

TIBETTRUTH
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Attention Of:

Regional Tibetan Youth Congress New York & New Jersey

Regional Tibetan Women's Association New York

Tibetan Community New York & New Jersey

Chushi Gangdruk New York

We are contacting your organization in the aftermath of deeply upsetting scenes which cast an unwelcome and divisive shadow over the New York March 10 rally to mark the 1959 Lhasa Uprising. Since you had responsibility for organizing the event it is understandable that many people are expecting accountability and transparency as to why such scenes were witnessed at the rally. As such and given the magnitude of the issues raised and to inform more fully our subscribers and the global Tibetan community we decided to make this an open communication.

On a date when a determined solidarity with the just struggle being waged inside occupied Tibet would be expected, as a natural and politically legitimate action, the event was struck by division, acrimony and anger.

The resultant debate which has followed across the internet and social media sites such as *Facebook* reveals the intense sense of disappointment, frustration and opposition to what seems to have been an engineered and agreed policy to exclude from the protest any expression not officially sanctioned by the organizing committee. This was reported upon by the *Tibetan Political Review* which asserted that your organizations:

“... opposed anyone calling for a free or independent Tibet” and that Editors of TPR were informed that *“the organizers (TCNYNJ, RTWA, RTYC, and Chushi Gangdruk) would not permit anyone or any group who supported independence (such as SFT, USTC, and Tibetan National Congress) to participate or even join the March 10 protest.”* (Editorial 'Repairing Unity After 10 March 2015' March 11, 2015 Tibetan Political Review)

Anyone doubting this report is easily dispossessed of any skepticism when viewing various videos taken at the rally in which Tibetans seeking to express their right to free-speech are bullied and marginalized for daring to call for a 'Free Tibet' or 'China Out-Of-Tibet'! The nature and degree of intolerance and hostility on display was breathtaking and has not served Tibet's true cause at all, indeed by seeking to censor and marginalize those supporting the common political aspirations of Tibetans in Tibet, the only party benefiting is China's regime.

Now as bodies responsible for agreeing the content and objectives of this rally you have a duty, not only to the Tibetan community of New York, but beyond to account, why in full knowledge of the consequences and sensitivities involved, you agreed upon a course of action that would inevitably result in acrimony and division?

Moreover in seeking to marginalize fellow Tibetans and censor any mention of Tibetan independence you place yourselves open to the charge of callously ignoring a directive of the *Central Tibetan Administration*, which in 2010 published a paper specifically addressing such issues. Here is the relevant section of that document for your attention, appropriate parts of which have been highlighted:

"In a democratic society, there is always a fierce debate among the proponents of different ideologies and approaches, each opposing the other through arguments and counter-arguments. The main thing by which to ensure that this does not harm the unity among these different ideological groups is each of these groups develops a sense of understanding, respect and tolerance for one another...In the same vein, the Middle-Way policy has been put forward by His Holiness the Dalai Lama as a mere suggestion...He has never said that all should agree with his line of thought.

The Central Tibetan Administration has also thus far not issued any statements to this effect, both verbally and in writing. Neither does it intent to issue one in the future. Hence, if any of those organisations and individuals who support the Middle-Way policy try to propagate this policy by saying that it is the expressed wish of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and so all should accept it, then they are simply spreading disinformation. We consider this as absolutely inappropriate and undesirable" (Middle Way Policy and All Recent Related Documents Department Of Information And International Relations 2010)

Now while it is our view that the Central Tibetan Administration should demonstrate leadership and act to address this matter, we believe it is of critical importance that your organization give serious thought on that official statement, to assess carefully if your actions and objectives in organizing the March 10 rally truly complied with the formal advice and position of the Central Tibetan Administration? In what way could excluding those who hold a different view on Tibet's cause be deemed as tolerant or respectful? How was imposing a ban against those who wished to express their demands for a 'Free Tibet' respecting diversity of opinion? By engineering an event that sterilized any reference to Tibetan independence and in doing so alienating a considerable number of Tibetans, how was unity served?

It is to be hoped you will agree these are extremely important and valid questions, that demand an answer, right now the consequences of decisions you agreed upon have inflicted disillusionment and outrage within the Tibetan Diaspora. We trust you share our view that the people of occupied Tibet deserve not division, dispute and abandonment but genuine solidarity with their courageous resistance and struggle for national liberation.

Let us hope the executive members of your organization will act with due accountability and have the wisdom and selflessness to reflect upon their actions and take the appropriate steps in resolving this deeply unfortunate situation.

Bod Rangzen
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