

Information and analysis of developments in Tibet



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My Aspirations
[Chinese: *Wode xinyuan* - Tibetan: *bdag gi re-smon*]

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[*My Aspirations*, Preface, translated from the published Tibetan text]

Preface

Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China, our country has been characterised by socialist co-operation between the fifty-six nationalities, based on the principles of equality, unity and mutual help. The Tibetan nationality, under the leadership of the Communist Party of the People's Republic of China, has had its own beneficial socialist system of political, economic, scientific and educational organisation, and is now enjoying the warmth of membership in the big ancestral family of the Motherland. Throughout Tibet unparalleled achievements have been made in the task of economic and cultural progress and the Tibetan people's culture and standard of living has clearly improved since the old Tibetan society. However, as a result of historically inherited shortcomings there is still a wide gap between the economic and cultural level of progress in Tibet and that of other areas and nationalities in our country. This disparity has recently become more acute since the development of a socialist market economy. In my view, Tibet, which occupies one fifth of the total land area of our country, has great potential and significance for the economy,

culture, international relations and national defence [of our country], whether we consider the past, the present or the future.

As our country is a union of many different nationalities, the task of ushering in balanced and greater all round prosperity for all the nationalities is the paramount task of our Party and State at all times. Therefore, with both genuine and unmitigated concern for the affairs of the Party, and with unbounded love and concern for the highland of Tibet where I was born and raised, I have, to date, written about ten different articles starting with the lead article entitled "*How to reform, administer and develop the Tibetan areas*" [This was the original title of the 1st Chapter, which in our text is entitled "*Causes of instability in Tibet and strategies to counter them*"]. I have submitted to all concerned leaders and departments of the Party and Government, a factual account of the most important and significant matters pertaining to all Tibetan areas, and here I have outlined the means by which we may resolve the outstanding issues and a brief statement of my own ideological position and thinking, for consideration by all those who make policy decisions.

In my writing entitled "*Causes of instability in Tibet and strategies to counter them*" [Chapter 1], I have delineated the main causes of instability in Tibet under eight points.

1. A few splittists, aided by hostile foreign powers, have undermined stability by instigating unrest, engaging in sabotage, and spreading propaganda aimed at splitting the motherland.
2. The failure to properly implement the policy of regional nationality autonomy. This is the principal cause of instability in Tibet.
3. The growing economic and cultural gap between nationalities.
4. The failure to give the Tibetan language its proper role in society.
5. The failure of the government in the past to give due respect to the wishes of the people, their nationalist sentiments, and their concerns for their own futures. This has accentuated national conflicts in Tibetan areas.
6. Problems in the fields of education, science, and medical hygiene.
7. Officials not serving the people and even being at odds with the people.
8. National discrimination, which has become more prominent in recent years, and has created feelings of estrangement between the nationalities.

Of the eight factors listed above, the first is an external factor and the other seven are internal factors. Therefore, if we resolve the internal problems properly, the external factor will become ineffective.

In short, the internal causes of instability in the Tibetan areas are frustration over the hopes and appeals for reform, and the continuation of a backward economy in the Tibetan areas over a long period of time. These have served to heighten the conflict. Also our insensitive 'cut and chop' approach to resolving problems, displaying a contemptuous disregard for unique regional characteristics, has contributed to the instability. On the positive side, if we were to resolve these causes of instability in the Tibetan areas with speed and appropriate measures, and raise the people's material and cultural standard of living, the troublemakers would be denied the environment [needed] to instigate and foment trouble.

I have highlighted the seven internal factors of instability and my own ideas and practical suggestions for resolving them.

