Native American affairs? That is how they view the equivalent of me.

So, you are right. We have to have more voices. We have to have high level voices. The administration has tried, and if there are some other multilateral levers we can use, I would be delighted to come and talk with you and your staff and get some ideas on this because we only have a short time left in this administration, and I do not want to have to admit that we have not—

Senator KERRY. Fair enough. Just a last question, a very short answer. Who is the highest level Chinese official you personally have brought this up with?

Ms. TAFT. I have not been granted any audience with any Chinese official, and after many written requests to our Ambassador, many verbal requests from other senior officials, and I have asked for visas to go to China, visas to go to Tibet—

Senator KERRY. So, you have basically been stiffed.

Ms. TAFT. Well, I have but there are a lot of voices—

Senator KERRY. This is your job.

Ms. TAFT. Yes, sir, I know.

Senator KERRY. If they are not paying attention to the person whose job it is, it seems to me that we are not in the ball game.

Ms. TAFT. Well, I hope you do not read into that that it is useless having me there.

Senator KERRY. No, I do not read that into it.

Ms. TAFT. You are right and I am very frustrated by this, but I think it is really useful to have an office in the State Department where you keep prodding, you keep looking at the talking points, you get ideas from people who come in, you keep in touch, you ask the embassy to do things. Even though I have no face-to-face contact, I assure you there are—

Senator KERRY. I understand. I am not suggesting it is and I think you have done wonderful work on the refugee and other issues that are in front of you. I do not suggest that at all, but it underscores the predicament we are in and that is why I asked the question.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Madam Secretary. Appreciate it.

Let us go on to our panel two please: Mr. John Ackerly, president, International Campaign for Tibet; Dr. Elliot Sperling, professor, Department of Central Eurasian Studies, Indiana University; Dr. Elizabeth Napper, co-director, Tibetan Nuns Project. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for being here.

We will include your total statements in the record. If you would like to sort of consolidate them a little, why, try that. We are stretching this a little longer than we had thought. So, in any event, why do we not start with you, Mr. Ackerly.

STATEMENT OF JOHN ACKERLY, PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. ACKERLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for inviting me to testify.

I also want to thank the committee for your support and leadership in addressing the problems in Tibet and specifically for your help in initiating and sustaining important programs such as the Office of Special Coordinator. I think it is important that during the next administration to make sure that there is another powerful person in that office. Also the Voice of America and Radio Free Asia, Tibetan language programs, Fulbright scholarships for Tibetans, and humanitarian assistance to refugees are all programs which have been extremely beneficial and which would not exist but for your efforts.

I also certainly share your frustration and that of Senator Kerry with the lack of progress on negotiations. I want to thank you for raising it so strongly with the Secretary. We believe that this administration has not been strong enough in sending the right signals to Beijing, but in a matter of weeks when the Dalai Lama comes, the White House, as well as the State Department, as well as this Congress, will have an opportunity to make sure that a very loud and clear signal is sent. This will be the best, final opportunity of this administration for this to happen.

I do want to say I believe there is a lot more that they can do. I think there is a lot more Julia Taft herself can do. For example, she could hold her own conference with Tibetan experts and leaders on the issue. During the next administration, a summit. There will be a summit, I imagine, on China and that will be another very important opportunity. So, I think these are some of the things that you may be getting to in looking for more specifics in what we should be doing and looking for.

I want to take a few minutes to talk about the World Bank. This is a very important issue for us now because it is still pending. As you know, the bank approved a project last year to move 58,000 Chinese and Muslims up onto the Tibetan plateau into traditional Tibetan areas. It delayed funding pending an inspection panel investigation. The panel finished that investigation in April and submitted their report to the bank. Yesterday the bank was supposed to issue its response to the inspection panel, but China blocked them and delayed their response for a week presumably because they were not happy with what the bank was going to propose.

However, this project is still approved and no one yet in the bank has had the courage to cancel it. So, we are still very concerned that China and some people in the bank may try to find a way to continue this project in some format.

It is our position the World Bank should have no business resettling Chinese onto the Tibetan plateau. It is difficult to imagine circumstances where the bank would want to fund resettlement of any ethnic majority on the lands of dispossessed and disenfranchised minorities, particularly when resettlement is also a tool of an authoritarian government to dilute or quell political unrest by that minority. The bank tried to do this in Brazil and Indonesia, and it was a resounding failure. Secretary Summers has been quite good on this. He said on April 17, "Cases such as the Western China Poverty Reduction Project serve only to erode the credibility and endanger public skepticism."

I do want to thank Members of the Senate and the House for being very supportive of trying to cancel this project. We still need your help because, as I mentioned, it is still an approved project. Specifically I would like to ask help from this committee and other legislatures and institutions to demand that the World Bank release the inspection panel report. The report is confidential still, but we believe that it is vital for the stakeholders to have a right to know what is in that report before the bank decides on their fate, not afterwards. When we see this report, I think we will see a detailed story of mismanagement, duplicity, and broken promises.

Transparency should mean that information decisionmakers are using to affect people's lives is shared with those people, not deliberately and intentionally kept from them. During the weeks leading up to the decision about whether 58,000 people will move onto Tibetan lands, the bank is keeping those people and the Tibetans in the dark.

One of the main reasons we need to get this report is to share it with the Voice of America and Radio Free Asia, who are both here covering this today, so that they can broadcast it into the region to let affected people know what is in this report and how the bank is going to use it.

This project has also brought to light much more far-reaching problems with bank-funded resettlement projects in China, and one outcome should be more aggressive scrutiny of these projects.

Another group, Human Rights in China, has initiated a groundbreaking study which undermines the myth that the bank has also been promoting, that China should serve as a role model for countries involved in resettling populations. I would urge this committee to look into these problems in the future.

In the area of human rights in Tibet, the conditions remain extremely grim. I will not go into too much detail. You have heard from Ms. Taft and you will hear more from Dr. Sperling and Betsy Napper. Of course, we remain extremely concerned with the Panchen Lama, who now is serving his fifth year under detention. He is only 11 years old.

Ngawang Choephel, who is familiar to many of you primarily because he has been championed by Senator Leahy and Senator Jeffords of Vermont and by this committee which passed a resolution calling for his release. As Julia Taft mentioned, there is some movement. China has agreed to give his mother a visa to come and we hope that China, working with the U.S. Government, will facilitate that trip smoothly. She is very elderly. She cannot make this trip alone. She needs help and we want to ensure that she has a good meeting with her son. Of course, we want to see him free.

I also want to touch on the issue of the United Nations Human Rights Commission and thank this committee for leadership in urging the U.S. administration to sponsor resolutions against China in the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva. Now, even though these resolutions have not passed, I want to say how important I think they are and how important I think it is for the United States to continue sponsoring them. They give the Chinese and Tibetans, whose rights have been abused, a voice in the international community where they otherwise would have none. They force the Chinese Government to defend itself in front of the international community and they serve as a strong reminder that these grave and systematic abuses occurring there will not be overlooked and the victims not forgotten.

Now, this year, the United States sponsored the resolution, and as Ms. Taft said, they did so quite early. And we applaud the administration for this initiative. However, the United States needs to put its weight behind the resolutions. We feel this year the White House did not do that. They need to do so to avoid any appearance that these resolutions are being used to appease domestic constituencies, including to appease yourself and members of this committee.

I think it is also important for the administration and members of this committee to take the extra step and work more closely with your colleagues in Europe and elsewhere. One reason the resolution did not pass this year is because the European Union would not cosponsor it, which points to the need for greater consensus building prior to introducing the resolution.

