

**ETHNIC MINORITIES IN CHINA:  
TIBETANS AND UIGHURS**

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**ROUNDTABLE**  
BEFORE THE  
**CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE  
COMMISSION ON CHINA**  
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS  
SECOND SESSION  
JUNE 10, 2002

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## **ETHNIC MINORITIES IN CHINA: TIBETANS AND UIGHURS**

**MONDAY, JUNE 10, 2002**

CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE  
COMMISSION ON CHINA,  
*Washington, DC.*

The roundtable was convened, pursuant to notice, at 2:32 p.m., in room SD-215, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Ira Wolf (staff director of the Commission), presiding.

Also present: John Foarde, deputy staff director; Steve Marshall and Anne Tsai, Commission staff; Jennifer Goedke, Office of Representative Kaptur; Matt Tuchow, Office of Representative Levin; Arlan Fuller, Office of Representative Brown; Karin Finkler, Office of Representative Pitts; Dave Dettoni, Office of Representative Wolf; and Holly Vineyard, Department of Commerce.

### **STATEMENT OF IRA WOLF, STAFF DIRECTOR, CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA**

Mr. WOLF. I would like to welcome everyone to the sixth staff-led roundtable of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China. We are holding these roundtables per the instructions of the Commission chairman, Senator Baucus, and the Commission do-chairman, Congressman Bereuter, in order to delve more deeply into specific issues than is normally possible at a full Commission hearing.

Two issues of great concern to many Members of Congress, to the Administration, and to the American people are Tibet, and the treatment of Uighurs in Xinjiang. We have two panels today. The first will deal with Tibet, the second will deal with Uighurs.

We are going to follow the usual process for these roundtables, which means each witness will have 10 minutes for an oral presentation. Then we will have questions from the staff members.

We have a court reporter transcribing this roundtable. Within the next couple of days, the formal written statements will be posted on our Website at *www.cecc.gov*, and then, in about 5 weeks, the full transcript will be posted.

When we complete the Tibet panel we will move to panel two. For this panel, in addition to myself and John Foarde, who is the deputy staff director, as well as the staff members of individual commissioners, Steve Marshall, from the Commission staff will participate.

The three panelists today are Bhuchung Tsering, who is director of the International Campaign for Tibet, Elliot Sperling, chair of Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana University; and Arthur

Holcombe, who is president of the Tibet Poverty Alleviation Fund. Mr. Tsering, let us start with you.

**STATEMENT OF BHUCHUNG TSERING, DIRECTOR,  
INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET**

Mr. Tsering. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to testify before you all here. We believe this Commission and its staff members play a very important role in trying to define how the United States will be dealing with China.

I think today we are at a crucial State on the Tibetan issue, as far as the United States-China relationship is concerned. That is because in recent months, the Chinese authorities have taken some steps which on the face of it shows that the Chinese are sensitive to American concerns about human rights in Tibet and the political situation, in general.

However, if you base your consideration solely on those developments, then we might miss the broader political issue which still remains to be resolved. Despite the fact that there have been release of political prisoners, the Chinese authorities have adapted a slightly different policy in that in addition to the previous policy of suppressing Tibetans in all their walks of life, today they have come to control the Tibetan people's way of life. And that is done very subtly through incorporation of certain aspects of Tibetan life, including academic and economic fields. So I want to touch briefly on these topics.

One thing that we can say for certain is that because of international pressure, because of the pressure that the United States has been exerting, Chinese authorities have had to take even those minimum steps that they have taken. But the Chinese authorities are also using new tactics. For example, the incentives of access to economic opportunities for government organizations and individuals, who then would have to become sympathetic to their perspective on Tibet. They also are welcoming, in fact, attracting more and more western experts to Tibet, to China, to various conferences being organized by the Chinese Government, and to somehow legitimize the Chinese rule over the Tibetan people, not just in the political aspects, but in the cultural, literary, and all other aspects of the issue.

I have to say that there are some individuals and organizations who take opportunity of this Chinese opening, to interact with the Tibetan people, in fields which are of direct benefit to the Tibetan people and that, we really encourage.

To go back to the release of some prisoners. You will recollect that in January the Chinese authorities released Ngawang Choephel, a Fulbright Scholar and ethnomusicologist, on medical parole. His case was taken up mostly by the U.S. Government, as well as by Members of Congress, particularly from Vermont. Then we had Chadrel Rinpoche being released some time in February, although we do not know what his present situation is. Then, Tanag Jigme Zangpo, whose case is also well-known to people who watch Tibet, was released in March.

At the same time that the Chinese Government was releasing these political prisoners, they were taking steps, most noticeably in Eastern Tibet—which is presently in what we would call Sichuan—

and Qinghai provinces. They were cracking down on Tibetan leaders who were popular among the people for the work that they were doing with the Tibetans directly; Lamas like Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche, Gyaye Phuntsog, in present-day Qinghai, Gen Sonam Phuntsog, from Kardze in Sichuan, and, of course, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog, from Larung Gar Buddhist encampment. And just recently we heard about Jigme Tenzin Rinpoche from Lhasa, who had been detained on different charges, but we feel, because he was popular with the people for starting an orphanage there.

So all these show that the Chinese Government is taking steps to assuage the international concerns by releasing popular political prisoners but still slamming down on the most popular leaders still inside Tibet. The Chinese authorities are also using developmental opportunities, as I said earlier, to fulfill their political ambition. Most noticeable is the railway project that they are undertaking. We believe in the long term, the railway project will be hard on the Tibetan people, despite the fact that it has short-term economic benefits. One Western journalist who visited the construction area had this to say, "The trains would allow quick deployment of troops to put down Tibetan protests like those in the late 1980s against Chinese rule and to guard the frontier with India, which fought a border war with China in 1962." He also goes on to say that, "It would be very easy to bring lots of non-Tibetans to the Tibetan areas, thus affecting the Tibetan identity there."

China has also revised its regional autonomy law to say that all developmental projects—which are supposed to be in the autonomous region—would be prioritized on the basis of the interests of Beijing.

This brings us to the question: What is the International Campaign for Tibet's position on developmental projects in Tibet? We are not opposed to developmental projects in Tibet—we believe Tibetans need to be empowered—but at the same time we are opposed to those projects which bring in more non-Tibetans to the Tibetan areas. We are opposed to those projects which take over Tibetan resources without benefiting the Tibetan people. We are opposed to those projects which fulfill the political ends of the Chinese leadership.

Having said this, what is our recommendation to the Commission and to everyone here? I have seven recommendations that I would like to mention. The first is that the Commission needs to realize that human rights aspect is just one symptom of the Tibetan problem, which is a broader political problem. Unless we tackle that broader political problem, there cannot be a lasting solution. And that broader political problem needs to be tackled through continued raising of dialog for resolving the issue between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese leadership.

Second, the Commission should urge the Congress to pass the Tibet Policy Act, which is a comprehensive legislation before the Congress. Third, the Commission should ask the Administration to have a coordinated approach to the Tibet issue. Maybe there is some sort of coordination at the moment, but we think it can be improved so that at all fronts the Chinese Government realizes, whether it is economic, commerce, or political, it cannot go on without resolving the political issue of Tibet. Then the Commission also

should urge the Administration to adopt a multilateral approach, not just the United States, but the international fora, including the United Nations.

The Commission should also ask the Administration to draw up guidelines on the developmental projects in Tibet. The Congress has already done that in the Tibet Policy Act, where it has incorporated some of those basic principles which are of concern to the Tibetan people. The Tibetan Government in exile has come out with guidelines on development projects in Tibet, where they encourage development in the rural sector, particularly in the fields of health and education.

We commend the Commission for taking a staff delegation to Tibet and China recently. We believe that needs to be complimented by sending a delegation to the Tibetan community in exile so that the Commission can understand how the democratic administration in exile functions; what is the thinking of the leadership, how the Tibetan refugees survive. We believe this information will be useful to the Commission as you continue your dialog with the Chinese leadership.

Finally, we would like to endorse the recommendations of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, which was contained in their third annual report released in May of this year. Their recommendations, as you recall, consisted of asking the Congress to extend an invitation to the Dalai Lama to hold a joint meeting, and that the United States should have a presence in the Tibetan capital, Lhasa, and that the United States should ask the Chinese Government to grant access to religious persons in prison in Tibet. We believe with such a comprehensive approach there is hope for a lasting solution to the Tibetan issue. Thank you so much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Tsering appears in the appendix.]

Mr. WOLF. Thank you very much, Bhuchung. Elliot Sperling.

**STATEMENT OF ELLIOT SPERLING, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
OF TIBETAN STUDIES, INDIANA UNIVERSITY**

Mr. SPERLING. Thank you. I am going to diverge from the things that I have written as well, so this will be somewhat extemporaneous, in part.

I am grateful to the Congressional-Executive Commission on China for giving me the opportunity to speak to you. I am the chair of the Department of Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana University, and have for a long time been engaged in the study of Tibetan history and Sino-Tibetan relations. I served as a member of the Secretary of State's Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad before it became the Commission on Religious Freedom.

I am going to talk about the Tibet issue in general, both historical and contemporary. The historical perspectives that underlie Chinese policies in Tibet are fairly clear. It is the position of the People's Republic of China [PRC] that Tibet became an integral part of China in the 13th century; that sovereignty over Tibet was claimed by all subsequent dynastic rulers, and that inasmuch as China has consistently been a multinational state, the fact that two of the three dynasties involved in this rule were Mongols and



Manchus has no bearing on the question of Chinese sovereignty. This is the position of the People's Republic of China.

With the collapse, in 1911, of the last imperial dynasty, the Qing, these claims were taken up by the Republic of China—or Nationalist China as it is sometimes called—and in 1949 by the People's Republic of China, which was able to implement them fully. In May 1951 after military clashes left Tibet with no real defense, the Chinese Government was able to conclude an “agreement on measures for the peaceful liberation of Tibet” with the government of the Dalai Lama, which constituted an official acquiescence to Tibet's incorporation into the People's Republic of China.

This account, the view from the People's Republic of China, is in some ways emotional and nationalistic in its perception of Tibet as an integral part of China for centuries. It is used to introduce almost all Chinese polemics and arguments about Tibet and its history and it underpins China's assertions about its place in Tibet. Sometimes there is talk about the benefits China has brought to Tibet, in Chinese materials, and talk about other issues, too. But in making the case as to why Tibet is a part of the People's Republic of China, the argument is always historical. It is held to derive from the workings of history.

And here we come to an interesting facet of this whole issue, something that came up at a conference 2 months ago at Harvard University. Several of us were addressing the Tibet issue, and Tibet in the cold war, and it was remarkable to see the extent to which Marxist-Leninist theory plays into issues such as Tibet. One tends to think now of China as having gone beyond Marxist-Leninism, not that it is not ruled by an authoritarian regime; but nevertheless the Marxist-Leninist theory has been jettisoned.

There are certain aspects of Chinese policy, such as the Tibet issue, which really cannot be explained otherwise. If you turn to questions such as self-determination or whatever, you still sense the dominance of Marxist-Leninist ideas. That is to say, the historical narrative which China puts forward, which I just spoke about, is a Marxist-Leninist view. It represents the inevitable workings of history. There is no other theoretical justification for it. So, therefore, we have something which stays where it is by dint of inertia; this justification, this Marxist-Leninist justification about the workings of history, holds that this is inevitable, that the Tibetan and “Han”—this is the term which is used for the people who are otherwise called Chinese—that the Tibetan and “Han” people have merged together by the workings of history. This is the emotional underlay which we have as a Chinese justification of Tibetan policy. Thus—and I do not want to be too obtuse about this—when people talk about bridging the gap between the positions of the Tibetan exiles and the Chinese Government, they often forget that in point of fact, China's justification actually have an important link to their theoretical views in this. Therefore, when the Tibetan exiles and the Dalai Lama's government have broached proposals, such as taking all of the disparate Tibetan areas within the People's Republic of China and making a larger Tibetan region that would be autonomous, China has simply rejected this, because as far as China is concerned, history has already decided the Tibetan issue. That is to say, the exile government often says there is a dif-

ference in nationality. You are Chinese, we are Tibetan; therefore, we should have some sort of autonomy. To which China responds, you already have nationality autonomy. But again, Tibetan exiles ignore China's Marxist-Leninist notion that national differences are on the surface and thus that the Tibetan question has been solved by the socialist integration of Tibet into China. For China it is the social and economic differences which require certain allowances for autonomy: witness Hong Kong. You do not have any national difference there, the differences are social and economic. Even though we often forget about the Marxist-Leninist background here—and I do not want to exaggerate; certainly in so many areas of life in China Marxist-Leninism has been jettisoned—in some areas, as if by inertia, you do find this theoretical basis. When people argue about the Tibet issue, as often as not they forget that there is this vast theoretical difference in positions, and therefore when China rejects what the exiles say, it does so with its own logic, which is often misperceived.

For Tibetans opposed to Chinese rule, the Tibetan issue also remains a very emotional issue. And it is, at heart, a nationalist issue as well. And this is something which the attempt to bridge positions often elides. The fact is, Tibetans who are dissidents, Tibetans who protest against Chinese rule inside Tibet and outside Tibet, do so on the basis of nationalist sentiment. They see their identity as Tibetans as something which is quite different from an identity as Chinese. It is a nationalist issue and they are calling for independence.

Proposals to bridge the gap put forth by the United States Government, for instance, calling for more autonomy and cultural freedom in Tibet, are all very good and they are all very well intentioned, but we have to bear in mind that these are not the issues being addressed by Tibetans who are agitating inside Tibet. Almost all of the material that you pick up that is put out by Tibetan dissidents, uses the term independence. They are struggling for independence there. It is quite interesting that you have as the rallying cry from certain sectors, such as the exile government authorities, that we have to preserve Tibetan culture. And this has been picked up in the United States, in House and Senate resolutions, and also by the Executive Branch. What we must do, they say, is preserve Tibetan culture, which, of course, is a somewhat difficult issue, because calls for preserving a culture forget that what we are dealing with here is something dynamic. Culture is dynamic, it changes all the time. It cannot be preserved. The only thing you can call for, really, is the lifting of restrictions and measures that suppress cultural expression. It should not be forgotten, too that when people call for Tibetan cultural preservation that we are often talking about sort of a folk culture or Tibetan monastic culture. Tibetan culture today is actually a very complex thing. You have modern secular writers in Tibet who are part of the Tibetan picture, too.

The focus of a lot of efforts has also been in bringing China into negotiations with the Dalai Lama's government in exile and this has also been mired in misperceptions, I believe, largely coming from the Tibetan Government in exile. These were also picked up certainly during the Clinton Administration. It was and is a very important point for the United States, that what we should be

doing is encouraging China to negotiate with the Dalai Lama. And the main obstacle to this—this is how it is often presented—is that China does not realize that the Dalai Lama has renounced Tibetan independence, which indeed he has. He has said that in the past, Tibet was independent, but for the future, Tibet does not have to be independent. He does not want Tibet to be independent. He has even said at one point, it would be a disaster, if Tibet were to be independent. Of course, China understands what the Dalai Lama is saying. But Chinese policy has evolved: it is a very clear-cut policy and it is very easy to see. China has decided that it really does not need the Dalai Lama.

A number of years ago you had the case of the Panchen Lama. The Dalai Lama recognized a child as the Panchen Lama, the second highest ranking hierarch, as he is often termed, within the Gelugpa sect. And China, of course, rejected this; it was adamant and angry and chose another child as the Panchen Lama. In a sense, what this means is that China was essentially saying that it was going to control the Buddhist establishment. It was not going to have the Dalai Lama controlling the Buddhist establishment. More importantly, of course, is the fact that China's Panchen Lama is going to help find the next Dalai Lama. China had decided that it did need a Dalai Lama, but not the Dalai Lama; it could wait until the present Dalai Lama died. The Dalai Lama is not young, and Chinese policy has now come down to waiting for the death of the Dalai Lama. This is something which I have to emphasize because for so many years, the Tibetan Government in exile, in the face of all evidence to the contrary, and the United States Administration, which in many ways relied on information from the Tibetan Government in exile, acted as if what was needed was to get negotiations started between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Government. The Chinese Government, of course, benefited because it could simply say, well, we would do it, of course, if the Dalai Lama were more sincere, and they would then elicit further statements from the Dalai Lama, which helped to undermine the case for Tibetan independence. Without seeming flip, it was a policy that I call the "Dalai Lama dancing on one foot" policy. The Dalai Lama would say "No, I do not want Tibetan independence." The Chinese Government would say, "Well, you are not sincere. You have to say that you do not want Taiwan independence either." The Dalai Lama would say, "Well, I am not for Taiwan independence." The Chinese Government would say, "Well, you are not sincere." It would seek more and more. It was simply buying time. And like it or not, it is important for this government, this Administration, and I think, everybody who cares about Tibet, to understand what is going on and what Chinese policy is, and to be guided by the actual facts of the issue, and not by what we hope they might be. I apologize for taking excess time.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you. This is just supposed to set a framework. Arthur Holcombe, please.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sperling appears in the appendix.]

**STATEMENT OF ARTHUR N. HOLCOMBE, PRESIDENT, TIBET  
POVERTY ALLEVIATION FUND**

Mr. HOLCOMBE. Thank you very much. It is also a pleasure for me to be here. I will also diverge a little bit from my prepared text. In the context of my previous experience, I was the resident representative for the UNDP [United Nations Development Program] in China during the 1990s. Later, starting in 1998, I established the Tibet Poverty Alleviation Fund. All of this has meant that I have been involved in development work in Tibet since about 1992, and so the perspectives that I would like to share here are looking at it from the standpoint of the economic and social trends in Tibet and what they mean for the international donor community.

