

Coercive Birth Control In Occupied Tibet

**An examination and exposé of
China's coercive population
program as operated inside
occupied Tibet**

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This paper seeks to provide a detailed insight into the nature, extent of China's coercive population control violations as they apply to the three traditional regions (U-Tsang, Amdo and Kham) that constitute historic and ethnic Tibet. It provides a background on policy implementation, dating from the 1980s through to the present, and features documented case-studies which reveal disturbing human rights violations and medical atrocities, that have been forced upon the oppressed people of Tibet. The testimony and material contained has been researched, verified and edited by *Tibettruth*, an organization dedicated to human rights, justice and freedom for Tibet. For more information on this, and other human rights issues that operate inside occupied Tibet, kindly refer to <http://tibettruth.com>

Note: This document concerns the implementation of coercive birth control policies upon the subject people of Tibet. The key issues of concern to *Tibettruth* are the issues of coercion in Chinese birth control policy and the attendant violations of human rights. The imposition of such policies upon the Tibetan people by a power in the act of military occupation, and position of these policies within the framework of a planned policy of cultural genocide being pursued against the people of Tibet. **The report does not consider any rights or wrongs of abortion itself and *Tibettruth* takes no position upon abortion, sterilisation or birth control policies per se, these being outside the scope of the aims of the organisation.**

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Introduction

Witness From Occupied Tibet *"If they give birth to more than 2 children, they do not get anything to eat"*

A degree of confusion exists over precise descriptions of Chinese birth control policy in occupied Tibet, probably born of the fact that central policies may be modified at "province" and local level by local authorities. Thus the actualities of the policy may vary slightly from place to place. Further uncertainty results from differing opinions concerning what constitutes Tibet, in this paper reference to 'Tibet' relates to the historic, political and cultural regions of Tibet comprised of U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo. These territories were forcefully absorbed and renamed by Communist China into Chinese provinces, leaving a truncated region, the so-called 'Tibet Autonomous Region'. Thus Tibetans have one definition and the Chinese another.

For the purposes of detailing China's coercive birth control policies and their impact upon Tibetans, Tibet will be taken as the three traditional regions of U-Tsang, Amdo and Kham. Available sources, whether Tibetan, Chinese or otherwise, are agreed on one thing; that the geographical area over which birth control policies are applied in Tibet is extensive, and that the degree to which the policy is enforced violates human and reproductive rights.

There is now no disagreement about whether policies are enforced upon Tibetans, since the Chinese freely admit it and over the years have released information that appears to indicate a general hardening of attitude toward stricter policy enforcement. As far as can be ascertained the policy appears to work through a system of progressively more menacing intimidation. Whilst local policies vary slightly from region to region, they must all adhere to the central policy set down by the communist Chinese government. While responsibility is to at least some degree devolved to local officials acting through regional governments, the strength of central guidance on policy and practice is clearly detectable in the official statements of national and local governments. Regional birth control offices appear to control a number of local offices with the job of monitoring the population to ensure strict adherence to the policy and issuing permission for state sanctioned births.

It appears that virtually ALL AREAS of Tibet are subject to birth quota policies. Tibetan officials seem to be either allowed or under considerable pressure to have only one child. Urban dwelling Tibetans appear to be allowed only two children with three being allowed in "special circumstances". Rural Tibetans appear to be allowed between two and four children. There appear to be age limits for birth, at least in some areas where women may have to be 25 or between 25 and 35 to bear children. Couples may have had to have been married for at least four years.

Unmarried women appear to be universally denied the right to bear children. In addition to this, restrictions on the number of births in a year are imposed by the restricted issue of birth permits. Thus whilst couples may be eligible to have children, permission can be denied if the quota of birth permits to be issued for that region is already used. Despite such variance, in terms of policy application, as demonstrated by the wealth of testimony and reports that have been able to emerge from China's draconian grip over Tibet, is that Tibetan women have been subject to a program of forced sterilizations and forced abortions that violently deny them civil, human and reproductive rights, as understood in more liberal and democratic societies.

Unless a card-carrying member of China's Communist Party, there is no doubt that a spiral of birth-control enforcement is imposed upon Buddhist-Tibetan women. As will be shown by the included testimony, measures which include fines, arrest, detention, degrading treatment and physical force. There is an extensive and well researched body of evidence, including first-hand testimony, eyewitness accounts, and a range of supportive information from a variety of sources, including Chinese documentation, international media reports, television documentaries, and accounts from former birth-control officers.

Which testify that Tibetan women continue to face a systematic policy of medically unnecessary, highly coercive, and often harmful sterilizations and forced abortions, ostensibly justified by China's nationwide population control policies. Measures which include fines, arrest, detention, degrading treatment and physical force.

Communist China adheres to a "*one family – one child*" policy as a means to control what it considers overpopulation problems. In theory, this policy applies solely to nationalities whose populations exceed ten million, only about six million Tibetans live in Tibet. More importantly Tibet has no population problem, and it never has. In fact, prior to 1950, about six million Tibetans lived in Tibet, a region over twice the size of France. Even today, in the so-called 'Tibet Autonomous Region', which covers about forty percent of the region traditionally called Tibet, fewer than 1.6 persons inhabit each square kilometre. Tibet remains one of the least populated regions in the world.

There is absolutely no justification for China to apply its "family planning" policies in Tibet, the coercive birth-control program therefore suggests an intent to destroy the Tibetan people, in whole or in part. Which is a clear violation of China's international obligations under the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*

For an understanding of coercive birth control policies as applied to Tibet, it is important to recognize the degree of totalitarian domination that China's communist regime enforces over Tibet. This has a defining and significant impact upon the flow of information regarding violations associated with the Chinese population program. With China intensifying its control, through an ever increasing security presence and violently repressive measures, we have witnessed a decline in the availability of material from inside Tibet. These factors; *Chinese State Control, Intensified Border Security and Geographic/Cultural* components, which have negatively impacted upon the availability of relevant material on the subject, are examined in detail on Page 30.

2000-A New Decade Of Violations Begins

Witness From Occupied Tibet "Once I was beaten continuously for two days with nothing to eat nor a drop of water to drink"

"Most women are 'encouraged' to get themselves sterilised after having their limit of children and once a year the County authorities order the township officials to conduct a special lottery. The names of all the Tibetan women in the township – regardless of age or marital status – are put into a pot and then one is picked out for sterilisation. She cannot refuse, and after her operation she is given a cash payment and a position in the local administration to show her as a good example. Every year my family prays together that it will not be one of my sisters. The Chinese women in my area are safe, because their names are never put into a lottery like this."

(Testimony of 22 year-old Dhundup from Gade County, Golog, Amdo escaped to India in January 2000-TCHRD)

"Tenzin is a 21 year-old former monk of Hortsang Kirti Monastery Ca branch of Kirti Monastery). His parents are farmers in Marthang Township of Lhabrang County, Khenlo TAP, Gansu Province. Tenzin reported that a two-child birth control policy is strictly implemented in Lhabrang County.

In order to generate awareness on the new birth control policies set by the CCP, the county authorities call regular meetings at which every married and sterilized woman is required to be present. Those women are issued with a yellow-coloured certificate, which has to be visibly hung in their house so that the inspecting officials can easily see it. Officials carry out regular inspections on Tibetan families, in which Tibetans were required to show their certificates and their children.

A penalty of 500 to 2000 Yuan is imposed on the families with more than two children. Failure to pay the penalty results in confiscation of animals and properties.

In 1999, four Tibetan women from Marthang Township of Lhabrang County were fined for violating the official policy. The yellow certificate stipulates that any Tibetan woman having two children shall undergo sterilization at the county or township hospital." (Human Rights Update, June 2000 TCHRD)

"Sogrishang (Chikdrishang) is the place where women are sterilized. When I arrived there, I witnessed some women taking off their clothes at the door and then laying down on the beds. Some of the women felt shy to remove their clothing and requested the doctors not to have to do so. Thereafter, the women were stripped by two health workers and forcefully taken inside. There was a hole on the bed right below the rectum. For the women who were two months pregnant, the doctors insert forceps inside them and destroyed the child by squeezing it. This resulted in the foetus coming out, and with lots of blood. The women were kept in the hospital for just 4 days and then discharged." (Interview with 68 year old Buddhist Nun September 2000 extract from Tears Of Silence TWA 2009)

Following graduation from class 12, Ms. Phurbu Dolma, was selected to join the staff of the (Qihua Shengyu) family planning team through an entrance test. Her responsibilities included generating awareness and monitoring birth control policy. She was employed at that position for 4 years, after which she left the job. Her husband was an ex-political prisoner, which caused her to experience problems in her work. She finally escaped into exile with her husband and her only son.

"One has to be registered for pregnancy otherwise fines are imposed after 3 months of pregnancy. We have a sort of competition between the different regions. I belong to the Tsomoeling region. The competition is weighed in terms of stars. The greater the number of children born, the lesser the number of stars and which means a reduction in our salary. The minimum age for giving birth is 23. Younger girls are forbidden to take the necessary birth control methods. If a girl under 23 years of age gives birth to a child she will be punished by a reduction in her salary. As a family planning advisor, when I advise them on birth control methods, the local Tibetans turn on us and ask us if we are really Tibetans". Most of the children are born by Caesarian section. The women are told that this is necessary as it will take long time to give birth otherwise." (Interview With Ms Phurbu Dolma Female, family planning worker Lhasa, 15th October 2001-Courtesy of TWA)

That coercive birth control was being inflicted upon Tibetans throughout the 2000s attracted the concern of no less than a former United Nations Special Rapporteur, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, who noted in an official UN report that:

“Women in Tibet continue to undergo hardship and are also subjected to gender-specific crimes, including reproductive rights violations such as forced sterilization, forced abortion, coercive birth control policies and the monitoring of menstrual cycles. There have been many reports of Tibetan women prisoners facing brutality and torture in custody”

(UN Commission on Human Rights-Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, 27th February 2003)

Ms Losar Kyi was formerly a family planning and healthcare worker in Tibet's eastern region of Amdo (renamed as Qinghai Province by China) *“Recently, I have seen a online report in a UK newspaper about a US research team visiting some areas of so-called Tibet Autonomous Region for doing research, without escorts of Chinese Govt. The report concluded that the Chinese policy of birth-control and implementation on Tibetan women is not a forced! I am very much surprised to see it.*

I am a Tibetan refugee woman from Amdo, North-Eastern Tibet having reached Dharamsala (northern India) recently. In my country, I completed a course from Medical School of Tsholho in 1993 and from then, up to July 2001, I have been working in family planning at a health centre for women and child. My job known as ‘white dress’ or doctor provided me with direct experience of birth-control and mother and child care. We have to propagate the Chinese policy of birth-control among the farmers and nomads in villages and remote areas.

It claims ‘less family member will face no economic problems’, however the farmers and nomads are not opting for birth-control willingly or because of economic pressure. If it is so, why it is made mandatory target of birth control. The common practice and methods of birth control includes sterilization, ligature, ‘birth-control surgery’, inter-uterine-device of the woman have a miscarriage, induce labour etc. There is no proper system of transportation in the remote rural regions of my country, besides high hills and long routes for women and have to come several times to hospital which is either in Shang or Zong level. These arduous journeys are made because of the reality of coercion (fines and force), so nobody comes willingly! In addition all medical and surgery charges are paid for by the women herself. This became a burden not economic development for a family.

In the district where I worked, carried out planned birth-control operations. After taking women age group of 18 to 35 in villages and district level, forced birth-control operations were carried out. The number of birth-control surgery to be done in a place per year is fixed and we have to carry out these ‘surgeries’ to fulfil the given duties. In many places a forced ‘lottery system’ is applied to complete the number of women to be operated upon against the will of respective women. People called it ‘human murdering tax’ rather than willingly.