I have traveled to Tibet six times in the last 12 years to monitor conditions. It is clear Tibet is under occupation now. This does not mean there are tanks or troops in the streets every day, although this is not uncommon, but the military presence in Tibet is stag-

gering if you take time to look around the outskirts of Lhasa, where compound after compound are military facilities. Military presence serves both to intimidate the local Tibetan population and to make the Chinese settler population feel more secure.

Now, in a few weeks, the Dalai Lama, as I mentioned, will be here. I hope you will have an opportunity to have a dialog with him.

I want to say in response to your earlier question about what specific vision we have for the future by mentioning that there is a very specific transition plan which has been put forward by the Dalai Lama to facilitate a transition between the current situation and a democratic government. He lays forth a plan which relies on Tibetans who are living in Tibet and have remained in Tibet, and it dissolves the Tibetan Government in exile. It is not a plan to transplant a government in exile back in Tibet, but it is a plan to rely on Tibetans who have remained there. Many patriotic Tibetans, although they are serving in the Chinese puppet regime there, are very able and very patriotic, and the Dalai Lama is looking toward them to constitute a new government.

In closing, I would urge the committee to be vigilant in efforts to support those Tibetans and Chinese who are demanding greater respect for human rights and keep the spotlight on people, on both the tortured and the torturers.

Last, your vigilance is also badly needed to help keep the pressure on the World Bank which is still capable of making colossal mistakes by undermining the legitimate rights of persecuted minority peoples.

One additional point. I do want to mention that there is a huge project which is about to be undertaken in Tibet, probably the largest construction project in the history of Tibet, and that is the first large-scale gas pipeline which is planned to be built across the northern plateau. This will take Tibet's resources to China with virtually no benefits accruing to the Tibetans themselves. The construction is being done by PetroChina, but they have a very large foreign investor, and that is BP Amoco. I want to assure this committee that the International Campaign for Tibet is very supportive of development in Tibet. Development is badly needed. As was mentioned earlier, Tibet is the poorest part of China, but what we are seeing is not development to benefit primarily Tibetans, but development that benefits the Chinese settler population and which takes resources out of Tibet to China.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ackerly follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN ACKERLY

Mr. Chairman, thank you for inviting me to testify. Most of all, I want to thank this Committee for your support and leadership in addressing problems in Tibet. As a result, the Congress and the American people have gained a better understanding of the impact of China's occupation of Tibet and the Dalai Lama's efforts to halt the persecution of his people and find a peaceful resolution to the issue.

More specifically, you have helped to initiate and sustain important programs for Tibetans which, I am happy to report, are having a very positive, direct and tangible impact on the lives of Tibetans. These include:

- The Office of the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues at the Department of State,
- The Voice of America and Radio Free Asia Tibetan language programs,

- Fulbright scholarships for Tibetans, and
- Humanitarian assistance to Tibetan refugees.

The most immediate issue for us today at the International Campaign for Tibet is the World Bank's proposal to resettle 58,000 Chinese and Muslim farmers onto the Tibetan plateau. The Bank approved the project on June 24, 1999, but delayed funding for a review by the independent Inspection Panel, which was completed and submitted on April 28, 2000. Just yesterday, Bank management was supposed to issue its response to the Inspection Panel report to the Board of Executive Directors. China requested, and was granted, a week delay before the Bank issued its recommendations as to whether this project should proceed or not.

It is our position that the World Bank should not fund the resettlement of Chinese into Tibetan areas under any circumstances. It is difficult for me to imagine circumstances where the Bank would ever want to fund resettlement of ethnic majorities onto the lands of dispossessed and disenfranchised ethnic minorities, particularly when resettlement is also a tool of an authoritarian government to dilute or quell political unrest by a minority population. When the Bank tried to do this in Brazil and Indonesia, it was a resounding social, economic and political failure. The World Bank has no business funding such schemes in the tropics, the Himalayas or anywhere else. Moreover, as Secretary Summers said on April 17 of this year, "cases such as . . . the Western China Poverty Reduction Project, serve only to erode credibility and engender public skepticism. And they shortchange development effectiveness."

The United States has been on the right side of the Tibet resettlement project, as has Germany and many other countries also have serious problems with this project. I know that foremost among leaders in this government opposed to the project are Members of the Senate and the House and I want to express my deep appreciation for all of your efforts.

We still very much need your help because this project is still formally approved by the Bank. Specifically, I urge this Committee, and other legislatures and institutions, to demand that the World Bank release the Inspection Panel report because the stakeholders have a right to know what is in that report before the Bank decides on their fate, not after.

While we understand that the Inspection Panel report is harshly critical of the Bank's handling of this project, stakeholders deserve the report regardless of the nature of its content, in a timely manner. When we do see this report, I think we will see a detailed story of mismanagement, duplicity and broken promises.

The alleged purpose of the Bank's strategy of delaying any funding was to provide a more full and factual discussion of the contested issues. President Wolfesohn himself said in the press release announcing the decision that "the fact that this component of the project will not start, nor will any monies be drawn for it until the results are known, should allow critics and supporters alike the space and time for full and open consideration of all issues." The government of China added: "we are in favor of transparency. Transparency brings to light facts and scorches rumors."

But it turns out that the Bank and China define the word transparency differently from you and I. Transparency should mean that information decision-makers are using to affect people's lives is shared with those people, not deliberately and intentionally kept from them. During these weeks leading up to the decision about whether 58,000 people are moved onto Tibetan lands, the Bank is keeping those people and the Tibetans in the dark. One of the main reasons we need the report is to get it to VOA and RFA to be broadcast in Tibetan, Chinese and Uyghur languages so that people in the affected areas can know what is in the Inspection Panel report before the Bank takes final action on that report.

This project has brought to light much more far-reaching problems with Bank funded resettlement projects in China and one outcome of this should be more aggressive scrutiny of other projects. I am very happy that one group, Human Rights in China, has initiated this and done a ground-breaking study which undermines the myth that the Bank has been promoting that China should serve as a role model for countries involved in resettlement. The report concludes that "the World Bank effectively waives its own guidelines in its work on resettlement in China, while ignoring evidence contradicting the favored image of China as resettlement paragon." I would urge this Committee to look further into these problems in the future and to take appropriate action.

In the area of human rights, conditions in Tibet remain extremely grim. One of the most blatant examples is the detention of a 11-year-old boy who has been kept incommunicado for 5 years now—since he was 6 years old. He is being kept in detention because he is widely revered as a future religious leader of Tibet, having been recognized by the Dalai Lama in the traditional manner as the next Panchen

Lama. Also of particular concern is Ngawang Choephel, a young man familiar to many Senators because his case has been championed by Senator Leahy and Senator Jeffords of Vermont delegation and the Committee on Foreign Relations which passed a resolution calling for his release. Ngawang was on a Fulbright scholarship in ethnomusicology at Middlebury College in Vermont and returned to Tibet to film traditional song and dance. He is now serving the fifth year of an 18 year sentence in Tibet and has been having serious health problems.

Systematic human rights abuses are also pervasive in monasteries and nunneries where the government places strict limits and controls over many activities, and outlaws others altogether. These controls drive some aspects of Buddhism underground, and they deepen Tibetan animosity towards their Chinese overseers. This phenomenon is described in more detail by Betsy Napper in her testimony today about nuns, and in an excellent new book, "Tibet Since 1950: Silence, Prison, or Exile" by Human Rights Watch and Aperture. While this is a stunning book of photographs, the text illustrates the extent of China's repression and the ongoing violation of basic human rights in Tibet, through arbitrary arrest, torture, unfair trials, the secular takeover of religion, and the absence of freedom of association, expression, and assembly.