Around 1992, the Chinese Government introduced major new financial and residence liberalization measures in Tibet which resulted in a major influx of Han and Hui Muslim people. These people migrated primarily into urban areas or along main routes, and established businesses. However, along with them came farming populations from Sichuan and elsewhere, who went into greenhouse farming around the urban areas. This influx created a new dynamic in Tibet, and greatly stimulated economic growth. According to the Chinese Government, growth since 1992 has been on the order of about 11.9 percent per annum—some of the fastest growth in the PRC during this period. In 2000, Central Government introduced its major Western Provinces Development Initiative. This was initially explained in terms of trying to boost economic growth and incomes among local ethnic populations, and helping them to catch up to the living standards of people in Eastern Provinces. More recently, it has become clear that the “Western Initiative” has been focused primarily on the development of gas, oil, other natural resources to the benefit of China as a whole.

So what we have seen since 1992 is an urban oriented growth process which has focused on public sector infrastructure investment, supporting economic reforms and opening up. What I would like to highlight are some of the distortions that this urban growth has created as far as the Tibetan population is concerned.

The first important implication is a very rapidly increasing income disparity between urban and rural areas. Because most of the Tibetans are living in the rural areas, there is also growing income disparity between the Han and Tibetan populations. The government does give some figures on this. It states that in 1996, urban family average per capita income was about \$606, whereas, it was only \$117 in the rural areas. Moreover, in the urban areas, average income was growing at five times that of the rural sector.

Second, it has meant that because Tibet’s infrastructure and investment have been largely urban focused, Tibetans in rural areas have not been provided opportunities to learn modern skills useful for employment in Tibet’s modern urban sector. This greatly encouraged the government to continue to employ skilled migrants to implement urban investment programs.

Third, Tibetan entrepreneurs in urban areas have experienced great difficulty in competing effectively against the rapidly growing number of better funded, better managed, and lower-cost Han enterprises. This competition from migrant enterprises has included even some of the traditional Tibetan artisan product sectors of the

economy. So, we are seeing a squeezing out of traditional Tibetan entrepreneur in the urban areas due to the rapid growth and modernization taking place there.

Fourth, there is also a growing influx of rural Tibetan youth, into the urban areas looking for employment opportunities, but without the skills needed to secure the jobs that they are looking for. This increasing unemployment is creating growing social problems, including crime and other illegal activity.

The formal social and economic policies applicable to Tibetans in rural areas of Tibet are commendable. They include elimination of absolute poverty among most disadvantaged populations; universal access to basic healthcare; in rural areas, replacement of all 2-year community schools with 6-year State primary schools, and by 2003, achievement of 6 years of primary education for all rural primary school aged children; introduction of vocational skills curricula in primary and middle schools in rural areas; and by 2005, establishment of a home in winter village areas for all nomads that do not have them.

The difficulty is that there is not enough money to implement these policies in a timely and comprehensive basis. More central government funds are required to upgrade rural health and educational services and to greatly expand vocational skills training for unemployed Tibetans both in rural and urban areas. Unless they do, Tibetans will continue to be marginalized rather than benefited by the continued expansion of Tibet's market economy. Similarly, without priority to increased local vocational skills training, migrant labor will be required for the construction and operation of the new railway from Qinghai to Lhasa, and with it, further exacerbation of ethnic income disparities, and increased marginalization of Tibetans in traditional economic pursuits.

To help compensate for this lopsided emphasis on investment in urban areas, the TAR government has been encouraging outside international bi-lateral and NGO [non-governmental organization] agencies to get involved. In particular, they have been encouraging them to assist into the rural sector, focusing on strengthening basic health and education, but also clean water supply and to some extent, vocational skills training. Most of this activity by outside donors located around main urban areas and in the Qomolangha Nature Preserve along the Nepalese border. But some organizations, like the Canadian CIDA [Canadian International Development Agency] and our own Tibet Poverty Alleviation Fund, have been encouraged to assist into closed areas of Lhoka and Nagchu Prefectures.

I would like to relate a comment made to me in April 1998, by Mr. Guo Jinlong, who is the present Tibet Autonomous Region Party Secretary. At that time, when we were formulating our program of assistance in Lhoka and Nagchu Prefectures, he indicated to us his hope that we would focus on rural activities that would help to bring Tibetans into the market economy where they could benefit most from the economic reforms and modernization taking place. He also indicated that whatever we could do as an NGO to help benefit the traditional nomad populations would be very much welcomed. He further indicated that if we found ways to make progress in helping to bring nomad populations into the modern

sector and benefiting from the economic reforms taking place, that the government would try to expand upon our efforts.

I would like to just conclude by saying, that we, as well as other NGOs, have found it possible to collaborate effectively with the TAR government, at all levels to improve basic health and other human services of benefit to Tibetan communities. While we would like to see a reorientation of the TAR policies to give relatively more emphasis to rural sector activities that can help to improve Tibetan working and living conditions, we believe it is now possible for NGOs to cooperate successfully and help improve conditions for Tibetans.

We also believe that it is very important for there to be stepped-up United States Government support to United States NGOs prioritizing Tibetan human development. This will help to signal the human development values and priorities that we, as Americans, believe ought to be given higher priority in Tibet. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Holcombe appears in the appendix.]

Mr. WOLF. Thank you all very much.

Each of us up here will have 5 minutes for quick questions, and we encourage discussion and interaction among the three of you.

Let me start out with a question for Mr. Holcombe regarding your final comment. What would be the nature of additional United States Government support and help for NGOs working in the rural areas in Tibet?

Mr. HOLCOMBE. In the health sector?

Mr. WOLF. Well, in health, or in any sector, economic development, business development.

Mr. HOLCOMBE. This is a complicated issue. In the education sector, many rural communities youth still only have 2-year community primary schools. Thus, for many Tibetan youth in rural villages, that is all the formal education they ever get. There is an important need for the government to successfully implement its policy of introducing 6 years of compulsory education at the primary level. However, we also believe that U.S. NGOs can help to reform the curriculum to include vocational content that can help to prepare Tibetans for the world of work. The NGO I established is working with the TAR Education Bureau to introduce such reforms in 21 pilot counties of Tibet.

In addition to that, I believe U.S. NGOs should give priority to vocational skills training that can equip Tibetans for jobs that require vocational and technical skills in rural and urban areas. We were told by the TAR Poverty Alleviation Office very recently that there is a government decision now that where Tibetans are qualified for work in the construction sector, they will be given priority over others. We believe that U.S. NGOs can help to prepare Tibetans for available construction sector jobs. One of our new programs will be working with the Nagchu Poverty Alleviation Office to launch a construction skills training program for Tibetans who will be working in 10 rural counties.

In the health sector, there is a broad range of needs.

There is presently a network of township clinics, backstopped by county level hospitals. These health facilities are inadequately staffed and equipped. U.S. NGOs can help with training and up-

grading the skills of local doctors to improve the quality of health services they provide. Success in improving the quality rural health services would also have the effect of building greater confidence in the rural health system, and increasing the utilization of available services.

United States NGOs can help expand Tibetan community access to rural credit for income generating purposes. My NGO is currently providing small loans to about 1,000 Tibetan families. We find that after 4 years we have about a 95 percent pay back on loans. This is a payback rate substantially higher than the payback in the formal banking system catering more to the urban commercial sector. We also believe that United States NGOs can provide valuable technical and financial support to Tibetan entrepreneurs and enterprises in rural and urban areas. So there are a range of practical, economic, and social development initiatives that can and should be promoted by United States NGOs. I think United States government support to United States NGOs can expand and enhance the value of United States NGOs helping to improve working and living conditions for Tibetans in Tibet. It can also help to project the kinds of values and priorities that we think are important for Tibet.

Mr. WOLF. Increased support? Do you mean U.S. money to NGOs?

Mr. HOLCOMBE. Financial support through NGOs.

Mr. WOLF. Good. Bhuchung, please.

Mr. TSERING. In addition to what Mr. Holcombe mentioned, the greatest problem that is in Tibet today is the economic marginalization of the Tibetan people. In order to avert that danger, I think it is imperative that the United States encourage NGOs to support projects in Tibetan areas which empower the Tibetan people at all levels. This can be done at the same time as enabling the Tibetan people to preserve their traditional handicrafts or other forms of production. Some NGOs are already doing that in Tibetan areas and therefore, I think whether it is Commerce or any other department which handles that aspect of the issue, should be encouraged to take steps to empower people economically.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you.

Mr. SPERLING. I would just like to say that in some of the literature that has come out, people have pointed to the economic disparities and have said, what you have in Tibet is not really a national division. That is to say where Chinese are doing better than Tibetans, or Chinese, including Han and/or Hui, are doing better economically than Tibetans, it is an urban-rural division, and, therefore, there is no national aspect to it. It hardly matters though. The effect is the same and certainly the perception on the part of Tibetans is the same. Mind you, there are some Tibetans who are doing well or are doing better. But by and large indeed, you do have this divide. Whether you want to divide it along the rural-urban line, or along the Tibetan-Chinese line, there is this perception that Tibetans are not doing as well as they might be doing, and it has to do with rule by China.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you. Next is John Foarde.

Mr. FOARDE. I thank all three of you for sharing your expertise with us this afternoon. I am going to reserve my questions until later, because we have a number of colleagues here that I am sure want to ask you some questions. And we have very little time.

Mr. WOLF. Next is Steve Marshall.

Mr. MARSHALL. I have enjoyed this a lot, hearing three rather distinctive viewpoints here. It sounds like we have got basically two sides of this issue to deal with. One is quite political, insofar as the United States would be concerned, and is certainly grounded in this idea of nationalism. This is a very thorny and difficult issue.

The other side is about what the United States can do for 97 percent of Tibetans who are still living in the PRC. Their needs are much more immediate. They begin right now and their continuation starts tomorrow. So, I would like to ask two questions and see if we can get very quick ideas from you on these two things.

On the political side, to follow up Elliot's idea, when the Dalai Lama passes away, and if China were able to appoint a replacement, would that indeed solve the problem for China?

On the development side, the question is: Is it a good idea for Tibetans, particularly rural Tibetans, to learn the Chinese language so that they can participate in the job market more competitively? Whoever would like to reach for the mike first—

Mr. HOLCOMBE. I would like to respond to the second question. The language issue in Tibet is a tremendously complicated and difficult one. In the rural areas, Tibetan youth are going to primary school and learning the Tibetan language. And they are generally being taught by Tibetan teachers. Those that pass on to the middle school level begin to get instruction in the Chinese language, and also instruction of arithmetic and some basic science in the Chinese language. Most Tibetans do not get beyond the middle school level. If they do go on to the secondary level, then they are confronted with a predominantly Chinese curriculum. At this level Tibetan youth are at a distinct disadvantage in that they must compete against Han youth for available secondary school seats, and if admitted, they must compete against Han youth in Chinese speaking classes. Frequently, they get placed in slower, inferior course streams within their classes because of their language disadvantage.

Tibetan youth who want to get better skill qualifications and better jobs, or who want to secure government jobs, must master the Chinese language. So it is a dilemma for both the government and Tibetans and I do not think there is any easy answer to it.

Mr. TSERING. To answer the first question, I think it would be foolish for the Chinese authorities to assume that when the Dalai Lama is no longer there, the Tibetan issue will have been solved. In fact, the issue might deteriorate. The only reason why the Tibetan issue has become so peaceful and non-violent so far is the Dalai Lama's commitment to non-violence as a way and means of achieving a Tibetan political solution. Tibetans are only human beings. And there is already frustration building up inside Tibet. And when the Dalai Lama is no longer there to console the Tibetan people, they might as well take other paths which might increase the tension in the area as a whole. If you look at the map of Cen-



tral Asia, tension in Tibet would have implications in other areas as well.

The second question in terms of learning Chinese language in rural areas, I think the short answer is, that if this is done, not at the cost of learning Tibetan, then it is a political reality today that if Tibetans have to survive, they have to learn Chinese. Tibetans in exile learn three languages, so Tibetans should be capable of learning Chinese language, if they are given equal opportunities.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you. Jennifer Goedke works for Representative Marcy Kaptur.

Ms. GOEDKE. My question is going to be regarding, especially—Mr. Tsering, in your testimony you referred to the release of prisoners. As a commission, we have been charged with establishing a list of political prisoners. In your experience, how helpful are these lists? And how are they best utilized? Have you found some of these lists to be helpful in some of the releases you referred to in your testimony, or even in people that you are working toward releasing now?

Mr. TSERING. Generally, anything that is done by the outside world, including the United States Government, whether it is raising the political prisoner issue or the Tibetan issue as a whole is helpful. Having said that, I think the Chinese Government unfortunately does not play by the same rules that the United States tries to play. Therefore, the Chinese look at their interests. As I mentioned earlier, the Tibetan political prisoners who were released have been released, not because the Chinese felt that that was their right, but because they thought they would win the support of other governments, like the United States, on this. So I think it is useful to keep account of the number of prisoners the Chinese Government is holding. It is useful for letting the Tibetan people know that the outside world cares about them.

Ms. GOEDKE. Would anyone else like to speak to that?

Thank you.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you. Next is Karin Finkler, who works for Congressman Joe Pitts.

Ms. FINKLER. Thank you, Dr. Sperling. If you would like to ahead and finish the statement that you wanted to make before, that would be helpful. And also if you could address—you mentioned that the United States needs to, in its policies, address the real facts about Tibet. If you could clarify that in terms of specific policies that you would recommend, that would be helpful.

Mr. SPERLING. Well, that last part, of course, is a most difficult task, what to do in this situation—if I might, let me get back to the other two questions. I appreciate your asking me to finish with them. The language issue is particularly complex. China publishes a tremendous amount of material in Tibetan. This is quite laudatory. They publish old classical Tibetan books, they have magazines; they have newspapers. There is a lot going on in terms of Tibetan publishing. But—and I always say this—the crux of the matter is, what is the viability of the Tibetan language day-to-day? As an academic, as a scholar, of course, I am thrilled to see all of this material in Tibetan to see texts that I can use. But until Tibetan is the administrative language, until it is the day-to-day language of administration and of commerce, it is endangered. And I

say this with trepidation. By the way, there has been another announcement recently, that cadres in Tibet should learn the Tibetan language. But the fate of such sentiments and announcements remains to be seen.

With the economic development that we see, particularly with the proposed rail link between the Tibetan capital and Golmud and the influx of tremendous numbers of people from China proper, the Tibetan language is going to be under serious pressure.

Now as for the question about the Dalai Lama: the fact of the matter is—and I really don't even think it is conjecture at this point—China's policy is to wait for the Dalai Lama to die. The question was, would this be effective? I do not think so. But China obviously does. They think this will effectively put an end to the Tibetan issue. Of course, over the years, they have tended to personalize the Tibetan issue. They have often treated the Tibetan issue as if it were simply a question between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Government. And the fact of the matter is that I do not think this is going to end this issue. It is difficult to say what is going to happen, if Tibetan nationalism becomes more fragmented, which is a possibility, unfocused and perhaps unpredictable; I do not know.

Policy recommendations. This is a very tricky subject. As I think everybody here knows, the United States does not recognize Tibet as an independent country. The Dalai Lama does not advocate that Tibet be an independent country. But just about all of the dissidents and activists inside Tibet, and I would say, most of them outside Tibet are advocating Tibetan independence. It often comes down to the United States not advocating Tibetan independence which is outside the pale as far as United States foreign policy is concerned. But what does one do with a Chinese Government that consistently and harshly represses dissent on this issue? It is a very tricky and complex issue.

If we press China to respect human rights, that includes freedom of expression. It includes the expression of dissenting political opinions, particularly on the status of Tibet. And if you have free dissent, public meetings, circulation of materials, you are going to have increased sentiment and increased pressure, along these lines. Do you then say, well, we understand that this is something that China does not want. And even though advocacy is non-violent, we agree that it should be suppressed and that people should be locked up for it. It is a conundrum. I am not giving you an answer—clear-cut steps, one, two, and three, but at least we should understand what the situation is. If you press China for respect for human rights, including freedom of expression, you have to understand you are also going to be asking them to respect the right of Tibetans to express themselves on Tibetan independence and that will have an effect.

I should also add that we often take the view in the United States that what Tibet needs is cultural preservation and material development; that if Tibet develops materially, then that will resolve the issue. But again, you are dealing with a nationalist question. It is emotional. If you look at the dynamics in other areas, in Eastern Europe, for instance. The fact of the matter is, that when an authoritarian government begins to liberalize, often it is then,

as conditions improve politically and materially, that people turn themselves to political desires, and political activism.

Mr. WOLF. Next is Matt Tuchow with Congressman Sander Levin.

Mr. TUCHOW. My question is also about policy recommendations. I want to ask all the panelists, or at least those who have not spoken to this yet. What specifically do you recommend that we, the Commission, recommend to Congress and the Executive Branch, to do about the issues and the problems that you have identified? That is a broad area and I want to give you leeway to respond to that. But a more specific question relating to this would be, if Han immigration is agreed by all of you to be of singularly strong impact in the Tibetan areas, what antidote is there for this in terms of law and policy? But answer either the broad or the specific or both.

Mr. HOLCOMBE. Because local ethnic populations, including Tibetans, lack the skills necessary to secure employment in major construction, transport or mining activities, it would be necessary to utilize the skills of Han people for the construction and operation of the large investment projects. Only with a major commitment to employable skills training for local ethnic minorities, backed by legislation giving priority to the employment of local ethnic minority people when they had the requisite skills, would it be possible to reverse the present Han migration patterns found in Tibet and other western regions.