For example, in year 1989 to 1995, six hundred women were given birth-control surgery. This is a case of a small district where the population is about fifty thousand.

Most operations are done in the hospital of village (Shang) level where the medical equipment, living places and other facilities are backward, besides there is no health guarantee for our Tibetan sisters in these cold climates of Tibet. Birth-control operation is implemented as per fixed number in a place, applying various methods for birth-control. In 1997 two hundred and forty women were subject to 'birth-control surgery' which resulted in the women having a 'miscarriage', a further four hundred and six women suffered induced labour surgery in 1999.

A woman from Chhusang, Sengdeng village, Tsholho Tsigor District of Tshongon (Amdo) died due to this type of birth-control surgery in July 2000. In my view the findings of a place by the researchers team cannot represent six million Tibetans living in Tibet which is divided by Chinese into one autonomous region, ten autonomous prefectures and two autonomous districts etc.

*Any researchers (team or a person) who visits Tibet under the knowledge of Chinese Government are allowed only after well prepared, educated to answer and terrified them in advance, Hence to say that they visited villages without official escorts and had complete freedom of movement can't portray freedom (in Tibet). For example, the places, the villages and the houses where to visit are fixed in advance, besides the village head and regional secretary of communist party used to monitor them. If any person answers against their instructions will face penalty or punishment as per severity of talk. Therefore, Tibetans in Tibet can be asked question under the protection of UNO, otherwise they (Tibetan) can't express their feelings. I am praying for such day to come. Being a doctor of women and child I had experienced, saw, heard and am proud to prove it to the world, hence made this fact appeal to correct the untruth, also sure people will understand a genuine matter" **Testimony of Ms. Losar Kyi 6th March, 2002 English translation of Chinese and Tibetan version-tibettruth.com)***

"The story of a woman recently interviewed by the Tibetan Women's Association also shows the continued prevalence of sterilization of Tibetan women as a form of population control in China. Like many other Tibetan women in Tibet, Chemi was sterilized without even knowing what was happening. She said that she had been taken to a hospital with several other women after having her fourth child. They all received the same procedure, where they inserting an unknown object into her vagina. She heard a loud noise from inside of her, and felt the entire procedure happening as the anaesthesia was not masking the pain. Following her operation, she and her friends suffered from severe back pain.

Several years later, a couple of her friends had died as a result of the pain and suffering of these new symptoms. Chemi continued to suffer from these pains even after she had arrived to India many years after she had been sterilized. In India, a hospital attempted to remove the object that had been inserted inside of her, but it was so ingrained in her flesh that it was impossible to take out. Thus, her pains continue. Someone she knew successfully had the device removed, and the pain subsided. Unfortunately, Chime Lhamo must continue to endure suffering caused by the un-removable object inside of her." (Interview Ms ChemiLhamo Aged 41 Kham, East Tibet 4th April 2008-Courtesy of TWA)

One woman, who was covertly interviewed inside Tibet described her agony at a forced sterilisation operation without anaesthetic. She could not afford the fine, equivalent to £70, and was one of six in her village who went through the ordeal.

"I was forcibly taken away against my will. I was feeling sick and giddy and couldn't look up. Apparently they cut the fallopian tubes and stitched them up. It was agonisingly painful. They didn't use anaesthetic. They just smeared something on my stomach and carried out the sterilisation. Apart from aspirin for the pain, there were no other drugs. I was so frightened, I can't even remember how I felt" (Extract of an Interview with a Tibetan women as featured in the Channel Four Television Documentary, 'Undercover in Tibet'. Broadcast 30th March 2008)

In an effort to meet local sterilization targets, officials in Gansu Province, who were often promised a promotion and a monetary reward, reportedly **forcibly detained and sterilized a Tibetan woman** who had abided by local population planning requirements. **(2008 US State Department Human Rights Report: China)**

The following extracts featured in the UK Channel Four TV Documentary 'Undercover in Tibet', broadcast on 30th March 2008. The film included an interview with a Tibetan woman who recounted her harrowing experiences of forced sterilisation. The program refers to a Tibetan who is investigating communist China's coercive birth-control program inside Tibet:

Narration: "Despite years of torture and imprisonment, this man is determined to continue to fight the Chinese. More recently he has been investigating the government's population control policies." The torture victim said: "There were 6 million Tibetans before Chinese rule. There are only about 5 million of them in the Tibetan region today. So there has been no population growth in this period. Yet now they are carrying out forced sterilisations in the Tibetan region. Those who refuse are punished. They are implementing this here and now. This is a violation of human rights."

Narration: “Tash had made contact with a woman who claimed to have had personal experience of enforced sterilisation.

She asked the team to arrive in the early hours of the morning, terrified of the consequences of foreigners being seen coming to her house.”

Tibetan Interviewer: “*She’s very nervous...*”

Narration: “She said she had a child out of quota under the terms of China’s one child policy. As a result, she was given the choice of a fine she couldn’t pay or sterilisation.”

Tibetan Lady: “*Those who can’t pay the fine have to have a sterilisation. If you have good connections you can buy a sterilisation certificate for around 1000 Yuan. But those who don’t have any money have to have the sterilisation whether they like it or not. I was forcibly taken away against my will.*”

Tibetan Interviewer: “*Did you cry?*”

Tibetan Lady: “*I cried when I was lying on the bed after the sterilisation. I cried thinking that I’d been forced to have a sterilisation when there was nothing wrong with me. I was feeling sick and giddy and couldn’t look up. It was so painful. Apparently they cut the fallopian tubes and stitch them up. When they opened me up they pulled them out by the roots. It was agonising. They didn’t use anaesthetic. They just smeared something on my stomach and carried out the sterilisation. Apart from aspirin for the pain there were no other drugs. And then from the day after the operation I had to look after myself. If I needed a drip I had to pay for it myself.*”

Tibetan Interviewer: “*Can you show me the scars from the sterilisation?*”

Narration: The woman shows Tash her scars.

Tibetan Lady: “*I was so frightened. I can’t even remember how I felt. I wasn’t the only one. About half a dozen women in our village had to undergo sterilisation.*”

Tibetan Interviewer: “*Forcibly?*”

Tibetan Lady: “*Yes, forcibly. No one would have done it willingly. They come to the door to fetch you by force. They threaten to confiscate stoves and anything valuable from the house. So people get frightened and go for the sterilisation. Some people were physically damaged by the operation. They have limps and have to drag their hips. Since then people are too scared to have many children.*”

Narration: *“The Chinese government says that the one child policy does not apply to Tibetans. But this woman’s experience is far from unique. In 2002 a UN special rapporteur said women in Tibet are subjected to forced sterilisation, forced abortion, coercive birth control policies and the monitoring of menstrual cycles.”*

On February 15, 2009 a Yunnan (*parts of which is formed by annexed Tibetan territory*) *The Times* newspaper documented another instance of forced sterilisation. It concerned a woman, named as Ms.Zhang Kecui (a name that looks to be a Sinocized version of a Tibetan name) who was kidnapped in the street by family planning officials and forcibly taken to a clinic where she was tied onto a medical table and sterilized. She was reported as having two children, which according to China’s draconian population regulations meant Ms.Zhang should have undergone ‘*birth-control surgery*’ (forced sterilisation) after the second birth. Such accounts are all too familiar in China, Tibet and East Turkistan, where human and reproductive rights are brutally denied by order of the state. Alternative forms of ‘surgery’ used more brutal methods:

“While operating they cut the stomach vertically and horizontally often without anaesthetic and with little consideration for the pain that is being inflicted. I have witnessed these terrible things with my own eyes”.

According to the testimony, birth-control officers would visit the villages once a month and take down names of all those who were to be sterilised, any that showed resistance were taken by force. The staff carrying out such ‘*surgery*’ were, it was claimed, often unqualified and showed little concern for the well-being of the women. The witness reported highly detailed instances of women, almost nine months pregnant, being:

“given medicine to induce labour and afterwards the premature infant is put into a bucket of hot water”. **Interview conducted 23rd February 2009 near Leh, Ladakh by Tibettruth with a 37 year-old woman (name withheld for security concerns) from Kham in East Tibet**

Policy Implementation-The Years Of Coercion

During the 1980s and 1990s Communist China implemented a number of laws regarding population control policies in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), although Zhang Tianlu (*Tibet’s Population Develops, Beijing Review* 17th August 198) recorded that family planning was implemented in Tibet in the early 1970's, but claimed it only applied to Chinese people. However he reported that “*provisional regulations on family planning*” were set forth in 1986 with second births being “allowed” to Tibetan cadres and workers and third births in special cases.

Tianlu claimed that no family planning targets were set for rural, pastoral or border areas, *"for the time being"* but that publicity and education *"should be conducted among the masses"*.

Thutnadoge (Information Sheet OIR1988) then deputy head of *"Tibet Autonomous Region's Public Health Bureau"*; claimed that the one child policy only applied to Chinese people in Tibet but that Tibetans were "encouraged" not to have more than three children stating "but this is not mandatory". Thutnadoge admitted family planning was "encouraged" in Tibet during the "Cultural Revolution" but claimed this was in contradiction of national policy of the time. He stated that *"Today Tibetan couples are urged to consider having only three children, but there are no penalties for having more"*. He claims that more people are realising the value of "voluntary family planning".

A key regulation that impacted during that period was a 1985 regulation, *'Established Guidelines Relevant to Granting Birth Permits'*. This permitted urban Tibetans two children and Chinese one.

A report by communist China's mouthpiece *Xinhua* on 29 May 1990, announced that the so-called *Tibetan Regional Government* would introduce birth control regulations throughout the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region, as had already happened in Tibetan areas outside the TAR.

In 1991, the so-called *Ganze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture* issued a booklet called *"The Collection of Planned Birth Documents, No. 5"* which stressed that ideological *education* must be the main method of implementing planned birth and must also be assisted by necessary *administrative* and *economic methods*. These euphemisms conceal the harrowing truth of further medical atrocities at that time. Further regulations were imposed upon Tibetans within the so-called *Tibet Autonomous Region* during 1992, that inflicted more coercive measures. These were imposed upon Tibetan farmers and nomads, demanding *"fewer births, quality births and births at intervals, and stressing that couples, who already have three children no longer give birth."*

This echoed previous calls by then Family Planning Minister, Ms. Peng Peiyum, for *"the people of national minority nationalities to join the nation's family planning programme"*. Peng had told the CHINA DAILY 14th March 1991 that the State Nationalities Commission had reported the growth rate of *"minority populations"* as being much higher than the national average and thus supposedly threatened their 'economic development'. The article further stated that family planning policies had already been implemented in East Turkistan (also occupied by China) indicating the intention of the Chinese authorities was to step up the population control of their so-called "ethnic minorities".

Throughout 1990, statements from the Chinese government confirmed suspicions that they were extending the official policy and stepping up the degree of implementation. With draconian birth control laws impacting upon women across Tibet additional laws were imposed, The '*Maternal and Infant Health Care Law*', (passed the National People's Congress in October 1994) which was enacted in 1995, gave further powers to China's regime to restrict marriages and births.

With the eugenic objective of 'improving the *quality* of births', anyone deemed by the state as having any mental or physical illness was considered a suitable target for either deferred marriage, forced sterilisation or tubal ligation. These laws were targeted at so-called *ethnic minorities*, who had been victim of forced sterilisations prior to that latest regulation.

A broadcast by Gansu Radio (which cover a traditional area of Tibet) trumpeted on 7th May 1990 that 63, 000 men and women had been sterilised as a result of a 2 month long campaign.

This was particularly chilling as Gansu had since 1988 implemented a policy of forced sterilisations for those with mental disability, extremely disturbing in light of Chinese commentators who claimed that within Tibet there some 100,000 'handicapped' people.