I want to thank this Committee for its leadership in urging the U.S. Administration to sponsor resolutions against China at the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva. And, I want to urge the Committee to continue their support of these resolutions on China as long as human rights conditions in China and Tibet do not improve. As you well know, the resolution did not pass this year, and it has not passed in previous years. However they still serve extremely important functions and are very beneficial. They give Chinese and Tibetans whose rights have been horribly abused a voice in the international community where they otherwise would have none. They force the Chinese government to defend itself in front of the international community. And, they serve as a strong international reminder that these grave and systematic abuses will not be overlooked and the victims not forgotten.

This year the U.S. sponsored the resolution and we applaud the Administration for this initiative. However, the U.S. needs to put its weight behind the resolutions to avoid any appearance that it is using the resolutions to appease domestic constituencies. It could also be important for this Committee to take the extra step and work even more closely with your colleagues in Europe and elsewhere. One reason the U.S. resolution did not pass is because the European Union would not co-sponsor it, which points to the need for greater consensus building prior to introducing a resolution.

Scrutiny of rights abuses has also been an important part of the annual review of Normal Trade Relations with China. The International Campaign for Tibet supports the annual review of NTR as long as China remains a totalitarian state. Maintaining the status quo does not affect tariff rates and is not a barrier to China joining the World Trade Organization. There was some confusion about the Dalai Lama's position on these matters but he has a clear record of supporting China's inclusion in multilateral rules-based organizations such as the WTO, but the Dalai Lama has not taken a position on legislative issues such as PNTR.

I have traveled to Tibet six times in the last 12 years to monitor conditions there. It is clear to most politically-savvy visitors that Tibet is under occupation by its neighbor, China. This does not mean there are tanks and troops in the streets every day, although this is not uncommon. But the military presence in Tibet is staggering if you take time to look around the outskirts of Lhasa where compound after compound are military facilities and infrastructure dominating the landscape. This presence serves to both intimidate the local Tibetan population and make the Chinese settler population feel secure.

Today there are not as many street demonstrations by Tibetans demanding independence. This has been achieved by intimidation campaigns, surveillance systems, undercover police and brutal reprisals for those who confront the system. In these respects, Tibet is a far more repressive place today than nearly all parts of China, with the possible exception of areas in Xinjiang.

In a few weeks the Dalai Lama will be in Washington and I hope that you will have an opportunity to have a dialogue with him and hear his proposals for improving conditions in Tibet and initiating negotiations with China. I also hope that you can do the same with representatives of the Chinese government. Because of our enormous trade relationship and other ties with China, we have an even greater responsibility to ensure that we do not further entrench the occupation of Tibet, but rather help to alleviate it.

I believe that we will soon look back at the brutal occupation of Tibet just as we look back at apartheid in South Africa and Communism in Eastern Europe. Those

systems became cultures of arrogance, fear of change and intolerance. Cultures like that cannot last forever. This country should have the integrity to admit that some of the effects of our policies serve to prop up and enrich this culture which is embedded in the Communist leadership, while at the same time, other effects serve to undermine it. Sometimes it is difficult to untangle those effects, particularly the effects of our trade relationship, which I believe are contradictory.

In closing, I would urge this Committee to be vigilant in efforts to support those who are demanding greater respect for human rights and to keep the spotlight on people—on the tortured and the torturers. Lastly, your vigilance is also badly needed to keep the pressure on the World Bank, which is still capable of making colossal mistakes by undermining the legitimate rights of persecuted minority peoples.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you.

Dr. Sperling.

STATEMENT OF DR. ELLIOT SPERLING, PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL EURASIAN STUDIES, INDIANA UNIVERSITY, BLOOMINGTON, IN

Dr. SPERLING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am grateful to you for giving me this opportunity to appear before you. I am essentially an academic working as a specialist in Tibetan studies. I am in the Department of Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana University where I teach. I have also been for some time a consultant to Human Rights Watch. It is in that capacity, as a consultant to Human Rights Watch, that I address the committee this morning.

Gross violations of human rights in Tibet remain a continuing fixture of the situation there in spite of the efforts of various concerned governments and NGO's—and by the way, among those governments is the United States Government—to focus attention on the issue. It is, thus, crucial that measures for putting effective pressure on China to adhere to accepted international human rights norms be a key component of U.S. policy toward China and, where appropriate, be built into legislation governing U.S. relations with China.

Human Rights Watch has a number of concerns that cover ongoing human rights violations in Tibet. One of our concerns is the continued implementation of Chinese policies aimed at subordinating religious practices and sentiments to serve the political needs of the state that impinge upon the freedom of many Tibetans to peacefully practice or even express certain vital aspects of their religious beliefs. These policies are implemented through the use of coercion, violent repression, and imprisonment.

Particularly prominent in this regard has been the campaign of patriotic education and an increasingly heavy-handed turn toward putting certain monasteries and temples under secular management. This is closely tied to the well-known case of Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, the child who was recognized as the Panchen Lama by the Dalai Lama. This case has been alluded to already this morning. I will not go into it, but it is a very major concern of Human Rights Watch.

In addition to that, we are also concerned about the continued abuse of prisoners in Tibet and the use of torture against them. Torture, in fact, we believe has become entrenched in Tibet as part of the price for political activism.

As I have said, the case of the Panchen Lama has been brought up. There is no need to go into it in detail, but I would like to point

out that he and his family continue to be kept in effective isolation from the outside world, and human rights monitors have not been able to independently verify their condition. The list of those who have tried to visit him in the 5 years since he was spirited away, includes Mary Robinson, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights; Harold Koh, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; and just this past month, Raymond Chan, the Canadian Secretary of State for Asia and the Pacific. In all cases, the requests were rebuffed; China continues to state simply that the child is in good health but will not allow any independent verification of that statement.

In addition, we have also noted that the state has assumed a visible presence in certifying certain incarnations and in harshly suppressing dissenting voices in the matter.

Most recently, of course, we have seen the management of the recognition of Reting Rinpoche, another important Lama within the Dalai Lama's sect. By all appearances, this is part of a continuing effort to control such searches in order to ultimately stage manage the discovery and enthronement of the next Dalai Lama.

Human Rights Watch is concerned about the gross infringement on the freedom of conscience that this constitutes; all the more so because China has arrested people who have peacefully opposed this process. In connection with the question of the recognition of the Panchen Lama, there has been, of course, a campaign of patriotic education which has inflicted a harsh regimen of political tests in order to root out any allegiance to the Dalai Lama in Tibetan monasteries. In places this has resulted in the expulsion of monks and nuns from their cloisters and the imprisonment and torture of some who refuse to accept state control over what they perceive as vital aspects of their religious lives and beliefs.

There has not been a uniform application of this campaign, and in some places it appears to be winding down. But it is speculated—and there are good grounds for speculating—that this is because the authorities perceive that it has achieved success in certain areas, success that is in subordinating the Tibetan clergy to the political control of the state. But the effects of this campaign remain. Clergy have been required to demonstrate their rejection of the Dalai Lama and of the child recognized by him as the Panchen Lama, Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, as well as their acceptance of Tibet's status as an inalienable part of China. There have been sharp clashes between monks and the authorities over this campaign with resulting expulsions and arrests.

Recent and unusually harsh Chinese denunciations of the Dalai Lama and his followers may be the prelude to a renewed and intensified campaign of attacks on him. We do not know.

In addition, Human Rights Watch is also concerned about the fact that arrests and imprisonment in Tibet are frequently carried out as a result of peaceful dissident activity, that is, in violation of accepted human rights norms. There are serious abuses following detention. Human Rights Watch is particularly concerned about the fact that incidents of severe beatings at the time of arrest and torture during incarceration have been reported with sufficient frequency and from a number of credible sources as to put the issue beyond doubt. In a number of instances, we have political

prisoners in Tibet who are reported as having died in custody and then in many instances the official report is that they committed suicide.