In "*Grieving for the fact that Tibetans do not know their own written and spoken language*" [Chapter 2], my position is that the main reasons for Tibetans not knowing their own written and spoken language are the disregard and non-implementation of the constitutional provision which stipulates that all nationalities have the freedom to use and develop their own language, and the erroneous view being promoted that Tibetan is a useless language. The fact that Tibetans do not know their own written and spoken language which they have used as the common language over centuries, is not only a matter of national disgrace but also a fundamental issue affecting our national destiny and fortune. As such, why shouldn't we grieve? In reality, it is something about which we ought to grieve, in my opinion. The Tibetan language is recognised as one of the advanced languages of the world, adequate for dealing with the social sciences, the natural sciences and many other sciences and for the translation of other languages.

Written and spoken language, along with customs and habits, is the pivot of a common national psyche. What we must clearly recognise is the fact that the existence of a nationality amongst a host of other nationalities depends fundamentally on the fact that they have a common language, [and share] customs and habits, territorial space and a common psyche. If they did not share these special characteristics, then there is no justification for calling them a nationality. Therefore I oppose linguistic chauvinism, and argue that the provisions for the free use and development of nationalities' own languages should be implemented sincerely and that there should be legal protection and support for each nationality's own language to be used as an instrument for exercising the responsibility and authority of autonomy.

In "*Suggestions for the selection of an outstanding batch of national minorities' cadres for placements in positions of responsibility in the PRC [Government] offices*" [Chapter 5], I have postulated that in accordance with the Marxist principle of equality, this principle should be exercised between nationalities as a basic premise in the resolution of nationalities issues, and that whilst implementing the policy of equality between nationalities, fundamental consideration should be given to the national interest of the country. If outstanding cadres are selected for positions of responsibility in the Peoples' Republic of China's (government) offices, there would be the following advantages:

Firstly, the principle of equality and freedom between nationalities with respect to positions of responsibility would be practically applied.

Secondly, equality, unity and mutual help between the nationalities would be consolidated and promoted.

Thirdly, [it would be advantageous] to the resolution of mutual conflicts between nationalities.

Fourthly, [it would be advantageous] to the formulation of appropriate policies by the Party and the Government in accordance with unique regional characteristics.

In view of the four benefits above, I have tried to justify the selection of a number of cadres from the minority nationalities for appointment to PRC [Government] offices.

The piece entitled "*Suggestions for reform in the system of selecting cadres*" [Chapter 4] was written in January 1989, when nepotism, considerations of seniority, age and dogmatism were rife; and in particular, the fact that some cadres, forgetting their commitment to serve the people wholeheartedly, had blatantly brought disrepute to our Party and Government in the eyes of the public. In light of this, I suggested the introduction of an element of competition in the selection process to enable outstanding candidates to reveal their knowledge and potential and through extensive publicity and to select and nurture outstanding cadres based on their character, education, potential, job qualification and achievements.

The chapter entitled "*Suggestions for the courageous reduction in the number of offices and the creation of a task force for the amalgamation of departments*" [Chapter 6], is based on meticulous investigation and analysis of the prevailing situation. In the nationalities' areas the plethora of offices has mushroomed, creating a corresponding increase in the level of bureaucratic control. This has had no beneficial effect on the goal of unitary control espoused in the consolidated plans for local self-government, based on the reality and unique characteristics of the local nationality areas. On the contrary, the PRC has established, on a uniform basis, political administrative offices with primarily military functions in all the Dzongs with a population of less than 20,000. This not only contradicts the actual needs of the local nationality areas but also puts a great strain on the local economy and is a waste of the extra subsidies that come from the national [Treasury].

A prime cause of backwardness in the social economy of nationalities areas is the insufficiency of funds to invest in development. On the other hand it has become inevitable that a large portion of the local economic development fund is given over to the protecting and financing the routine functions of these party political administrative offices with primarily military functions, which in some areas have accounted for over 80% of the total budget outlay. Therefore, considering the adverse effect this is having on the tasks of developing the economy and culture of the local nationality areas, I have made a few suggestions for the courageous reduction in the number of offices and the formation of an elite force for the amalgamation of departments [chapter 6].