From a practical standpoint, what the United States Government can do is support U.S. NGOs active in these western regions, which are concerned about the development and welfare of ethnic minorities, and are in a position to help provide the types of training that will enable ethnic minorities to qualify for employment on major investment and construction projects that would otherwise require outside migrants. U.S. NGOs can help to highlight the particular beneficial types of training initiatives and demonstrate that they can, at the same time, bring Tibetans and other ethnic minority populations into mainstream economic life.

Mr. TSERING. Two points. The United States at the political level should discourage the Chinese Government at every instance in which they take steps to send Chinese people to Tibet in different ways. At the economic level, I think maybe the Commerce Department is the right department who should look at ways to discourage being involved in projects in Tibetan areas which contribute to the migration of Chinese. In the past, there was the instance of the World Bank investment, and now there is the railroad. There are gas pipelines and other activities which the corporate world looks to in Tibet.

Mr. SPERLING. I would just point out that China views this economic development, this integration within the great Western Development scheme, as something that, in addition to being part of the general development of the western areas of the PRC, will by drawing Tibet into the Chinese economy, reduce instability. Those things, which, well-intentioned as they are, seem to be part of a separate Tibetan economy, would be looked upon, I think, without great favor. The whole point is to integrate Tibet into the Chinese

economy, and, hence, too, you are going to have an increasing influx of people from Chinese interior.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you. Arlan Fuller, who is with Congressman Sherrod Brown.

Mr. FULLER. The question is actually to the three of you on the issue of Tibetans in exile, specifically in Nepal.

It seems from what I have been hearing in Nepal with the Maoist insurgency, that the conditions for refugees have been increasingly more inhospitable. I was wondering if the three of you might be able to enlighten us a bit on what the conditions are right now for refugees in Nepal and India, and so forth.

Mr. TSERING. The situation of Tibetans in Nepal, particularly the newest comers who escaped from Tibet through Nepal, was precarious in the past. But it has become more so in recent times because the Nepalese Government has been cracking down on Maoist insurgency. And the Chinese Government seems to be taking advantage of that to pressure the Nepalese to take action on Tibetans. One indication of this is that last year, and the year before, there was a great difference in the number of Tibetans coming out, escaping out through Nepal.

Certainly, the Nepalese Government, because it seems to be walking a tight political rope, bowed to the pressure of the Chinese Government so that it deprived the Tibetan people, newcomers as well as the resident Tibetan refugees, basic political rights, rights such as the right to assembly, the right of freedom of speech, etc. Of course we understand the Nepalese Government's situation, but there are ways that the Nepalese Government can protect and respect the rights of the Tibetan people without facing the wrath of the Chinese Government. That is something which we feel ought to be done.

For your information, The International Campaign for Tibet has done a report on the Tibetan refugees in Nepal, which is coming out soon.

Mr. SPERLING. I would simply point out that there has been a lot of—and I phrase this mildly—unpleasantness along the border between Tibet and Nepal over the years, particularly with local Nepalese authorities along the border, who have in some ways abused Tibetan refugees and in some instances sent them back. So it has always been somewhat difficult before Tibetans finally managed to get down to Kathmandu.

As far as the Maoist insurgency goes, I think that is something which is quite frightening to Tibetans in Nepal, but it is also frightening to Nepalese.

Mr. HOLCOMBE. Nepalese that I have met in Lhasa are very worried about this situation and see this as an impending national crisis, one that goes far broader and deeper than just the Tibetan communities there. It is a very serious situation, whose outcome is by no means certain.

Mr. WOLF. Thanks. Last is Dave Dettoni, with Congressman Frank Wolf.

Mr. DETTONI. Thanks, Ira. How many Buddhist monks and nuns are imprisoned in Tibet? Does anybody know?

Mr. TSERING. Amnesty International came out with a report this year in which they documented 250 political prisoners. Most of

them are monks and nuns. As for specifics, it is very difficult to say. At the height, it ranged in the several thousands, but maybe lately, people see the number of prisoners have been decreasing.

Mr. DETTONI. Why is it difficult to determine who is in prison and who is not?

Mr. TSERING. I think, first of all, it is the basic structure of the system in China. It is a communist system where the rights of the people are, to say the least, not respected. So it is difficult to say. And also, the Chinese judicial system, there is a fine line between who is detained, who is under observation and who is under investigation. This puts us in a difficult situation.

Mr. DETTONI. My understanding is that a number of prisoners were in prison during the reign of Hu Jintao. Are there still Tibetan political prisoners and Buddhist monks and nuns who were arrested and put in prison when Hu Jintao was Governor?

Mr. TSERING. I think our investigation shows that there were, I think, 25 political prisoners who are still in prison.

Mr. DETTONI. So how long have they been in prison?

Mr. TSERING. We are talking about the period from 1989 to 1993.

Mr. DETTONI. These are monks and nuns?

Mr. TSERING. I would not say that they all are monks and nuns.

Mr. DETTONI. So would it be fair to say that these people are in prison for practicing their faith?

Mr. TSERING. Sure. They were trying to preserve their basic religious and cultural identity.

Mr. DETTONI. That is a long time to be in prison.

That being said, about Hu Jintao, and these folks still being in prison, how do you think Tibet will be treated and what is your prognosis for Tibet if Hu Jintao climbs the next step in the ladder of politics in China?

Mr. TSERING. That is a question which many of us are still trying to tackle. But one thing is for sure. He may not be better than any of the past leaders, but what he will have is direct experience of dealing with the Tibetans. And he has this opportunity. If he wants to do something better for the Tibetans, he has the opportunity, because he knows the Tibetan issue better than any of the past central leaders. On the other hand, if he wants to strike down heavily on the Tibetans, he can do that because he also knows the Tibetans better, and how to deal with them.

Mr. DETTONI. This question has come up a couple of times today and in previous hearings as well. What will be the best way to help promote human rights and religious freedom in China and Tibet when Hu Jintao takes office? Given his knowledge of Tibet, what would be some of the more effective things this Commission can do to help promote change in Tibet for human rights and religious freedom?

Mr. TSERING. I think one thing that the United States Government, including Congress and the Administration, is to continually put the spotlight on China's attitude in Tibet.

This is important. We at the International Campaign for Tibet, do not ask the government to isolate China. The government should engage with China. But at the same time, even as they engage in trade, or any other aspect of life, they should not hesitate in raising issues of political freedom, human rights, issues of reli-

gious freedom, as strongly as they raise issues of bilateral trade. As soon as China realizes that they cannot avert the issues of human rights, they cannot avert the issue of religious freedom, then they will be forced to do something about it.

I want to quote Secretary of State Colin Powell. He dealt with this issue and he said, "It is a difficult situation right now with the Chinese sending more and more Han Chinese to settle in Tibet, which seems to be a policy that might well destroy Tibet. I think we have to reenergize our discussions with the Chinese to let them know that this is another example of the kind of behavior that will affect our entire relationship, and to show our interest and solidarity with the Dalai Lama and the people of Tibet." If the Chinese get this message strongly and consistently, they will be forced to do something.

Mr. DETTONI. Would it be helpful if top United States trade negotiators and top U.S. Commerce Department people, USTR or American businessmen, raise specific cases of prisoners and religious freedom and human rights with their Chinese counterparts?

Mr. TSERING. I do not know if it will be helpful in releasing the prisoners, but it will be helpful in sending that message to the Chinese Government that they cannot ignore these aspects of the issues.

Mr. WOLF. OK. Thanks. We are not going to have time to go for a second round, so if you have some final comments, or something you want to reiterate, do that over the next few minutes. Bhuchung.

Mr. TSERING. Some people in the business world tend to project all Tibetans as being against business dealings with China and try to make that a big case when we talk about investment in China, etc. The thing to realize, as I mentioned earlier, we encourage governments to be dealing with China, but at the same time we encourage them to talk strongly about the human rights aspects in Tibet. This is important if at all, the Chinese are going to change their policy on Tibet. We are living in what is called a globalized world and if the trade relationship can somehow be connected with empowering of the Tibetan people, and the changing of the Tibetan people's human rights situation, only then can something be effective.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you. Elliot.

Mr. SPERLING. I would address two points. One, I would address the point about raising the issue with China. I would simply point out that the United States does have a track record, particularly in the old days before PNTR [Permanent Normal Trade Relations] was PNTR, when it was MFN [Most-Favored Nation], of constantly threatening to do things and then stepping back. I think that has created an environment in which many of our threats are taken with a grain of salt, particularly when dealings with companies like Boeing and such enterprises are put on the block.

The other thing I would point out is with regard to this comment about Buddhists practicing their faith and being put in prison for practicing their faith. I think that has to be nuanced. It is not as if Tibetans simply performing very simple Buddhist ceremonies and Buddhist practices are going to be imprisoned. China does allow freedom of religion. But when it perceives state interest to be

at issue, it clamps down. And that includes allegiance to the Dalai Lama, and not recognizing the publicly disputed Panchen Lama, whom I mentioned in my statement. These are basic areas of course, in which you could say religion is at issue. The other thing that I would point out to you is that religion in Tibet is not simply religion. It is a marker of Tibetan nationalism. I have used this term quite a bit. Much as the Catholicism in Poland differentiated Poles from Russians who were either Orthodox or Marxist, Tibetan Buddhism really differentiates Tibetans from Chinese. It is a marker of Tibetan nationalism. And for many Tibetans who are not in the clergy, the clergy embodies a degree of Tibetaness. So there are a lot of factors involved in this beyond simple religious practice.

Mr. HOLCOMBE. Yes. I will very briefly make three points. In terms of the question of Hu Jintao, I think we are going to see a continuity of policy in Tibet. It is not going to vary because of new leadership in Beijing. We are going to see a continuing of the present economic reforms, and opening up, including policies that encourage outside migrants to go to Tibet to secure employment in the public and private sectors.

My second point is that for some time China has encouraged overseas Chinese to come back, and invest in China. This has been mutually beneficial to the investor and to China. The United States should urge China to allow overseas Tibetans to return and contribute to the economic and social development of Tibet. Some have in fact returned, and others should be encouraged to return in larger numbers to invest in ways that contribute to the further employment and welfare of Tibetan people.

My third point is that it is very important that we, as Americans, find every possible way to project our human development values in Tibet. Even though it is only in limited ways that we can do it, it is important nevertheless, to have organizations working inside Tibet and doing the kinds of things that are empowering Tibetans to take more control over their lives, to be more successful and to improve their living standards.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you all very much. This has been a big help to all of us. It will be a major contribution to the report that the commissioners will be presenting in early October. We thank you, and we will move on to the next panel.

As we move on, the two participants in the second panel are Dr. Dolkun Kamberi, who is director of the Uighur Language Service at Radio Free Asia, and Dr. Justin Rudelson, who is the executive director of the Institute for Global Chinese Affairs at the University of Maryland. Since you were both here, I do not have to explain how the process works. Dolkun, would you start, please?

**STATEMENT OF DOLKUN KAMBERI, DIRECTOR OF UIGHUR  
LANGUAGE SERVICE FOR RADIO FREE ASIA**

Mr. KAMBERI. Thank you for inviting me here today to present on the subject of Uighurs and Uighur identity. I have divided my research presentation into nine different sections. That includes: introduction, Uighurs, linguistic identity of Uighurs, cultural identity of Uighurs, artistic identity of Uighurs, musical identity of Uighurs, historical identity of Uighurs, regional identity of Uighurs

and conclusion. It is very difficult for me to draw a complete picture on the subject within 10 minutes; I will do my best.

The basic meaning of the name Uighur is "unity." But it may also be translated as "union," "coalition" or "federation." The name appeared first in records of the Orkhun Kok Turk inscriptions and in early Uighur. Later forms of the name can be found in medieval Uighur, Manichaeic, and Sogdian scripts, and the Arabic script of the Uighur Qarakhanid and Chaghatay periods. Apart from these Central Asian forms, the name can be found in different periods and diverse texts in Chinese, appearing in more than 100 translation forms.

About early Uighur culture and its history, kingdom Professor Denis Sinor wrote,

The kingdom of Khocho [Idiqut Uighur Kingdom], ruled by the Turkic Uighurs, was multiracial, multilingual and it permitted the peaceful coexistence of many religions. It enjoyed a living standard unparalleled in medieval Central Eurasia. Among the non-Muslim Turkic peoples, none has reached the degree of civilization attained by the Uighurs, and they developed a culture in many respects more sophisticated than that of most Muslim Turks. In the visual arts, they continued tradition, non-Turkic in origin, of which they maintained very high standards. The script they used gained widespread acceptance both to the east and the west. The Uighurs undoubtedly wrote one of the brighter chapters of Central Eurasian history.

The German archaeologist, A. Von Le Coq, cut off many wall paintings, which were shipped back in several hundred cases to Berlin. The British archaeologist, Aurel Stein, who visited Bezeklik at the end of 1914, indicated that, in terms of richness and artistry, no other finds from similar sites in the Turpan Basin can match those of Bezeklik, which parallel the rich ancient paintings of the Dunhuang "Thousand Buddha" caves. Professor Albert Grunwedel writes in a letter dated April 2, 1906, "For years I have been endeavoring to find a credible thesis for the development of Buddhist art, and primarily to trace the ancient route by which the art of imperial Rome, etc., reached the Far East. What I have seen here goes beyond my wildest dreams. If only I had hands enough to copy it all. For here in the Kizil are about 300 caves, all containing frescoes, some of them very old and fine.

Based on history, literature, religion, content, and script of Uighur linguistic material, I have classified Uighur language into five different periods: The first is the pre-historical Uighur language. Before the 6th CE, no written material in Uighur has been found so far, but language came to us throughout Uighur oral literature, idiom, idiomatic phrase, folk story, folk song, folk literature, and ancient mythology and legends in other language records.

The second period is the ancient Uighur language from the 6th century to the 10th century CE, mostly pre-Islamic literatures, which had influence from non-Altaiic language.

The third period is the medieval Uighur language from the 10th century to the 15th century CE. There is mostly Islamic literature, which got strong influence from Arabic and Persian languages.

The fourth period is the contemporary Uighur language period from the 16th century to the end of the 19th century CE. Elishir Nawayi's works are the main representative of the era.

The fifth period is the modern Uighur language period from the end of the 19th century to the present.



Modern Uighur language belongs to the Ural-Altai language family, Turkic language group of the eastern branch. Among the major six Turkic languages, Turkish and Azeri languages are very close. Kazakh and Kyrgyz languages are closely related, and Uighur and Uzbek languages are coupled. They can communicate with each other on simple subjects without learning the other language. The modern Uighur language has two major dialects: southern and northern. According to the Chinese 2000 official census, the population of Uighur native speakers is near 9 million. But independent sources claim the Uighur population is about 16 million. In the past 10 years, Chinese population in the region increased almost 32 percent. In 1949, the Uighur population constituted more than 90 percent and the Han Chinese population comprised 5 percent of the total population of the Uighur land. The Chinese population increased about 500 percent from the original 5 percent of the total population of the Uighur land in the year 2000.

Among the states of the Central Asian regions currently, the stateless Uighurs historically formed the leading group of the region for centuries. They possessed a rich literary art, strong economy and military, the ability to conduct state affairs and to help others to solve different problems. They showed generosity and offered their hospitality across time. Uighurs and their ancestors built their reign under the rule of the Hun, 2nd BCE to 2nd CE, the Jurjan, 3rd CE to 5th CE and the Turk Empires 522 CE to 744 CE. Uighurs also established their own states throughout history. Their states include the Uighur Ali, 744 CE to 840 CE, the Idikut Uighur 840 CE to 1250 CE, the Uighur Qarakhan 10th CE to 13th CE, the Uighur Chaghatay, 13th to 16th CE, the Yarkant Uighur Khanate 1514 to 1678, the Qumul and Turpan Uighur Baks from the end of the 17th CE to beginning of the 19th CE, and finally the Yakup Bak, 1820 to 1877, which lasted until Qing's invasion. Uighurs reclaimed Uighur land as the Republic of Eastern Turkestan in 1933 and the Eastern Turkestan Republic in 1944 through 1949.

The president of Eastern Turkestan Alihan Ture was called back by Stalin in 1946 to Russia, and lived in Tashkent until 1976. His successor Ahmatjan Qasim, Eastern Turkestan army Chief General Isaqbeg, deputy army chief general, Dalilkan Sugurbayev, a member of Eastern Turkestan Central Government Abdukerim Abbasov, died in a mysterious plane crash on their way to Beijing on August 22, 1949. Abduruf Mahsum, the General Secretary of the State of the Eastern Turkestan Republic, is still alive in Almaty, Kazakhstan. He is 88 years old. I met him last year. From 1946 to 1949, Russia and China engaged in many governmental structure reforms in the Uighur land. During the reforms, both Russian and Chinese Government representatives promised again and again to the Uighurs that the presence of the Chinese army in the Uighur land is to promote democratization, free elections and high autonomy, to help build the new Xinjiang, even independence for Uighur in the future; as Zhang Zhizhong promised at the summit of Chinese Nationalists, Communist and Uighurs in Urumqi in 1946.

After 1950, several times the Communist revolutionary moment in China has touched almost every aspect of traditional culture, especially crucial for Uighur land during the Cultural Revolution. The revolutionists found that every aspect of culture in Uighur land was different from that of China. That included languages, writing systems, the arts, literature, ideas, values, attitudes, history, religion, customs, music, dance, songs, the way that people think, even the features of people, their clothes, house decoration, as well as food and the like.

After September 11, China increased Chinese military at the Central Asian borders, and they sent more armed police and non-uniformed security forces into the big cities of Uighur land to control Uighur people, intensifying already high tensions. Recently, Chinese authorities have stepped up the "Strike Hard" campaign against Uighur dissidents. According to an Amnesty International report, which was released in 1999 and recently, the Uighur region is the only region of China where political and religious prisoners have been executed in recent years. The Chinese Government has also put tremendous pressure on Central Asian countries such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, not to support Uighur political activists or harbor Uighur dissidents. They are pressuring Central Asian governments and Pakistan to return Uighur dissidents to China with accusations of terrorism.

