

Washington Plays 'Tibet Roulette' with China

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Washington has obviously decided on an ultra-high risk geopolitical game with Beijing by fanning the flames of violence in Tibet just at this sensitive time in their relations and on the run-up to the Beijing Olympics. It's part of an escalating strategy of destabilization of China which has been initiated by the Bush Administration over the past months. It also includes the attempt to ignite an anti-China Saffron Revolution in the neighboring Myanmar region, bringing US-led NATO troops into Darfur where China's oil companies are developing potentially huge oil reserves. It includes counter moves across mineral-rich Africa. And it includes strenuous efforts to turn India into a major new US forward base on the Asian sub-continent to be deployed against China, though evidence to date suggests the Indian government is being very cautious not to upset Chinese relations.

The current Tibet operation apparently got the green light in October last year when George Bush agreed to meet the Dalai Lama for the first time publicly in Washington. The President of the United States is not unaware of the high stakes of such an insult to Beijing. Bush deepened the affront to America's largest trading partner, China, by agreeing to attend as the US Congress awarded the Dalai Lama the Congressional Gold Medal.

The immediate expressions of support for the crimson monks of Tibet from George Bush, Condi Rice, France's Nicolas Sarkozy and Germany's Angela Merkel most recently took on dimensions of the absurd. Ms Merkel announced she would boycott attending the August Beijing Summer Olympics as her protest at the Beijing treatment of the Tibetan monks. What her press secretary omitted is that she had not even planned to go in the first place.

She was followed by an announcement that Poland's Prime Minister, the pro-Washington Donald Tusk, would also stay away, along with pro-US Czech President Vaclav Klaus. It is unclear whether they also hadn't planned to go in the first place but it made for dramatic press headlines.

The recent wave of violent protests and documented attacks by Tibetan monks against Han Chinese residents began on March 10 when several hundred monks marched on Lhasa to demand release of other monks allegedly detained for celebrating the award of the US Congress' Gold Medal last October. The monks were joined by other monks marching to protest Beijing rule on the 49th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising against Chinese rule.

The geopolitical game

As the Chinese government itself was clear to point out, the sudden eruption of anti-Chinese violence in Tibet, a new phase in the movement led by the exiled Dalai Lama, was suspiciously timed to try to put the spotlight on Beijing's human rights record on the eve of the coming Olympics. The Beijing Olympics are an event seen in China as a major acknowledgement of the arrival of a new prosperous China on the world stage.

The background actors in the Tibet "Crimson revolution" actions confirm that Washington has been working overtime in recent months to prepare another of its infamous Color Revolutions, these

fanning public protests designed to inflict maximum embarrassment on Beijing. The actors on the ground in and outside Tibet are the usual suspects, tied to the US State Department, including the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the CIA's Freedom House through its chairman, Bette Bao Lord and her role in the International Committee for Tibet, as well as the Trace Foundation financed by the wealth of George Soros through his daughter, Andrea Soros Colombel.

Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao has accused the Dalai Lama of orchestrating the latest unrest to sabotage the Olympic Games "in order to achieve their unspeakable goal", Tibetan independence.

Bush telephoned his Chinese counterpart, President Hu Jintao, to pressure for talks between Beijing and the exiled Dalai Lama. The White House said that Bush, "raised his concerns about the situation in Tibet and encouraged the Chinese government to engage in substantive dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives and to allow access for journalists and diplomats."

President Hu reportedly told Bush the Dalai Lama must "stop his sabotage" of the Olympics before Beijing takes a decision on talks with the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader, foreign ministry spokesman Qin Gang said.

Dalai Lama's odd friends

In the West the image of the Dalai Lama has been so much promoted that in many circles he is deemed almost a God. While the spiritual life of the Dalai Lama is not our focus, it is relevant to note briefly the circles he has chosen to travel in most of his life.

The Dalai Lama travels in what can only be called rather conservative political circles. What is generally forgotten today is that during the 1930's the Nazis including Gestapo chief Heinrich Himmler and other top Nazi Party leaders regarded Tibet as the holy site of the survivors of the lost Atlantis, and the origin of the "Nordic pure race."