When I presented my suggestions with regard to the above two chapters, some people, for internal purposes, made me the butt of ridicule and laughter for taking such an entrenched line. But I empathise and understand their position.

In the chapter about "*The will for [or consciousness of] autonomy among the cadres of the minority nationalities, and their ability in self-governance*" [Chapter 7], I maintain that the right to self-government granted to the nationality authorities by the [Central] Party and State is a unique privilege not enjoyed by other provincial governments. Whether or not this right is exercised properly depends on the will for self-government amongst the local nationality cadres, and their ability in self-governance. It is my thesis that raising the level of consciousness of self-government among the minority nationality cadres, and [thereby raising] their ability in self-governance, is an internal measure to ensure the practical application of the principle of self-government in the nationality areas. Consciousness of self-government is a product of national self-respect and self-reliance. Whether or not a cadre takes an interest in and is aware of the way in which their nationality is perceived by other nationalities of the Motherland, is an indication of the presence or lack of their consciousness and will for self-government. Therefore, I have postulated that consciousness of self-government among the cadres and their efficiency in self-governance should be the chief benchmarks by which we should assess the education and character of the minority nationality cadres.

Raising consciousness of nationality self-government among the cadres and raising their ability in self-governance would have the beneficial effect of bringing common prosperity to all the nationalities - a fundamental goal of our Party and State with respect to nationalities affairs. This would not only consolidate the relationship between the party and the people, but also illustrate the fact that the interests of the nationalities is the same as that of the State.

My thinking about the means by which we can raise consciousness of self-government among cadres and their ability in self-governance, are summed up as follows:

1. Raising the level of the nationalities' self-endeavour and courage.
2. Liberating the mind by inculcating new ideas and assimilating progress.
3. Learning from the advanced nationalities through:

- (a) modelling
- (b) various means of communication, and
- (c) despatching cadres for training in situ.

As history tells us, "responsibility for the progress and prosperity of the country lies with the people". Being a state cadre, nourished and sustained by the travails of the Party and the people, as well as being a member of the Tibetan nationality, I realise that it is my unquestionable duty to work for the prosperity of the State and for the progress of my nationality. Being concerned about the future path and destiny of our nationality, and realising that it is my historical legacy and duty to offer suggestions about ways and means of bring prosperity to our nationality, I submit this small booklet to the Party and the people amongst whom I was born and bred, with utmost sincerity, love and hope.

These suggestions have already been submitted to the national leaders and other concerned departments, and some of the writings have also been widely published in magazines, which have made an ostensible impact on the leadership at various levels of government in the Tibetan areas and among Tibetan scholars. However, because the publication of these writings has been intermittent and the contents scattered, lacking a proper perspective of particularities and generalisations, many farsighted people have suggested I should compile a small booklet to facilitate their perusal and analysis. Here, I have done so, and Mr Karma Gyaltsen of the Nationalities Teacher Training College in Dartsedo [Kanding], has kindly translated it into Tibetan.

My personal aspirations in bringing out this booklet are that the offices of the Party and the State which make decisions may obtain factual knowledge of the situation in the Tibetan areas, and that this may enable them to formulate policies and strategies appropriate to the material conditions of the nationality areas, and also to propose guidelines for consolidating the development tasks undertaken in the Tibetan areas for greater prosperity. I also hope to raise the awareness that Tibetan nationals number 4.59 million and occupy a land area totalling 22,200,000 sq km, lands which are well endowed in certain resources despite the scarcity of others; and to remind Tibetans of their ancient past as reflected in the verse:

*"The usurpation of political power in the central highlands,
The glory of the conquest of the white and black Myang lands,
The fame and reputation of the powerful forces, north and south,
With such might, the whole of the world was subdued."*

This verse reflects the achievements of our ancestors since the evolution of human history. However, all this is a pride borne of the past, and yesterday's brilliance can not make up for the backwardness of today. Yesterday is only history; tomorrow is the real object of our debate and endeavour [*brtsod len*].