When there have been protests—and there have been several instances that we know of—these protests have been followed by, in many cases, beatings. There have been cases of death following these protests and extension of sentences for the peaceful, non-violent expression of dissident opinion. There are a number of incidents of this which we have come across. Just last week, it was reported that nine Tibetans in Kandze, an important town in the eastern reaches of the Tibetan plateau, had their 5-year sentences, which were meted out for participation in a peaceful protest last October, doubled to 10 years.

We note too that several cases have been raised by the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention concerning the imprisonment of a number of Tibetans. China has refused to explain or justify to the working group its actions in these cases. So, in this regard too, we must express our concern at the detention late last month of 50 students who had left Tibet to obtain educations in India and who were arrested, upon returning to Tibet via Nepal. It is important that steps be taken to see that the Chinese Government respects their rights and, if there are no legitimate grounds for detention, that it releases them immediately.

I am going to be brief here. Let me express to you what the recommendations of Human Rights Watch are with regard to the situation.

First of all, time and again since 1989, the U.S. Government has voiced its intention to hold China to account for its abysmal failings in safeguarding some of the most basic human rights of its citizens. The President and other senior administration officials have raised the issue of human rights violations in Tibet with President Jiang Zemin and other senior Chinese officials during summit meetings and other official gatherings. This has been useful.

In fact, if I may depart from my statement to say something on a personal note, for many years, prior to the President's visit in 1998, we were often told that one cannot mention human rights in public with Chinese officials because it involves the loss of face. One does not do that publicly. One has to discuss this very quietly in the background as a background topic otherwise there can be no progress.

One of the most gratifying things about that visit in 1998 is that the President did raise the issue of human rights publicly, very publicly, and since that time, I would say happily, people have stopped talking about this rather arcane, orientalist notion that somehow you cannot discuss these things in public with the Chinese Government. You can talk about them in public. They ought to be talked about in public.

But the other part of it, of course, is that in spite of all of the efforts at dialog, as Ambassador Taft has noted, there has not been meaningful positive change. In fact, human rights conditions in China have noticeably deteriorated in the past year or more, something attested to in the State Department's annual reports. But China is clearly sensitive to its international image and standing.

This is why it has vigorously resisted any debate on its human rights record at the annual meeting of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in Geneva.

Human Rights Watch recommends that if Congress chooses to end the annual trade review and grant China PNTR, the review process must be replaced by a credible mechanism to keep the spotlight on China's human rights record. We support the formation of a standing bipartisan human rights commission, as proposed by the House of Representatives in the bill it passed last month granting PNTR. We urge the Senate to join in enacting legislation to create such a commission with both congressional and executive branch members and a permanent staff to monitor human rights conditions in China and Tibet, as well as the state of religious freedom and worker rights, and to issue an annual report.

The legislation establishing the commission should call for some of its staff to be based in Beijing and Lhasa. I cannot say this with any greater emphasis. You have already heard from Ambassador Taft about the difficulties that she has meeting with Chinese counterparts at any level. I would say that the legislation calling for the formation of this commission should incorporate language that would mandate the stationing of personnel in Beijing and Lhasa. This should be done in order to conduct effective monitoring on the ground.

In addition, it is crucial that the annual report by the commission with findings and recommendations for U.S. policy actions should be debated and voted upon by a certain date each year after it is delivered to the House and the Senate. This will help ensure that human rights abuses in Tibet and China remain a key issue on the U.S.-China agenda.

We would urge the President in his contacts with Jiang Zemin, including the expected summit meeting this fall during the APEC conference in Brunei, to speak out both publicly and privately urging China to fully comply not only with its commitments to respect global trading rules, but also with its international human rights obligations.

Specifically with regard to Tibet, Human Rights Watch urges that there be an end to the re-education campaigns in Tibetan nunneries and monasteries; the unconditional release of all Tibetan political prisoners. We recommend that the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child or another international body be granted immediate access to the Panchen Lama, and we ask that United Nations, foreign journalists, diplomats, and independent human rights monitors be given unhindered regular access to Tibet. This would be a positive, constructive confidence-building measure.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Sperling follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. ELLIOT SPERLING

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN TIBET

I am grateful to the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs for affording me this opportunity to appear before you. In addition to my academic work as a specialist in Tibetan Studies, I have also served for some time as a consultant to Human Rights Watch. Most recently, I collaborated with Human Rights Watch on a new book, "Tibet Since 1950: Silence, Prison, or Exile" (published with Aperture

Foundation) graphically detailing the reality of exile from Tibet today and the role that human rights violations play in forcing many Tibetans to leave their homeland. It is as a representative of Human Rights Watch that I address this Subcommittee.

I am here today to speak to Human Rights Watch's concerns about human rights conditions in Tibet. Tibet has been, for more than a decade, a place where some of the most visible and egregious human rights violations committed by the Chinese state have occurred. It is well known that Tibetan nationalism forms the background to this situation. Human Rights Watch does not endorse any particular political arrangement to resolve the issue of Tibet, but we do advocate that the right of all Tibetans to peacefully articulate and express themselves on political questions must be respected under existing and future political arrangements, whatever they may be.

Since 1987, Human Rights Watch has monitored and reported extensively on abuses that have transpired in Tibet. In general, we are pleased to note, greater attention is now being paid by the United States government to the situation in Tibet; for example, human rights violations there are now given significant exposure in the State Department's annual review of international human rights conditions.

Unfortunately, however, gross violations of human rights remain a continuing feature of the situation in Tibet, in spite of the efforts of various concerned governments—including the U.S.—and NGOs to focus attention on the problem. It is crucial, therefore, that measures for putting effective pressure on China to adhere to recognized international human rights norms be included as a key component of U.S. policy towards China and be built into legislation governing U.S. relations with China.

In my testimony I will briefly describe several areas of continuing human rights violations in Tibet that are of particular concern to Human Rights Watch.

One of our concerns is continuing violations of religious freedom and the implementation by the Chinese government of policies aimed at subordinating religious practices and sentiments to serve the political needs of the state. This is not just a question of propaganda and persuasion. Rather, these policies impinge upon the freedom of many Tibetans to peacefully put into practice or even express certain key aspects of their religious beliefs; and they are implemented through the use of coercion, violent repression, and imprisonment. Particularly prominent in this regard has been the ongoing campaign of "patriotic education," aimed at undermining and eliminating the Dalai Lama's influence in Tibet. But there has also been an increasingly heavy-handed turn by the Chinese authorities towards putting certain monasteries and temples under secular, government-backed management in order to implement greater government control of Tibetan religion.

Such policies are closely tied to the well-known case of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the child whom the Dalai Lama formally recognized as the incarnation of the Panchen Lama. This child has been subjected to virtual house arrest for the last five years simply because most Tibetans have accepted him as the incarnation of the Panchen Lama and rejected the child whom the Chinese government named as Panchen Lama. Neither he nor his family have freedom of movement.

I will also discuss disturbing evidence that torture of prisoners in Tibet continues, in a number of cases resulting in death in custody. Torture has become entrenched in Tibet as part of the price that political activists must pay.

Finally, I would like to draw upon our new book "Tibet Since 1950: Silence, Prison or Exile" for a case study which illustrates what the effects of human rights abuses can be in one individual's life.

