

RELEASED IN PART B6

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5017
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

S E C R E T HONG KONG 18993

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E.O. 12065: RDS-2/4 10/23/09 (SHOESMITH, THOMAS P.) OR-M
TAGS: PEPR, SREF, CH, IN
SUBJ: (S) PRC CONTACTS WITH TEBETAN REFUGEES

REF: (A) BEIJING 7410 (NOTAL), (B) HONG KONG 18706 (NOTAL)

1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. [REDACTED] HAS REVEALED THAT THE MESSAGE
ON TIBETAN AFFAIRS FROM UNITED FRONT WORK DEPARTMENT
DEPUTY DIRECTOR XIONG XIANGHUI WAS RELAYED TO HIM BY WANG
DEYAN, ASSISTANT MANAGER OF THE HONG KONG BRANCH OF THE
BANK OF CHINA. WANG AND [REDACTED] HAVE MAINTAINED CLOSE
CONTACT FOR MANY YEARS. [REDACTED] SAID WANG DID NOT
ALABORATE ANY FURTHER THAN THE COMMENTS REPORTED IN REFTEL B
ON XIONG'S STATEMENT CONCERNING THE ACCEPTABILITY
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REVIEW AUTHORITY: Charles Lahiguera, Senior Reviewer

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TO BEIJING OF THE IDEA OF OFFERING TIBET A UNITED
NATIONS SEAT A LA BYELORUSSIA. XIONG REPORTEDLY
ADDED THAT OTHER IDEAS (NOT ARTICULATED) ALSO COULD BE
DISCUSSED AS POSSIBLE CONCESSIONS TO THE TIBETANS.
BUT HE EMPHASIZED THAT THERE MUST BE AN UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN BEIJING AND THE DALAI LAMA THAT ONCE THE DALAI
HAS RETURNED TO TIBET HE WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO BROADEN
THE CONCESSIONS. [REDACTED] PASSED THIS MESSAGE ON
TO THE DALAI LAMA'S ELDER BROTHER DURING THE OCTOBER 15
TELEPHONE CONVERSATION REPORTED REF B.

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3. COMMENT: THE IDEA OF A SEPARATE UN SEAT FOR TIBET WAS INSPIRED BY THE TIBETAN REFUGEES' CONCERN THAT IF THE DALAI DOES RETURN TO HIS HOME LAND HE WILL LOSE ALL ACCESS TO WORLNIION, AND SO WOULD BE UNABLE TO MAKE HIS VOICE HEARD IN THE EVENT OF FUTURE PERSECUTION OF TIBETANS. BEIJING'S MESSAGE THAT THE IDEA OF A TIBETAN UN SEAT IS ACCEPTABLE AS LONG AS THE DALAI DOES NOT USE IT TO PRESS FOR INDEPENDENCE INDICATES BEIJING MIGHT CONSIDER ENHANCING TIBET'S STATUS AS AN "AUTONOMOUS REGION" OR PERHAPS EVEN AS AN "AUTONOMOUS STATE" AS LONG AS CHINA'S SOVEREIGNTY IS INDISPUTABLE. OBVIOUSLY THIS NOTION BEGS MANY QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE CONSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE PRC, NOT TO MENTION THE LIKELIHOOD OF SUCH AN IDEA BEING ACCEPTED BY THE UNGA. THE CLANDESTINE AND INDIRECT MANNER IN WHICH THE MESSAGE WAS PASSED SUGGESTED IT MAY HAVE BEEN FLOATED TO ENCOURAGE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS, PERMITTING BEIJING TO WITHDRAW THE OFFER IN THE FUTURE.

4. THE FACT THE UNITED FRONT WORK DEPARTMENT WOULD EVEN SERIOUSLY CONSIDER SUCH AN IDEA SHOWS THE LENGTHS TO WHICH BEIJING MAY BE WILLING TO GO TO TO ENTICE THE
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DALAI LAMA TO RETURN. WE HAVE BEEN STRUCK THROUGHOUT THE LAST YEAR BY THE PERSISTENCE WITH WHICH BEIJING HAS PURSUED ITS CULTIVATION OF THE TIBETAN REFUGEES. THE DALAI LAMA'S TRIP TO THE USSR SEEMS ONLY TO HAVE INTENSIFIED BEIJING'S INTEREST. ONE POSSIBLE EXPLANATION FOR THIS INTEREST IS THAT BEIJING HOPES THAT AN AMICABLE SETTLEMENT OF THE TIBETAN PROBLEM WILL BE VALUABLE PROPAGANDA VIS-A-VIS TAIWAN, AND WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF SOME WITHIN THE UNITED FRONT WORK DEPARTMENT ARE CONTEMPLATING THE IDEA OF A TIBETAN UN SEAT AS AN EVENTUAL MODEL FOR TAIWAN.

5. A SETTLEMENT WITH THE DALAI LAMA WOULD ALSO BE A STEP TOWARD NORMALIZING SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS, AN OBJECTIVE TO WHICH BEIJING MAY ATTACH HIGHER PRIORITY NOW THAT IT FACES PROLONGED TENSIONS WITH VIETNAM.
SHOESMITH

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