The present generation has reached the age of space travel. Within the community of nations China is considered one of the more backward countries in economic and cultural development and the Tibetan areas within China are even more backward.

We should with clear intelligence identify our deficiencies. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of the People's Republic of China, and with the concern and assistance of the great Motherland, we must acquire the courage to develop national self-esteem and self-reliance; we must assimilate progressive ideas, and dare to acknowledge our shortcomings as well as the dangers arising from such shortcomings. Failure to acknowledge these shortcomings could harm both ourselves and others. Callous disregard is tantamount to resignation. Ineffectual grumbling and trepidation are futile, as is the practice of religious superstition. On the other hand, a genuine expression of concern for the interest of one's nationality consists of having the courage to enter

into debate on the rectification of deficiencies through personal initiative and effort in the context of the prevailing reality. We should strive to turn the state of backwardness originating from our inherent deficiencies into an awareness of the threat to all members of our nationality, and exhort the people to develop a sense of urgency.

Thus, striving for a place among the developed societies of the world, where the Tibetan people can take their place with pride, is the common aspiration and prayer of all the nationalities. United, we should work constantly towards the monumental task of bringing prosperity to the Tibetan areas, and together we must build a new and beautiful land of snows. We must endeavour and face the challenges. We must persevere.

Written in July 1993 at Dartsedo.

[My Aspirations, Chapter 2, translated from the unpublished draft in Chinese (TIN Ref: 22(WX))]

**Grieving for the fact that
"Tibetan people do not know their own spoken and written language"
- A Tibetan Cadre's Cry.**

In our big family of the motherland, Tibetans have a long history, a splendid national culture and a rich heritage. But during the 1980s, in an era when knowledge was bursting forth and science was accelerating, a phenomenon became apparent in the Tibetan areas - "Tibetans do not know the Tibetan written language, and cannot speak the Tibetan language well." Is this not a joke, a farce? Actually, it is not only a Tibetan tragedy, it is also a Tibetan humiliation! This is the first time in our history that such a tragedy and humiliation has happened to the Tibetans.

In the following nine counties of Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture - Kanding, Dege, Bathang, Lithang, Ganzi, Xinlong, Baiyu, Serxu and Serta - which used to have educational levels slightly above the national average, I did some investigations among 6,044 Tibetan cadres.

My results were as follows: Only 991 cadres, 16.4% of the total, knew the Tibetan written language. In Kanding it was 3.1%, Bathang 5.3%, Lithang 9.9%, Ganzi 21.6%, Xinlong 9.5%, [p2] Derge 38.7%, Baiyu [Palyul] 13.2%, Serxu 30.7% and Serta 15%.

I did a sample investigation of 25 Tibetan students at a Middle School in Kanding and found that 5 of them, ie., 20%, could make fluent conversation in the Tibetan language for any occasion; 4 people, ie., 16%, could only make conversation in Tibetan for ordinary occasions; 9 people (36%) could understand Tibetan language but could only speak it for everyday use; and 7 people (28%) could understand it but could not even speak in Tibetan for everyday use. In this way it seems certain that our nationality's rich, fine language and literature will be ruined in the hands of our own generation. Is this not a serious matter concerning our nationality's future and destiny? Is it not a situation to be most concerned about?

I assume the following three points to be the reasons for Tibetans not knowing their own written and spoken language.

1. The mistaken idea of speeding up the fusion of nationalities has been one of the reasons. Mankind developed from tribes into nationalities over a long [p3] period of history, and this development has decided the stability of nationality. The existence of nationalities is not only determined by class and state but also by the local economy, culture, common language, common land and common psychology. The establishment of the socialist system alone could create the