MAKING RELIGION SERVE POLITICS

The issues of the Panchen Lama and "patriotic education" are closely bound up with each other, since it was the Dalai Lama's announcement of the recognition of the incarnation of the 11th Panchen Lama that precipitated the campaign of "patriotic education." When the Dalai Lama formally recognized the Panchen Lama in May 1995, the Chinese authorities reacted by virulently denouncing him and by taking harsh measures against the child whom he had recognized. The boy and his family have been kept in effective isolation from the outside world, and government representatives and human rights monitors have not been allowed independently to verify their conditions, in spite of many attempts to do so. Those who have tried to visit him in the five years since he was spirited away include Mary Robinson, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights; Harold Koh, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; and, most recently, Raymond Chan, the Canadian Secretary of State for Asia and the Pacific, who tried to see the child earlier this month. In all cases the requests were rebuffed; China simply states that the child is in good health but will allow no independent

verification of that statement. In December 1995, China enthroned its own choice as Panchen Lama.

The Panchen Lama is generally considered to be just below the Dalai Lama in stature within their particular sect of Tibetan Buddhism and as such has great prestige within Tibet. China's actions are designed to exert unquestioned state control over religion, to the point, in this case, of dictating whom Tibetans may revere as a religious hierarch. In other instances the state has assumed a visible presence in certifying certain incarnations and in harshly suppressing those who dissent. In the case of the Karmapa Lama, the head of the Karma Kagyupa sect of Tibetan Buddhism, the restrictions on his movement made it impossible for him to receive proper teachings from his traditional mentor; as a result he had no choice but to flee Tibet. He arrived in India at the beginning of this year.

More recently, the Chinese government alone managed the search for another important incarnation within the Dalai Lama's sect, Reting Rinpoche. By all appearances, this is part of a continuing effort to control such searches in order ultimately to stage manage the discovery and enthronement of the next Dalai Lama.

Human Rights Watch is concerned about the gross infringement of the right to freedom of conscience that this constitutes, all the more so because Chinese authorities have arrested people who have peacefully opposed this process. They include, most notably, Chadrel Rinpoche, a high-ranking lama from the Panchen Lama's monastery of Tashilhunpo: he is imprisoned along with several other Tibetans accused of working with the Dalai Lama from inside Tibet to identify the incarnation of the Panchen Lama. The issue here is not simply a question of polemics and intellectual disagreements, but of methods and tactics involving clear violations of human rights.

As I have noted, the struggle over the recognition of the Panchen Lama led to a campaign of "patriotic education" that has imposed a harsh regimen of political tests on residents of Tibetan monasteries in order to root out any allegiance to the Dalai Lama. Again, this has not been simply a peaceful polemical issue: the campaign resulted in the expulsion of monks and nuns from their cloisters and the imprisonment and torture of some for refusing to accept state control of what they perceive as vital aspects of their religious lives and beliefs.

The application of this campaign has not been uniform. Over the last year, it appears to have been winding down, but this may be because it is thought to have achieved sufficient success in subordinating Tibet's clergy to the political control of the state. On the other hand, recent and unusually harsh Chinese denunciations of the Dalai Lama and his followers may be a prelude to a renewed campaign. In any event, the campaign's effects remain, with many monks and nuns still barred from their cloisters and other, vocal dissidents still in prison.

The campaign, widely implemented, has required clergy to demonstrate their rejection of the Dalai Lama and the child he has recognized as the Panchen Lama, as well as their acceptance of Tibet's status as an inalienable part of China. In the region that Tibetans know as Amdo, covering parts of the Chinese provinces of Qinghai and Sichuan, monks at Kirti and Rebgong monasteries have clashed sharply with the authorities, with resultant expulsions and arrests. This enforced subordination of religion to politics has brought about noticeable changes in the running of monasteries and nunneries: in some cases, the secular authorities have taken over their management; in others, monastic leaders have simply resigned themselves to accommodating the political directions of the state. In short, it is absolutely clear that unfettered religious practice does not prevail in Tibet's monasteries today.

TORTURE AND ABUSE IN PRISON

In addition to the fact that arrest and imprisonment in Tibet are frequently carried out as a result of peaceful dissident activity—in violation of international human rights law—there are serious abuses following detention. Incidents of severe beatings at the time of arrest, torture during incarceration, and severe beatings of inmates already sentenced have been reported with sufficient frequency and from a number of credible sources as to put the issue beyond doubt and, moreover, to demonstrate that these abuses are not isolated incidents but rather the product of a policy for dealing with political dissidents. Such reports continue to emerge.

Human Rights Watch estimates that there are approximately 600 known political prisoners in Tibet, most of them monks and nuns.

A Tibetan arrested in Lhasa in August 1999 for trying to raise the Tibetan flag in a public square, Tashi Tsering, was brutally beaten before being taken away by Public Security officers. In March 2000, he was reported to have committed suicide in prison a month earlier. In April 2000, a further death in custody was reported,

that of Sonam Rinchen, a farmer from a town near Lhasa. He had been arrested with two others in 1992 for unfurling a Tibetan flag during a protest and was sentenced to fifteen years in prison. Although information is difficult to obtain, a study by the Tibet Information Network suggests the incidence of deaths in detention in Lhasa's Drapchi prison among prisoners due for release in 1998-1999 averaged approximately 1 in 24. Several such deaths were reported as suicides.

In one notable incident in May 1998, political prisoners in Drapchi staged major protests to coincide with a visit from a European Union delegation. The protests were non-violent, but the authorities' reaction was severe: one monk, Lobsang Gelek, died after he was shot. His family was later told that he had committed suicide. The authorities also attributed the deaths of several other prisoners who had demonstrated to suicide, despite credible reports that they had been beaten. Four nuns who had protested all died on the same day in the same way while held in strict solitary confinement. The authorities claimed they had committed suicide, but unofficial reports said they were singled out for particularly harsh treatment as suspected ringleaders of the protests.

At least ten prisoners are believed to have died in the aftermath of the protests. Those subjected to beatings are reported to have included several nuns known to already have had their original sentences extended for continued non-violent protests in prison. Most prominent among them is Ngawang Sangdrol, one of several nuns who smuggled a recording of political protest songs out of prison in 1993, and whose sentence was increased to 18 years.

To date, the Chinese government has been evasive in responding to European Union and NGO questions about the Drapchi protests, but it is clear that the imposition of arbitrary extensions to their sentences is a further abuse affecting Tibetan political prisoners. Only last week in fact, nine Tibetan prisoners in Kandze, an important town in the eastern reaches of the Tibetan Plateau, were reported to have had their five-year prison sentences for participating in a peaceful protest in October 1999, increased to ten-year terms.

The Chinese authorities have also been unresponsive to concerns expressed by the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention about the cases of three Tibetans who had their sentences extended for staging a peaceful political protest during the Working Group's visit to Drapchi in October 1997. To date, Chinese authorities have refused to adequately explain their actions. Nor have they explained their failure to release Ngawang Choephel, the well-known Tibetan musicologist who was arrested while doing research in Tibet in 1995, and whose detention the Working Group has formally declared to be in contravention of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Human Rights Watch is also concerned about fifty Tibetan students detained late last month when they sought to return home via Nepal after previously leaving Tibet to further their education in India. They, too, may be victims of arbitrary detention. The Chinese government should release them immediately absent evidence that they have engaged in criminal acts. None should be held for peaceful political activity and all should be granted internationally recognized due process protections, including the right to be informed of the charges against them.