When he was 11 and already designated Dalai Lama, he was befriended by Heinrich Harrer, a Nazi Party member and officer of Heinrich Himmler's feared SS. Far from the innocent image of him in the popular Hollywood film with Brad Pitt, Harrer was an elite SS member at the time he met the 11 year old Dalai Lama and became his tutor in "the world outside Tibet." While only the Dalai Lama knows the contents of Harrer's private lessons, the two remained friends until Harrer died a ripe 93 in 2006.¹

That sole friendship, of course, does not define a person's character, but it is interesting in the context of later friends. In April 1999, along with Margaret Thatcher, and former Beijing Ambassador, CIA Director and President, George H.W. Bush, the Dalai Lama demanded the British government release Augusto Pinochet, the former fascist dictator of Chile and a longtime CIA client who was visiting England. The Dalai Lama urged that Pinochet not be forced to go to Spain where he was wanted to stand trial for crimes against humanity. The Dalai Lama had close ties to Miguel Serrano², head of Chile's National Socialist Party, a proponent of something called esoteric Hitlerism.³

Leaving aside at this point the claim of the Dalai Lama to divinity, what is indisputable is that he has been surrounded and financed in significant part, since his flight into Indian exile in 1959, by various US and Western intelligence services and their gaggle of NGOs. It is the agenda of the Washington friends of the Dalai Lama that is relevant here.

The NED at work again...

As author Michael Parenti notes in his work, *Friendly Feudalism: The Tibet Myth*, "during the 1950s and 60s, the CIA actively backed the Tibetan cause with arms, military training, money, air support and all sorts of other help." The US-based American Society for a Free Asia, a CIA front, publicized the cause of Tibetan resistance, with the Dalai Lama's eldest brother, Thubtan Norbu, playing an active role in the group. The Dalai Lama's second-eldest brother, Gyalo Thondup, established an intelligence operation with the CIA in 1951. It was later upgraded into a CIA-trained guerrilla unit whose recruits parachuted back into Tibet, according to Parenti.⁴

According to declassified US intelligence documents released in the late 1990s, "for much of the 1960s, the CIA provided the Tibetan exile movement with \$1.7 million a year for operations against China, including an annual subsidy of \$180,000 for the Dalai Lama." ⁵

With help of the CIA, the Dalai Lama fled to Dharamsala, India where he lives to the present. He continues to receive millions of dollars in backing today, not from the CIA but from a more innocuous-sounding CIA front organization, funded by the US Congress, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The NED has been instrumental in every US-backed Color Revolution destabilization from Serbia to Georgia to Ukraine to Myanmar. Its funds go to back opposition media and global public relations campaigns to popularize their pet opposition candidates.

As in the other recent Color Revolutions, the US Government is fanning the flames of destabilization against China by funding opposition protest organizations inside and outside Tibet through its arm, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

The NED was founded by the Reagan Administration in the early 1980's, on the recommendation of Bill Casey, Reagan's Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), following a series of high-publicity exposures of CIA assassinations and destabilizations of unfriendly regimes. The NED was designed to pose as an independent NGO, one step removed from the CIA and Government agencies so as to be less conspicuous, presumably. The first acting President of the NED, Allen Weinstein, commented to the Washington Post that, "A lot of what we [the NED] do today was done covertly 25 years ago by the CIA." ⁶

American intelligence historian, William Blum states, "The NED played an important role in the Iran-Contra affair of the 1980s, funding key components of Oliver North's shadowy "Project Democracy." This network privatized US foreign policy, waged war, ran arms and drugs, and engaged in other equally charming activities. In 1987, a White House spokesman stated that those at NED "run Project Democracy." ⁷

The most prominent pro-Dalai Lama Tibet independence organization today is the International Campaign for Tibet, founded in Washington in 1988. Since at least 1994 the ICT has been receiving funds from the NED. The ICT awarded their annual Light of Truth award in 2005 to Carl Gershman, founder of the NED. Other ICT award winners have included the German Friedrich Naumann Foundation and Czech leader, Vaclav Havel. The ICT Board of Directors is peopled with former US State Department officials including Gare Smith and Julia Taft. ⁸

Another especially active anti-Beijing organization is the US-based Students for a Free Tibet, founded in 1994 in New York City as a project of US Tibet Committee and the NED-financed International Campaign for Tibet (ICT). The SFT is most known for unfurling a 450 foot banner atop the Great Wall in China; calling for a free Tibet, and accusing Beijing of wholly unsubstantiated claims of genocide against Tibet. Apparently it makes good drama to rally naïve students.

The SFT was among five organizations which this past January that proclaimed start of a "Tibetan

people's uprising" on Jan 4 this year and co-founded a temporary office in charge of coordination and financing.