Many have noted that these ideas were essentially Eugenics based, with the Chinese Government's stated intention to "*improve the quality of the nation*" with "*fewer, but higher quality births*". On the subject of sterilisations and reports of human experimentation Paul Ingram (*Tibet-The Facts*, Scientific Buddhist Association) wrote "ONE IS INEVITABLY REMINDED OF THE NAZI STERILISATIONS AND EXPERIMENTS PERFORMED ON SUBJECT PEOPLES IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR".

The revival by the communist Chinese regime of policies, based on theories that the Nazis held in such high regard, caused grave concern at that time among human rights monitors.

English journalist Simon Long (*The Guardian* 24th July 1991) reported that China had signalled it may soon tighten up birth control enforcement among "ethnic minorities". Long quotes Zhang Tianlu in a CHINA DAILY article as saying "***while the ethnic population surged, it's quality has declined***" and reports that "***Raise the quality of the population***" is a slogan "***seen all over China***". Long describes the article as having "*alarming racist overtones*" in relation to the "minorities".

Other official Chinese comments and documents from the 1990s confirmed the implementation of coercive birth-control measures forced upon Tibetans.

A *Xinhua* report on 29 May 1990 reported that Mr. Tashi Namgyal, then Deputy Director of the Regional Family Planning Office, said that:

“..this reduction of population was needed in order to curb the region’s fast population growth rate and to control its “population quality”.
(Increase Restriction on Birth of Children in Tibet, World Tibet Network News, Feb. 13, 2000)

A radio announcement (TIN Update 30th May 1990) in Qinghai (formerly Amdo and Kham Regions of Tibet, renamed and annexed by communist China following its invasion of Tibet in 1949) broadcast 20th April 1991 stated that some 87,000 WOMEN HAD BEEN STERILISED up until the end of 1989, this apparently representing about 10% of women of child bearing age and was reportedly 2.76% higher than in 1988. The broadcast also noted a slow in the population growth rate to 1.5%.

If these figures are correct, then approximately 17 to 18% of WOMEN OF CHILD BEARING AGE in this "province" were sterilised in IN ONLY 2 YEARS

Xinhua (TIN Update 30th May 1990) reported during May 1990 that 700 women were sterilised in Gyaca County and a further 1200 on contraceptives, nearly 70% of women of child bearing age in this county were thus sterilised or on contraceptives. While Gansu Radio (Gansu contains annexed Tibetan territory) on 7th May 1990 reported 63,000 MEN AND WOMEN had been sterilised as a result of a TWO MONTH long campaign.

These figures show, for that time, **that the number of women unable/unlikely to bear children due to sterilisation or contraception varies from at least 4 or 5% in the so-called 'Tibetan Autonomous Region' to at least 17% in "Qinghai".**

If figures could be added for previous years, and up to 2010, a much larger proportion would be noted. Tibetan exile estimations, at that time, for the proportion of women sterilised, varied considerably between 20 and 85%. Although these usually referred to specific places or regions, the Tibetan estimates at their lowest, corresponded to the estimates given by *Xinhua*.

A human rights update (OIRR 31st March 1992) reported on a LHASA EVENING NEWS article of 2nd February 1992 which claimed ***"appreciable success" in implementing the "party's present family planning policy" had been achieved by the Lhasa City family planning office. The article reports that the family planning office "organised four sterilisation teams and sterilised 1294 women in Nyemo, Lhundup and other dzongs with a 98% success rate and won the applause of the broad peasant and nomadic masses with intensification of family planning work".***

The inclusion of the euphemism "broad masses" is interesting since it is generally used by the Chinese to recognise that they have met considerable resistance to the policy without giving away anything concerning the size or scope of that resistance.

Further articles in the TIBET DAILY of 15th February 1992 and 26th February 1992 also referred to success for the family planning policy among the *"peasant and nomadic masses"* clearly revealing the intensification of policy implementation among rural Tibetans. Despite this Tashi Namgyal, Deputy Director of the *"Family Planning Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region"* in a *Xinhua* report of 29th February 1992 declared that *"the regional government has carried out family planning policies" limiting couples to two or three children in towns and cities, but "in the vast rural areas, however, the regional government does not set any limits on births" but that they have strengthened "education in contraception and new methods of delivery"*.

Addressing a meeting on family planning within the so-called 'Tibet Autonomous Region' (TAR), on May 23, 1996, Mr. Gyaltsen Norbu, former Governor of TAR stated that the Party, government and family planning departments: *"Should comprehensively implement the family planning policy, adopt effective measures, carry out family planning services **right down to the peasants and herdsmen**"* (Source: Increase Restriction on Birth of Children in Tibet, World Tibet Network News, Feb. 13, 2000))

The *'Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) Birth Control Leading Group Document-Number Six'*, reveals the degree of state control and coercion relating to 'birth-control' as imposed across the so-called TAR by the Communist Chinese authorities. Behind the deliberately vague and extenuating terminology, and chilling synonyms, one can easily recognize two basic facts. Tibetans are indeed subject to China's notorious population control 'measures', and furthermore the methodology employed features a draconian spiral of coercive measures, including forced sterilisations. Chapter Two, Item Nine states:

"At the heart of agricultural and nomadic areas, must stick to the principles of relying mainly on propaganda education, voluntary and offering service, advocate fewer births quality births. First start propaganda testing work and then gradually widen the scope on that basis"

An official document from the *'Ganzi Tibet Autonomous Prefecture Committee for Birth Control'* includes the *'Communist Party Central Committee Document Number 9'* states:

*"In order to raise the economic and cultural standard and national quality in the minority areas, **birth control must also be implemented among minorities**"*.

The document includes details of measures, population targets and sanctions, all of which are imposed upon Tibetans in that region:

“Ideological education must be the main method in implementing , it must also be assisted with necessary administrative and economic methods.....must promote the transition of people’s ideology of birth and further strengthen the consciousness of practicing birth control”

These chilling euphemisms, so reminiscent of the eugenic lexicon within Nazi Germany’s sterilisation laws, barely conceal the traumatising brutalities such laws have enforced upon Tibetan women. **International delegations and observers that visited occupied Tibet throughout the 1990s were also aware of coercive birth control practices inside Tibet. An Australian human rights delegation to China reported:**

*“Disturbing allegations of involuntary sterilizations and forced abortions in China, **particularly in remote regions and among minority nationalities**, continue to circulate.*

Such allegations had been evident in the Tibet Autonomous Region during the delegation’s 1991 visit, and similar allegations were heard by the delegation in Xinjiang during the current visit.” (Issue Paper-Chine le Point Sur la Politique de l’Enfant Unique-IRB Canada January 1995)

These observations were supported by testimony provided by Tibetans who had managed to escape into exile during that time, accounts which emerged into the late 1990s and beyond

“After a woman gives birth to a second child, she is taken to the county hospital to be sterilised. All the women in my village had this done, but three of them died after the operation. The authorities gave no compensation to their families, and a month old baby born to one of the three mothers then died a few weeks later. It was really terrible. All the women in my village are very scared of this procedure, but they cannot escape it.” (Testimony of 19 year-old Tamden Tsering from Haiyan County Amdo Province escaped to India in December 1999-Tibetan Center For Human Rights And Democracy)

The *Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy* examines and verifies similar accounts from Tibetans who have escaped into exile. In one year alone TCHRD received reports of 432 women who were subjected to forced sterilisation or contraceptive procedures. In some areas up to 80% of Tibetan women of childbearing age have been sterilised under coercion or subterfuge. Yet instead of restricting the practice of these illicit “state policies”, the Chinese government actually endorses them, drawing connections with growth in the economic sector.

An official report in the "Tibet Daily" on March 23, 1998, stated that:
"birth control policy introduced in Nyangdren town in Lhasa was a huge success. This successful policy has been implemented with regard to both the family planning procedures of the People's Republic of China and the existing conditions of Nyangdren town."

The report also stated that the family planning authorities had carried out the policy with *"full co-operation"* from the local people. In Nyangdren town, **342 out of 379 married women underwent sterilisation**, and an additional 295 women were provided with contraceptive pills. An official of the town authority applauded the:

"successful performance" of The Department of Health, and commented that the birth control policy has "directly resulted in the alleviation of the living conditions and reasonably increased the economic growth of the people."

Coercion-The Early Years

Witness From Occupied Tibet *"We have no rights, even over our bodies"*

A report issued by the Tibetan Office of Information and International Relations (OIIR) in 1991 stated that *"ACCORDING TO AVAILABLE SOURCES, THE PRACTICE OF FORCED ABORTION AND STERILISATION WAS REPORTED AS EARLY AS 1955. AT THAT TIME IT WAS CONFINED ONLY TO SOME PARTS OF AMDO (CHINGHAI) REGION OF TIBET .."*

Thus as far as can be ascertained, measures of population control were reportedly implemented at least in parts of Amdo, Eastern Tibet (renamed as Qinghai Province by communist China) by the Chinese authorities ONLY 5 YEARS AFTER THE INVASION OF TIBET. By 1960 Tibetan exiles who had escaped from occupied Tibet, following the crushing of the 10th March uprising in Lhasa, were able to sufficiently impress the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) that there was widespread fear amongst the Tibetan people, that these measures were aimed at the eventual destruction of the Tibetan race.

The 1960 report of the ICJ stated that *"There is no doubt that the belief is widespread among the Tibetans that the Chinese deliberately sterilised large numbers of them in an attempt to prevent them from propagating their own race"* and describes such activity as *"specially defined as genocide by Article 2(d) of the Convention for the Prevention and punishment of Genocide"*.

The report also stated that *"The facts which gave rise to this belief took place in Amdo region in 1955-56, and the Legal Inquiry Committee have no reason to doubt the bona fides of those who believe that they have been sterilised. It cannot however be accepted that the witnesses who claim to have been sterilised have in fact undergone this treatment"*, this being due to *"Expert medical evidence on the details given is that the treatment described is not in accordance with any known method of sterilisation"*.

The Committee reported that it could find no proof of sterilisations having actually been done and did not consider that whatever had been done was in fact an *"attempt to destroy the Tibetan race"*. It did however take the view that the *"statements were honest"*. These initial reports of sterilisations in Amdo remain confused, but it is worth noting that accounts of Tibetans being used as 'Human Guinea Pigs' exist for the early and mid 1960's. An article in the TIBETAN REVIEW of July 1988 by a Tibetan nurse Gadrang Tenzin, describes how in 1964 a team of Chinese "doctors" toured Tibet. Tenzin states *"Whether surgery was necessary or not and whether facilities existed or not, operations were performed. Many hundreds of healthy Tibetans died as a result or were killed."*

When the bodies of those who died on the operating table were being dismembered to feed the birds, as per the Tibetan Buddhist Tradition, there were many cases of finding operating instruments and bandages sewn up inside them".

The incidents described to the ICJ as having occurred in Amdo in the mid 1950's could have been early examples of experimentation, perhaps even experimental sterilisation. Kunsang Paljor (*Tibet-The Undying Flame* 1977) describing *"Chinese population Control Measures 1963-64"* states that *"From late 1963 the Chinese authorities formulated and implemented a plan of controlling the growth of the Tibetan population"* and describes a media campaign that "discouraged" marriages for men under 30 years old and women under 25.

Tibetan cadres were told that *"You are the leading elements of the masses. YOU SHOULD BE THE FIRST TO BE STERILISED AND SHOW THE WAY FOR THE OTHERS. IF YOU REFUSE TO FOLLOW THIS POLICY, THERE WILL BE NO RATION INCREASES, AND NO EDUCATION FOR MORE THAN TWO CHILDREN. IT IS BEST THAT YOU THINK OVER THIS CAREFULLY. WE WILL BE OBSERVING YOU AND SHALL FIND OUT WHETHER YOU ARE LOYAL TO THE PARTY."*

Paljor describes incidents known to him where Chinese methods of birth control resulted in illness, disability and death. He reports the case of a TIBET DAILY worker (Lhasawa Thondon) whose wife was sterilised in a Chinese hospital and afterwards developed a long term illness.