THE INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

One account included in the new Human Rights Watch publication, "Tibet Since 1950: Silence, Prison, or Exile," tells the story of a young Tibetan student from the eastern reaches of the Tibetan Plateau, outside the boundaries of the Tibet Autonomous Region. (Such areas to the east of the TAR are composed of lower level Tibetan autonomous units. They are distinct from the regions that comprise the TAR but they are very much a part of the Tibetan world, in terms of history, culture, and nationalist identity and activity.) Although this young man's story does not exemplify the brutality of imprisonment experienced by many of those whose cases I have raised, it gives a broader picture of the reality of living under conditions in which respect for basic human rights is not a given. In the account, the student describes his struggle, in his region's minority institute, to have several courses taught in Tibetan rather than Chinese, and to have a Tibetan language publication reinstated to serve as an outlet for the creativity and intellectual activity of the institute's Tibetan students. The publication was reinstated, but was soon subjected to official censorship, which weighed more and more heavily on the student. Finally, when he himself authored a piece which alluded indirectly, but clearly, to the subordinate status of Tibetans, he was confined to the school compound and effectively barred from classes. In one stroke, he saw his future possibilities dashed; not for vocal protests for Tibetan independence, not for denouncing human rights violations, but simply for expressing discontent with the lot of Tibetans in China as he saw

it. At that moment, he decided that his only alternative was to leave his family, friends, and the life he had known behind and flee into exile. That flight in itself was not without danger, but he made it over the border into Nepal and then into India. This student's story will serve, I hope, to demonstrate that human rights concerns in Tibet are important beyond the cases of those who engage in the most vocal forms of protest, or whose religious veneration of the Dalai Lama is under attack. Violations of human rights in Tibet resonate broadly into the everyday lives of Tibetans across the board.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Time and again since 1989, the U.S. government has voiced its intention to hold China accountable for its abysmal failings in safeguarding some of the most basic human rights of its citizens. The President and other senior administration officials have raised the issue of human rights violations in Tibet with President Jiang Zemin and other senior Chinese officials during summit meetings and other official gatherings. This is to be welcomed, but it has not resulted in meaningful, positive change. In fact, human rights conditions in China have noticeably deteriorated in the past year or more, something attested to in the State Department's most recent annual report.

On the other hand, China is clearly sensitive to its international image and standing. That is why it has vigorously resisted any debate on its human rights record at the annual meetings of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. And under pressure, it has signed, although not always ratified, a number of important U.N. human rights treaties, including, most recently, the international covenants on civil and political rights, and on economic, social, and cultural rights.

We recommend the following:

(1) If Congress chooses to end the annual trade review and grant China PNTR, the existing review process must be replaced by a credible mechanism which can ensure that there is a continuing spotlight on China's human rights record. To this end, Human Rights Watch supports the formation of a standing, bipartisan human rights commission, as proposed by the House of Representatives in the bill it passed last month granting PNTR. We urge the Senate to join in enacting legislation to create such a commission, to include both Congressional and Executive branch members and a permanent staff and to empower it to monitor human rights conditions in China and Tibet, including the state of religious freedom and worker rights, and to publish an annual report on its findings.

The legislation establishing the commission should provide for some staff to be based in Beijing and Lhasa, as well as in the U.S., in order that effective, on-the-ground monitoring can be undertaken. In addition, the commission's annual report, including its findings and recommendations relating to U.S. policy and action, should be the subject of regular Congressional debate and vote, to take place before a designated date each year, after the report's delivery to the House and Senate. This will help ensure that human rights abuses in Tibet and China remain a key issue on the U.S.-China agenda.

(2) The President, when he meets President Jiang Zemin, as at the expected summit meeting this fall during the APEC conference in Brunei, should speak out both publicly and privately, urging China's full compliance not only with its commitments to respect global trading rules but with its commitment to respect its international human rights obligations.

Specific steps the U.S. should recommend to help improve human rights in Tibet include:

- Ending the reeducation campaigns in the Tibetan nunneries and monasteries;
- Releasing unconditionally all Tibetans imprisoned or detained for their peaceful exercise of the right to freedom of expression;
- Allowing the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child or another international body immediate access to the Panchen Lama recognized by the Dalai Lama;
- Permitting the U.N., foreign journalists, diplomats, and independent human rights monitors regular access to Tibet. This would be a positive, constructive confidence-building measure.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you, sir.

All right. We are down to our last witness, Dr. Napper.

**STATEMENT OF ELIZABETH NAPPER, PH.D., CO-DIRECTOR,
TIBETAN NUNS PROJECT, SAN GERONIMO, CA**

Dr. NAPPER. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you for allowing me to be here today. My name is Elizabeth Napper and I have a Ph.D. in Buddhist studies from the University of Virginia. After teaching there and at Stanford and an intermediate teaching stint at the University of Hawaii, since 1991 I have been working full-time with the Tibetan Nuns Project.

I have been going in and out of Tibet during those years, but I am mostly based in north India working with the refugees who are coming out as a result of the appalling human rights and political situation in Tibet. I have a long-term view of this, having been going in for so many years, and although things briefly got better over the 1980's, since the early 1990's, it has been a steady tightening up and really moving backward.

We support about 500 nuns now, and of that number, 80 percent of them have come from Tibet since 1990. I would say 40—I do not have an exact figure, but approximately 40 of them have been imprisoned. They have engaged in peaceful demonstrations in Tibet. A demonstration is holding up a flag and saying, free Tibet, or saying, long live the Dalai Lama. What constitutes grounds for beating, imprisonment, and torture is the smallest thing. All of these demonstrations have been peaceful.

And the reaction is immediate and severe. It is beatings as you are on the way to the prison, and it has been documented, and electric cattle prods in all the orifices of the body. One of the most popular ones is the arms get tied behind the back and pulled up and hung over something in the ceiling so that the shoulders tend to get dislocated. I myself have heard these stories many times from those who have come out of Tibet. I do not doubt for a moment they are true. They are repeated with such—the details are so much the same.

Now, what has happened over the years is that the process of stopping these demonstrations has really been refined to the point where they almost cannot happen anymore. It used to be you had 15 minutes. Now you have maybe 15 seconds, a half a minute. There are surveillance cameras. There are secret police everywhere. There are police all around.

A detail I just learned yesterday from someone who had recently been in Tibet. The monks and nuns have especially demonstrated because they are individuals, and so they do not have the same repercussions on the family, which is what gave them the freedom to take this upon at least themselves. But now it has been linked to the other members of the monastery or nunnery, so they know that if they demonstrate, there is a chance that everybody in the nunnery will lose their ration cards or be evicted. So, the process of demonstrating has really been clamped down on. The need for it has not lessened at all.

Over the years, photographs of the Dalai Lama are not allowed. I have been taking tour groups into Tibet. One year it was just so poignant. We got into a back room of a nunnery and the nuns were just in tears talking to us as they described the re-education committee that had moved into the nunnery and was going to stay until everyone signed a denunciation of the Dalai Lama, and their

choice was sign or be kicked out. There were not choices. That is why this steady stream of refugees into India continues because there is no religious or political freedom.

Now, the other thing that has happened alongside of this, because a number of nuns were coming out and every year we would get four or five, and this year for the first time no nuns came out. Last year it was three, and they had been 1 year out of prison before they came out. They tend to leave once they are out of prison because, assuming they have survived this—and they do not all survive. But once they are released, they are not allowed to go back to their home nunnery. They are sent back to their families, to their villages, told not to say anything about what has happened to them. They are denied access to the medical system, and they have all been beaten and have had such poor nutrition that they are in terrible health. Usually they give up after a while and they come out into India. Now, that is not easy because they can get a ride near the border, but they still have to walk 3 weeks to a month over the mountains. So, pretty much the people who were getting out of prison were coming out.

Well, they are not getting out of prison anymore. As Elliot said, the sentences are being increased. There is one young nun who demonstrated when she was 15 and was arrested, and over the years, her sentence has gone up and up. She has been in prison for 7 years now, and her sentence is up to 17 years.

What are the things that they do that cause this? A group of them made a tape singing freedom songs and smuggled it out at Tibetan New Year about 2 years ago. And the authorities tracked down who had made that tape and all of their sentences went up. These visiting delegations come through and the prisoners are desperate to get the word out, so they stage a demonstration, and then they are beaten and their sentences go up.