conditions to allow nationalities to thrive and prosper, and eventually to fuse. Comrade Mao Zedong clearly pointed out: "First class will wither away and after that nationalities will wither away. The whole world will be alike." In the period of socialism, all nationalities would achieve common [united] development, would flourish and would not wither away. Unfortunately, our prefecture, in dealing with this issue, has not seriously carried out the stipulations of the Constitution which state that "the authorities of the Autonomous Regions of Minority Nationalities should manage their local education, science, culture, health and athletic affairs well; they should safeguard and sift the nationalities' cultural heritage". They have not fulfilled: "pay attention to using the nationality's language or written language in litigation, education, translation, publishing, newspapers and magazines, [p4] broadcasting and films." They have not fulfilled: "guarantee the equal rights of the nationalities by means of the legal system." They do not use or do not wish to use "the nationality's own written language to exercise their authority". In fact the spoken and written language of the autonomy has been substituted by another language. Not considering the importance of the nationality's spoken and written language is in fact a manifestation of national discrimination. To use Chinese as the main language in minority nationality areas, to adopt an attitude of big nationality chauvinism and put everything into Chinese to try to close the economic and cultural gap between the nationalities, and to try to exercise equal rights between the nationalities by accelerating the fusion of nationalities, is in fact violating the Constitution. It not only violates the stipulation that "all nationalities have the freedom to use and develop their own oral and written language" but it also sabotages the relationship of "equality, unity and mutual help" between the nationalities in our country. It is also detrimental to the unity of the motherland and the unity of the nationalities. In practising such a policy of fusing the nationalities in order to help the Tibetans [p5] to develop and make their economy and culture thrive, will this not simply create twice the work with only half the results? or even achieve the opposite of our goals?

During the Cultural Revolution all the Tibetan language schools, the professionals and the Tibetan books and magazines were destroyed in the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Ganzi. Thousands of volumes of Tibetan historical literature were set on fire and many learned and knowledgeable monks and laymen were labelled as "reactionary monks" or "class enemies of all description". Scriptures were burned, holy statues were broken into pieces, monasteries were destroyed and the masses were prohibited from believing in religion. In the end, what was achieved by these actions? The economy and culture of the Tibetan areas not only did not develop but was almost destroyed and the Party's policy lost its credibility amongst the masses. The image of the Party amongst the masses of the Tibetan people was damaged, the prestige of the cadres amongst the masses fell and Tibetan people developed feelings of estrangement. Religion and culture in the Tibetan areas suffered a loss that cannot be replaced. Therefore it is very harmful to underestimate [p6] the importance of nationalities' affairs and not to solve this issue from the Marxist point of view. Leaders at all levels who work in minority nationality areas should see this as a serious lesson of history.

2. The erroneous view that there is "no use for the written Tibetan language" has been another reason why "Tibetans do not know the Tibetan written language and cannot speak the Tibetan language well."

During the 1960s and 1970s the Party's policy on nationalities was badly misled under the influence of "leftist" thinking and the remnants of nationalist ideology. The customs and habits of the minority nationalities were not respected. Nor was attention paid to the use and development of minority nationalities' languages, and as a result the Tibetan written language could not develop and became tarnished by the erroneous view that "the written Tibetan language is useless". In our Prefecture, between 1962 and 1978, all primary and middle schools including vocational schools, stopped Tibetan language classes and the publishers of Tibetan magazines were closed down. Tibetan teachers were made redundant group by group or were forced to change profession and transfer to other places. A system [p7] of Chinese language teaching was established, so that the Tibetan language almost vanished in Tibetan areas. A large number of Tibetan teachers lost their opportunity to study Tibetan written language, and although many wished to study through self-

education, the lack of text books and teachers [prevented them], resulting in the ridiculous situation we have today.

[this section repeats chapter 1 [doc 21(WX)], p. 13]

Is the Tibetan written language really useless? No, not at all! The cultural heritage accumulated by the Tibetan people over thousands of years is as vast as the open sea, it is voluminous and is universally acknowledged. Since its emergence the quantity, quality and value [of the Tibetan literary heritage] has been just behind the Chinese. It has an important standing amongst the literature of the world and many developed countries began to research Tibetan literature quite early.