The Chinese Government simply labeled Uighurs as terrorists and tried to condemn two contemporary Eastern Turkestan republics established during the 1930s and 1940s as the origin of terrorists. As we know, the concept and terms of "terrorism" and "terrorist" do not exist in Uighur general knowledge and in their language throughout history. Modern Uighurs use loaned words directly borrowed from English terminology for these notions.

The government-owned Kashgar Uighur publishing house burned 128 copies of "A Brief History of the Huns," and "Ancient Uighur Literature," which officials view as fermenting separatism. It also burned 32,000 copies of "Ancient Uighur Craftsmanship," also regarded as promoting separatist religious beliefs, according to sources in Kashgar. "Burning Uighur books is like burning the Uighur people. Even under the Chinese constitution, these Uighur books should be protected as part of the Uighur cultural heritage," said one local Uighur. According to the official Kashgar Daily, the Kashgar Uighur Publishing House has also censored more than 330 books and stopped publication of other volumes. Another Uighur intellectual sadly indicated, "Burning those Uighur books recalls images of Hitler and Chairman Mao's campaign during the Chinese Cultural Revolution."

It is time for the United States Government to pay more attention to the seriousness of the political, economic, cultural, and religious discrimination and abuses facing the Uighurs and the Tibetans. Widespread abuses of human rights, unequal wealth distribution, economic, ideological, cultural exploitation and joblessness are affecting almost every family of near ten million Uighurs in China. Saving the Uighur culture is like saving our own culture. I ask of you, the U.S. Government, to establish a coordinator in the U.S. State Department on Uighur issues to help consult the U.S. Government on policymaking decisions regarding Central Asia and

China. The White House Administration should consider opening a United States Consulate in Urumqi. The State Department should establish an immigration quota to help Uighur refugees hiding out in Central Asia and surrounding countries; also establish an academic research institution focusing on Silk Road civilization, and create more educational opportunities in the United States for Uighur youth. The United States Government should coordinate with the United Nations and NGOs to promote human rights and religious freedom for Uighurs. The United States should also put stronger pressure on China to release Uighur businesswoman, Rebiya Kadeer, and periodically, send Congressional delegations, including Uighur dissidents, to Uighur land to examine the state of human rights and religious freedom in the Uighur Autonomous Region.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kamberi appears in the appendix.]

Mr. WOLF. Thank you. Justin.

**STATEMENT OF JUSTIN RUDELSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL  
CHINESE AFFAIRS**

Mr. RUDELSON. I would like to thank the Commission for inviting me and thank Anne Tsai, who made it possible for both of us to be here.

I have been working on Xinjiang issues for the last 20 years. My initial mentor was Louis L'Amour, the western writer, who loved this area. He, I think, would be very proud that I am here speaking.

China claims Xinjiang to be the front line in its war against international terrorism, maintaining that Xinjiang harbors Uighur Muslim extremists intent on overthrowing Chinese rule with the support of bin Laden's terrorist network. China is indeed invoking bin Laden's name to justify its crackdowns on the Uighurs and Islam that have been going on with a vengeance in Xinjiang since at least 1990. In Beijing's view, Xinjiang has a greater potential than all other regions of China to cause upheaval, something which could bring instability to Tibet, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

While Uighur militants have carried out several anti-government bombings over the past 20 years, Beijing's labeling the Uighurs as terrorists with connection to the Taliban, al Qaeda and bin Laden is, frankly, a terrifying appeal to United States anti-terrorism sympathies. There is evidence of only 13 Uighurs involved with Taliban fighters, and we do not know how many of these come from the Uighur exile community in Pakistan that left Xinjiang in the 1930s. To be fair, China is in a no-win situation. No matter what it does to develop Xinjiang, many Uighurs will see it as part of China's colonial domination. They view each discovery of oil as leading to Uighur wealth being stolen from them. Each new road facilitates Han Chinese immigration to the region, that will essentially make them a minority in their own autonomous region.

Beijing uses Western-style affirmative action economic rewards mixed with political and military crackdowns to undermine Uighur calls for independence and solve Xinjiang's problems. As part of

China's "manifest destiny," Beijing is fulfilling its responsibility to modernize Xinjiang, and, economically, Xinjiang has thrived. In 1991, Central Asian independence had very little impact on people in Xinjiang, because most recognized then and now that Xinjiang is economically a lot better off than Central Asia.

Jiang Zemin's regime has arguably delivered China's most stable decade in the last 150 years. However, the experimental nature of Chinese development in Xinjiang opens it to enormous risks. For example, Beijing is connecting Xinjiang to Central Asia's new trade, rail, and road links with Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. But these very openings are splitting the Uighur Nation apart—and I will talk about this in questions if there are any questions—and exposing Xinjiang directly to Islamic militants and drug trafficking from Central Asia. In 1999, China completed the railway that connects Urumqi to Kashgar to assist its economic boom. Militant Uighurs are certain to accelerate violent action against the large number of Han immigrants who are settling in this traditional Uighur area as well as against the trains that carry them.

Uighur resistance to Beijing takes many forms. In the oasis villages, many Uighurs participate in the revival of Islam and Sufism. Only a very few Uighurs have turned to militancy. And almost all of these militants are Uighur secular nationalists. They are seeking independence from China, whose struggle is not connected with Islam.

As Dr. Kamberi mentioned, in the mid-1990s, Beijing unleashed a series of police crackdowns called *yan da*, or "Strike Hard," against what it called "illegal religious activities and splittism," that equated Islam with subversion. Two months after the first Shanghai Five meeting in 1996, an alliance that has given China extreme latitude to crack down on Xinjiang's Uighurs, China launched "Strike Hard" crackdowns against Uighur "separatism" that initiated a tragic cycle of Uighur anti-government resistance alternating with harsh police retaliation that continues today. According to Amnesty International, since 1996, one Uighur has been executed in Xinjiang an average of every 4 days. Few Western countries have voiced concern.

By clamping down on all Islamic practices as fundamentalist or potentially militant, China provides no moderate alternative for Islamic education. And I see the possibility here for an alternative use of Islamic education being very positive. This current policy only produces greater militancy among China's Muslim population. For example, in 1997, Uighur students in Yili, the most secular region of Xinjiang, launched a grass-roots campaign against alcohol. Alcohol addiction is destroying the Uighur people, much as it has our own Native American peoples. Uighur students developed their health campaign against alcohol to encourage liquor stores to diminish their sales and to get Uighurs to limit consumption. The government saw the campaign as motivated by fundamentalist Islam. Over 5,000 students protested against government attempts to end the campaign, and in the ensuing clashes between police and students an estimated 300 Uighurs were killed.

Besides alcohol, HIV/AIDS has brought the most devastating threat to Uighur survival as a people. The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Xinjiang is developing into a significant geopolitical problem that

warrants close attention from the United States. Heroin started coming into Xinjiang in 1994 from Burma. Within a drastically short time, Xinjiang has emerged as China's most seriously affected region and the Uighurs are the most affected of all of China's peoples. Most of the Uighur HIV sufferers are intravenous drug users. Most addicts live underground to evade police detection. In Xinjiang, there are no anti-retroviral drugs available. The Uighurs face an epidemic chain of infection, devastation, and disintegration as the number of new HIV cases grows exponentially each year. Testing is prohibitively expensive. There are no hospitals in Xinjiang prepared to treat patients with full-blown AIDS. This information is collected from the Johns Hopkins University, which has an HIV station in Urumqi.

Although international teams are working in Xinjiang, the programs are limited in scope, with a lack of sharing of information among the various organizations. Such coordination is crucial to prepare for the rising numbers of Uighur patients as they develop full-blown AIDS, and as Uighur disaffection and anger mounts as the AIDS toll climbs. Young Uighurs infected with HIV/AIDS will feel desperate, enough perhaps to strike out at Han and government targets as suicide bombers. To deal with the AIDS nightmare in Xinjiang, China needs to partner with international organizations to reduce opium production in Burma and Afghanistan. So far, the entire supply of heroin entering Xinjiang is from Burma. If China cannot keep Afghan heroin from entering Xinjiang under the Karzai regime, it will be catastrophic for the Uighurs.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Xinjiang is more of a security concern than a humanitarian one, warranting immediate attention from the United States and its allies. The epidemic will radically affect China's national security and stability. Xinjiang's HIV/AIDS crisis, when put within the context of the regional HIV/AIDS epidemic affecting China, Russia, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Central Asian nations, starkly reveals that Xinjiang and the entire geopolitical region face a security crisis of the gravest proportions. In South Africa, where the AIDS trajectory has reached its most extreme extent, the military currently has an HIV infection rate of over 90 percent, mainly spread by contact with prostitutes. As the armed forces are one of the most at-risk segments of society for HIV, it is predicted that the militaries of all the countries in this region, including China's, will be profoundly affected within 5 to 10 years by HIV infection. I am not just speaking of Uighurs here. Professor Sperling and others spoke about the Northwest Development Project. Ethnic Han coming to this region, such as truck drivers, unmarried pioneers, soldiers, prostitutes, and government officials are all high-risk vectors for the spread of HIV/AIDS. Ethnic Han, although the government might see this as a Uighur disease in Xinjiang, will also be severely affected.

Economically, the treatment of opportunistic diseases associated with HIV/AIDS, such as tuberculosis and sexually-transmitted diseases, are sure to wipe out most, if not all, of the monetary gains that Chinese development will bring to Xinjiang. Moreover, Xinjiang's health system will be too financially devastated to react to patients with full-blown AIDS, a situation that is certain to pro-

voke rioting and militant action against a Chinese Government seen to be heartlessly unresponsive.

In order to stem such rioting and militancy, the cooperation in combating terrorism developed between China and the United States in the wake of the September 11 tragedy must be extended beyond anti-terrorism to include peacemaking, regional development, and the struggle against the HIV/AIDS epidemic. An important step toward this would be for the United States and its allies to invite China as an observer to G-8 meetings and eventually invite it to join the G-9. I was just at a meeting with the NATO School in Germany and we discussed China's joining of NATO in the next 10 years, like Russia. A Western embrace of China is the only way to develop a long-term and consistent overall strategy to prevent the further alienation of the Uighurs and the Turkic Muslim peoples of Central Asia.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rudelson appears in the appendix.]

Mr. WOLF. Thanks very much. I will start. One issue that neither of you really touched on is the practice of religion in Xinjiang. On the trip that some of us made several weeks ago, the theme came through repeatedly that nationalism and the practice of religion must be one in the same. Could you comment on that and the linkage between the practice of Islam and splittism as defined by the authorities and what the implications of that are?

Mr. RUDELSON. The fear that the Chinese Government has is that Islam, essentially, causes Uighurs to be insulated and withdrawn among themselves and not participate within the Chinese state. And to a large extent, this is true. The government in 1985 allowed Uighurs to start practicing Islam to a very large extent and allowed mosque construction. I did my anthropological field work in an oasis called Turpan. There were over 3,000 mosques built in a period of about 5 years. So the government did not really see Islam as a threat until Tiananmen in 1989, and started to retract. Just as in Tibet, where religion is seen as a marker of identity, for many Uighurs, it is the same, especially Uighurs in the oases. Many Uighur intellectuals and scholars who moved to Urumqi, to get more of a secular education, see that secular education is the most important thing for themselves and for their people, because it is only by competing with the Han people and learning the Mandarin language that they can compete on a national level. So there is friction between intellectuals, for the most part, who are predominantly secular, and locals, who see Islam as being part of their heritage. The Chinese Government is fearful that Islam can become more fundamentalist. However, just as we in this county have religious schools, such as Catholic education where both secular education and religious education are taught at the same time, this can be developed and should be encouraged to develop in Xinjiang. But religion is very much a part of who the Uighurs are. Even those secular Uighurs will say that they are Muslim, even though they might not practice. I guess it is akin to Jews, with my own faith. Many Jewish people will say that they are Jews, even though they do not practice the religion. But Chinese see Islam and fear its power, and it does have a power to unify people in ways that China believes can get out of control.

Mr. WOLF. Dolkun.

Mr. KAMBERI. Yes. You already brought out many points about Islam in the Autonomous Region. It has already become a part of the Uighurs daily life, and the culture and custom. The people, actually as Dr. Rudelson pointed out, a lot of intellectuals are not practicing, but they identify themselves as Islamic as one of the very important identities of the Uighur people, is seen as threatening to the Chinese Government.

Mr. RUDELSON. The interesting thing though is, it does not threaten the Chinese Government for the Hui people, or the Tungans as they are known in Xinjiang. Because the Chinese see that they are culturally closer to the Han peoples and they speak Mandarin. They do not speak a Turkic language; their language at home is not Arabic. So China sees them as being part of a Han cultural sphere, whereas, the Uighurs are completely on the outside of that, so that is what China sees as more of being part of a Central Asia sphere.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you. John.

Mr. FOARDE. I wanted to let you pick up, Justin, on your points about road and rail development in far western Xinjiang splitting the Uighur nation, and get into that a little more deeply and tell us what you meant by that, please.

Mr. RUDELSON. When I first was in Xinjiang in 1985, I noticed that there were very significant differences between the Uighur people. Some would say it is just like the differences between New York, Los Angeles, and Texas. But there are strong differences between the Uighur people. So in my own research, what I found is that through history, while the Uighurs were part of an area within what is now Xinjiang, they were often drawn outward across borders, rather than focusing inward toward one another. So Uighurs in the far east of the region were more aligned with and worked with China in trade, than were, say the Uighurs in Kashgar with what is now Uzbekistan. Most scholars looking at the region, because there are so many high mountains, thought that the Uighurs focused inward. And indeed, politically, the Communist Chinese Government closed off a lot of borders so that the Uighurs were forced to focus inward. In 1985, China opened this region to international trade and tourism, and it started focusing Uighurs outward across the borders again. And so I started looking at whether this development and international development would essentially start splitting the Uighurs apart, allowing the Chinese Government to control them more effectively because of the difference in the Uighurs and the fissures that developed between them. This is a complex situation because while there are things that are drawing them apart, and drawing their focus across the borders, there are other things such as HIV/AIDS, and the "Strike Hard" initiatives and the clampdown in Islam, that focuses people together. So it will be a question in the next few years whether the Uighurs will really solidify, as their name really means, "confederacy" or a "union," or whether the union will attenuate over certain geographic lines.

Mr. KAMBERI. I did not see that. I did not see that the Uighur in the future would be dividing because of natural division of the land. Natural division of land, of course creates different culture

and art and, also linguistic dialect in the region. But right now, I do not see any big difference between the Southern Uighur and the Northern Uighur. They are all the same in terms of their cultural identity. And also their political identity, linguistic identity, and religion identity, it is the same. I do not see the split coming.

Mr. FOARDE. Interesting. Thank you. We spoke a little bit just a minute ago about levels of religious practice among Uighurs as Muslims. Are Uighurs allowed to make the Hajj pilgrimage? And if so, roughly how many go every year, and what is making those numbers either large or small?

Mr. KAMBERI. I do not have specific numbers on how many each year, but in terms of do they do the Hajj, yes, it is yes. It used to be more during the 1980s. The procedure has changed. Travel agents can organize, but recently up to 1997, especially after recent events, it is only with approval from government officials. Some of the private sector go to Hajj, only if they go to Central Asia first. But I do not have specific numbers.

Mr. RUDELSON. In the 1980s, it was around 2,000 or 3,000 a year. Usually people needed almost \$6,000 to \$12,000 to make the trip. Because they needed dollars, they sent out young family members out to the coastal cities, Shanghai, Beijing to trade money, so they would have the dollars and this would help the people on the Hajj. A very interesting aspect of the Hajj is, in the late 1980s—and I think this continued through the 1990s—it was very important for certain local Communist officials to make the Hajj, because they would come back as a Hajji. Even though they did not believe in Islam, they would officiate at certain events and it was more of a pro forma. This is Uighur tradition as opposed to religion. And that separation for the Uighur Communist leaders still goes on today. I think the number of Hajjis has gone down to maybe fewer than 1,000 today.

Mr. KAMBERI. I would add only one thing and that is on the age. They only allow people over 50 years old and older, right now to go.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you. Matt.

Mr. TUCHOW. I think earlier in your testimony you indicated that there were only 13 Uighurs who were involved with the Taliban. I am wondering if the numbers are really so low, why are the Chinese striking so hard?

Mr. RUDELSON. Well, the “Strike Hard” campaign started in 1996. So it is sort of unrelated. But the “Strike Hard” campaign began when China could strike hard. It knew that there were incremental bombings, one or two a year. For instance, there was a bombing in Urumqi on Deng Xiaoping’s funeral on the day and hour of his funeral. It showed that the Uighurs were not afraid to embarrass China. When it joined the Shanghai Five, it was allowed to do whatever it needed to do to control the Uighurs within the Xinjiang region, or Uighur elements, as well as in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan where Uighurs were, separatist elements also handled by their governments. So the idea was that China could strike hard and none of the other Shanghai Five countries would say anything.

As far as Uighurs in the Taliban, I had been looking for a good 4 months, trying to find the numbers and came up with 4 Taliban. I then met an Israeli intelligence officer who is also a professor at



Hebrew University, and he said that his count was 13. The Chinese have said that there are over 1,000 Uighur Taliban that have now infiltrated the rest of the Muslim communities throughout China. No one that I have talked to says that that is possible at all. It has kind of demonized the Uighur people. It has scared a lot of Uighurs. And I think that is the reason for striking hard, and also for saying that there are these contacts with al Qaeda and bin Laden and the Taliban, just to stifle people into not doing anything.

