

che said, “Ngari Tulku, had on previous occasions told the Chinese officials directly that the monks would take action by publicly demonstrating if not given more freedom.”

During this raid, soldiers, police, and army trucks surrounded Sera. Sera monastery is situated on a mountainside. He feels sure there were a few thousand troops that surrounded the building plus numerous police officers. Only two soldiers came in his room, accompanied by seven or eight police officers. When he saw such a large number of troops outside, he first thought that they came to destroy the monastery. (A month earlier in October 1987, Chinese army officials said to the monastery elders, that they were going to destroy it, because it is always the monks that participate in demonstrations. They had said this other times before. The elder monks replied, “Do whatever you want to do. You always make threats and then you don't do anything.”)

Handcuffed, the monks were forced into a police truck. When they reached the first prison, Sangyip prison, the Chinese officers chained their arms and legs. They were held one day at Sangyip, and interrogated. Woesser said that the Chinese officers demanded, “Give me the names of your friends who conspired with you – give all the names and only then will we release you. Otherwise, you will be kept in prison for your entire life.” Woesser Rinpoche said he responded that he “does not have any friends”. He stated to the interrogator that he respects His Holiness the Dalai Lama and trusts the decisions made by His Holiness. The entire day was spent in interrogation with only one light meal of low quality food at 2:00 p.m.

After one day there, the guards told him they would be giving him “different clothes” and took him to Outridu prison (now called Lhasa prison). On the way to the prison, he and ten others (but not the same group from before) were hit with heavy police belts and kicked many times. The guards inserted electric rods into the their mouths, which caused intense pain inside the stomach and a burning sensation in the arms. But the worst pain was in the stomach, although Woesser Rinpoche said that he didn't faint or become unconscious. When they put the electric rod inside the others' mouths, some of them would kick because of the pain. He said, “Inside the truck, the Chinese would kick us with their heavy black boots and all of our mouths bled. So when I was kicked, I coughed out blood.”

On arrival, he had to remove his monks' robes and put on the clothes that were in the prison cell. This was also said to all the others in his group. They were taken to the cell, but the clothes they were supposed to put on were wet. In the cell, there were just the wet clothes and some ashes on the ground – nothing else, no mats or quilts. One of the persons in his group requested clothing and mats. Just for asking for this, he was beaten up. When they arrived at the Sangyip prison, their arms and legs were chained, but at Outridu prison, while they weren't chained up, they weren't given any food for a long time. All he could think of was getting food. Fortunately, the monks with him were a cooperative group and found a way to handle the situation.

Still, they had to endure fifteen days in this cell until they were finally given one quilt for three persons to share. If someone fell sick, they could choose only one medicine. If one had both a headache and a stomachache, for instance, “you could only choose one medicine,” he said. One of his friends said he