Tibetan literature has a splendid and long history. It developed greatly in the early seventh century. Tibetan people have used their oral and written language to express their knowledge through verse, literature, history, geography, logic, [p8] law, astrology, almanac, medicine, story books, tales, poetry, drama, dance, fable, painting, architecture etc. There are systematic and complete Tibetan writings on the social and natural sciences. The "Kanjur" and "Denjur", the two great bodies of Tibetan Buddhist writings, contain more than three hundred scripture books and more than four thousand chapters. There are few such great Buddhist writings in the world and this proves that the Tibetan culture is both old and developed and that Tibetan literature is both advanced and complete. Every science, whether social, natural or frontier science, can all be described or translated into Tibetan; so how can the Tibetan written language be useless?

Was the educational level of the written Tibetan language low in our prefecture since ancient times? No, not at all. Take for example Derong county, where the level of nationality culture was supposed to be quite poor. At the time of Land Reform, although its population was less than seven thousand there were around seven hundred people whose level of Tibetan written language [p9] was above primary school level and there were about twenty people who had achieved Geshe, Khenpa (abbot) scholarships in Tibet's Three Monastic Institutions. Now however, there are only two people in the whole county with college level Tibetan written language.

I do not mean to exclude other nationalities or foreign cultures when I emphasise the usefulness and importance of the development and advancement of the written Tibetan language; please do not misunderstand me. It is beyond doubt that acceptance of another nationality or foreign culture, and understanding of another nationality's language, is a sign of progress and should be encouraged and carried forward with perseverance, as it would be bad to close the country to international intercourse. I assume that it is good to study other nationalities' or foreigners' advanced cultures against the foundation of using and developing one's own nationality's written language. It would be good to learn their very essence with the background of having inherited and explored one's own nationality's written language, so that one could learn from others how to improve one's own culture. I think that "to cast aside one's own fine culture and [p10] become foreigners" is the wrong method to improve the science and culture of one's own nationality.

Since the trend of thinking that the "Tibetan written language is useless, only the Chinese are advanced" has appeared, 80% of the thirty thousand graduates from middle schools, vocational schools and universities in the 1970's and 1980's did not know the Tibetan written language. There were also those who could not even speak the Tibetan language well. The incorrect view that the "Tibetan written language is useless" has been at the root of the fact that "Tibetans do not know their own written language and cannot speak their own language well."

3. The tragedy that "Tibetans do not know their own written language, and cannot speak their own language well" has also been due to the lack of self-respect and pride amongst Tibetans.

There are various reasons for this tragedy. Firstly, some Tibetans, including some Tibetan leaders, blindly following the trend, have looked down on or belittled themselves, and have worshipped or had blind faith in foreign things while being disdainful towards their own culture. Others, particularly the younger generation, do not understand or care about the distinguished history of their own nationality [p11], nor their splendid national culture and rich heritage. These people do not care about the progress of their fine nationality and their rich written language and instead just blindly follow the trend of thinking that the "Tibetan written language is useless".

Secondly, those Tibetan comrades who have held posts in our Prefecture's leadership have not given much importance to the use and development of our nationality's written and oral language. Some leaders do not even understand the meaning of "Tibetan autonomy" and forget that we are a "Tibetan autonomous prefecture". The way they make policies, take measures and deal with their work shows that they do not consider the word "autonomy". Why is it that in a Tibetan autonomous prefecture, where 70% of the population are Tibetans, there is not wide-ranging use and promotion of the Tibetan written and oral language? It is very strange. Is it because if we do not give speeches, write documents, do publicity, and educate etc. in Chinese, then it is splittism, or narrow local nationalism? Is it because the Chinese written language is the "unity of the nationalities" and to think otherwise is splittism? Since we know that the Tibetan language may be used to express any science and [p12] that anything can be translated into Tibetan - with the exception of words borrowed from other languages - then why is it that only Tibetans are requested to learn another nationality's language; whereas those people from other nationalities who work in Tibetan areas do not have to learn the Tibetan language? Some people have worked in Tibetan areas for about thirty years, but still today they cannot speak a single word of Tibetan. What does this demonstrate?

