

1952

Speeches/Documents

**Title:** Talk with Tibetan Delegates (Excerpts)

**Author:**

**Date:** October 8, 1952

**Source:**. The writings of Mao Zedong SWM 7

**Description:**. The speech was made at a reception that Mao held for the delegation of the people of the Changdu (Chambdo) region of Tibet taking part in the celebration of the anniversary of the founding of the PRC in Beijing.

1. The Communist Party has adopted a policy of protecting religions. Believers and non-believers, believers of one religion or another, are all similarly protected, and their faiths are respected. Today, we have adopted this policy of protecting religions, and in future we will still maintain this policy of protection.

2. The problem of land redistribution is different from that of religion. In the regions inhabited by the Han people land has already been redistributed, and in these areas religions are still protected. Whether or not land should be redistributed in regions inhabited by minority nationalities will be decided by the minority nationalities themselves. At the moment, land redistribution is out of the question in Tibet. Whether or not there should be redistribution in the future will be decided by you yourselves; moreover, you yourselves should carry out the redistribution. We will not redistribute the land for you.

3. The setting up of a military and administrative committee and the reorganization of the Tibetan army were stipulated by the Agreement.<sup>[1]</sup> [However,] because you were afraid. I have informed the comrades working in Tibet to postpone the implementation [of this]. The Agreement must be implemented, but since you are afraid, implementation will simply have to be postponed. If you are afraid this year, we will wait until next year to implement it. If you are still afraid next year, then [we] will wait for the year after next before implementing it.

4. Tibet is a large area with a small population. Its population must be increased from the current figure of two or three million to five or six million. Later it would be good to increase it again to more than ten million. The economy and culture also need to be developed. Culture includes such things as schools, newspapers, cinema, etc. Religion is also included. The reactionary rules of the past, [whether] the emperors of the Qing dynasty or Chiang Kai-shek, all oppressed and exploited you, and so did the imperialists. They kept your population down, weakened your economy, and obstructed the development of your culture. The Communist Party puts into practice [the principle of] the equality of nationalities: it does not wish to oppress or exploit you, but rather to assist you — to assist you in developing your population, economy, and culture. When the People's Liberation Army entered Tibet, it was precisely for the purpose of carrying out the policy of helping you. In the early period of its presence there, it may not be of much help, and it may not be of great help even for the next three or four years. Later, however, it will be able to help you, that is certain. If the Communist Party could not help you develop your population, economy, and culture, the Communist Party would be of no use at all .... [I] am happy that you have come. During the next few days you can go to Nanjing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Guangdong, and the Northeast for a visit. From now on, if more people, both ecclesiastical and lay, and from all different circles of Tibet can come out to visit

the various places in the interior, it will help to strengthen the relations of unity and amity among the nationalities in China.

***NOTES***

1. This refers to the Agreement between the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet, May 23, 1951.