So, at this point I do not know the exact number. Nobody does because there is no monitoring of the prisons, but certainly 100 nuns languishing in prison and more or less the key has been thrown away. So, it is a very difficult situation in Tibet.

Now, in India we sort of get the overflow of this, and a lot of refugees come out. It has been hard organizing the aid to help them. So, I guess the recommendation that I would like to make is that people remember that things are going on on many different levels, that the dialog with the Dalai Lama is absolutely important in working out the political situation. But there are smaller levels of it going as well. There are refugees coming out who need help and support.

Aside from the immediate political situation, we are building up an educational system, and what we are really trying to do is train a generation of women who will be leaders in Tibet. What we would really like is for the climate to loosen up, for it to be possible for them to go back and set up nunneries and teach, not just religious education, but building in a modern Tibetan, English, social studies, mathematics. There has not been much education in Tibet. There is a tremendous need for education, and we are training a generation who could go back and teach.

The pressure needs to be kept on on all these different levels. The human rights issue should not go away because the political

issue is kind of not moving ahead. Pressure for education, to try to get the dialog going on different levels so that maybe some of the education that is being gained in the exile community can be made available to the people in Tibet.

Actually it is going the other direction. This group of students who were arrested—the government does not like the fact that the education is out and people come out to get it, and then they all want to go back to Tibet. But it is getting harder and harder for that to happen.

So, I guess what I would press for—and especially working with women, and we are a bit of a subset. We tend to get overlooked in some of the funding decisions because people think the big picture is more important—is what I see as important is to push it on many different levels at once and keep pushing steadily because over time I think the human development is happening and I hope there will come a time to slot that into Tibet and really help the situation there.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Napper follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. ELIZABETH NAPPER

THE CURRENT SITUATION IN TIBET: ONE STEP FORWARD, THREE STEPS BACK

My name is Elizabeth Napper. I have a Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies, with a focus on Tibetan Buddhism from the University of Virginia. I have taught at UVA, at Stanford, and at the University of Hawaii. My current position is Co-Director of the Tibetan Nuns Project.

I have been visiting Tibet on a regular, almost annual, basis since 1987, and since 1991, I have been spending the bulk of my time in India working with Tibetan refugees there. More specifically, I work with refugee Buddhist nuns, almost all of whom have fled Tibet in the years since 1990, and therefore most of my remarks have to do with the situation regarding nuns.

I find the title “The Current Situation in Tibet: One Step Forward, Three Steps Back,” very appropriate, as it certainly mirrors my experiences in Tibet over the years. I would say that the one step forward took place in the mid-eighties and that the steps backwards have been happening from 1988 or 89 on, with the current situation in Tibet being the most restricted and tightly controlled that it has been since the liberalization that began in the early 1980’s.

The Tibetan Nuns Project, based in Dharamsala, India, with a small U.S. office in Berkeley, California, supports almost 500 nuns living in North India, most in the Dharamsala area. Of that number approximately 80% have fled Tibet in the years since 1990. Included among them are approximately 40 nuns who demonstrated for Tibetan independence in the years from 1987 to 1995 or 1996 and as a result were arrested, beaten, tortured, and imprisoned, as well as a number more who fled Tibet in fear of arrest because they had either demonstrated or engaged in other activities that are punishable in Tibet by arrest and torture such as putting up posters in support of Tibetan freedom.

The stories they tell of their experiences are quite uniform. If one demonstrates—and these demonstrations are all peaceful, generally consisting of standing up and waving a Tibetan flag while chanting slogans such as “Free Tibet,” “Chinese go back to China,” or “Long Live the Dalai Lama,” one is immediately arrested. The beatings start in the vehicle on the way to the police station and continue through an interrogation that can take place over several days. Various instruments of torture are routinely used such as electric cattle prods inserted in the orifices of the body, electric shocks that knock a person across the room, described by one nun as “a pain that pierced the heart,” another called “the airplane” in which the arms are tied behind the body and then the rope is put over something hung from the ceiling so that the person is pulled up in such a way that shoulders are often dislocated.

As far as I can make out from the accounts given, sentencing generally takes place without a trial, and for most of the nuns we work with, time spent in prison was two to three years. During that time, the systematic torture ceased, but they were still beaten for the least thing considered an infraction. Many were put to work in fields. Many more describe having to clean toilets—this in itself might not seem

a torture, but they were given no implements and had to use their hands. After the work was completed, they had no soap or facilities for cleaning up and so had to live all the time with the smell of human excrement on their hands.

Upon release, nuns were not allowed to return to their nunneries. They were told to return to their families and not speak at all about their prison experiences. Most had health problems stemming from the abuse and poor diets they had endured. I have heard some accounts of nuns released from prison into the hands of the Tibetan Medical Hospital at times when they were close to death and the authorities preferred to have them die in the hospital rather than in prison. However, the more common situation is that the nuns leave prison with serious health issues and are then denied access to medical care, sometimes because they cannot afford the treatment, but more often because they have been labeled politically suspect and thus the treatment system is instructed not to offer them care. It is these impossible conditions that they face upon release that has impelled so many to undertake the arduous trip across the Himalayas to freedom in India.

Over the years, we have seen a change in this pattern from two sides. First, the number of demonstrations has definitely lessened as the authorities have stepped up their means of apprehension. There are now surveillance cameras at strategic locations all around the Barkhor, the central square in Lhasa where most demonstrations have occurred. Thus if a demonstration does take place, the authorities have a visual record and can track down all who participate, if they should happen to escape. However, few do escape because their are police stations all around the square and plain clothes police always mingling with the crowd, so that a demonstration that used to last for fifteen minutes to a half hour before the police moved in has now been quelled and the demonstrator dragged away within a maximum of two to three minutes. Since this has reduced a demonstration to a nearly futile gesture sure to lead to years of imprisonment, the number of demonstrations has definitely diminished.

The other factor that has changed is the length of imprisonment. In the early years, it was, as I mentioned above, generally two to three years. Every year a certain number would be released and every year four or five would escape to India and eventually arrive in Dharamsala. In recent years, although there are still large numbers of nuns in the prisons around Lhasa, very few are being released. Two years ago at Tibetan New Year, a number of nuns made a tape singing songs about their imprisonment and about freedom and smuggled it out of the prison. It eventually reached India and was widely disseminated. The Communist authorities tracked down the nuns who had made the tape and all of their sentences were increased. Sentences are also increased for a variety of reasons, such as speaking out to visiting delegations, as well as many things more petty, and so, for instance, one nun who was arrested at the age of fifteen and has already served seven years is now up to a sentence of seventeen years. This year for the first time no nuns who have served in prison have come to us in India seeking assistance. The three who arrived last year had already been out of prison for a year before they decided the situation in Tibet was simply untenable and they fled into India.

However, the fact that there are not a lot of new releasees from prison fleeing into India does not mean that the nuns are not still coming. They are, still in substantial numbers, because all over central Tibet, the level of repression continues to escalate in the monasteries and nunneries. In 1987 while taking a group of tourists to visit one of the nunneries in the Lhasa area, our visit became a very emotional one as a group of nuns in an inner room broke into tears telling us about how a reeducation unit has just moved into the nunnery, and they were now being subjected to daily reeducation sessions, the purpose of which was to cause them to sign a written denunciation of the Dalai Lama. Their choice was to sign that denunciation or face expulsion from the nunnery. The year before in Shigatse with a different group, I met two aged and very poor nuns who had recently been expelled by the Communist authorities along with forty others from the small nunnery they had recently rebuilt with their own hands. The reason was that they had rebuilt it without official permission and the authorities suddenly arrived one day, forced the nuns to leave, tore the buildings they had worked so hard to restore down once again.