Harry Wu is another prominent Dalai Lama supporter against Beijing. He became notorious for claiming falsely in a 1996 Playboy interview that he had "videotaped a prisoner whose kidneys were surgically removed while he was alive, and then the prisoner was taken out and shot. The tape was broadcast by BBC." The BBC film showed nothing of the sort, but the damage was done. How many people check old BBC archives? Wu, a retired Berkeley professor who left China after imprisonment as a dissident, is head of the Laogai Research Foundation, a tax-exempt organization whose main funding is from the NED.⁹

Among related projects, the US Government-financed NED also supports the Tibet Times newspaper, run out of the Dalai Lama's exile base at Dharamsala, India. The NED also funds the Tibet Multimedia Center for "information dissemination that addresses the struggle for human rights and democracy in Tibet," also based in Dharamsala. And NED finances the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy.

In short, US State Department and US intelligence community finger prints are all over the upsurge around the Free Tibet movement and the anti-Han Chinese attacks of March. The question to be asked is why, and especially why now?

Tibet's raw minerals treasure

Tibet is of strategic import to China not only for its geographical location astride the border with India, Washington's newest anti-China ally in Asia. Tibet is also a treasure of minerals and also oil. Tibet contains some of the world's largest uranium and borax deposits, one half of the world's lithium, the largest copper deposits in Asia, enormous iron deposits, and over 80,000 gold mines. Tibet's forests are the largest timber reserve at China's disposal; as of 1980, an estimated \$54 billion worth of trees had been felled and taken by China. Tibet also contains some of the largest oil reserves in the region.¹⁰

On the Tibet Autonomous Region's border along the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region is also a vast oil and mineral region in the Qaidam Basin, known as a "treasure basin." The Basin has 57 different types of mineral resources with proven reserves including petroleum, natural gas, coal, crude salt, potassium, magnesium, lead, zinc and gold. These mineral resources have a potential economic value of 15 trillion yuan or US\$1.8 trillion. Proven reserves of potassium, lithium and crude salt in the basin are the biggest in China.

And situated as it is, on the "roof of the world," Tibet is perhaps the world's most valuable water source. Tibet is the source of seven of Asia's greatest rivers which provide water for 2 billion people." He who controls Tibet's water has a mighty powerful geopolitical lever over all Asia.

But the prime interest of Tibet for Washington today is its potential to act as a lever to destabilize and blackmail the Beijing Government.

Washington's 'nonviolence as a form of warfare'

The events in Tibet since March 10 have been played in Western media with little regard to accuracy or independent cross-checking. Most of the pictures blown up in European and US newspapers and TV have not even been of Chinese military oppression of Tibetan lamas or monks. They have been shown to be in most cases either Reuters or AFP pictures of Han Chinese being beaten by Tibetan

monks in paramilitary organizations. In some instances German TV stations ran video pictures of beatings that were not even from Tibet but rather by Nepalese police in Kathmandu. 11

The western media complicity simply further underlies that the actions around Tibet are part of a well-orchestrated destabilization effort on the part of Washington. What few people realize is that the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) was also instrumental, along with Gene Sharp's misnamed Albert Einstein Institution through Colonel Robert Helvey, in encouraging the student protests at Tiananmen Square in June 1989. The Albert Einstein Institution, as it describes itself, specializes in "nonviolence as a form of warfare." 12

Colonel Helvey was formerly with the Defense Intelligence Agency stationed in Myanmar. Helvey trained in Hong Kong the student leaders from Beijing in mass demonstration techniques which they were to use in the Tiananmen Square incident of June 1989. He is now believed acting as an adviser to the Falun Gong in similar civil disobedience techniques. Helvey nominally retired from the army in 1991, but had been working with the Albert Einstein Institution and George Soros' Open Society Foundation long before then. In its annual report for 2004 Helvey's Albert Einstein Institution admitted to advising people in Tibet. 13

With the emergence of the Internet and mobile telephone use, the US Pentagon has refined an entirely new form of regime change and political destabilization. As one researcher of the phenomenon behind the wave of color revolutions, Jonathan Mowat, describes it,

"...What we are seeing is civilian application of Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's "Revolution in Military Affairs" doctrine, which depends on highly mobile small group deployments "enabled" by "real time" intelligence and communications. Squads of soldiers taking over city blocks with the aid of "intelligence helmet" video screens that give them an instantaneous overview of their environment, constitute the military side. Bands of youth converging on targeted intersections in constant dialogue on cell phones constitute the doctrine's civilian application.