What is even more ridiculous is that some people have said that the fact that "Tibetans do not know their written language and cannot speak their language well" is a manifestation of "progress", "blooming", or "knowledge" amongst the new Tibetan generation. Is it a manifestation of "progress" or "blooming" to throw away the ancient, developed and fine culture of one's nationality and to lose one's rich cultural heritage, which, like precious pearls, were created and inherited by the diligence, bravery and wisdom of our ancestors through long periods of productive work and social activity, overcoming enormous difficulties with great courage? Did human society "improve" in this way? If when a Tibetan cadre gives a speech, does some writing, goes to agricultural or pastoral areas for investigations or to publicise the Party's policies [p13] to the masses of the Tibetan people, he must do all this through an interpreter because he does not speak the Tibetan language, is this another sign of "progress"? Does this appear "knowledgeable"? Are we to say that if one can speak Tibetan directly with the masses, then one is "backward", is "uncivilised"? Ridiculous! Absolutely ridiculous!

Thirdly, amongst Tibetan leaders there are some who pursue their own interests; they are cunning and farsighted and are willing at all costs to bow low and sweep the ground with their caps or to sell their conscience just to safeguard their privileges of being highly placed with fat emoluments and so they drift along with empty, lying and poisoned lives. These people are dead to all feeling about their own nationality's future and fate and to their nationality's development and prosperity. They show no concern for these things. Our nationality has lost many things at the hands of a few such people. Some people do not uphold our nation's self-respect, and cannot conduct our affairs with dignity and confidence, but are jealous and hypocritical. This is why the tragedy that "Tibetans do not know their own written language and cannot speak their language well" [p14] has occurred.

Respecting and developing every nationality's written and oral language is the key means by which we can improve minority nationalities' backward cultural and educational circumstances. Respecting the Tibetan written and oral language and improving its status and role is not only a basic element of minority nationality autonomy but is also the starting point for developing science, culture and education in the Tibetan areas. It is also the correct way to build up a socialist spiritual civilisation with Tibetan characteristics. If anyone wishes to make our prefecture into a united, civilised,

beautiful and richly endowed Tibetan autonomous prefecture, then we must raise up the status and positive role of the written and oral Tibetan language.

Respectable Party Secretary, Commissioner of the Prefecture and Chairman of the County government: You are all elected to your posts of leadership to express the wishes and represent the interests of our nationality. You are not only there to authorise the minority nationality autonomy but also to serve as an embodiment of the Party amongst our nationality. I sincerely hope [p15] that you will always bear the people in mind and back them up. I believe that you understand that the composition of a nationality includes its characteristic written and oral language, its habits and customs, its areas of close-knit communities and its own psychology. Without these distinguishing features the nationality would not exist and there would be no need for the Party and the State to adopt the policy of regional nationality autonomy to deal with nationality issues.

At present, those of you who hold important posts in the authorities at all levels are gifted with talent and insight; but it does not mean that others who do not obtain such a post are not gifted with such talent and insight. Frankly speaking, the present society does not give people equal opportunities and is not fair. As you are the leaders of our autonomy authority, and at all levels have been given honour, status and power by the people, I sincerely call on you to work for the interests of this beautiful, richly endowed and wide ranging homeland. Work for its nation's fate and future and work for its' thriving development and prosperity.

Above is what I cry out in distress as I realise the historical [16] position and responsibility of our present generation and as I start to understand the connection between the individual and society and between the individual and the nation. I cry out in concern, but not as an onlooker. I myself am determined to be part of the mighty torrent of social transformation, not for the sake of my own personal fame and gain, but by dedicating my life to the struggle of this cause.

Archives of the Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture [*Xizang zizhizhou dang'an ju*], Sichuan Province