Another case (Jhampa Tendar) was also sterilised and *"Thereafter mysteriously crippled and confined to a wheel chair. His wife, Sonam Chonzom; emerged paralysed below the waist .. "* after the operation.

Paljor states that *"There have been instances when Tibetan youths have been sterilised under the pretence of being treated for some disease or other"* he also reports that Tibetan women who married Chinese were praised as "good citizens" whereas "Tibetan marriages were frowned upon and whenever a pure Tibetan child was born they would say *'The crows in the sky are all black. There are no white ones'* This meant that any Tibetan was a useless parasite".

Paljor was a worker on the TIBET DAILY in Lhasa and had opportunity to travel widely. However he apologises for "lack of details on Kham and Amdo; it is impossible to get reliable information from that part of Tibet since even Tibetan cadres are not allowed to cross into these provinces. Communication by letters arouses suspicion and in any case, they would all be censored." His information thus refers to the Tibetan region of U- Tsang, especially Lhasa and surrounding areas.

The testimonies of two Tibetan refugees published in 1976 by OIIR refer to issue of marriages. Pasang Tsewang (August 1971) states *"Chinese men are encouraged to marry Tibetan girls. In Phari, the daughter of Ngodup Khangsar got married to Chu Trang-kun, a Chinese working in the telephone exchange. Many Tibetan girls were raped by Chinese soldiers and as a result there are many bastards as well. However, Tibetan men are not allowed to marry Chinese girls"*.

Kunga Thinley (January 1975) reporting on what he calls "a favourable turn" in conditions for Tibetans since 1971 says that "Tibetan girls have altogether stopped marrying Chinese men, however hard the pressures may be".

Taphe Adhi (Interview 20th July 1989) states that *"In 1977, the Chinese authorities announced that Tibetans would be allowed to have only two children. In 1978, this was officially implemented. Two ladies were appointed to supervise it in our region. Instances were galore of Tibetans pleading with the Chinese officials by paying bribes so as to be able to bear their children. Punishment for exceeding the official limit was cruel. Fields were confiscated, leaving the family to verge on starvation due to shortage of grains."*

Taphe states that *"One Tibetan woman, Asho Tranda; was the head at the Abortion/Sterilisation Office in Trabu Kuanggyaku (political Office) at Minyak Rangakha in Nyarong, Kham (Eastern Tibet region renamed and annexed into so-called Qinghai Province and others areas into Sichuan). She would visit all the towns, villages and nomadic areas to ensure that the abortion and sterilisation policy is efficiently implemented"*.

She names two hospitals where *"the abortions and sterilisations were carried out"*, one at Tranbu (Yiwun Shi) and another at Ching Qha Dha Du noting that this last hospital was the biggest in the Minyak Rangakha area and that all the doctors and nurses were Chinese. She further testifies that a woman named Nyangjen Phupa Padri was *"subjected to forced sterilisation in 1978"*.

Editors Note: In the interests of personal safety and privacy of eyewitnesses, some names have been removed and replaced with a numbering system T1, T2 etc. The original testimonies remain with the Office of Information and International Relations of the Tibetan Government in Exile and/or with the Tibetan Youth Congress. Names from published sources remain as given.

Mrs Taphe Adhi refers to the case of a neighbour whose child was *"killed pre-natal, by injection"* during a late stage of pregnancy in 1984. After injection into the abdomen the woman is said to have started labour pains immediately. The baby (her first) was born alive, *"cried a little bit and then died in a tub"*.

Adhi names two women she said had been subjected to forced sterilisation, and states that *"more than 50% of Tibetan women in Minyak Rangakha (Kham) have been forcibly sterilised"*.

A statement by a Tibetan (T1) (Testimony Presented 27th May 1991) described the introduction of birth control policies in 1983 in Drukchu Dzong, one of the seven Dzongs in the "Autonomous Tibetan region of Kenlho" in Amdo (Gansu). T1 describes how in 1984 a nine member team arrived in the Sharbom township led by the General Secretary and Chairman of the local administration. The town people (about 400) were divided into small groups, had their names taken and were told that it was the intention to *"carry out birth control operations on the womenfolk of the region"*. The operations are stated to have begun the next day. Local administrative officials are described as having gone around *"terrorising"* women into *"submitting to birth control operations"*. Two who resisted were apparently tied up *"thoroughly beaten and then taken away to be forcibly operated on"*.

Additionally the officials confiscated the family livestock. A house-to-house search was reported the following day, for those trying to evade the birth control team. One couple moved away to avoid detection but were tracked down, their door was broken in, the home ransacked, grain was confiscated and livestock killed and taken. Similarly another family were tracked down, the man was tied up and severely beaten. Again livestock was killed and goods confiscated but they were unable to find his wife. Thus posters were apparently issued stating that she had been fined 1200 Reminbi. A man who told the Chinese that his wife was 9 months pregnant was apparently beaten by the township head, named as Lue Yug Yug; and General Secretary named as Tao Shun Me.

T1 asserts that his wife was tied up and carted away to hospital where the doctors were told to abort the pregnancy by injection. This was done but the child was born alive. Upon hearing of this Tao Shun Me reportedly instructed the doctor to *"kill the baby without handing it over to it's mother"*. The baby was thus murdered states T1.

In a further incident a Tibetan man reportedly protested at the seizing of his wife and this same Tao Shun Me reportedly beat him, seized his goods and partially demolished the family house.

A statement (T2) (Testimony of Presented 27th April 1990) given by a 25 year old Tibetan doctor who worked in a hospital in Amdo to the West of Chapcha from 1983 to 1990, when she escaped to India; describes the hospital as having a Women and Delivery Section in which *"Women don't come to deliver their children, nor for check ups, but only to be operated on"*. She reported that women from *"far away nomadic regions"* comprise the largest number of 'patients' to this section who come under pressure from local birth control offices.

T2 states she got married in 1984 when 22 and wanted her first child in 1985 but says she first needed permission from the "birth control office".

This only being given after four years of marriage, they obtained it by bribing the officials. Their first child was born in 1986. She documented that in her region couples having more than one child are *"subjected to financial punishments"* including a 1700 Yuan fine for the second child.

Thus when she was again pregnant in October 1988 she prepared to pay the fine. Her Head of Office apparently came to know of the pregnancy and *"almost every day he would come to me to influence me with birth control policy and brainwashing me to undergo abortion. He said he wanted to eliminate the child inside me"*. T2 told him she wanted the child whereupon a Chinese woman doctor named as Huang Fen Yin told her to go home *"and think it over carefully"* adding that she must *"immediately eliminate the child"*.

T2 stated she delayed things, asked for a weeks maternity leave and told them she was ready to pay the financial punishment. She asserts that the doctor then threatened her saying *"if you insist on having your child, it is alright. THE FINANCIAL PUNISHMENT IS A SMALL MATTER COMPARED TO THE POLITICAL CRIME YOU ARE COMMITTING. From now on you will get only 30% of your salary. In future your salary will never increase. Your child will not have the right to claim his ration card. The child will not be admitted to either nursery or school. Both of you (husband and wife) have been expelled from your jobs"*.

T2 stated she initially thought this merely to be the Chinese doctors trying to pressurise her into having an abortion but says she later discovered that "there were specific rules and regulations" to be found in documents known only to "various leaders" that had never been made public. She submitted to the birth control policy and had an abortion. T2 reports knowing of at least 12 other similar cases and six others who also worked in the hospital.

T3 (Testimony Presented 18th October 1988) that of a 20 year old Tibetan medical worker reported that four years must pass between pregnancies and a woman must be over 25 to have a child. Women who become pregnant before 25 are "*forced to have an abortion*". If she has the child, no ration card is given and in towns the woman is fined. T3 reported knowing of 3000 Yuan fines for third children and of parents being dismissed from their jobs. She detailed an account of a woman who worked at a Lhasa hospital having a child in 1985 and then again in 1987.

A 700 Yuan fine was imposed, but the child died after three months. The parents apparently applied for a refund but were refused. It was also asserted that the so-called *People's Hospital* in Lhasa was referred to as the "*Butcher's Place*" among local Tibetans, due to the 30 to 40 abortions, or sterilisations performed each day.

Testimony (T4) (Presented 24th October 1988) of a monk from Sera monastery near Lhasa documented that "*According to Chinese law, Chinese women can have only one child and Tibetan women can have three, but in reality Tibetan women are often only allowed to have one*".

T4 said that Tibetans working for the government have been allowed two children since 1986. Villagers are allowed three. For those where a two limit applies, the fine for a third is 2000 Yuan. He stated further that in towns it is a legal requirement to inform the nearest hospital upon becoming pregnant. Additionally he noted that in villages doctors were apparently sent round. In both cases T4 reported that women must sign papers stating how many children they have, if they are pregnant, or even undertakings not to get pregnant again.

Such work, claimed T4; is often done by highly paid Tibetans who act as spies for the Chinese. He reported a 28 year old woman, who in 1986 was told by the authorities that she was "*in a poor economic condition*" and was thus taken by force to a hospital for an abortion. His testimony also told of an unmarried 29 year old Tibetan, who became pregnant in 1984 and was ordered by the police to go to hospital for an abortion, which she did and was also sterilised. Another woman who apparently had problems with a previous pregnancy was sent to hospital for a 'check up', where she was told she would have to have an abortion.

A detailed report, T5 (Testimony Presented 20th October 1998) from two Tibetan monks, described "*dead babies*" as being left outside the tent for everyone to see and the attendant "*horrible smell*". Even women nine months pregnant are apparently forced to undergo abortion and sterilisation often without medical care to reduce pain or prevent infection.

These teams, they reported, operated for 15 to 20 days in each locality before moving on. T5 asserted that CHINESE WOMEN DO NOT RECEIVE THIS TREATMENT but are sent to the district hospital, and noted that such teams started in 1982, but that there had been a TREMENDOUS INCREASE IN THE NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF SUCH TEAMS SINCE 1987.

They described how a 'birth control team' came to the villages of Woja Chue, Nyenchu Chue and Hor in the Autumn of 1987. The villagers were apparently told of the arrival of the team, and that the women must report to them, or face "*grave consequences*" and that to resist was to violate the constitution. They stated those who resisted were rounded up by the police and taken by force. T5 reported seeing women crying as they waited for their turn in the abortion tent, listening to the screams of those who went before them and watching the growing pile of babies build up outside the tent.

A monk of Lhasa's Jokhang Monastery T6 (Testimony Presented 29th November 1988) claimed knowledge of abortions and sterilisations that occurred in 1981 and gave three examples.

He asserted that at this time many Chinese doctors came to do such practices, and that all pregnant women REGARDLESS of HOW MANY children they had, were forced to have abortions and sterilisations.

Mr. Dhukar Tsering (Testimony Presented 4th November 1988) from the Kokonor area of Amdo was married to a Chinese woman, which he stated was not very common, and often viewed with contempt (whether by Tibetans, Chinese or both is unclear). He noted they married in 1985 and had one child, and that Chinese women can have one child, whereas Tibetans can have up to three. Couples of mixed marriage used to be allowed two but he reported that all this is "*just on paper*" and that "*Chinese have various means to avoid the rule*".

He accounted that Chinese with a child "*simply move to another place where they can have another child. This is an oft repeated phenomena*". Tibetans are denied this avenue because such freedom of movement is impossible for them, "*For them there is no question of getting themselves transferred from one place to another, for the vast majority of them are unemployed*". The witness also noted that only financial punishments existed for Chinese exceeding the birth quota, and then only if the matter is discovered but "*invariably they manage to strike an arrangement with the concerned officials*".