"This parallel should not be surprising since the US military and National Security Agency subsidized the development of the Internet, cellular phones, and software platforms. From their inception, these technologies were studied and experimented with in order to find the optimal use in a new kind of warfare. The "revolution" in warfare that such new instruments permit has been pushed to the extreme by several specialists in psychological warfare. Although these military utopians have been working in high places, (for example the RAND Corporation), for a very long time, to a large extent they only took over some of the most important command structures of the US military apparatus with the victory of the neoconservatives in the Pentagon of Donald Rumsfeld.14

Goal to control China

Washington policy has used and refined these techniques of "revolutionary nonviolence," and NED operations embodied a series of 'democratic' or soft coup projects as part of a larger strategy which would seek to cut China off from access to its vital external oil and gas reserves.

The 1970's quote attributed to then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, a proponent of British geopolitics in an American context comes to mind: "If you control the oil you control entire nations..."

The destabilization attempt by Washington using Tibet, no doubt with quiet "help" from its friends in British and other US-friendly intelligence services, is part of a clear pattern.

It includes Washington's "Saffron revolution" attempts to destabilize Myanmar. It includes the ongoing effort to get NATO troops into Darfur to block China's access to strategically vital oil resources there and elsewhere in Africa. It includes attempts to foment problems in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and to disrupt China's vital new energy pipeline projects to Kazakhstan. The earlier Asian Great Silk Road trade routes went through Tashkent in Uzbekistan and Almaty in Kazakhstan for geographically obvious reasons, in a region surrounded by major mountain ranges. Geopolitical control of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan would enable control of any potential pipeline routes between China and Central Asia just as the encirclement of Russia controls pipeline and other ties between it and western Europe, China, India and the Middle East, where China depends on uninterrupted oil flows from Iran, Saudi Arabia and other OPEC countries.

Behind the strategy to encircle China

In this context, a revealing New York Council on Foreign Relations analysis in their Foreign Affairs magazine from Zbigniew Brzezinski from September/October 1997 is worth quoting. Brzezinski, a protégé of David Rockefeller and a follower of the founder of British geopolitics, Sir Halford Mackinder, is today the foreign policy adviser to Presidential candidate, Barack Obama. In 1997 he revealingly wrote:

'Eurasia is home to most of the world's politically assertive and dynamic states. All the historical pretenders to global power originated in Eurasia. The world's most populous aspirants to regional hegemony, China and India, are in Eurasia, as are all the potential political or economic challengers to American primacy. After the United States, the next six largest economies and military spenders are there, as are all but one of the world's overt nuclear powers, and all but one of the covert ones. Eurasia accounts for 75 percent of the world's population; 60 percent of its GNP, and 75 percent of its energy resources. Collectively, Eurasia's potential power overshadows even America's.

'Eurasia is the world's axial super-continent. A power that dominated Eurasia would exercise decisive influence over two of the world's three most economically productive regions, Western Europe and East Asia. A glance at the map also suggests that a country dominant in Eurasia would almost automatically control the Middle East and Africa. With Eurasia now serving as the decisive geopolitical chessboard, it no longer suffices to fashion one policy for Europe and another for Asia. What happens with the distribution of power on the Eurasian landmass will be of decisive importance to America's global primacy....'15 (emphasis mine-w.e.).

This statement, written well before the US-led bombing of former Yugoslavia and the US military occupations in Afghanistan and Iraq, or its support of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline, puts Washington pronouncements about 'ridding the world of tyranny' and about spreading democracy, into a somewhat different context from the one usually mentioned by George W. Bush or others.

It's about global hegemony, not democracy. It should be no surprise when powers such as China are not convinced that giving Washington such overwhelming power is in China's national interest, any more than Russia thinks that it would be a step towards peace to let NATO gobble up Ukraine and Georgia and put US missiles on Russia's doorstep "to defend against threat of Iranian nuclear attack on the United States."

The US-led destabilization in Tibet is part of a strategic shift of great significance. It comes at a time when the US economy and the US dollar, still the world's reserve currency, are in the worst crisis since the 1930's. It is significant that the US Administration sends Wall Street banker, former Goldman Sachs chairman, Henry Paulson to Beijing in the midst of its efforts to embarrass Beijing in Tibet. Washington is literally playing with fire. China long ago surpassed Japan as the world's largest

holder of foreign currency reserves, now in the range of \$1.5 trillions, most of which are invested in US Treasury debt instruments. Paulson knows well that were Beijing to decide it could bring the dollar to its knees by selling only a small portion of its US debt on the market.

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