Mr. TUCHOW. Do you know what the numbers are on Uighur nationals who now are political prisoners, imprisoned for simply exercising their rights of speech or religion?

Mr. KAMBERI. I do not have a number because of the Chinese Government system. It is not allowed. When they arrest people, they cover it up and they never allow journalists to go to get statistics.

Mr. RUDELSON. The one we do know about is Rebiya Kadeer, who, of course, Dolkun mentioned, who is a very famous activist. A millionaire, a rags to riches story, who met with a Congressional staff delegation in Urumqi and was arrested 4 years ago, and sentenced to 8 years for passing documents to her husband who is a dissident journalist living in Oklahoma. She is now the Mother Teresa or the Dalai Lama figure of the Uighur people. Because she started organizations for women—the Thousand Women Movement—helping impoverished women better themselves, women whose husbands left them, or whatever. When I was in Urumqi in 1995, I saw anti-heroin posters. She has a 7-story department store—and had anti-heroin banners outside her building that she had put up herself. And this was the first time that I started understanding how profound this HIV problem was, through her.

Mr. KAMBERI. I have not finished my statement on this issue, actually. I say that we do not have official statistics from the Chinese side, but we have information from traders who cross the border to Central Asia who bring information. Especially at the time in 1995, there was an event that is unknown to the outside world because of the religious practices crackdown by the Chinese Government.

Mr. RUDELSON. Just to clarify, what happened in 1995, at least the Chinese explanation, is that so many people were praying in a mosque during the Kurban festival—the largest festival when Muslims go to Mecca to make the Hajj—that they were overflowing into the street, and were praying in the street and blocking traffic. When the police came to try to direct traffic, it became chaotic, and there was some resistance. And when they went to arrest the cleric, it started violence. That is at least the Chinese official description of what happened.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you. Dave.

Mr. DETTONI. Thanks for your testimony. In the last panel, one of the witnesses said that there is religious freedom in Tibet. I know that from my boss' journeys to Tibet, that there is a police officer or undercover agent in every seminary or every temple. So he is not here to answer for himself. And I am picking a fight with an empty seat. But nonetheless, my definition of freedom is a bit different. And this is not just to pick a fight. This leads into a ques-

tion to you. How are the mosques in the Uighur areas; are there police officers, undercover security? How would you describe from your experiences freedom of religion? Are they being watched? Are there repercussions for practicing their faith?

Mr. KAMBERI. It is hard to define. There is no religious freedom in China. Of course, there is no religious freedom in the Autonomous Region. And it is because they only allow certain people to practice, especially in the government. After 1990, if you work for the government, you are not allowed to practice religion. Even some kind of cultural form of religious practice is not allowed.

Mr. RUDELSON. In general, Uighur children are allowed to be trained in basic prayers up to the age of about 6. Then they are sent to secular schools. Most go for 5 years. Then at age 11 education stops. This is what is causing a lot of the HIV problems. There is just nothing for a lot of kids to do except get high on glue or gasoline or shoot heroin.

As far as mosques, as one of my scholar friends says, they are X-rated. If you are below the age of 18 years you are not allowed to enter a mosque. When you go in you will see a sign in Uighur that says if you are under 18 you are not allowed in. There is one school to train mullahs in all of Xinjiang. All of the mullahs, at least the ones at the famous mosques, are trained. And they know how to behave in order to continue as mullahs under the system.

As far as the power of Islam. In 1990, I was in Turpan again, and I was at a wedding. There was lots of alcohol at the wedding, people dancing, men and women together. One individual got a little bit too drunk and attacked another guest at the wedding and killed him with a knife. The repercussion was that the mullah said, whoever had a wedding with alcohol and dancing in the future, they would refuse to bury that person's father and mother in a religious way and in a religious cemetery. So that was the start of really asserting that kind of power. The government, several weeks later, cracked down and read the mullah the riot act, that he had to perform religious funerals. He could not have that kind of power to make that decision.

Most people who are retired, even if they are not religious, gravitate toward being religious. Being at the mosque five times a day is, in some ways, a social way of getting together and being together. For the government, they are not a threat. The elderly are considered fine, as far as their practice. So there is, to some degree, religious practices that are allowed—whether it is completely free, and there are a lot of strings attached—it is difficult to say. During that period from 6 to 18 years of age, they are not allowed to practice Islam at all, and those who do, and do it secretly can be arrested, and are arrested.

Mr. DETTONI. But are there undercover surveillance officers in almost all the mosques? Are they being watched?

Mr. KAMBERI. Yes. The answer is yes. Religious freedom in the Uighur Autonomous Region is hindered since the Chinese Government studied how many mosques have been opened, how many mosques have been built. And every imam and mosque is governed by the government, and the imam himself is not well-educated in the Islamic religion. If you have more knowledge to interpret it deeply, you are not allowed. In the Chinese newspapers they say

that they have religious freedom, you have open mosques in each city, people still go and pray. Yes, in terms of that it is limited practice, just like the Falun Gong.

Mr. RUDELSON. There is also a syncretic religion, which is interesting. There is a lot of Shamanistic practice that goes along with Islam. The use of fire in purification and cemeteries, and sometimes at night, you would go out and see people burning cotton in bottles, sending medicines to heaven, which kind of surprised me. You will see dead birds hanging in trees with money, something that is completely antithetical to Islam, yet practiced there.

As far as the Public Security Bureau [PSB], there are a lot of informants, people that just see things and use things for their own strategic benefit within society. So you do not have to have the Public Security Bureau, people can inform on each other. Because after the Cultural Revolution, there is a lot of distrust among people even today.

Mr. WOLF. Thanks. Anne Tsai.

Ms. TSAI. Thank you for your testimony. I was just curious as to if there is any continuation of local grassroots activities to address public health issues such as what Rebiya Kadeer had done, or did that completely get shut down in the last few years? And also any types of NGO activities outside of the Red Cross addressing public health issues and other areas that NGO activity might be helpful in.

Mr. RUDELSON. In the public health area—that is what I have been looking at most extensively recently—Australia is doing an incredible amount of work in Xinjiang. There are a lot of Uighurs who emigrated to Australia because it is like Xinjiang, it has got a lot of desert, it is very far away from danger, and it is safe and peaceful and beautiful. So Australian Aid—AUSAid—is very strong there. The Australian Red Cross is also very strong there. And they are the major player right now in public health. Johns Hopkins University is doing some work, but it is very small, prevention trials. Yale University has a small clinic that treats pregnant Uighur women. As far as NGO and investment, Xinjiang is the lowest, or the last, ranked of all of the regions of China in terms of direct foreign investment.

I am part of a project called the Xinjiang project at Johns Hopkins-SAIS [School of Advanced International Studies] and one of our economists found that in fact, China's Northwest Development Project is just really a slogan, that there really is not much development going on in Xinjiang at all. And in fact, she found that Xinjiang is falling apart economically, that a lot of the state farms are falling apart. And so there are a lot of Han who might be leaving soon to get back into the interior of China, which I assume, would make some Uighurs happy. But it is a difficult situation for them.

The other situation I wanted to bring up is the question of the military. An Israeli scholar found that, in fact, China's military is not very strong in Xinjiang. Whenever we look in this area, the actual military situation is a complete shock to most of us working in this area. He found that the military there is composed of the young recruits, the weakest and smallest numbers of forces. Xinjiang is really seen as a place to absorb foreign forces. They will

let them come across Xinjiang and then put up a stand in Gansu or Qinghai, or somewhere else. Xinjiang is not heavily defended so the “Strike Hard” campaign is very similar to the Rodney King days of Los Angeles, where there is a rapid attack force that comes in and puts something down very hard and scares people tremendously so that they will not create further problems. And that is a very different way of seeing this region in terms of security and stability.

Ms. TSAI. In terms of “Strike Hard,” does the Production and Construction Corps play a large role in that or is that mostly left to the PSB?

Mr. RUDELSON. The Production and Construction Corps are pretty much getting old. They are producing about one-third of the gross domestic product coming out of Xinjiang from the farms. But the farms themselves are having a lot of problems, very much like the state farms of the former Soviet Union, Russia today. But their function as a military force is not that strong at all.

Ms. TSAI. Thank you. Dolkun, do you have anything to add to that?

Mr. KAMBERI. Yes, *bing tuan* [Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps] is controlling a lot of things. It might not seem as strong a military force, as Justin said. But if there is a war, yes, they have a very strong military because they have been training secretly. And also they control the economy of the vast Uighur Autonomous Region. Recently they wanted to reconstruct the *bing tuan* as a business corporation, to try to control the economy of the Uighur Autonomous Region. And also, I will point out that I do not see the Chinese going back, as Justin said, because of the failing economy. Recently we saw that another big project has started, the gas pipeline project, from Tarim Basin to Shanghai. It is a 4,000 kilometer pipeline and it is a \$40 billion project. And China has decided to start that project. Many Uighur people see that project as resource exploitation, because they are not benefiting from it. The Uighur people are asking questions. Why did they build the pipeline just around the Tarim Basin, only benefiting the 10 million people there? It would cost less and could have been built faster, and benefited the Uighurs too, instead of spending \$40 billion to run a long line to Shanghai. So the Uighurs see that the Chinese Government is always trying to benefit the Chinese first and not the Uighurs. And this is a very serious problem right now.

Mr. WOLF. OK. Well, thank you very much. We have pretty much come to the end. Does anyone have any final quick comments? Dolkun.

Mr. KAMBERI. I would like to suggest, if you can, as I said because the Central Asia Uighur culture, is a part of the overall culture and they have a long tradition of culture, we should preserve it. Preserve the culture. And I would suggest establishing a research institution. When I look at the University in that Autonomous Region, in the history department, there is no teaching of Central Asia history, Uighur history. And of course we can do something about that, and establish a department at the research institution.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you. Justin.

Mr. RUDELSON. I think the issue of Rebiya Kadeer is very important. I see her as being a real dynamic force for the Uighur people. The way she organized her business, her education establishment in her department store, she sent several Uighurs to the United States, she helped thousands of women. Having her let out and having her come here, or stay in Xinjiang and be able to do good things, would be very important for the Uighur people.

I think, in general, China really needs Xinjiang. It is a place for mineral extraction, for wealth, for oil and gas. China is profoundly in need of mineral wealth and will be trying to get a lot of mineral wealth from Russia and have it transfer across Xinjiang to the eastern part of China. So, the region is important. It is important to emphasize Xinjiang's development and development of the local people will have an impact on the Uighurs, not just on the Han that are coming in.

I am extremely worried about the HIV/AIDS situation, which I think I made clear. I think it will have a tremendously devastating impact on the region if something is not done quickly. It must be done without anti-retroviral drugs, these drug cocktails. It has to focus on boosting the immune system through traditional Chinese medicine, traditional Uighur medicine, boosting nutrition of the Uighurs. There is mono-cropping there so most Uighurs eat bread and tea as their main staples. All that needs to be changed. And then education, education, education to change the drug problems.

Mr. WOLF. OK, well thank you very much. This has been very useful. It is a subject that is all too little addressed in the United States. I think we all know that this is one of the many reasons that the problems are so severe, because the outside world has not paid very much attention. RFA [Radio Free Asia] is there, there is a handful of scholars in the United States and in Europe looking at these issues. I hope we can, through this roundtable today, and through our report in October, at least help a little bit in sustaining U.S. attention on what is a very difficult problem.

With that, thank you very much for helping us move a little bit in that direction as we prepare our report and try to put some recommendations together. If you want to follow up with any further thoughts, especially concrete ideas, as to how this Congressional-Executive Commission, with its recommendations to the Congress and to the President, may be able to do something that would help the every day life of Uighurs, feel free to get in touch with us. Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 4:50 p.m., the hearing was concluded.]



# APPENDIX

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## PREPARED STATEMENTS

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BHUCHUNG K. TSERING

JUNE 10, 2002

Thank you for the opportunity to talk about the situation in Tibet at this roundtable. I would like to focus on some recent developments in Tibet and to speculate on what they mean in terms of China's strategy toward Tibet. My hope is that this would be of some use to the Commission and its staff as you draft your recommendations to the Congress and the Administration on responding to the changing situation in Tibet.

Since the Commission has been set up specifically to give recommendations to the U.S. Government to help improve human rights and support the development of the rule of law in China, I believe it should not hesitate in promoting ideas, which even require policy changes if it believes that is where the solution is.

The United States needs to adopt a holistic approach toward the Tibetan issue. Attempts to improve the human rights situation need to be incorporated with efforts to resolve the broader political problem in Tibet.

The Chinese authorities have made a subtle change in their policy on Tibet. In addition to the policy of outright suppression of Tibetans, they have intensified their control through assimilation and incorporation of selective aspects of Tibetan life, including in the academic and economic fields.

China seems to have realized that it is not in its interest to ignore the international interest in Tibet. Therefore, the Chinese authorities have chosen to release some Tibetan prisoners who they hope will help improve their international image. They are also undertaking economic development projects in Tibetan areas, which on the face of it are aimed for the welfare of the Tibetans but have the dangerous possibility of helping to dilute the distinct linguistic, cultural and religious identity of the Tibetan people.

The Chinese authorities are using the tactic of providing access and economic incentives to governments, organizations and individuals to encourage them to be sympathetic to the Chinese perspective. China has also been attracting Western Tibet experts to visit Tibet and China, to participate in government-sponsored conferences, etc., all in an attempt to provide subtle legitimacy to their policy in Tibet. The silver lining in this development is that there are individuals and organizations, which are taking advantage of this change in Chinese attitude to undertake activities, which are of direct benefit to the Tibetan people.

## RELEASE OF PRISONERS

To begin with the positive news, in the first 3 months of this year the Chinese authorities released three internationally known Tibetan political prisoners.

On January 20, 2002 Ngawang Choephel, a Tibetan ethnomusicologist who was a Fulbright scholar, was released on medical parole after serving more than 6 years of his 18-year sentence on trumped up charges of espionage while documenting Tibetan performing arts tradition in Tibet.

Ngawang Choephel's case had received the attention of many people in the United States, particularly the Congressional delegation from Vermont.

In February 2002, Chadrel Rinpoche, the former abbot of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery and Head of the Search Committee for the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama, was released from prison. Although we do not have exact information about his current whereabouts it is believed that he is in Shigatse. Chadrel Rinpoche's prison term had been completed and his release was expected.

On March 31, 2002, Tanak Jigme Sangpo, Tibet's longest serving political prisoner, was released on medical parole in Lhasa. He had served 32 years out of his 41-year sentence. The 73-year-old Sangpo is currently staying in Lhasa with his niece. We have learned that Sangpo is not getting satisfactory medical treatment.

## CLAMPDOWN ON POPULAR TIBETAN LAMAS

However, the above development does not seem to indicate that Chinese policy on Tibet has changed for the better. In recent months the Chinese authorities took actions to clamp down on certain Tibetans, individuals who may not be widely known internationally but who have been making tremendous contribution toward the welfare of the Tibetan people.



In April 2002 a Tibetan religious teacher, Tenzin Delek Rinpoche (lay name: Ngawang Tashi), was arrested on suspicion of involvement in bomb explosions in Karze region of Kham in eastern Tibet (in present-day Karze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan province). The real reason for his arrest may have to do with his projects among the Tibetans, which made him a popular lama.

Tenzin Delek Rinpoche supported local people in the reconstruction of various smaller monasteries and a nunnery, and he was involved in activities to provide homes and education for children from poor local families. The authorities refused him permission to build a school and an old people's home in one nomadic area. In the late 1990's, however, he successfully set up a school in Lithang for both Tibetan and Chinese children, mostly orphans, providing education to at least 130 pupils.

Tenzin Delek Rinpoche is not the first one to suffer because of his work among the Tibetan people. In July 1999, a Tibetan scholar from Amdo (Tsolho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in present-day Qinghai), Gyaye Phuntsog, was sentenced to 6 years in prison (and reportedly released on medical parole) for the crime of "damaging the stability of the nation." Gyaye Phuntsog had founded a school, funded partially by UNESCO, which caters for some of the region's poorest Tibetan families and focuses on the study of the Tibetan language.

In October 1999 Gen Sonam Phuntsog, a well-known scholar and Tibetan language teacher in Kham in eastern Tibet (in present-day Karze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan province), was arrested in what appears to be China's concern over his influence in the area and over his apparent loyalty to the Dalai Lama. At the time of his arrest he had been teaching more than a hundred monks at Dhargye monastery for 6 years. Sonam Phuntsog was popular among Tibetans because he ran projects teaching Tibetan children about their religion as well as Tibetan language. He had also helped in the renovation of some monasteries in his region in the 1980's.

In September 2001, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog, abbot of the monastic complex of Larung Gar in eastern Tibet, was removed from the complex against his will and is currently being held somewhere in Chengdu.

The monastic community known as Larung Gar near Serthar (in present-day Karze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan province) had the largest concentration of monks and nuns anywhere on the Tibetan Plateau in recent years. In particular, the community attracted several thousand Chinese devotees.

The latest news is the sentencing of Jigme Tenzin Rinpoche (known as "Bangri" Rinpoche) and his partner Nyima Choedron for charges including espionage and endangering State security.

They had been running the popular Gyatso Children's Home in Lhasa, which had about 50 pupils between the age of 3 and 15, most of whom were orphans. The orphanage had been supported through private donations. Following their arrest the orphanage was closed down.

The Chinese authorities' action against these popular spiritual leaders in Tibet can be attributed to the fact that they have been unable to gain the respect and trust of the Tibetan people.

#### USE OF DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE POLITICAL OBJECTIVE

China has also been using developmental activities in order to promote its overall political objectives in Tibet. Its Western Region Development Program includes the railway project in Tibet.