Tibetans however had to pay the fine and are also denied ration card registration for the child *"which means denial of citizenship"*. Also reported was a 6 months pregnant 21 year old Tibetan woman he met in hospital who had two children. He stated she told him that she had been *"ordered to the hospital to have her baby aborted"* and that the doctor had told her that she would have to be injected into the stomach *"to kill the baby"*. She was apparently injected several times and the baby was still born, it being *"straight away thrown into the trash bin"*.

D.T claimed that a friend who accompanied him to the hospital told him he had seen *"a large number of dead babies in the trash bin outside the hospital"*. D.T worked at a radio station, and recalled in his testimony, receiving a report of the one child policy being implemented in his native Ma Lho Kul Tseko Dzong in Amdo, a mostly nomadic area. He asked a friend who often visited the area about this, pointing out that Tibetan nomads were supposed to be allowed up to three children. He reported being told that *"the Chinese authorities were telling the people that they had brought a reputed doctor and issued a proclamation requiring all women, married or unmarried, to report to him"*. They were also apparently informed that failure to do so would incur a 200 Yuan fine, about a years wage for these nomads. Many did as they were told and *"WOMEN RANGING FROM 15 TO 40 YEARS OLD OR EVEN OLDER WERE SUBJECTED TO FORCED STERILISATION"*. He further testified that *"forced sterilisation is most effectively carried out in the nomadic regions"*.

A 1990 interview with Dr D.T. described family planning mechanisms that impacted upon workers. Referring to the Autonomous Region Health Bureau in Lhasa, D.T reported a family planning, or birth control office, which directed other government departments on the number of children their staff were allowed for a given year.

Only a certain proportion of staff would be allowed children in anyone year, and the respective offices decided who was entitled. This office was responsible for carrying out birth control policy, the issue of birth permits and ration cards. Staff members exceeding the quota faced reduced salary with no raise for a set number of years. They were denied educational or promotional opportunities and the child could be refused a ration card. If a card is granted, a lump sum tax penalty was sometimes imposed, which Dr D.T noted in 1990 as always larger than 500 Yuan. Office workers were also apparently made examples of, by being given extra duties.

Dr D.T asserted that most abortions were carried out in hospitals around Lhasa, and that most cases were performed on women six to seven months pregnant. In the so-called *First Workers Hospital* there was apparently two days a week set aside for abortions and Dr D.T reported about 16 cases per week.

Unmarried women who became pregnant were apparently *"forced to undergo abortion"* and Dr D.T further added (unfortunately without further explanation) that *"cases of mentally retarded Tibetan women who were raped by the military personnel and being pregnant were later forced to undergo abortion"*. Records of all the cases are apparently kept and sent to the birth control office.

A report by N. Chodak & N. Choephel ("Present Conditions In Tibet' OIIR 1991) reported the stated policy for *"minorities"* in China was that they may have 2 or 3 children but that ***"in reality, Tibetan women in cities are encouraged, pressurised, and at times even forced to have only one"***.

Of rural areas they report that *"as many Tibetan women are forcibly sterilised as possible, regardless of whether they have or do not have children"*. They also referred to a report of the security office of the Tibetan Government in Exile (DBR/61/1988) that Tibetan women in Lhasa were being forced to undergo sterilisation and/or abortion. **Women were reportedly picked up in the streets and taken for sterilisation.** In this case a fine of 3000 Yuan was reportedly imposed upon those who resisted, an enormous sum for most Tibetans. **The report presented eight testimonies.**

The first dated 22.12.1988 from the husband of a Doctor at the Mother and Child Health Care Hospital in Lhasa, reports the main activities of the hospital as infant vaccinations and birth control. He reports an average of 30 TO 40 ABORTIONS A DAY, 20 TO 30 OF WHICH ON TIBETAN WOMEN.

TESTIMONY TWO from a Lhasa carpet weaver detailed a policy of two children for Tibetans, with economic penalties for those who exceeded and cash rewards for those who didn't.

She reported the existence of cases where women went to the so-called *People's Hospital* in Lhasa for normal delivery, only to be told that they had delivered a stillborn child. She cited three case examples of forced abortion/sterilisation. That of a 25 year old woman from Shigatse, but living in Lhasa, who visited that hospital for a check up, and was informed the baby inside her was dead and that it should be removed. This done the baby was found to be healthy but had been killed. The woman reported being given an injection in hospital and upon leaving developed a fever, weakness, loss of appetite and frequent headaches. After a week this way she apparently vomited blood one afternoon and died soon after.

A 20 year old Lhasa woman with three children again became pregnant and went to the same hospital for delivery. She was apparently told that the baby was deformed and was given an injection and some tablets. The baby was delivered dead and the woman *"was surprised to see that the baby was not deformed"*.

She reported taking the dead child to a Tibetan Doctor she knew working in another hospital, who proclaimed that the injection had killed the child and that *"such incidents do take place at the People's Hospital"* and that *"THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES DO NOT LIKE TO SEE THE TIBETAN POPULATION INCREASE SO NATURALLY THEY WOULD KILL BABIES AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY"*.

Finally a 19 year old Lhasa woman who *"had to have her first child aborted at the People's Hospital in Lhasa"* and was forcibly sterilised at the same time.

TESTIMONY THREE, that of a Tibetan nurse at the Chikyab Military Hospital, just outside Lhasa, dated 26.12.1988 reported ABORTIONS FOR PREGNANCIES UP TO 7 MONTHS if women fail to inform the Chinese authorities about their marriage. Failure to produce a marriage certificate after delivery reportedly resulted in *"the newborn being instantly killed"*. Sanctions for resisting birth control policy included expulsion from a job, large fines and salary reductions. The witness reported 6 or 7 abortions, or sterilisations a day at this hospital.

TESTIMONY FOUR dated 24.12.1988 was presented by a Tibetan man visiting India to see his children. He reported 6 or 7 women as having undergone abortion or sterilisation in the Shekar District of central Tibet

TESTIMONY FIVE, recorded in November 1988 reported Tibetans in rural areas as being allowed 2 children, but those in towns only one with fines of between 3 to 400 Yuan for children beyond the quota.

Tibetans were apparently generally sterilised after their second birth, and 80% OF TIBETAN WOMEN IN TSECOK ARE SAID TO HAVE BEEN FORCIBLY STERILISED. The figure of 20% is given for Changkha.

Many of these women are reported to suffer ill health after sterilisation and even death. The account reported that birth control teams *"effectively carried out sterilisation in many towns and villages in Amdo"* during the winter of 1986/7 five cases known to the witness were documented, including a resident of Rekong in Amdo who was *"forcibly sterilised"* in summer 1986. Another woman of Rekong who was forced to have an abortion because she was not married in Spring 1987, a mother of four who was forcibly sterilised in December 1987, and two others who were forcibly sterilised after their second pregnancy.

TESTIMONY SIX is that of Adhi Taphe and is dealt with above.

TESTIMONY SEVEN is that of an office worker from Gormu in Amdo who reported that she was sterilised the day after the delivery of her second child in 1987, and has suffered loss of appetite, back ache and gastric problems. The witness asserted that all the women in her office had been sterilised after their second child.

TESTIMONY EIGHT, is that of a "Birth Control Supervisor" at the village of Iha Yi in Kashi Shang district. He reported leaving the area in mid 1989, when the area population was 4549, and only 5 Chinese. He reported there being 768 Tibetan women between 16 and 49, of which ONLY 95 had been issued with birth permits!

Permits were issued to newly married, or women with less than 2 children. Those with 3 or more were fined 1800 Yuan a regardless of ability to pay, though it was apparently possible to obtain a permit for a third child. Children born out of wedlock resulted in an 800 Yuan fine.

The witness noted that birth control policy was implemented in this nomadic region in 1982 and that in 1988 the child allowance was increased from three to four. However, he states that this was of LITTLE BENEFIT TO TIBETANS SINCE MOST OF THE WOMEN HAD BY THEN BEEN STERILISED! Details of all women were kept at the birth control office which the witness ran. He claimed that each woman received notification of permission for birth, by way of a *"governmental circular entitled CERTIFICATE TO BEAR CHILDREN"* and that the number issued declined each year.

He additionally reported he knew of 23 Tibetan women who were forcibly sterilised at Sashu sub-district Health Care Centre in June 1986 by a Chinese physician from Dhartsedo, an advisor to the Karze Regional Birth Control Office and of a Chinese physician also from Dhartsedo, called Hu De Son who carried out forced sterilisation on 123 men at this centre in August 1987.

Tseten Samdup (Tibetan Review 1988) reported on Mrs Dolkar of Dechen District who claimed she had been forcibly sterilised, and that she knew of another 23 women in her district who had suffered likewise.

Samdup also reported of an American tourist *"who wishes to remain anonymous"* who travelled in Kham in 1986 and witnessed 18 fetuses being thrown near hospital toilets in a single night.

The O.I.I.R (Tibetan Review September 1988) reported on forced sterilisations in two villages in the Toelung Dechen District.

A Mrs Dechen stated her village comprised 12 households with 9 women named Anu, Penpa Tsering Dolma, Tasam Wangdu, Choedon, Lhakpa Dolma and Tsamcho who were forcibly sterilised. In a nearby village of 29 households 13 women named Lhadruk, Tsomo, Dekyi, Pasang Dolma, Sonam Youdon, Dekyi Dawa, Tsering Dolkar, Dawa Dolma, Tsamcho, Tsepak, Pema and Tasam were also sterilised against their will around the end of 1982 beginning of 1983.

A report by US Congressional Aides (*Tibetan Review* September 1988) in 1988 describes an interview with three recent Tibetan refugees who were *"expressive and adamant"* that there had been forced abortions and sterilisations in their area. They described *"abortion vans"* that passed through villages in the early morning **picking up all the women, both Tibetan and Chinese; in the fields. **Pregnant women were forced to have abortions, others including unmarried girls and elderly women were sterilised.****

A report by E. Cohen (*Tibetan Women & The Population Control Policy of the PRC*, 1989) featured interviews conducted with Tibetan refugees at the Tibetan school at Bir, in North India. Cohen interviewed ten women about birth control policy, four women from Lhasa, five from Kham and one from Amdo. Nine of them stated that Tibetans were allowed only two children, one woman thought it was two or three.

On the policy for Chinese women two apparently thought it was two children, one knew the actual one child policy, one stated that she "doesn't know much about Chinese" and five others didn't answer. Three women referred to a policy of sterilisation after second birth, one speaking of her two sisters who had undergone such treatment. Two women referred to the punishment of no ration card for un-permitted children one referring to it as "IF THEY GIVE BIRTH TO MORE THAN TWO CHILDREN, THEY DON'T GET ANYTHING TO EAT".

Only one woman apparently showed any understanding of the concept of population control, and referred to population size as a reason for the existence of the policy. The others apparently did not comment on reasons for the existence of the policy.

One witness told Cohen that threats made to dissuade those who might disobey the policy were not only economic and referred to "a meeting in her village, called by the Chinese, in which the Chinese threatened to kill babies who were the 3rd and 4th in a family.

The response of the old people in the Tibetan community was to say *'It's no use killing the young ones, kill us'*. One woman, from Amdo; was in fact sterilised. She had worked in an office and had become pregnant for the second time. Her first child had died at seven months, but despite this she reported being sterilised the day after the birth of the second child.

She reported being threatened with loss of job and refusal of ration card for any future child if she didn't submit to sterilisation. This she simply described as *"They cut my stomach"* and complained of health problems since including tiredness, bleeding, lower back pain, loss of appetite and weight loss. She stated that most of the women in her old office had been sterilised.