At the same time that this process has been going on over the past two to three years, the Communist authorities have introduced and enforced a policy forbidding the display of any photographs of the Dalai Lama. At first they were taken out of public displays in the monasteries and nunneries but still allowed in monks and nuns rooms. Eventually this too was banned, and a systematic search was undertaken to make sure that every single picture had been removed. In 1997 it was still possible to see the occasional picture that was tucked away in a discrete corner. By late 1998 there was not a single one left, and in fact, when taking a tour group to

visit a village farmhouse along the road from Shigatse to Lhasa, I was disheartened to see that the family was no longer even allowed to display a family altar, which is traditional in every Tibetan home. That indicated to me a return to levels of repression I had not seen in Tibet—when I first visited Tibet in 1987, most houses had altars except for those of some of the higher placed cadres who were still being politically cautious. (What they tended to have up was an old photograph from mid-1950's that was a group shot of the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama, Mao Tse Tung, and Zhou En Lai.) By the early 1990's, everyone again had an altar, and I consider it an ominous sign that they have once again been forbidden. I don't know how widespread that rule is; I do know that pictures of His Holiness the Dalai Lama are now absolutely not allowed.

I was last in Tibet in October of 1998 and I found the political climate there the most repressive that I have experienced in Tibet. The atmosphere of fear was palpable. Monks serving as caretakers in the monasteries I would take my tour group to were noticeably cautious about speaking to me, and I found the general climate so alarming that I did not contact old friends I've made over my years of visiting Tibet because I really feared the repercussions that might come from their having contact with a Tibetan speaking American. This sense of Tibet is echoed by the stories the most recent arrivals to India tell, by conversations I have with other American friends who go regularly into Tibet. Certainly, as far as political and religious freedom are concerned in central Tibet, the situation is dire and in fact steadily worsening.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you. Very good. I thank all of you. I really do appreciate it very much. I guess in general terms I doubt that anyone would disagree with many of the things that you have said. The question is how do we cause this to happen, to change.

The bank thing is interesting. Could you just be really very brief? Who thought up this bank relocation business?

Mr. ACKERLY. As far as we know, it was a plan devised by Chinese planners who brought it to the bank.

Senator THOMAS. I am sorry. Who did?

Mr. ACKERLY. Chinese planners.

Senator THOMAS. I see.

Mr. ACKERLY. And it was brought to the bank. It is something that just absolutely fell through the cracks at the bank. But then when it was brought to the attention of the bank, instead of distancing themselves from it, they circled the wagons. Instead of improving the documents, we believe they just doctored the documents to make the project look better. So, it has been a very really discouraging experience dealing with them and trying to get them at this point, now that they, I think, realize what is going on, to get them to distance themselves from it.

Senator THOMAS. I understand the difficulty, but if Tibet is to be part of China—I presume that is what people expect to happen in the long run, a part of China—you indicated that building this pipeline then takes Tibetan resources into China. How do you separate? That is like saying Indiana's resources are going to Illinois.

Mr. ACKERLY. I think it would be more comparable to resources that were under a Native American reservation and the idea that there should be a contract which is enforceable.

Senator THOMAS. So, your view is that Tibet ought to be a separate country—two Chinas, two, three Chinas, four Chinas—and it ought to have its own resources. It ought to have its own government and all those things. That is your view of the future.

Mr. ACKERLY. Essentially. They should have some decision-making over those resources and benefit from those resources.

Senator THOMAS. Some decisionmaking is quite different than being an independent government that runs itself pretty much apart from China. Is it not?

Mr. ACKERLY. It is. I think there is a lack of specificity here on the part—it is the Dalai Lama who has been negotiating. I think partially he does not want to be too specific yet before getting to the table. He wants to try to work this out and not set up too many things which the Chinese will object to.

Senator THOMAS. I understand that. It is hard to know.

I guess the human rights thing at the U.N. was not just Tibet, though, was it? It was human rights in all of China.

Mr. ACKERLY. That is right. It was a China resolution which mentioned Tibet.

Senator THOMAS. Dr. Sperling, you indicated that not having the annual review of so-called most favored nation and going to this permanent one then requires—what was unique about doing it every year? It was approved every year.

Dr. SPERLING. Yes, but at least it focused the spotlight, and it was not always taken for granted. As the years went on, yes, it began to be taken for granted, but I can remember back several years ago when this was a very serious issue of debate and it really did focus the spotlight on human rights in China, much as you are doing with the hearing that we are having this morning. It is extremely important. Human Rights Watch believes that the spotlight must be kept on China and that what is transpiring in Tibet be known.

Senator THOMAS. Do you think the human rights in Tibet are different, worse than they are in other parts of China?

Dr. SPERLING. Well, I do not know if monks and nuns in Guangzhou or in Beijing—well, in Beijing actually you could make that case—are also being required to swear their allegiance to the Chinese state and to disavow the Dalai Lama. I am saying this somewhat facetiously because the cases are qualitatively different. They are qualitatively different because with one you are dealing with, first of all, a Tibetan tradition. There is a lot of nationalism behind this. Now, Human Rights Watch does not take a position on the structure of relations between Tibet and China, but we do believe that whatever the Tibetans wish to express politically, they should be allowed to express in an atmosphere free of any coercion, or any violation of their human rights. Now, that nationalist background is really very much emphasized in the context of this struggle because of the elements of Tibetan Buddhism. Tibetan Buddhism is markedly different from the Buddhism that was and is practiced in China in terms of its rites, its rituals, and its language. All this has imbued the Tibetan situation with a qualitatively different structure and air than any other human rights issue that you have in China. It very much becomes a national issue.

So, the methods used to suppress it and the harshness of those methods are often quite different than what you have in China. In addition, and here I am talking simply about the context, Tibetans see this not as a question of some political ideas, suppressing certain other political ideas which the state does not like, but as a question of their very identity. Now, we can disagree with this

view, but this is how it is perceived by Tibetans: to them these issues of religion really impinge upon their identity.

Senator THOMAS. Dr. Napper, I am really interested in your views. If the Buddhists were able to exercise their religious activities, is it the religion they are protecting, or are they protecting the political sovereignty of Tibet? Could you separate those two? Could there be an active Buddhist community there living under a Communist government?

Dr. NAPPER. I think there could be if the government would back off a bit. It has become very linked. Peoples' Buddhist-ness is their Tibetan-ness. Now allowing them to practice their religion really is not allowing them to be Tibetans.

Senator THOMAS. Well, let us assume that they do allow them, but they do not govern themselves.

Dr. NAPPER. If they were allowed that, then a lot of this problem would go away. I actually I think a lot of the Chinese policies are foolish because they are making their life harder.

Senator THOMAS. It is a little hard for some people who are not involved to differentiate between does the Dalai Lama want to govern Tibet or practice a religion perhaps under another kind of government? Do you want to respond to that?

Dr. SPERLING. Well, you know, the traditional Tibetan political system has been termed by the Tibetans as chos srid zung 'brel which means basically a combination, a union of religion and politics. But the Dalai Lama himself has explicitly said that once the political question is resolved, he does not want to have political authority in Tibet. He said that very clearly.

Dr. NAPPER. He says that again and again publicly.

Senator THOMAS. That is an important issue I would think. I understand because the Chinese are persecuting other people in religious things as well, not just Tibet. But as you say, it is unique.

Well, thank you so much. I do think, as you have suggested, there needs to be a focus continued. You all are helping to do that, of course. I do think, Dr. Sperling, it has been talked about in public some. I have been to China several times. We always bring it up. The last time I was there, there was a Mormon activity there and so on. But certainly it is not as focused as it ought to be.

So, thank you so very much for being here. We appreciate it. I hope you will continue to work at it and stay in touch with us if you think there are things we can do. Thank you so much.

The committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:36 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

