

their homes to be searched for altars, religious pictures, and other religious paraphernalia. A ban on the display of Dalai Lama pictures in temples and monasteries was instituted in 1996. Monasteries have been invaded by security forces and searches made of monks and nuns' quarters. In May 1996, when a team went to Ganden monastery near Lhasa to enforce a ban on Dalai Lama pictures, six monks were shot and wounded and one died. Three months later some 92 monks were expelled from the monastery for refusing to sign an affidavit denouncing the Dalai Lama. More and more expulsions have followed at Ganden, which now has just a handful of monks.

A campaign for political reeducation – the so-called Patriotic Education Campaign -- was instituted in the monasteries in 1996 to implement the goals of the Third Work Forum. Political Work teams were sent into monasteries and nunneries throughout Tibet, even in remote rural and nomad areas, including areas outside the Tibet Autonomous Region. This included many monasteries and nunneries in which the monks and nuns had never been involved in demonstrations or protest. These work teams frequently are accompanied by armed police, who stand guard over the monks and nuns as the work teams speak.

Political work teams remain for as long as three months. The reeducation combines the investigation and interrogation of individual monks and nuns with lectures by political workers. Monks and nuns are given the correct answers to a series of questions on Tibetan politics, history, and religion, and then required to take written examinations and sign a written affidavit of loyalty. To pass and be allowed to remain monks and nuns must agree that Tibet has always been a part of China. They must assent to characterizations of the Dalai Lama as a criminal, unfit to be a religious leader, and not worthy of veneration. Refusing to participate in the reeducation is not allowed. Monks and nuns who attempt to boycott the sessions are arrested and imprisoned. Failure to comply with the demands of the work team and to denounce the Dalai Lama results in expulsion or arrest. It is significant that the Dalai Lama has recently felt compelled to declare that monks and nuns should denounce him under these conditions, rather than face torture, arrest, and imprisonment.

I can cite case after case of the closing down of monasteries, or their reduction to a skeleton staff following the arrival of the work teams. Sometimes the monks themselves shut down the monasteries and walk out – or just leave when they hear a political work team is due.

A large number of these monks and nuns, after leaving or being expelled, or after serving several years in prison, head over the mountains through Nepal and become new refugees in India. Perhaps as many as 10,000 monks and nuns have made this journey in the past ten years. Many have been caught and imprisoned along the way, some have been shot by border guards. Others have died from exposure to the harsh weather in the mountains in their attempt to reach freedom.

The ordinary practice of religion by lay people has also become more and more difficult in Tibet. In January of 1998, a new three-year campaign was launched to promote atheism.