The \$3.3 billion railway project is said to be China's biggest investment in Tibet. While the railways may have economic benefit, it will also strengthen Beijing's political grip. "The trains would allow quick deployment of troops to put down Tibetan protests like those in the late 1980's against Chinese rule and to guard the frontier with India, which fought a border war with China in 1962," according to a Western journalist who visited the construction area.

Chinese President Jiang Zemin told the New York Times a year back the railway line was being constructed for political reasons. Similarly, China has made revisions to its regional national autonomy law of 1984 to say that the priorities of the central authorities regarding the control and economic development of "autonomous" areas would be implemented in accordance with a centralized plan. According to the revised version resource extraction and major infrastructure construction are to be the main priorities for minority nationality areas and development will be carried out under the "unified plans" of the central authorities and according to "market demand."

The Chinese authorities have permitted modest development projects in Tibetan areas being implemented by some Western NGO's. In many cases, such projects seem to be benefiting the Tibetan people. The International Campaign for Tibet's

position on development in Tibet is that all governments, NGO's and individuals undertaking projects in Tibetan areas should see that their projects directly benefit the Tibetan people and do not encourage the further dilution of the Tibetan identity. They should also be carried out in a manner that reflects the spirit of the priorities outlined in the Tibetan Government-in-Exile's guidelines. Dharamsala currently encourages developmental projects in the health and educational sector, particularly in rural areas. Similar guidelines were incorporated in the Tibetan Policy Act, a comprehensive legislation that is before the Congress.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The human rights violation in Tibet is symptomatic of a bigger political problem. Unless steps are taken to adequately address the fundamental issue, mere release of a few prisoners or the implementation of development projects in Tibetan areas will not provide any lasting solution. Given this situation, our recommendations to the Commission are the following:

(1) The Commission should ask the United States government to consistently and proactively work for encouraging a negotiated settlement to the Tibetan problem between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Chinese leadership. The Dalai Lama is calling for a genuine autonomy for Tibet. The U.S. Government should formulate a Tibet policy based on all Tibetan areas, not just the Tibet Autonomous Region, in recognition of historical fact, and current demographic reality.

(2) The Commission should recommend that the Congress pass the Tibetan Policy Act in light of its programmatic and political significance.

(3) The Commission should ask the Administration to have a coordinated approach on Tibet, involving all relevant departments, including Labor, Commerce and State. The Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues at the Department of State should be fully relied upon, and should be involved in any aspects of US-China relations that could impact Tibet, including issues of economic consequence.

(4) The US government should work multilaterally in developing a united Tibet policy, including at the U.N. and other regional and international forums.

(5) The Administration, Commerce in particular, should not promote any U.S. corporate involvement in projects or investments, such as the railroad, in Tibetan areas that are contrary to the interests of the Tibetan peoples. The Administration should consider drawing up guidelines on this and could look to those formulated by the Congress in the Tibetan Policy Act as well as by the Tibetan Government-in-Exile for the Tibetan perspective on economic development.

(6) The staff of the Commission should undertake a trip to the Tibetan refugee community in India, Nepal and Bhutan, similar to the trip that they took to Tibet. This will enable the staff to gain information on the situation of the Tibetans in exile, the working of the democratic Administration in Dharamsala, the thinking of the Tibetan leadership in exile, information all of which will be useful as you continue your dialog with Tibetan and Chinese leaders inside Tibet.

(7) We endorse the recommendations of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom contained in its third annual report released in May this year. The Commission recommended that the U.S. Congress should extend an invitation to the Dalai Lama to address a Joint Meeting of Congress; that the U.S. Government should endeavor to establish an official U.S. Government presence in the Tibetan capital, Lhasa; and that the United States should urge the Chinese government to provide access to religious persons imprisoned, detained or under house arrest in Tibet.

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#### PREPARED STATEMENT OF ELLIOT SPERLING

JUNE 10, 2002

I am grateful to the Congressional-Executive Commission on China for affording me this opportunity to appear before you. Over the course of many years I have been engaged in the study of Tibet's history and Tibet's relations with China, both historical and contemporary. I am presently the chair of the Department of Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana University and I have served as a member of the Secretary of State's Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad (1996-1999).

The historical perceptions that underlie modern Chinese policies toward Tibet are relatively clear: it is the position of the People's Republic of China that Tibet became an integral part of China in the 13th century; that this sovereignty over Tibet was claimed by all subsequent dynastic rulers; and that inasmuch as China has consistently been a multi-national state, the fact that two of the three dynasties involved in this rule were established by Mongols and Manchus has no bearing on the

question of Chinese sovereignty. With the collapse in 1911 of the last imperial dynasty, the Qing dynasty of Manchu rulers, Chinese claims were taken up by the Republic of China and in 1949 by the PRC, which was able to fully implement them. In May, 1951, following military clashes that left Tibet with no real defense, the central government of China concluded an "Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet" with the government of the Dalai Lama that formalized Tibet's incorporation into the PRC.

This account of Tibet's history, an emotional and nationalistic perception of Tibet as a centuries-old "integral part of China," is used to introduce almost all official Chinese polemics and arguments about Tibet and its history, ancient and modern, and underpins China's assertions about its place in Tibet. Suffice it to say, outside the PRC, China's claim to continual sovereignty over Tibet from the 13th century on are often disputed; and the existence of a de facto independent Tibetan government under the Dalai Lama prior to 1951 is often adduced to contradict that claim. Since the establishment of the PRC the emotional element inherent in China's claim has been significantly nourished by the ideological imperatives to be found in the writings of Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Mao. The view derived from their ideas holds Tibet's integration into China to be part of the inevitable workings of History, as nations and peoples inexorably move together. This is, of course, an idea that is now rarely, if ever, overtly invoked or even seriously considered. It is sustained by inertia as much as anything else and as such has served to solidify a dogmatic attitude toward Tibet. None of this is meant to deny that Tibet also has a marked strategic significance for the PRC. It occupies a sensitive border area and thus, out of concern for stability (including stability in other areas of the PRC that are potentially restive), the Chinese government has clearly felt a need to integrate it as closely as possible with the rest of the country. To that end Chinese migration into the area is significant in the development of an economy-albeit a Chinese-dominated one-that binds Tibet ever closer to China. Be that as it may, in stating its case China has never based its claim to sovereignty over Tibet on military or security concerns. It has based it squarely on the historical argument.

The ideological considerations that I have described have exerted an influence on the situation that is sometimes poorly perceived, particularly when proposals for bridging the positions of the Chinese government and the Tibetan government-in-exile are considered. On several occasions the latter has put forward propositions for a special status or condition for Tibetan areas within the PRC on the basis of the distinctive nationality of Tibetans. These have been rejected for reasons that can only be understood from an ideological perspective. For China the great cultural and national differences between Chinese and Tibetans cannot be a basis for special treatment within the PRC, since these distinctions are in theory defined as superficial and ephemeral, unlike the profound differences that China's ideological theorists recognize between the social and economic systems in the PRC proper and Hong Kong (or between the systems in the PRC and on Taiwan, for that matter). Not surprisingly, the PRC rejects such propositions (including proposals to lump all Tibetans in the PRC into one large, Tibetan autonomous unit) since they are rooted in national distinctions rather than in differences in social and economic development. Moreover, moves to increase Tibetan political autonomy, which would work against the increasing amalgamation of the Tibetans with the other peoples in the PRC, go against the Marxist sense of History's direction; they are perceived by China to be "reactionary" in a very basic way. In essence then, the Tibetan question is settled as far as the PRC is concerned. The perception that the PRC has been unforthcoming in offering creative solutions to the impasse that has developed between it and the Dalai Lama's government in exile is largely rooted in this stance. China is willing to bring in amenable exile elements but sees no reason to do so other than on its own terms.

But for Tibetans opposed to Chinese rule the Tibet issue remains a nationalist issue. This fact has been elided, by both the U.S. Government and the Dalai Lama's government-in-exile. For the U.S. Government, which has never recognized Tibet's independence, support for Tibet is largely limited to political, human rights, and cultural issues, which are not the crux of what Tibetan nationalist agitation is aiming at. The Dalai Lama, through the Tibetan government-in-exile, has willingly discarded a policy of seeking independence for Tibet in hopes of reaching an accommodation with China that would allow Tibet internal autonomy and preserve Tibetan culture. These approaches are problematic, but both have been tied to calls for direct negotiations between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government. Indeed, over a period of many years, the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile have focused much energy on seeking to have third parties (including the U.S.) make clear to China that the Dalai Lama does not seek Tibet's independence, so that negotiations might commence between China and the Tibetan government-in-

exile. However, China is well aware of the Dalai Lama's stand; it simply sees no reason to deal with him in order to resolve the Tibet issue.

As concerns the position of the United States, there has been a certain myopia inherent in its perception. To wit, hoping that improved political or material circumstances will alleviate Tibetan discontent ignores a well-known dynamic. When a highly authoritarian State begins to liberalize it is then that dissent spills over; we've seen this in many situations (the lack of understanding of this process is no doubt why so many Americans were perplexed about Gorbachev's lack of popularity in the waning days of the USSR). As conditions improved in Tibet, during the early part of Deng Xiaoping's liberalizing break from the Maoist past, we saw more, not less, discontent, because at heart the core of the issue in Tibet is one of Tibetan national aspirations, not material conditions.

The preservation of Tibetan culture as a U.S. foreign policy goal also presents some problems. Tibetan culture, like any other, is dynamic. Calling for its "preservation" automatically brings forth the need for it to be defined, and this in turn leads to it being viewed as a stuffed-and-mounted item fit for a museum. In fact, for most people calling for the "preservation" of Tibetan culture, that culture is largely equated with clerical and monastic life, or with what might be termed folk culture. Tibetan culture does not need to be frozen in time, but Tibetan cultural life needs to be protected from measures that repress literary and artistic expression. In Tibet today secular writers and artists—and they do exist—working with modern forms, are every bit a part of the Tibetan cultural scene.

The focus on bringing China into negotiations with the Dalai Lama's government-in-exile has also been mired in misperceptions. For its part the Tibetan government-in-exile has often acted as if the sole obstacle to talks was China's failure to understand that the Dalai Lama did not advocate Tibetan independence. To that end, the government-in-exile would often, as noted above, urge third parties to communicate to China that the Dalai Lama sincerely sought a solution to the issue that would leave Tibet within the PRC. However, with the simple goal of buying time, China would decry the manner in which the Dalai Lama rejected independence, demanding certain other concessions (e.g., recognition of China's sovereignty over Taiwan) or displays of greater sincerity, etc., none of which have been sufficient to meet with Chinese approval. Though he has tried to comply, the Dalai Lama has, as a result, actually become a significant actor in a strategy of delegitimizing support for Tibetan independence. This has not made negotiations imminent by any means, but it has undermined the position of Tibetan activists in exile and inside Tibet agitating for Tibetan independence.

What has become clear (even, of late, to members of the government-in-exile) in all this, is the fact that China's strategy is to look toward a resolution of the Tibet issue via the death of the Dalai Lama. Hence the tactic of buying time, which brings us to the ongoing controversy over the Panchen Lama, the incarnate hierarch generally considered second to the Dalai Lama within the Dge-lugs-pa sect of Tibetan Buddhism (the sect of the Dalai Lamas). Chinese moves here have been quite cynical: they involved the Communist-led government of an officially atheistic country in the mission to discover the true reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, who, in turn, would normally recognize and enthrone the next Dalai Lama. What this clearly implies, of course, is that the next Dalai Lama will be chosen, groomed and educated in a manner according with PRC needs and PRC control. The result has been the recognition in 1995 of one child (now held incommunicado) by the Dalai Lama and another by the PRC authorities. The latter lives in Beijing, with all the trappings of a Panchen Lama, but is not accepted by many, if not most, Tibetans. Nevertheless, all of this points to a sense, on the part of the Chinese government, that whatever the inconveniences, China is capable of forging ahead in Tibetan matters without the cooperation of the Dalai Lama; if the Dalai Lama wishes to acquiesce and assume the ceremonial place that China is willing to grant him, well and good. Otherwise it is of little consequence to Chinese policies that he is not on board.

U.S. policy in pushing for negotiations between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government has largely followed the lead of the Tibetan government-in-exile and seems not to be based on a clear-headed and independent analysis of the situation. It does not significantly reflected an understanding of China's decision to write the Dalai Lama out of the picture. It is time to acknowledge that this indeed is the step China has taken. Up through the end of the previous administration, the Office of the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Affairs proceeded in its work on the assumption that negotiations between China and the Dalai Lama were feasible if China clearly understood the Dalai Lama's rejection of Tibetan independence. As noted, activity over the possibility of negotiations has simply been a means for letting time pass until the present Dalai Lama is out of the picture.

At the same time, Tibet remains a focus of attention for several other reasons as well. As indicated above, the U.S. has oft-stated and well-justified human rights concerns with regard to Tibet. There is no doubt that imprisonment for dissenting political expression (most commonly with regard to Tibetan independence) and State pressure on religion, where there is a perception of a threat to State interests, remain serious matters. There is often an overlap between these concerns, as, for example, when loyalty to the Dalai Lama is at issue. Most recently Tibetan areas within the PRC have witnessed increasing restrictions on the activities of certain religious centers and religious figures (e.g., the 2001 closure and expulsions at Gserthar).

Over the last 2 years China has embarked on a project designed to further the economic and social integration of the PRC's western regions with the rest of the country. This project, the "Great Western Development Initiative (Xibu da kaifa . . .)," has its own implications for Tibet. It is important to note that while the project does seek to address the stark imbalance in development that characterizes the differences between areas such as Tibet and the wealthy coastal regions in eastern China, it also has the potential for spurring Chinese migration into Tibet and further Sinicization there. Given that one of the elements in this enterprise is the construction of a railway link to Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, this project could greatly alter the situation in Tibet. And given the nationalism at the core of Tibetan political activism, this project may well exacerbate tensions, particularly in Lhasa and other urban areas, where Chinese residents are an ever-growing majority of the population.

Ultimately U.S. policy must be based on what the actual facts about Tibet are, not what we might like them to be. These include the fact that the Tibet issue is at its core a nationalist issue, not one centered around the improvement of material conditions; and the fact that Chinese policy is not to seek a compromise with the Dalai Lama, but to await his death and install a new Chinese-educated Dalai Lama. China's perception and handling of dissent in Tibet continue to be characterized by serious human rights violations. Until such time as China can deal with Tibetan dissent-nationalist, religious, cultural, etc.-in a manner commensurate with international norms of respect for human rights, Tibet will be the focus of visible international concerns and demonstrations.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF ARTHUR N. HOLCOMBE

JUNE 10, 2002

I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak to you today about the current situation in Tibet. Tibet remains a contentious issue in the US, and one can approach the subject from many perspectives. As the former Resident Representative of the U.N. Development Program in China during the 1990's and the President of the Tibet Poverty Alleviation Fund since February 1998, I have been engaged in development work in Tibet since 1992. This has provided me with certain perspectives which I would like to share on current economic and social trends there, and on international assistance being provided to help improve the lives of average Tibetans.

The Chinese Government reports that GDP in the Tibet autonomous Region has expanded at an average annual rate of about 11.9 percent since 1992, and that this is among the fastest growth in any Province of China during this period. It also reports of progress being made to develop main transport routes, expand electric power production, upgrade telecommunications infrastructure and speed up of municipal construction in major cities and towns. It also highlights the growth of tourist numbers and earnings, and the expanding output in the productive sectors, particularly commercial agriculture and minerals. It also points to the progress in establishing basic health services and education reaching most the population since 1959.

The Central Government is providing special financial and residence liberalization incentives to attract outside entrepreneurs and semiskilled workers to take advantage of economic reforms taking place in Tibet, and to help force the pace of private sector investment and growth. At the same time it is providing about 95 percent of Tibet's capital and recurrent budgets, about the equivalent of \$180 million annually, to help compensate for the widespread local poverty and lack of local revenue, and to ensure continuing economic and social advancement. Most recently, the Central Government has been publicizing its Western Development Campaign, which it indicates should help to promote local development, welfare and economic stability among local ethnic populations in Tibet and other Western Provinces, while helping

to develop their gas, oil and other natural resources of overall national importance. In Tibet, the first big project under this Campaign is the Qinghai to Lhasa railway link at an estimated cost of 20 billion RMB.

Rapid growth in Tibet has improved living conditions, particularly for Tibetans and migrant Han and Hui Muslim people living in the urban areas, and along main transport routes. However, it is important to understand the distortions created by the present urban oriented market economy growth taking place in Tibet, and the implications of such urban orientation for most of the Tibetan population still living in rural areas and depending on traditional agricultural and livestock pursuits.

#### WHAT ARE SOME OF THE DISTORTIONS?

First, Tibet's rapid employment and income growth has been primarily in the modern urban sector, and has been driven by a dynamic, even cut throat, private sector in which Han and Hui Muslim populations have been dominant. It has included Han farming populations that have been instrumental in the development of a major peri-urban green house agriculture that has sprung up around main urban areas. This urban oriented growth has contributed to rapidly increasing income disparity between urban and rural areas, and between Han and Tibetan populations, as most Tibetans still depend for their livelihoods on relatively low productivity subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry in rural areas. This is acknowledged by the Government which estimated average per capita family income in urban areas of Tibet to be the equivalent of \$606 in 1996, in comparison to only \$117 in rural areas, and growing at about 5 times the rate in rural areas.

Second, Government investment since the mid 1980's has given priority to the development of infrastructure supporting economic reforms and opening up in urban areas. This has resulted in inadequate funds being available for rural economic and social infrastructure, including rural credit, improved basic health services and education and vocational skills training. Because Tibetans have not been provided with opportunities to learn modern skills, the Government has found it expedient to encourage increasing numbers of migrants with the skills needed for its investment projects. Most rural Tibetan children today don't advance beyond primary schooling, and rural Tibetan families tend to underutilize existing basic health services because of their long distance from villages, their high costs or the low quality of health care being provided.