An information sheet issued (O.I.I.R September 1989) detailed a report of a 24 year old Tibetan who worked in the Birth Control Committee in Zachuka Serju Chju Kashi Shang in eastern Tibet between 1985 and 1987, who was responsible for scrutinising the issue of birth permits. It stated that out of a population of 4000 for the area, only **ONLY 40 BIRTH PERMITS PER YEAR WERE ISSUED!** For those exceeding the quotas, 1800 Yuan fines were imposed for each child over.

Ledger (*Human Rights Violations In Tibet*, Parliamentary Human Rights Group 1988) reported that a Tibetan woman from Chamdo knew "*of 600 individual cases*" of sterilisation since 1980 when public announcements that families should have no more than two children started to be made in Chamdo. Those with more than two children apparently faced fines, salary cuts, higher taxes or even confiscation of homes. Apparently the idea was "*not only to deter others but the family will have difficulty feeding themselves, causing illness, perhaps starvation and even the death of the unwanted child*". Mothers may then be sterilised forcibly in appalling conditions.

A refugee from Amdo reported having seen "*truck loads of women being taken away to hospitals to be sterilised*". Abortions were apparently usually done in the morning, office workers then received two or three days paid leave but fieldworkers had return to work as soon as possible to earn a living. A refugee from Chamdo asserted that the Chinese forced abortions on women 3 to 5 months pregnant, and claimed to have seen foetuses lying in drains and dustbins outside Chamdo Public Welfare Hospital.

Ledger reported that another refugee asserted that "*sometimes the mother will go through labour, give birth and hear the baby cry and the after fully awakening will learn that the baby died during birth*". The refugee considered such babies to be the victims of infanticide.

A testimony (*Tibetan Bulletin* September 1991) from Ms. Valda Harding, an English nurse described how "***Tibetan women in Lhasa have been taken forcibly from their homes caged like animals and taken away by a truck***".

The nurse described how she came across a commotion at dusk in September 1987. She saw a truck with it's back open and three wicker baskets inside. Two had Tibetan women in them and a third stood empty. She assumed they were criminals but was told they were "***being taken away because they were having too many children***". Harding recalled there was a large crowd of protesting Tibetans and a lot of Chinese soldiers around the truck. Harding could not see if the women were pregnant but she got the impression that they "***were pregnant, but they weren't going to be pregnant in a very short time***".

Harding stated that ***"The full significance of what I saw didn't really hit me until later. It sounds strange, but IN TIBET YOU GET USED TO SEEING PEOPLE KICKED, BEATEN AND ABUSED"***.

Testimony from Chodhak & Choephel (Present Conditions In Tibet OIR, 1991) asserted that abortion techniques include ***"inserting electrical devices into the vagina of women who are two to three months pregnant, thereby killing the baby", "giving injections to 5 - 6 months pregnant women thereby killing babies inside the womb" and "giving lethal injections to babies just after delivery"***.

Testimony (Presented 18th October 1988) provided by a Tibetan Doctor from the People's Hospital in Amdo describes the process of Menstrual Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) she underwent. The doctor was a little over 84 days pregnant when she submitted to pressure to have an abortion early in 1989. On 1st March at 4 am a physician named as Cho Yi Chin was apparently ordered to conduct the MTP operation, but the required appliances were not available at the hospital. Furthermore no anaesthetic was supplied. A rubber tube was inserted about 4.40am causing a loss of blood in the womb, this is claimed to make the operation safer.

She was told next day that the womb had opened making it easier to operate. She says that "the Gua Shao" a big "spoon type" of appliance was inserted into the vagina and ***"thereafter bits and pieces of the child's body were taken out and the appliance was again inserted into the womb right to left. This was done to prevent internal growths and disorders from remaining inside the womb. All this took about three minutes"***.

Then a device that span round at great speed was inserted and the remains of the child's body were removed by suction. She reports that the ***"reading on the machine would go on to 200, which is the fastest speed. Because some of the pieces were big it would block the tube now and then. After about half an hour the 'operation' was over"*** The doctor reported that ***"The complications and pain that I went through during this operation were so terrible that I don't want to tell"*** but stated that there were greater problems for women whose pregnancies were 7 or 8 months advanced, and who must undergo such operations which she asserted ***"happens quite often at this hospital"***.

She also reported constant back pain and irregular periods since that time and tells of another method of abortion called Le Xun Nur where 0.2ml of Le Xun Nur (a drug ?) is injected into the foetal bag using a size 12 syringe, resulting in stillborn delivery in about 72 hours. Testimonies considered previously in this report often refer to the practice of injecting the mother in the abdomen to cause abortion and are undoubtedly that described here or similar methods.

Many of the testimonies report health problems that are attributed to the abortion/sterilisation operations, and also that the operations are often carried out without regard for the health or welfare of the woman and under bad conditions.

The symptoms described are remarkably consistent and include most commonly, back ache, loss of appetite sometimes with attendant gastric problems, weakness and tiredness. Some report fever and headaches. There are even reports that women died as a result of such operations.

Factors Restricting Availability Of Information From Occupied Tibet

State Control

'Witness From Occupied Tibet'... "They were kicking him on the ground, and he was bleeding a lot—there was so much blood".

There is no aspect of life, inside that formerly independent nation, which is not monitored, controlled, suppressed or free from state regulation and manipulation. A number of regulations have been passed by China designed to further suppress Tibetans, in 2007 for example a *Reuters* report documented that: *"Reincarnations of "living Buddhas" in Tibet which fail to get Chinese government approval are illegal and invalid, China has announced as it tightens control of a region still deemed loyal to the Dalai Lama"*.

The law came into power on September 1, 2007 were to *"regulate the management of the reincarnation of living Buddhas"*, (China's State Administration for Religious Affairs). Following the widespread Uprisings for Tibetan independence during 2008 ever greater and more oppressive restrictions were imposed across Tibet. Prominent among such measures was an intensification of the so-called *Patriotic Education Campaign*, that targeted Monasteries to coerce Buddhist monks and nuns to denounce the Dalai Lama and submit to China's state ideology on Tibet.

Mass arrests, political show trials, torture, prison and killings ensured the 'stability' Beijing demanded following the protests for Tibetan freedom. The violent nature of repression generated international concern from human rights monitors including *Human Rights Watch* which released a damning report on China's repressive actions in Tibet following the 2008 protests <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2010/07/22/i-saw-it-my-own-eyes-0> Prior to the crackdown it was already virtually impossible for freedom of movement for Tibetans, that were subject to official Chinese authorization for almost every facet of daily life, most notably travel, housing and employment registration, since that time what was already a form of martial law has been tightened further.

In truth Tibetans are under China's military and police rule, with a wide network of informers and security operations that seek to strangle any expression of dissent. The Chinese regime targets Tibetans for special attention in relation to security operations, even incorporating the newly created Lhasa rail link as part of its security/information structure. A project called *Golden Shield* that enables the monitoring and procession of personal data for individual movement and activities of people on a mass scale. **See here:** http://www.dd-rd.ca/site/_PDF/publications/globalization/hria/Tibet%20-%20REPORT.pdf For Tibetans this means even more suffocating intrusion.

As reflected in the findings of a number of Congressional hearings on the human rights situation in Tibet, and known to the *US Congressional Executive Committee on China*, the machinery of state authority over Tibetans can be justifiably described as beyond the totalitarian nightmares of George Orwell. Communications are monitored, most notably international calls, emails, faxes and correspondence between overseas Tibetans and relatives inside Tibet. Internet use is tightly monitored by the state, making it almost impossible for Tibetans to use in any open or free manner. A report from *Radio Free Asia* August 3 2010 noted that:

"All internet cafes (sic) across Tibet have been ordered to finish installing by the end of Aug'10 a state-of-the-art surveillance system which would not only restrict contents that could be viewed by identified surfers but also monitor their internet activities. "All the Internet cafes must now install it,"
The Machinery Of Fear

'Witness From Occupied Tibet' *"The two prisoners who were sentenced to death were told by the Chinese police that since they were to be executed in two days, they should sing loudly and dance in front of the crowd of other prisoners."*

China's harrowing human rights record is well documented, the torture, arbitrary arrests, forced-labor, executions, all have attracted international outrage and concern from governments, human rights organizations and the United Nations.

No one however knows better than the people of Tibet the terrifying reality of life under Chinese rule, and the chilling consequences for those who dare to express dissent or reveal information which places China in any negative light. **The countless reports of beatings, night searches and deportations calls to mind eye-witness descriptions of 1938 'Crystal Night' in Vienna, when the Nazis rounded up large numbers of Jews.**

Well documented reports detail trucks full of stunned Tibetans disappearing into the night to face savage reprisals. There is enough evidence and testimony to fill a fair sized library that documents the forms of violent abuse and degradation suffered by Tibetan political prisoners, who face years of brutal misery inside one of many prisons and forced-labor camps in occupied Tibet.

A great deal of such information has been presented to the US Congress, individual Congressmen, successive Secretaries of State, and even a number of Presidents. One of the most disturbing accounts was presented to the United States Congress (Congressional Record Volume 141, Number 62, Tuesday, April 4, 1995) by former Tibetan political Prisoner Mr. Palden Gyatso, whose harrowing testimony revealed the horrifying reality of violent suppression faced by Tibetans.

What is often overlooked however is just how pervasive is the atmosphere of oppression which hangs over the Tibetan people who live under constant fear.

During a visit to China and Tibet in 2005, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture reported *“a palpable level of fear and self-censorship which he had not experienced in the course of his previous missions”*.

Tibetan refugees have long asserted that any attempt to exercise their human rights inside occupied Tibet threatened their personal liberty and security. A number of delegations and investigations conducted in Tibet have noted a palpable sense of anxiety and self-censorship.

Some, such as a 2007 investigation by the *International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development*, noted that during an effort to converse with Tibetans a number of off-limit subjects, including mention of Tibetan government-in-exile, political prisoners, the Panchen Lama and human rights. Included within that last subject of course is the issue of China's coercive birth control policies and the violations inflicted upon Tibetan women. Such conditions provide a huge challenge in securing detailed communication on subjects like forced sterilizations. Although testimony *does* emerge, as featured throughout this paper.

Intensified Border Control

Witness From Occupied Tibet: *“Then, without warning, shots rang out. Over, and over and over. Then the line of people started to run uphill; they were at 19,000ft. Apparently the Chinese army was tipped off about their attempted escape, and had showed up with guns. Watching the line snake off through the snow, as the shots rang out, we saw two shapes fall. The binoculars confirmed it: two people were down, and they weren't getting up”*.

Since around 2000 China has embarked upon a determined effort to effectively seal off Tibet's borders with both Nepal and India, This has had a dramatic effect upon the numbers of Tibetans seeking exile and thus reduced significantly too the amount of testimony, which has proved a key resource in documenting cases of human rights violations resulting from China's population program in Tibet. A 2005 report by the *International Campaign for Tibet*, 'Dangerous Crossing', documented the dangers for Tibetans escaping from Tibet into exile through Nepal, a country which has established very favourable relations with Beijing. Based on interviews conducted in Nepal and India, and monitoring of the socio-economic and political situation in Tibet, the publication demonstrated incidents of *re-foulement* of Tibetans during that year, notably within the sensitive border regions of Nepal. It further documented that Chinese border guards encouraged cooperative relations with Nepalese border forces, to assist in returning Tibetans.

According to a *Nepal News* on 20th February 2010 four Tibetan nationals, including three women, were arrested from Nepal's Dolakha district after escaping Chinese-occupied Tibet

A key point to note (and an ongoing trend which has been observed since 2000) is that over a third of the new arrivals during 2004 were children under 14 (Sent into exile by family that consider exile as being their only chance for a better life). This has a direct impact upon the flow of information regarding China's coercive birth control activities inside Tibet, as women and mothers often remain inside occupied Tibet to tend to relatives. Thus impacting upon the amount of available testimony.

