

“Hawks blocking Dalai Lama’s return”

China memo questions loyalty of Communist Tibetans

Tuesday 25 March 2008, by [BECK Lindsay](#), [Phüntso Wangye](#) (Date first published: 10 October 2007).

(Reuters) Phuntsog Wangyal, the 84-year-old Tibetan Communist veteran, has written to President Hu Jintao and condemned “hawks” for blocking the Dalai Lama’s return and criticised them as they “make a living, are promoted and become rich by opposing splittism”. Phuntsog Wangyal’s three letters to Hu have never been made public, however, Reuters has obtained copies of the letters.

In his 2006 letter, Phuntso singled out Lt Gen Yin Fatang, party boss of Tibet in the 1980s, for sticking to “wrong” leftist policies. In 2004, he wrote: “If the Dalai Lama and the central government reconcile, these people will be in a state of trepidation, feel nervous and could lose their jobs”. In an indication that China’s policy towards Tibet is to drag its feet until after the Dalai Lama’s death, Phuntsog wrote: “Any notion of delaying the problem until after the 14th Dalai Lama dies a natural death is not only naive, it is also unwise and especially tactically wrong”. Phuntsog warned that the Dalai Lama’s death would radicalise young Tibetan hardliners frustrated with his “Middle Way”.

Invoking Hu’s “harmonious society” slogan, Phuntsog wrote in 2005 that striving for the return of hundreds of thousands of exiled Tibetans would turn “confrontation into harmony”. Phuntsog wrote that “wrong leftist policies continue on ethnic and religious issues especially Tibetan issues” and should cease. “I hope relations between the Dalai Lama and the central government are reconciled”, the 2006 letter read.

Phuntsog Wangyal was one of the early Tibetan Communists and played a prominent role during the first years of Chinese rule in Tibet before he was disgraced. He spent many years in prison and lived a largely retired life after his liberation in the 1980s.

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* From <http://www.tibetinfonet.net/content/news/10392>

China memo questions loyalty of Communist Tibetans

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By Lindsay Beck

BEIJING (Reuters) - China is questioning the loyalty of ethnic Tibetan members of the ruling Communist Party, accusing many of swearing their true allegiance to the Dalai Lama, according to an internal memo.

The Sept. 4 memo, issued by the Party’s Discipline and Inspection Commission, highlights ongoing

concerns about stability in Tibet, the largely Buddhist western region into which Chinese troops marched in 1950.

"It calls on the Party in Tibet to carry out a kind of campaign — I suppose a kind of rectification campaign — to reassess the loyalty of the members," said Robbie Barnett, a Tibet expert at Columbia University who had parts of the memo read to him.

"The content seems to be this question of whether the Party members in Tibet are reliable or are supporting the Dalai Lama."

Radio Free Asia (RFA) quoted the memo directly, saying it accused internal dissidents of "suckling at the breast of the Chinese Communist Party, while calling the Dalai Lama mother".

"There still exists a small number of dissident elements within our Party whose commitment to its ideals, beliefs, and political standpoint is a wavering one," Washington-based RFA quoted the memo as saying.

The Dalai Lama fled into exile in 1959 following a failed uprising against Chinese rule. Authorities have since all but erased his presence from the region's Buddhist monasteries but many in Tibet still consider him their spiritual leader.

The document raises at least two specific cases of disloyalty on the part of Tibetans: a Party member who was expelled for shouting "reactionary slogans", and a schoolteacher who told his pupils that the Panchen Lama recognised by China was a fake.

The Panchen Lama is Tibet's second-highest spiritual leader.

DALAI LAMA DENOUNCED

China's state media has in the last week issued several reports denouncing the Dalai Lama, possibly in reaction to the announcement that U.S. President George W. Bush is to present him with the Congressional Gold Medal on Oct. 17.

In its latest invective against him, China's official Xinhua news agency on Tuesday accused the Dalai Lama of supporting "evil cults", namely Japan's Aum Shinrikyo, which carried out a sarin nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway in 1995, killing 12.

The Dalai Lama says he wants greater autonomy for his homeland, not independence, but China has continued to consider him a separatist.

Rights groups say political repression in Tibet and in parts of western China dominated by ethnic Tibetans is worsening as the Party seeks to stifle dissent and ensure a stable environment for its five-yearly Congress, which opens next week.

The International Campaign for Tibet said the military presence in ethnic Tibetan counties of Sichuan province has increased since villager Runggye Adak addressed a crowd of people on the need for greater religious freedom and for the Dalai Lama to be allowed to return to China from exile in India.

Local people, including schoolchildren, have been asked to denounce the Dalai Lama, the Washington-based group said.

The Party secretary of Tibet, Zhang Qingli, has also pledged to maintain stability in the remote,

mountainous region to ensure the success of the Party Congress and the 2008 Olympic Games, which open in Beijing next August.

Zhang is seen as a hardliner, whose term in Tibet has been shaped by a rare demonstration at a Lhasa monastery last year that coincided with the beginning of his post.

“His reaction has been very strong,” said Barnett.