Third, the economic reforms and opening up have made it more difficult for traditional Tibetan urban enterprises to compete with better funded, more experienced and lower cost Han managed enterprises in urban areas. There is growing evidence of Han enterprises, which now constitute about 70 percent of all enterprises in Lhasa Municipality, squeezing out Tibetan enterprises even in traditional Tibetan product areas such as Tibetan clothing, furniture, painting, clothing, restaurants and dry goods and food retailing. In Lhasa today, there are about 340 officially registered Han enterprises in the "handicraft" sector, and only 28 Tibetan enterprises. Moreover, with the opening up of Tibet to the outside, Nepalese entrepreneurs in Tibet have recently been able to import high quality traditional jewelry and dominate the local tourist trade in this area, undermining traditional Tibetan artisan production.

Fourth, urban construction technologies and practices in Tibet have advanced to modern earthworks, reinforced concrete and glass designs and complicated construction machinery that are beyond the traditional construction experience and practices of existing Tibetan construction workers. A result is that most transport and urban infrastructure today is built and maintained by outside, more highly qualified workers.

Fifth, Tibetan youth in rural areas are increasingly being attracted to the urban areas with their higher paying employment opportunities and more comfortable living conditions -but without the skills needed to secure steady, well remunerated work. A consequence is that they are increasingly getting into crime and other unlawful activity. To some extent this problem is exacerbated by the lack of business and vocational skills training facilities in Lhasa and other urban areas to prepare urban Tibetan and Han youth for available jobs in the modern sector.

Economic and social policies in Tibet are basically similar to those set by the Central Chinese Communist Party and Government for all Provinces of China. Thus, for example, Tibet has social policies that call for:

- elimination of absolute poverty among most disadvantaged populations in most resource deficient areas;
- universal access to basic health care, reinforced by a Community Medical System health insurance program;

- in rural areas, replacement of all 2 year community primary schools with 6 year State primary schools, and by 2003, achieve 6 years of primary education for all rural primary school aged children, and 9 years in urban areas;
- introduction of vocational skills curricula initially in 1000 pilot primary and middle schools located in 21 counties;
- winter village housing in proximity to health clinics and primary schooling for all Nomads that presently don't have it by 2005.

It is hard to fault these policies, as they focus on improving the human capacities and living conditions of the Tibetan ethnic population in Tibet. The basic problem is that with the Central Government development priority in Tibet being given to investment in urban infrastructure supporting economic reforms, there hasn't been enough money available to implement these laudable policies. Our concern is that the Central and TAR Governments must allocate sufficient funds to upgrade rural health and education services and to greatly expand vocational skills training for Tibetans in rural and urban areas. Unless they do, Tibetans will continue to be hurt rather than be helped by the continued expansion of Tibet's market economy, and the new railway to Tibet will only intensify existing migratory trends, exacerbate ethnic income disparities and further marginalize Tibetans in traditional economic pursuits.

To in part compensate for the limited investment in rural services, the Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region has encouraged international, bilateral and non-governmental organization donors to support rurally oriented programs of direct benefit to Tibetan communities. These have been largely in the basic health, education and water resource development sectors, although some support to household agriculture and livestock activities and vocational skills training has also been provided. This assistance has been largely concentrated in open rural counties around main municipal areas, and in the Qomolangma Nature Preserve located in Southwest Tibet along the Nepalese border. There have been some recent exceptions, including with Canadian CIDA and our Tibet Poverty Alleviation Fund which have been encouraged to work in closed counties of Nakchu Prefecture. I have attached to my statement a partial summary of recent external assistance to Tibet, which shows these overall patterns.

On behalf of TPAF, I had a meeting in April 1998 with Mr. Guo Jinlong, the present TAR Party Secretary, at the time we were developing the outlines of our assistance in Lhoka and Nakchu Prefectures. He urged us to do everything we could to help poor Tibetan households to participate in the expanding market economy in order to benefit from the increased income and other benefits it offered. He also indicated frankly that in Nakchu Prefecture the Government had not succeeded in getting nomad households to participate more actively in Tibet's cash economy. He indicated that the TAR Government would be most interested to support any programs TPAF could develop that helped to integrate nomads more closely with Nakchu's small, but expanding, modern sector.

In this spirit, TPAF has given emphasis in its programming to the provision of small loans to rural Tibetan households for investment in new income generating activities, to rural and urban employable skills training, to Tibetan enterprise support and development, and to reform of rural education to include basic employable skills curricula. These and other TPAF project activities are generally implemented jointly with Tibetan staff employed at lower levels of Government. We believe this helps to strengthen local capacity to continue implementation of project activities after termination of our assistance. Our projects are also designed to demonstrate ways Government and other donors can enhance their support to Tibetan participation in the market economy and modern sector in the future.

Other US NGO's have also been able to collaborate effectively with the TAR Government and implement programs that help to improve basic health and other human services of benefit to Tibetan communities. While we all would like to see a reorientation of Central Government and TAR resource allocations to be of greater direct benefit to Tibetan families and communities, we believe that US NGO's have been able to help improve working and living conditions for Tibetans in Tibet. We also believe that stepped up US Government support to US NGO's prioritizing Tibetan human development helps to signal the values and social development priorities that we as Americans believe need to be given higher priority in Tibet.

Thank you.

## Major Donor Assistance to Tibet 1999–2002

Donor organization	Sector of activity	Observations
Australia .....	(1) Rural Health Care, Water Supply Development (Shigatse). (2) Support to IDD Elimination Campaign. (3) HIV/AIDS Control (Lhasa Municipality) ....	(1) Implemented by Australian Red Cross.  (3) To commence in 2002.
Belgium .....	(1) Training in essential drugs ..... (2) R&D in Kashin-Beck Big Bone Disease.	Implemented by Mediciens Sans Frontiers.
Canada .....	(1) Mixed farming and Nomadic Livestock Development, Reproductive Health, and Environmental Protection (Lhoka and Nakchu Prefectures). (2) Many small Canada Fund projects .....	(2) Implemented by local governments.
European Union .....	(1) Irrigated Agriculture, Health and Education Development (Panam County, Shigatse Prefecture). (2) Vocational Education Curriculum Development in Four Rural Vocational Training Centers.	(1) Originally developed and approved in mid 1992.  (2) Implemented by the Tibet Poverty Alleviation Fund during 1999.
Germany .....	(1) Rehabilitation of small rural hydropower Stations (Lhasa, Lhoka and Lingzhi Prefectures ). (2) Vocational Skills Training (Lhasa Municipality and elsewhere).	
Italy .....	Construction of hospital and primary schools.	Implemented by Italian NGO Associazione per la Solidarieta Internazionale in Asia (ASIA).
Netherlands .....	(1) Pasture Rehabilitation, Village Wells Development, Midwife Training, Urban Skills Training. (2) Sustainable Community Development in Qomolangma Nature Preserve. (3) Water Supply .....	(1) Implemented by TPAF.  (2) Implemented by The Mountain Institute.  (3) Implemented by ASIA (Italian NGO).
New Zealand .....	Poverty Alleviation in Lhoka Prefecture .....	Implemented by TAR and Lhoka Prefecture Governments.
Norway .....	Preventive Health Care—Kashin-Beck (big bone) disease.	Implemented by Mediciens Sans Frontiers.
United States .....	(1) Health and Nutrition ..... (2) Entrepreneurship Development ..... (3) Improved Eye Care ..... (4) Education and Training .....	(1) Implemented TERMA Foundation. (2) Implemented by The Mountain Institute. (3) SEVA. (4) Implemented by Tibet Fund.
UNDP .....	(1) Integrated Rural Development-QNP area (2) Improved design of Tibetan Artisan jewelry and other products.	(1) Implemented by national and local government units. (2) Financed by the Government of Finland Observations.
UNICEF .....	(1) Basic Health and Nutrition ..... (2) Primary Education. (3) Microfinance for Women.	Implemented by national, regional and local government units.
United Kingdom .....	Rural Health Care, Education and Water Supply (Panam County, Shigatse Pref.).	Implemented by Save the Children, UK.
WHO .....	(1) Workshops on health education and printing of health materials.	Implemented by WHO and TAR Health Bureau.



## Major Donor Assistance to Tibet 1999–2002—Continued

Donor organization	Sector of activity	Observations
	(2) Cold chain and safe injection project.	
Ford Foundation (USA) .....	(1) Reproductive Health ..... (2) Vocational Skills Development (Nakchu Municipality). (3) Enterprise Development .....	Implemented by TPAF. Implemented by TPAF. Implemented by The Mountain Institute.
Future Generations (USA) .....	Primary Health Care, other .....	Located in Qomolangma Nature Preserve (South West Tibet).
Kadoorie Charitable Foundation (Hong Kong).	(1) Microfinance, Reproductive Health Training, Urban and Rural Skills Dev't. (2) Child Nutrition ..... (3) Small Business Development .....	(1) Implemented by TPAF. (2) Implemented by TERMA Foundation. (3) Implemented by The Mountain Institute.
SEVA (USA) .....	Rural Eye Care .....	US Government Funding.
Swiss Red Cross .....	Rural Health Care .....	Implemented with and by Shigatse Prefecture.
The Mountain Institute (USA)	(1) Sustainable Community Development Qomolangma Nature Preserve (South West Tibet). (2) Assistance in small enterprise development.	(1) Netherlands and US Government Funding. (2) Ford Foundation funding and other.
Tibet Poverty Alleviation Fund (USA).	(1) Small loans to about 1,000 families in Nakchu and Lhoka Prefectures). (2) Development of TAR Safe Motherhood Strategy, township doctor and village midwife training. (3) Rural and Urban Vocational Skills Training. (4) Introduction of Vocational Curricula in Pilot Primary and Middle Schools of 21 counties. (5) Clean water supply in 14 villages (Nakchu Prefecture). (6) Tibetan Artisan Enterprise Development	(1) Funded by Kadoorie Charitable Foundations (KCF). (2) Funded by Ford Foundation. (3) Funded by KCF, Dutch Government, Bridge Fund. (4) Funded by anonymous US foundation. (5) Funded by Dutch Government. (6) Funded by KCF, Bridge Fund.
The TERMA Foundation (USA)	Child Nutrition, Maternal and Child Health, Tibetan Medicine, TB, and Rickets Prevention.	US Government Funding and other.
Tibet Heritage Fund .....	Preservation of Old Lhasa City area .....	Implemented with Lhasa Municipal Government (Terminated by TAR Government in 2000).
Trace Foundation (USA) .....	(1) Technical Training for Restoration and Rehabilitation of Old Lhasa City area. (2) Primary Education (Nakchu). (3) Micro-enterprise development (Dingjie County). (4) Handicraft Training (Lhoka Prefecture).	(1) Implemented by Tibet Heritage Fund.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DOLKUN KAMBERI<sup>1</sup>

Thank you for inviting me here to discuss Uyghurs and Uyghur identity. I have divided my presentation into nine topics: an introduction, Uyghur people, the linguistic identity of Uyghurs, the cultural identity of Uyghurs, the artistic identity of Uyghurs, the musical identity of Uyghurs, the historical Identity of Uyghurs, the regional Identity of Uyghurs, and a conclusion. It is very difficult for me to draw a complete picture of the subject in 10 minutes, but I will do my best to summarize. The full text also will available soon on the Internet and in print.

## SUMMARY

Today the land of the Uyghurs consists of the Tarim, Junghar and Turpan basins, located in the center of Asia. The land has gained great importance since early times because of its favorable geographic location on the ancient trade routes between the East and the West, connecting Greco-Roman civilization with Indian Buddhist culture and Central and East Asian traditions. Burgeoning trade and cultural exchanges gave Uyghur-land a cosmopolitan character marked by linguistic, racial and religious tolerance. Uyghur culture and art has developed not only on the basis of inheritance and preservation of traditional culture, but also through cultural exchanges with others in the East and West.

The name "Uyghur-land" denotes a geographical location rather than a geopolitical entity. It is located in the eastern part of Central Asia. Uyghur-land comprises about one sixth of China's territory; it is now the biggest Autonomous Region of China. The Uyghur region includes a great portion of Central Asia, from the northeast to the southwest; it borders Mongolia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tibet, and India. Uyghur-land is not only located in a strategic position on a vital communication line in Central Asia-among three large imperial states China, India, and Russia-it also has a unique geographic environment, rich natural resources and special climate. Its arid climate has helped preserve ancient tombs, mummies, petroglyphs and city sites, Buddhist caves, innumerable cultural relics, underground antiquities, and treasures. There are 24 different manuscripts using 17 ancient languages, writings which were unearthed along with the Tarim and Turpan Basin oasis cities, well known to scholars. In different periods people called it "The Western Region" in Chinese sources, "Uyghuristan," "East Türkistan," "Chinese Türkistan," or "Chinese Central Asia" in the West. "Uyghur Ali," found in a medieval Uyghur manuscript, means "The Country of the Uyghur." In 1884, the Qing Dynasty Government of China started calling "Xinjiang," which means "new territory." After 1955 the name "Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region" was given to it by the government of China.

The basic meaning of the name Uyghur is "unite," but it may also be translated as "union," "coalition," or "federation." The name appeared first in records of the Orkhun Kok Turk inscriptions and in early Uyghur. Later forms of the name can be found in medieval Uyghur, Manichaean, and Sogdian scripts, and the Arabic script of the Uyghur Qarakhanid and Chaghatay period. Apart from these Central Asian forms, the name can be found in different periods and diverse texts in Chinese, appearing in more than 100 translated forms.

The Uyghurs and their forefathers are an ancient group of people who have inhabited Central Asia since the first millennium B.C. Their ancestors can be traced in Chinese historical sources to the "Die," "Chi Die," "XiongNu," "Ding Ling," and "Gao Che," who lived in the north of the Heavenly Mountain (Tängri Tagh), and along the Selenga and Orkhun rivers. That territory later became known as the Uyghur Empire. The Uyghurs have left historical traces along the ancient Silk Road, and also in Chinese historiography.

The Uyghurs, earlier than other peoples in Central Asia, started to settle and build cities. Certain kinds of evidence from both archaeological excavations and historical records show that Uyghurs lived a settled urban life, and adopted Buddhist and Manichaean culture. Facts from Uyghur manuscripts indicate religious and cultural interaction of medieval Uyghurs with other peoples of neighboring countries.

<sup>1</sup>Dolkun Kamberi, director of Radio Free Asia's Uyghur service, earned his M. Phil. and Ph. D. degrees from Columbia University and completed post-doctoral work at the University of Pennsylvania. His specialty has been Silk-Road archaeology and civilization. His career has included work as a university professor, museum curator, and field archaeologist. He has been published extensively in various languages on the Silk-Road culture, history, religions, languages, arts and archaeology. Prior to joining RFA, Dr. Kamberi was a scientific consultant for the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, and a visiting professor at the University of Pennsylvania. He has taught the courses: "History & Archaeology along the Ancient Silk Road," "History and Cultural of Central Asian Empires," "Medieval Turkic Languages and Literature," and "Modern Uyghur and Uzbek Languages."

An important part of Uyghur literature is devoted to the translation of Buddhist works from non-Turkic languages. That is one reason why so many borrowed words from different languages appear in medieval Uyghur language.

About early Uyghur culture and its history, Kingdom Professor Denis Sinor wrote: "The kingdom of Khocho [Idiqut Uyghur Kingdom], ruled by the Turkic Uyghurs, was multiracial, multilingual and [it] permitted the peaceful coexistence of many religions. It enjoyed a living standard unparalleled in medieval Central Eurasia. . . . Among the non-Muslim Turkic peoples, none has reached the degree of civilization attained by the Uyghurs, and they developed a culture in many respects more sophisticated than that of most of Muslim Turks. In the visual arts, they continued a tradition, non-Turkic in origin, of which they maintained very high standards. The script they used gained widespread acceptance both to the east and the west. The Uyghurs undoubtedly wrote one of the brighter chapters of Central Eurasian history."

German archaeologist A.Von Le Coq removed many wall paintings, which were shipped in several hundred cases to Berlin. British archaeologist Aurel Stein, who visited Bezeklik at the end of 1914, indicated that, in terms of richness and artistry, no other finds from similar sites in the Turpan Basin could match those of Bezeklik, which parallel the rich ancient paintings of the Dunhuang Thousand Buddha Caves. Professor Albert Grünwedel (1856–1935) writes in a letter dated April 2, 1906: "For years, I have been endeavoring to find a credible thesis for the development of Buddhist art, and primarily to trace the ancient route by which the art of imperial Rome, etc., reached the Far East. What I have seen here goes beyond my wildest dream. If only I had hands enough to copy it all, [for] here in the Kizil are about 300 caves, all containing frescoes, some of them very old and fine."

Historically the Turkic people have commonly used the Uyghur literary language. The ancient Uyghur language, which was used in the 8th century during the Uyghur Khanate, is the same as the language of Orkhun-Yenisay inscription, which is called ancient Türki. As we know, until the 14th century, the ancient Uyghur literary language was commonly in use among the Türki peoples. Shämsidin Sami the author of *Qamusul'Alam*, wrote: "Uyghur being most advanced in the cultural development, their language was common literary language among the Türki peoples. Since the period when Chaghatay Khan was in power, the Uyghur language, which was called Chaghatay Tili, has been famous."

Based on history, literature, religion, content, and the scripts of Uyghur linguistic materials, I have classified the Uyghur language into five different periods:

(1) Pre-historical Uyghur language, before the 6th CE. No written material in Uyghur has been found so far, but the language came to us through Uyghur oral literature, idioms, idiomatic phrases, folk stories, folk songs, folk literature, and ancient mythology and legends in other language records.