Another factor which affects the provision of such material is the fact that, as noted by the report, the majority of adult Tibetans who arrive in Nepal are monks and nuns, seeking a religious expression and freedom not possible in occupied Tibet due to the restrictions imposed by the Chinese state. Those that do try to seek a life in exile face being target practice for China's security forces that man the Tibetan border with Nepal, as happened infamously in September 2006 when witnessed by a party of horrified mountaineers climbers Chinese troops shot dead at least two Tibetan refugees trying to cross the border (The Independent 6th October, 2006)

A report in *The Indian Times* 2nd April 2010 described **a dramatic decline in the number of Tibetans escaping occupied Tibet, due to China's intense security and Nepalese cooperation.** "Normally until 2008, every year we had on average between 2,500 and 3,000 people who escaped from Tibet. But since the demonstration in March 2008, that number has fallen," said Tempa Tsering, a senior official within the exiled Tibetan Government in India "Last year about 600 have come out," he said. "That's (because) firstly, the restriction in Tibet" by the Chinese authorities became tougher and "secondly, in all the mountain paths guarding is strengthened," he said.

The intense and lethal nature of the border security, combined with the age groups, and mostly religious practitioners that do try to escape, has since 2008, reduced significantly testimony from numbers of Tibetan women who may have either experienced or witnessed China's program of forced sterilisations and forced abortions inside Tibet. In this case absence of evidence should not be considered as implying such abuses are not occurring.

Geographic And Cultural Factors

Another factor which has a direct and significant impact upon the availability of information on the subject of China's coercive birth control violations inside occupied Tibet relates to the lifestyle of the majority of Tibet's population.

Even today it is considered that around 80 percent of Tibetans follow a traditional nomadic culture, living in areas of extreme remoteness, denied educational opportunities. It is within such regions that reports of China's mobile birth control teams' have operated, arriving into an area, forcibly sterilizing hundreds of women then moving on. Such medical atrocities are conducted far away from the attention of the media, international observers or human rights monitors, and we rely upon covert interviews or testimony from those Tibetans, who manage to escape into exile.

These accounts display a remarkable consistency in their description of the nature and extent of such violations, and record to that China enforces such 'population control' across the vast isolation of Tibet. How different is the situation inside China itself. Increasingly developed, possessed of an educated and affluent demographic with understanding of and easy access to the Internet.

Where a tradition of articulate and organized dissent has developed, with lawyers journalists and officials having access, and leaking information, to compatriots in exile who operate a number of very professional and highly efficient human rights organizations dedicated to exposing the more odious aspects of life inside communist China. Unlike occupied Tibet too, there are any number of Foreign media inside China, who although suffering a number of claustrophobic restrictions from the communist authorities, still serve as a conduit for reports on human rights issues.

Take for example the story which emerged documenting the forcible sterilization and coercive abuses of nearly 10000 women in Puning City, Guangdong Province, China during April 2010

http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=18720

When assessing the amount of information documenting China's coercive birth control policies it soon becomes apparent that there is a discrepancy between available information from China itself and occupied territories such as Tibet or East Turkestan. There are obvious reasons for this, most prominently the social, educational and economic development divide that distinguishes society within China and those regions under its brutal rule, most notably occupied Tibet. In which commentators note that, even presently a considerable percentage of Tibetans live some form of nomadic lifestyle, following a pastoral culture which has existed for millennia, although now being targeted by China, as it forcibly 'resettles' Tibet's nomads

<http://tibettruth.com/2009/08/14/chinas-forces-tibets-nomads-into-concentration-settlements/>

Conclusion-The Myth Of Moderation

There is no doubt that a spiral of birth-control enforcement is imposed upon Buddhist-Tibetan and Moslem-Uyghur women. Measures which include fines, arrest, detention, degrading treatment and physical force. There is an extensive and well researched body of evidence, including first-hand testimony, eyewitness accounts, and a range of supportive information from a variety of sources, including Chinese documentation, international media reports, television documentaries, and accounts from former birth-control officers, which testify that Tibetan (and Uyghur) women continue to face a systematic policy of medically unnecessary, highly coercive, and often harmful sterilizations and forced abortions, ostensibly justified by China's nationwide population control policies.

The duplicitous claim that Tibetans are exempt from the harrowing realities of coercive birth-control is forcefully contradicted by the evidence and testimony which has revealed that for decades Tibetan women have been subject to a range of human rights violations as a result of China's coercive birth control policies.

This was also exposed by the researches and observations of the Producer of the UK television documentary '*Undercover Tibet*', Mr. Jezza Neumann who noted such abuses as being all too real for Tibetans:

"China maintains that it doesn't implement its one-child policy in minority regions such as Tibet, but we discovered that this wasn't true. One woman told us how she'd been subjected to a forced sterilisation. The secret police broke into her house and said they would take all of her belongings if she didn't go with them. Aspirin was the only anaesthetic she was given before they cut her open." **(The Independent 31st March 2008)**

Such evidence and testimony exposes as fallacious the often cited claim that China has made good progress in recent years in improving reproductive health rights, especially through the supposed implementation of the 2002 Law of Population and Family Planning. A law which theoretically establishes equal rights for women and men in accordance with the principles of the ICPD (International Conference on Population and Development). Although that international statute is itself open to serious critique in relation to safeguarding women against China's coercive birth-control practices.

What is often overlooked is that China's official pronouncements regarding its population control policies are designed to assuage and deflect any international concerns, while internally the abuses continue, as most graphically demonstrated with **the forcible sterilization of nearly 10, 000 women** in the city of Puning, Guangdong Province (Amnesty International Bulletin April 22, 2010)

Despite such reports and the continuing information documenting the forcible sterilization of women across Tibet, **governments, including that of the United States, have simply repeated Chinese propaganda by insisting the use of physical coercion to compel persons to submit to abortion or sterilization is prohibited.** Yet, like other attempts to deny the reality of coercion and violations within China's population program, such claims owe their origin to a calculated Chinese deceit. Assertions that China's Regulations for the Management of Family Planning Technical Services of 2001 prohibits physical coercion relating to sterilization and abortion, is a cynical and misleading claim and duplicitous interpretation of Article 14 in that propaganda document. It is worth quoting:

"The institution engaged in family planning technical services shall, when giving a contraceptive or birth control surgery, a special examination or a special treatment, obtain the personal consent of the recipient and guarantee the recipient's safety." (Article 14: Regulations on Administration of Technical Services for Family Planning, Promulgated by Decree No. 309 of the State Council of the People's Republic of China on June 13, 2001, and effective as of October 1, 2001)

Nowhere do we see any clear prohibition from the Chinese state cautioning family planning officials that it against the law to physically coerce an individual to undergo sterilization or abortion. The emphasis, though superficially to be about consent, does not reveal *how* and by *what* methods such *compliance is obtained*. Thus, a range of coercive pressures may still be applied, and these are tolerated in the 2002 Law of Population and Family Planning! When governments affirm moderation and progress within China's population program, on the basis of what is a deliberately distorted interpretation of a propaganda document, claiming China prohibits coercion, they are repeating a base deception.

The text of communist **China's 2002 Law of Population and Family Planning** features no sign of moderation. It **says nothing about prohibiting, punishing, or even avoiding coercive tactics**. It **does not list and condemn specific coercive measures widely used in China**, although it does list specific acts obstructing family planning and provides for their punishment. It **does not acknowledge "the rights of citizens to determine the number and spacing of their children,"** although the Chinese Government supposedly signed on to such a guarantee at the 1994 World Population Conference in Cairo.

It **does not affirm the citizens right to choose his own form of contraception**. It **does not prohibit the widespread practice of putting pregnant women or their relatives into detention in order to force their compliance with family planning rules or their submission to forced abortions, sterilizations, IUD insertions, and implants**.

It **says nothing about any prospective "transition" toward a "client-centered" or voluntary approach to family planning**. It **does not mention the possibility of an imminent abandonment of family planning targets or quotas**; instead, it requires *"detailed population control quotas"* and reaffirms the necessity to continue the national and local *"population plans,"* on which quotas and targets are based. It speaks only vaguely about citizens *"legitimate"* rights and couples them with a reminder of the citizens' *"duty"* to practice family planning. The main purpose of the law and its most explicit provisions all have to do with family planning enforcement and the punishment of those who weaken or obstruct its enforcement.

*"Article 41 Citizens who give birth to babies not in compliance with the provisions of Article 18 of this Law shall pay a social maintenance fee prescribed by law. Citizens who fails to pay the full amount of the said fees payable within the specified time limit shall have to pay an additional surcharge each in accordance with relevant State regulations, counting from the date each fails to pay the fees; with regard to **ones who still fail to make the payment, the administrative department for family planning that makes the decision on collection of the fees shall, in accordance with law, apply to the People's Court for enforcement**"*.

*"Article 43 **Anyone who resists or hinders the administrative department for family planning or its staff members in their performance of their official duties in accordance with law shall be subject to criticism and be stopped by the administrative department for family planning . . .**"*

(Population and Family Planning Law of the People's Republic of China (Order of the President No 63) September 1, 2002.)

It is often asserted by defenders of the Chinese population programme, that a relaxation of such coercive measures were a part of China's 2002 National Family Planning Law. However, as indicated by the extracts above there is no sign of moderation presented, nor anything about prohibiting, punishing, or avoiding coercive practices. Neither does it identify or condemn specific coercive measures, used across occupied Tibet. Significantly though it does emphasize precise acts obstructing family planning, and provision is made for their punishment.

“China's population planning policies in both their nature and implementation constitute human rights violations according to international Standards.” (US Congressional Executive Commission on China-Annual Report 2008.)

Tibettruth expresses serious concern at this neglect, of what constitute a pattern of gender-based violence that Tibetan, Uyghur and Chinese women suffer as a consequence of China's population policies. This includes forced or coerced sterilizations and forced abortions. Furthermore such abuses take place against a background of other human rights violations, and in the case of the Tibetan people a denial of their fundamental right to self-determination, as recognized by General Assembly Resolution 1723 (XVI) (1961) and reaffirmed by Resolution 2079 (XX) (1965).

Forced sterilisations, coerced abortions and sterilisations, in tandem with intrusive monitoring of women's reproductive cycles, constitute acts of discrimination that violate:

Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Article 16(e) of CEDAW specifically guarantees women the rights: *“to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the . . . means to enable them to exercise these rights.”*

At the Fourth World Conference on Women, the participating governments, including the United States and China, recognized and reaffirmed:

“the right to have control and decide freely and responsibly . . . matters related to . . . Reproductive health, free of coercion . . . and violence.”
(Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, para 96.)

To this end, governments agreed to:

“Take all appropriate measures to eliminate . . . coercive medical interventions . . .” (para 106(h).)

Having collectively agreed and committed the United States to the terms and agreements of the Platform for Action and The Beijing Declaration, which rightly defined violence against women as including:

“ . . . forced sterilisation, and forced abortion, coercive/forced use of contraceptives . . . ” (Ibid-Paragraph 115).

It is clear that despite the misleading denials and claims made regarding such legislation, on the ground coercion remains a central feature of China's population programme. Women across China, and occupied territories such as Tibet and East Turkestan are subjected to a range of coercive measures, including physical coercion, arbitrary arrest, fines and forced sterilizations.

Moreover this report has sought to expose as bogus the cynical and mendacious claim that Tibetans are subject to less stringent regulations than the Han Chinese

“I was taken by force by the Chinese and sterilised, having gone beyond the stated limit of children. Nearly 30 women were also sterilised at the same time as me, in my village 70% of woman at 18 have been sterilised.

