

truth”. This has allowed for all havoc to take place that has considerably affected large human populations. “Loyalty-first”, or “Loyalty-at-all-costs”, pressures people to lie. It directs people’s behavior through the politics of fear. Such a demand for absolute loyalty, at the expense of honesty, is the source for the fabrication of “party truths” that aim to mould people and herd them into desired directions—often with tragic consequences. The authoritarian emphasis on “loyalty-first” whips up public emotions into a high tide of nationalism that drowns the voices of reason. Tibetans, who do not follow the party line and stand out, are likely candidates for “re-education” (which includes hard physical labor); they may well be found in a prison camp, balancing on the top edge of a three-meter high wall for hours—strapped with cement blocks.

It may seem ironic, but Tibetan Buddhist teachers could well point out how even this mode of belief and thinking, that has so affected the modern Chinese mind, has deeper sources driving it, and is ultimately self-destructive and harmful to the greater society. Maybe one day, even soon, the people of China might start to reconnect with the people of Tibet and rediscover the Tibetan kind of expertise that could benefit the entire Chinese community. Accessing Tibetan streams of knowledge could help remedy an ideological blindness, loosen hardened dogmas, nourish ancient roots, and help end the continuation of widespread, human-created suffering. A new horizon where both Tibetan children and Chinese children could peacefully and happily coexist, reaping and respectfully sharing rewards from each cultural heritage, can be imagined. This would reawaken and empower a positive relationship between the two peoples that was abruptly interrupted in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. But first, for this to begin, the Chinese people must find a way to see and listen past the communist (and Maoist) propaganda by which the Tibetan people, Tibetan culture, and Sino-Tibetan history have been so unfairly, disparagingly, and relentlessly portrayed. They must find a way to seek truth from facts – not propagated fictions. I hope that Chinese friends might open their hearts and minds to reevaluate what they have been programmed to think.

When the Chinese authorities do attempt to shut off or delay the discussion, if the world community acquiesces, remains quiet, or turns a blind eye because of the lure of cheap goods and corporate profits, we allow the postponement of a positive solution to this critical issue. Our silence allows the Chinese authorities to prohibit the kind of honest inquiry most urgently needed; our convenient rationalizations, motivated by short-sighted and narrow conceptions of personal gain, permit the suppression and oppression of an ancient culture and the very human beings who struggle to keep it alive. When as global citizens we begin responding firmly to the crisis in Tibet—through our voices and choices, we begin to act with profound global responsibility, as we stand together with the oppressed and empower them.

Brutal physical and ideological oppression is a tragic recurrence throughout global history. This phenomenon remains a salient feature of our global, social reality. When people and governments are willing to confront the realities that such oppression creates, then we can work together to end such practices. The following persons are survivors of forms of ideological oppression. The following accounts contradict the current People’s Republic of China’s Communist Party’s official ideology and propagated narrative. See their faces, hear their voices.