(2) Ancient Uyghur Language, 6th Century to 10th Century CE. Mostly pre-Islamic literatures, which were influenced by non-Altai language.

(3) Medieval Uyghur language, 10th–15th Century CE. Mostly Islamic literature influenced by Arabic and Persian languages.

(4) Contemporary Uyghur Language, 16th–19th Century CE. Elishir Nawayi's works represent this era.

(5) Modern Uyghur language, late 19th Century-present.

The modern Uyghur language belongs to the Ural-Altai language family, Turkic language group of the eastern branch. Among the major six Turkic languages, the Turkish and Azari languages are very close, Kazakh and Kyrgyz languages are closely related, and Uyghur and Uzbek languages can communicate easily on simple subjects. The modern Uyghur language has two major dialects: southern and northern.

According to the Chinese 2000 official census, the population of Uyghur native speakers is near 9 million. But independent sources claims Uyghur population is about 16 million. In the past 10 years, the Han Chinese population in the region increased almost 32 percent. In 1949, Uyghurs accounted for more than 90 percent of the population while the Chinese accounted for only 5 percent of the roughly five million people in Uyghur-land. The Chinese population had increased 500 percent by the 2000.

The vast majority lives in the Uyghur Autonomous Region under Chinese rule. There are large Uyghur-speaking communities in the Central Asian Republics, Turkey, and smaller communities live in Russia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and also in the West. According to the Uyghur Autonomous Regional law, the standard Uyghur language serves as the official language of the Uyghur Autonomous government since 1955. But while more than 10 million Uyghurs live throughout a vast region of Central Eurasia, the Uyghur language has been greatly neglected by the

international community. There are no generally accessible Western publications or education in the Uyghur languages and literature, except for a few early publications in Russian, and some German and Swedish. Uyghurs have used more than eight different writing systems from early medieval times to present. Now they are using the Arabic script-based, Persian-modified modern Uyghur writing system.

Among the states of Central Asia, the stateless Uyghurs historically formed the leading group of the region for centuries. They possessed a rich literature, strong economy and military, the ability to conduct State affairs, and to help others solve conflicts. They showed generosity and offered their hospitality. Uyghurs and their ancestors built their reign under the rule of the Hun (2nd BCE to 2nd CE), the Jurjan (3rd CE to 5th CE), and the Turk Empires (522 CE to 744 CE). Uyghurs also established their own states throughout history. Their states include the Uyghur Ali (744 CE to 840 CE), the Idiqt Uyghur (840 CE to 1250 CE), the Uyghur Qarakhan (10th CE to 13th CE), the Uyghur Chaghatay (13th to 16th CE), the Yärkänt Uyghur Khanate (1514–1678), the Qumul and Turpan Uyghur Baks (from the end of 17th CE to beginning of 19th CE), and the Yakup Bak (1820–1877), which lasted until Qing's invasion. Uyghurs reclaimed Uyghur-land as the Republic of Eastern Türkistan in 1933 and the Eastern Turkestan Republic from 1944–49.

The president of Eastern Turkestan, Alihan Ture, was called back by Stalin in 1946 to Russia and lived in Tashkent until 1976. His successor, Ahmatjan Qasim (1914–1949), Eastern Turkestan army chief general Isaqbeg (1902–1949), deputy army chief general Dalilkan Sugurbayev (1902–1949), a member of Eastern Turkestan Central Government Abdukerim Abbasov (1921–1949) died in a mysterious plane crash on their way to Beijing on 22 Aug. 1949. (Abduruf Mahsum, the general secretary of the State of the Eastern Turkestan Republic is still alive in Almaty Kazakhstan). From 1946–1949, Russia and China engaged in many governmental structure reforms in the Uyghur-land. During the reforms, both Russian and Chinese government representative promised again and again to the Uyghurs that the presence of the Chinese army in Uyghur-land would promote democratization, free elections, and high autonomy, to help build the new Xinjiang, and achieve independence for Uyghurs in the future-as Zhang Zhi Zhong promised at the summit of Chinese Nationalists, Communists, and Uyghurs in Urumchi in 1946.

After 1950, several times “the communist revolutionary moment” in China has touched almost every aspect of traditional culture, especially crucial for Uyghur-land during the Cultural Revolution. The revolutionists found that every aspect of culture in Uyghur-land was different from that of China. That included languages, writing systems, the arts, literature, ideas, values, attitudes, history, religion, customs, music, dance, songs, the way that people thought, even the features of people-their clothes, house decoration, and food.

The Government twice changed the writing system of the Uyghurs, Kazaks, and Kirghiz, and punished all levels of educated intellectuals four times in 50 years for political reasons. Furthermore, the politicians reorganized and merged the Eastern Türkistan troops into the Chinese Army units, and made the army units of former Eastern Türkistan-as well as their generals and high-ranking commanders-disappear after 1966.

Besides giving serious thought to Uyghur identity, another goal of this presentation is to attract the attention of United States and international community to Uyghur issues. Therefore, this presentation also aims to present the evidence needed to understand Uyghur identity better. The archaeological excavations and historical records show that Uyghur-land is the most important repository of Uyghurs and Central Asian treasures.

Indeed, there are only a few places in the world that can claim the religious, linguistic, cultural, and artistic diversity at one period that Uyghur-land can. Shamanism, Buddhism, Manichaeism, Nestorianism, and Islam flourished in the Uyghur-land side by side and one after another along with the tradition of early Uyghur original ethnic cults. Uyghurs are indigenous people of Central Asia; they have developed a unique culture and arts that made significant contributions to the Asian culture. The Uyghur intellectuals have struggled to renew and keep their cultural identity since 10th Century CE.

After September 11, China increased Chinese military along the Central Asian borders, and they sent more armed police and non-uniformed security forces into the big cities of Uyghur-land to control Uyghur people, intensifying already high tensions. Recently, Chinese authorities have stepped up its “Strike Hard” campaign against Uyghur dissidents. According to Amnesty International's 1999 and 2002 reports on human rights abuses, the Uyghur region is only region of China where political and religious prisoners have been executed in recent years. Chinese Government has also put tremendous pressure on Central Asian countries such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, not to support Uyghur political activists

or harbor Uyghur dissidents. They are pressuring Central Asian governments and Pakistan to return Uyghur dissidents to China with accusation of terrorism.

The Chinese government simply labeled Uyghurs as terrorists and tried to condemn two contemporary Eastern Turkestan republics, established during the 30s and the 40s, as origins of terrorists. As we know the terms "terrorism" and "terrorist" they are non-existent in Uyghur general knowledge and in their language throughout history. Modern Uyghur is using words directly borrowed from English terminology for that notion.

There is recent disturbing news in Urumchi. Xinjiang University plans to teach major subjects to Uyghur students in Chinese beginning 1 September 2002 and it has burned Uyghur books in Kashgar. Not one Uyghur dared to comment publicly from the Uyghur-land regarding the news, but there is a very strong reaction from the exiled Uyghur community. Eyewitnesses saw the destruction of thousands of books during May in Kashgar. The government-owned Kashgar Uyghur Publishing House burned 128 copies of A Brief History of the Huns, and Ancient Uyghur Literature, which officials view as fomenting separatism. It also burned 32,320 copies of Ancient Uyghur Craftsmanship, also regarded as promoting separatist religious beliefs, according to sources in Kashgar. "Burning these Uyghur books is like burning the Uyghur people. Even under the Chinese constitution, these Uyghur books should protected as part of Uyghur cultural heritage," said one local Uyghur. According to the official Kashgar Daily, the Kashgar Uyghur Publishing House has also censored more than 330 books and stopped publication of other volumes. Another Uyghur intellectual sadly indicated: "Burning those Uyghur books recalls images of Hitler and Chairman Mao's campaign during the Chinese Cultural Revolution."

After carefully examining different aspects of Uyghur identity, I deeply believe that neglecting Uyghur civilization is neglecting Central Asian civilization; neglecting Central Asian civilization is neglecting Asian civilization; and neglecting Asian civilization is neglecting world civilization. In other words, destroying Uyghur cultural heritage is destroying the world's cultural heritage.

It is time for the U.S. Government to pay more attention to the seriousness of the political, economical, cultural, and religious discrimination and abuses facing the Uyghurs, and the Tibetans. Wide spread abuses of human rights, unequal treatment, unequal wealth distribution, economical, ideological, cultural exploitation, and joblessness are affecting almost every family of near 10 million Uyghurs in China. Saving the Uyghur culture is like saving our own culture.

I ask of you, the U.S. Government, to establish a coordinator in the U.S. State Department on Uyghur issues to help consult the U.S. Government on policymaking decisions regarding Central Asia and China. The Administration should consider opening an U.S. consulate in Urumchi. The State Department should establish an immigration quota to help Uyghur refugees hiding out in Central Asia and surrounding countries. And it should also establish an academic research institution focusing on Silk Road civilization, and create more educational opportunities in the United States for Uyghur youths. The U.S. Government should coordinate with the United Nation and NGOs to promote human rights and religious freedom for Uyghurs. The United States should also put stronger pressure on China to release Uyghur businesswoman Rabiya Kadeer. And periodically the United States should send congressional delegations including Uyghur dissidents to Uyghur-land to examine the State of human rights and religious freedom in the Uyghur Autonomous Region. Furthermore, the United States should provide funds for the Uyghur Non-Governmental Democratic institution.

Thank you for having me here today, and for your attention.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF JUSTIN RUDELSON

JUNE 10, 2002

China claims Xinjiang to be the front line of its own war against international terrorism and maintains that Xinjiang harbors Uyghur Muslim extremists intent on overthrowing Chinese rule with the backing of Osama bin Laden's terrorist network. While it is true that that China is invoking bin Laden's name to justify crackdowns on Islam in Xinjiang and on the Uyghurs, Beijing's own "war on terrorism," its crackdown in Xinjiang has been going on with a vengeance since at least 1996, more than 5 years before September 11. This is because Xinjiang has a greater potential than all other regions of China to cause upheaval. In Beijing's view, instability in Xinjiang could bring instability to Tibet, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

Beijing uses “affirmative action” type economic rewards mixed with political and military crackdowns, believing in a very Western way, that economic development can undermine Uyghur calls for independence and solve Xinjiang’s problems. As part of China’s Manifest Destiny, Beijing believes it must fulfill its responsibility to modernize Xinjiang. And economically, Xinjiang has thrived. In 1991, Central Asian independence had little impact on the Uyghurs because most Uyghurs recognized then and now that Xinjiang is a lot better off economically than the countries of Central Asia.

Jiang Zemin’s regime has arguably delivered China’s most stable decade in the last 150 years. However, the experimental nature of Chinese development in Xinjiang opens it to risk. For example, as part of its development plans, Beijing is connecting Xinjiang to Central Asia’s new trade, rail and road links with Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. But these very openings are splitting the Uyghur Nation apart and exposing Xinjiang directly to Islamic militants and the drug trade emanating from these countries and beyond. In 1999, China completed the South Xinjiang railway, connecting Urumchi to Kashgar to assist its economic boom and settling large numbers of Han immigrants in this traditional Uyghur area. Militant Uyghurs are certain to accelerate violent action against these Hans and the trains that carry them.

Beijing’s labeling the Uyghurs as terrorists and separatists with connections to the Taliban, al Qaeda and bin Laden is a terrifying appeal to United States anti-terrorism sympathies. So far, there is evidence of only 13 Uyghurs involved with Taliban fighters, and we do not know how many of these were from the Uyghur exile community in Pakistan. To be fair, China is in a no-win situation. No matter what it does to develop Xinjiang, many Uyghurs will only see it as a part of colonialist domination. Each discovery of oil in Xinjiang leads to Uyghur wealth being stolen. Each new road facilitates Han Chinese immigration to the region.

Uyghur resistance to Beijing takes many forms. Some Uyghurs look toward the Central Asian countries and ask why the Uyghurs do not have their own state. In the oasis villages, many traditional Uyghurs participate in the revival of Islam and Sufism. In the capital Urumchi, some Uyghur intellectuals, who are primarily secular and fiercely anti-Islamic, advocate blowing up all of Xinjiang’s mosques because so much of the Uyghur wealth is being invested in mosques rather than in secular schools. Only a very few Uyghurs have turned to militancy. And almost all of these militants are Uyghur secular nationalists, seeking independence from China, whose struggle has no connection with Islam.

In the mid-1990’s, Beijing unleashed campaigns against what it called “illegal religious activity” and “splittism” or “separatism” that equated Islam with subversion. The security alliance known as the Shanghai Five, now Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which began in 1996, gave China extreme latitude to crack down on Xinjiang’s Uyghurs. Two months after the first Shanghai Five meeting, China unleashed a ruthless police crackdown called “Strike Hard” against Uyghur “splittism” that brought on a cycle of anti-government resistance and harsh reprisals that continue today. Since 1996, one Uyghur has been executed in Xinjiang an average of every 4 days. Few Western countries have voiced concern.

By clamping down on all Islamic practice as fundamentalist or potentially militant, China provides no moderate alternative and only produces greater militancy among its Muslim populations. For example, in 1997, Uyghur students in Ili, the most secular region in all of Xinjiang, launched a grass-roots campaign against alcohol. Alcohol addiction is destroying the Uyghur people. Uyghur students developed the health campaign against alcohol to encourage liquor stores to stop their sales and to get Uyghurs to end consumption. The government saw the campaign as motivated by fundamentalist Islam and in the ensuing clashes between police and students, an estimated 300 Uyghurs were killed.

Besides alcohol, HIV/AIDS has brought the most devastating threat to Uyghur survival as a people. The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Xinjiang will develop into a significant geopolitical problem that warrants close attention from the US. Heroin started coming into Xinjiang in 1994 from Burma. Uyghurs initially smoked it but over the past few years began injecting it, creating a nightmare AIDS crisis. Within a drastically short time, Xinjiang has emerged as China’s most seriously affected region and the Uyghurs are the most affected of all of China’s peoples. Most of the Uyghur HIV sufferers become infected from intravenous drug use. The data on HIV prevalence among intravenous drug users is grossly underreported by as much as 5–10 times, with the rate of infection increasing by about 30 per cent annually. Drug use in China, as in the US, is a criminal offense. Clean needle exchanges are unheard of. Data on drug use is obtained at police-run detoxification centers where drug users are detained typically for about 2 months. Most addicts live “underground” to evade police detection.

In Xinjiang, there are no anti-retroviral drugs available. The Uyghurs face an epidemic chain of infection, devastation, and disintegration as the number of new HIV cases grows exponentially each year. Public health systems are poorly positioned to stem the disease. There are no hospitals in Xinjiang prepared to treat patients with full-blown AIDS. Testing is prohibitively expensive.

Although international teams are working in Xinjiang with the Xinjiang Red Cross, the programs are limited in scope with lack of coordination or sharing of information among the various organizations. Such coordination is crucial to prepare for the rising numbers of Uyghur patients as they develop full-blown AIDS and as Uyghur disaffection and anger mounts as the AIDS toll climbs. Young Uyghurs infected with HIV/AIDS will feel desperate, enough perhaps to strike out at Han and government targets as suicide bombers.

To deal with the AIDS nightmare in Xinjiang, China needs to partner with international organizations such as NATO, along with international health agencies to reduce opium production in Burma and Afghanistan. So far, the entire supply of heroin entering Xinjiang is from Burma. Two years ago, before the Taliban cracked down on its drug trade, Afghanistan produced 75–90 percent of the world's opium supply. The interim government of Hamid Karzai in Afghanistan is too weak to prevent Afghan peasants from selling opium again. It will be difficult for China to keep Afghan heroin from entering the Xinjiang market to meet the huge Uyghur demand. When this happens, it will be catastrophic.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Xinjiang and throughout the greater Central Asian region is perhaps a more pressing concern as a security issue than as a humanitarian one, warranting immediate attention from the US and its allies. Xinjiang's HIV/AIDS situation alone, put within the context of the regional HIV/AIDS epidemic affecting Russia, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Central Asian nations, starkly reveals that China and the entire geopolitical region faces a security issue of the gravest proportions. Note that in South Africa, where the AIDS trajectory has reached its most extreme extent, the military currently has an HIV infection rate of over 90 percent mainly spread by contact with prostitutes. It is predicted that the military of all of the nations in this region including China's will be profoundly weakened within 5–10 years by HIV infection in the same way. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is certain to dramatically affect Xinjiang and its international neighbors, and will radically affect China's national security and stability.

The treatment of opportunistic diseases associated with HIV/AIDS such as Tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases are sure to wipe out most, if all not all, of the economic gains that development will bring to Xinjiang and the Central Asian region and will be an impossible burden for the health care budgets of the greater Central Asian states. Moreover, the under-funded and unreformed health systems in the region are too weak to react to patients with full-blown AIDS, a situation that could provoke rioting and militant action against governments seen to be heartlessly unresponsive.

In order to assist in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Xinjiang, and to develop the region economically, two issues that are vital to stemming militancy and terrorism, China should be invited as an observer to G–8 meetings and eventually be invited to join the G–9. A Western embrace of China is the only way to develop a long-term and consistent overall strategy to prevent the further alienation of the Turkic Muslim people of the greater Central Asian region including Xinjiang. China's current approach to the global war on terrorism, particularly its focus on anti-terrorism in Xinjiang among the Uyghurs, leads Beijing to appear to be cynically using the September 11 tragedy to repress its discontented Uyghurs. To change this perception, China needs to become a partner with the US and Russia in peacemaking, regional development, and the struggle against the HIV/AIDS epidemic, not just in anti-terrorism.