They treat us like animals and use many crude methods, my husband's sister was sterilised before his very eyes. She was four months pregnant and had been taken to the centre by force. They tied her hands and legs while the doctor, wearing gloves, put his hand into the vagina and squeezed the foetus. She was delirious and bled profusely for sometime”. Interview conducted 23rd February 2009 near Leh, Ladakh by Tibettruth with a 37 year-old woman (name withheld for security concerns) from Kham in Eastern Tibet

Acknowledgment

***Tibettruth* wishes to extend its sincere appreciation and respect to those courageous Tibetans who provided testimony.**

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Policy Recommendations

Tibettruth respectfully requests that the United States Administration and Honorable Members of Congress.

- 1)** Call upon the State Department to more prominently and formally include, in the United States-China human rights dialogue, with specific reference to Tibet, the implementation of China's population and family planning law.

- 2)** Ask the State Department to implement an independent evaluation involving a forum of relevant and independent organizations including human rights monitors to more factually and independently assess the Chinese population program, as they impact upon Buddhist-Tibetan, Moslem-Uyghur women, and other subject peoples within Chinese-occupied territories.

- 3)** Request that the State Department's Under Secretary Maria Otero, Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, should feature, research and publish human rights violations arising from China's coercive birth control policies as applied to occupied Tibet

- 4)** Call upon the State Department to make available for Congress, human rights organizations and/or members of the public details of exchanges between its officials and Chinese representatives within the United States-China human rights dialogue. Making available for public examination evidence that the State Department has formally expressed its condemnation to China concerning coercive practices within that population program, including the occupied nation of Tibet.

- 5)** Demand that the State Department urgently establish a program, linked to future availability of international economic aid, or educational, scientific support mechanisms, aimed at encouraging the Chinese government to switch their reliance on sterilization and abortion to the use of safe, effective and voluntary methods of contraception.

So that the Chinese program can be brought into line with CEDAW Articles 1, 2 and 16e, The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court Article 7.1 and the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, including Paragraphs. 96, 106 (h) and 115.

Glossary

Above-Quota Births/Extra Births/Unauthorized Births Births Not Approved by Local/Regional Birth-Control Offices And Thus Not Included In The Local Population Plan.

Birth Control Surgeries IUD Insertion, Vasectomy, Tubal Ligations, Abortion

Birth Permit Official Certificate Authorising A Pregnancy

Broad Masses Euphemism Use By China's Government When Referring To Generalizations About What The People Want, Think, State While Inferring Some Disagreement. Apparently Used When Those Who Disagree Are In The Majority.

Cadres Officials Of The Communist Party Of China

Commandism The Use Of Administrative Commands Rather Than Propaganda, Reason Or Other Methods Of Persuasion To Induce People To Comply With Chinese Government Directives.

Masses Ordinary Citizens (Those Without Government Rank, or Party Membership)

Party Central Committee Ruling Group Within The Chinese Communist Party

Propaganda Usually Refers To Programs of Public Education And Indoctrination Promoting Compliance With Policies Of The Party Leaders But May Also Refer To Measures To Force People To Compliance To Policies To Which They Are Subject.

Qinghai Province Tibetan Territory (formed from Amdo and Kham Tibetan regions) Annexed By China Following Its Invasion Of Tibet in 1949

Ration Card Permit Allowing Tibetans To Purchase Essential Monthly Staple Supplies From Chinese Government Stores.

Remedial Measures Euphemism For Abortion

Technical Measures Euphemism For Birth Control 'Surgeries'

Tibet Autonomous Region Chinese Provincial Administrative Unit, Created in 1965 From Annexed Tibetan Territory Already Incorporated Into Other Chinese Provinces

Work Style Method Of Execution of Official Policies

Xinhua Official Chinese News Agency

Yuan Chinese Monetary Unit

Appendix

Tibetan Population Levels-A Case Of Manipulation And Propaganda

According to a report published September 6, 2010 the Tibetan population of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (truncated area of Tibetan territory) had reached more than 2.9 million at the end of 2009, claiming it was an increase in relation to previous claims of 1.228 million in 1959. The majority of this supposed increase was said by the so-called *Tibet's Strategic Research Forum on Population Development* to be due to an increased Tibetan population level. The report referenced the so-called *Tibet's Economic and Social Development Report (2009)* as asserting the *local* Tibetan population in that region had seemingly increased from one million in 1956 to 2.7 million in 2008.

What these reports do not consider is the increasing levels of Chinese colonization into Tibet (including the truncated area called Tibetan Autonomous Region) which has witnessed huge numbers of Han Chinese 'settlers' moving into Tibetan areas.

These are often non-registered and are included, in the vague and loaded term, 'local Tibetan population' along with registered Chinese colonizers, both groups no doubt making a significant contribution to a supposedly increased 'Tibetan' population level. Nor do such official documents, designed for foreign consumption, detail China's long history of distorting and manipulating such statistics to support its duplicitous claims that it has brought social, educational, economic and health progress to Tibet, since its invasion in 1949.

In a cynical choreography China's communist regime seeks to peddle the idea that its 'policies' have resulted in an increased Tibetan population, the reality being that its expansionist objectives in occupied Tibet have one objective the undermining of Tibetan culture and the eradication of Tibetan national identity.

Population transfer is just one side of the demographic assault upon Tibet, the other is China's coercive birth control policies which have had a major impact upon Tibetan population level. The publication of such statistics are part of a propaganda and ideological strategy that seeks to deflect attention and criticism away from the human rights violations China's population programme has inflicted upon Tibetan and the grave impact it has had in terms of maintaining a stable population level. China has a long history of manipulating population statistics for purposes of political propaganda, most sensitively perhaps in relation to Tibet.

Background

The 1953 National Census of China claimed that there were 2.77 million Tibetans living in "China" (*Tibetan Inhabited Areas-Demographic Changes-Beijing Review*, April 4, 1988, Ma and Pan). By 1982 the census figure had increased to 3.87 million. Liang Ming (*Tibet's Population: 1 Million More In 40 Years, Beijing Review*, April 1991 p46) stated that the 1990 census showed a further rise to 4.59 million Tibetans in "China".

However, Chinese statistics issued in 1987 claimed that there were 5.17 million (derived from the 1987 1% Sample of Population Statistics for Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu and Qinghai and Zhang Tianlu's (*Tibet's Population Develops Beijing Review*, Number 33, 1987 p20) figure for the so-called Tibetan Autonomous Region). There was thus an 11 % discrepancy between these two sets of figures which appears rather too big to be purely statistical error.

The Office of Information and International Relations (OIIR) of the Tibetan Government in Exile (*Tibet: Environment and Development Issues*, 1992 p49) asserted at that time the current Tibetan population as being just over 6.1 million. They further noted that Chinese and Tibetan figures broadly agreed for the historic Tibetan regions of U- Tsang and Amdo, but disagreed for Kham.

They concluded that the Chinese figures omitted Tibetans living outside the so-called Autonomous Prefectures, and that the large nomadic Tibetan population in this region had been underestimated. OIIR do not however explain how they derived their figures. Calculating the size of the Tibetan population in Tibet is difficult, complicated not only by the presence of increasing Chinese colonizers in Tibetan regions; who are included under the term 'local Tibetan population', but also compounded by the phenomenon of **"Ethnic Switching"**.

Rose Maria Li stated in *'Migration to China's Northern Frontier 1953 to 1982'-Population And Development Review* No 15.3 1989, that: **"In the early years of communist rule the prevalence of Han chauvinism meant it was better to be considered Han.**

As the Party became more tolerant of minority groups, it encouraged them to preserve their indigenous culture. Offspring of a Han parent and a parent from a minority group, who were previously registered as Han were re-classified under the appropriate minority group."

Li further asserted:

"The policy of partially exempting minority groups from the fertility restriction to which Han Chinese were subject increased the incentive to be labelled a member of a minority group. This would tend to magnify the growth of a minority population relative to that of the Han"

Li (p535) related that Professor Jiang Zhengus, (then Director of the Population Research Institute of Xian Jiaotong University) had informed her that ***"up to 40% of the growth of the minority population between 1964 and 1982 can be attributed to switching"***. Figures on ethnic switching in Tibet are not available. However, the potential implications of 40% of the claimed growth rate in the Tibetan population is such that it would (for those decades) decrease the population growth rate between 1964 and 1982 from the claimed 1.79% per year to 1.24%.

The size of the Tibetan population in 1949 prior to Chinese invasion is a disputed figure. The Tibetan Government in Exile claims that there were about 6 million Tibetans in Tibet before Chinese invasion, but the 1953 Chinese Census estimated 2.77 million. Even the Chinese accept that this was an estimate but maintain that the Tibetan claims of 6 million are false. However, the *Tibetan Youth Congress (Strangers In Their Own Land-Chinese population Transfer In Tibet And Its Impacts 1994)* quote evidence to support the Tibetan estimate from two Chinese sources:

1) The *Chinese State Statistical Bureau* as reported in the *People's Daily* (November 10, 1959) which **reported the Tibetan population as comprising; 1,273,969 in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region, 3,381,064 in Tibetan regions formerly within Kham 1,675,534 in so-called Qinghai Province (comprised mostly of the Tibetan region of Amdo)**

2) A quote in the *Beijing Review* (Vol 31) attributed to Huan Xiang (then Director of the *Centre for International Studies under the State Council of the People's Republic of China*) which claimed that: ***"of the present population of 6 million Tibetans, only 2 million are living in Tibet (Tibetan Autonomous Region), while the remaining 4 million are in other provinces"*** .

Yet for those decades in question the Chinese census figures record the following totals for the Tibetan population;

1953 - 2,775,000 1964 - 2,504,000 1982 - 3,870,000 1990 - 4,590,000

The population drop between 1953 and 1964 has been attributed to deaths during and following the Tibetan National Uprising in 1959 as well as other deaths from famine, forced labour camps and the exodus of Tibetan refugees fleeing war and repression.

The principle significance of the contradictory statistics is that:

- 1) It is not possible to accept Chinese Census figures on face value since other Chinese statistical sources contradict them.**
- 2) Growth rates claimed by the Chinese Government for the Tibetan population may be subject to possible distortion, perhaps by as much as 40% due to possible ethnic switching.**
- 3) The Tibetan population of approximately 6 million in 1949 as claimed by the Tibetan Government in Exile and apparently confirmed by at least two Chinese sources in 1959 and 1988 respectively throws into question the Chinese census claim of there being 4.59 million Tibetans and questions if the Tibetan population has experienced any growth at all since 1949.** All that can be said with certainty about the Tibetan population is that it is between 4.59 and 6 million.

Conclusion

In light of such inconsistencies we can at best regard official communist Chinese statistics on Tibet's population level as being inherently flawed. Moreover it would be naive in the extreme not to equally consider that the publication of such figures and claims on supposed increased Tibetan population levels are part of a duplicitous effort to propagandise on the supposed benefits China claims to have introduced to Tibetans, since it invaded Tibet in 1949.

Furthermore, we should also evaluate such figures against the reality that China has for over twenty years inflicted a draconian birth control programme upon Tibetans, which has not only traumatized countless Tibetan women (and men) but forced dangerous demographic consequences upon a future stable Tibetan population level, already marginalized and increasingly outnumbered by Chinese colonists in many parts of occupied Tibet.

Abbreviations

CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

ICJ International Commission Of Jurists

ICPD International Conference on Population and Development

IUD Inter-Uterine Device

MTP Menstrual Termination Of Pregnancy

OIIR Office Of Information And International Relations Of The Tibetan Government In Exile

TAR So-Called Tibet Autonomous Region

TCHRD Tibetan Center For Human Rights And Democracy