

## CHAPTER 29

### The Defamation Campaign

AROUND THAT TIME, quite suddenly, two members of the Lhasa city branch of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CP-PCC), Dulwa Khensur Tubten Tséring and Kung-ru Shindram Tulku, both from Drépung's Go-mang college, were sent to make speeches at public meetings of each neighborhood committee defaming and insulting His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Generally speaking, successive political campaigns since the time of Democratic Reform had encouraged people to criticize and reject His Holiness from the political standpoint of "uprooting the evils of the old society," and at the many meetings held to elicit the views of the common people a few perverse individuals would indulge in defaming Him, but the majority avoided saying a single word about it. Some would describe the senior members of the former government (*bKa' shag srid gz-hung*) as the root of the "evils of the old society" while doing everything they could to avoid the heinous sin of vilifying His Holiness; thus none of those campaigns produced any results in this regard. The Chinese recognized that if they did not succeed in undermining the Tibetans' faith in and devotion to His Holiness, their control of Tibet would not be complete, so in view of their failure to encourage defamation from the political angle, they tried maliciously to undermine the Tibetans' faith in Him with false slander against His religious and ethical integrity, and cajoled those two religious figures into spreading it.

First of all, Kung-ru Shindram Tulku said that he himself had been recognized as an incarnate lama and was therefore in a position to know that this was a completely false notion, and maintained that His Holiness was an ordinary person like any other. Dulwa Khensur Tubten Tséring pretended that as he had formerly enjoyed the rank of retired abbot (*mKhan zur*) at

one of the great monastic universities, he had accompanied His Holiness on visits to India and thus had the opportunity of close contact, and told the huge lie that because he'd had the status of a close attendant, he had found out that His Holiness was given to immoral behavior. Having been put up to make shocking and outrageous speeches at public meetings during the earlier vilification drive against Trijang Rinpoché at the time of Democratic Reform, he was deluding himself that he was about to reap big rewards in the present campaign, but the people of Lhasa did not believe a syllable of his oath-breaking lies, and the resolute ones who had gotten wise to the situation in the past were not going to be taken in this time around.

As for Kung-ru Shindram Tulku's assertion that he himself was not an incarnate lama, the public were quite prepared to accept it, because it is always possible to make mistakes in the process of recognizing reincarnations. But on the main question of Dulwa Khensur's false accusation of improper conduct against His Holiness, in previous accounts of his personal history Dulwa Khensur had never mentioned accompanying His Holiness, and he was also guilty of covering up his past. When he was subjected to struggle and told that first of all his past record would have to be clarified, it is said that a flustered request was made on his behalf to the relevant neighborhood committees to exempt him. These two speakers had addressed no more than a couple of neighborhood committee meetings when the Chinese authorities realized that the deception was not going to work and called it off.

If anyone at those meetings had gone along with the attempted defamation, it would have led to all the CPPCC figures being forced to make similar false accusations in accordance with their own particular circumstances, and the launch of a thoroughgoing campaign to repudiate His Holiness all over Tibet with the aim of influencing international opinion. Had that been successful, it would have meant the arrest of a large number of Tibetans, as well as suicides and other untimely deaths, while international opinion would surely have been affected. Once it had fortunately proved ineffective, some members of the public stuck threatening messages on Dulwa Khensur's door and accosted him in the street, warning him to desist if he valued his life. After several such demonstrations of public anger toward him, he became concerned enough to inform the authorities, and for a while they had to provide him with clandestine bodyguards.

Dulwa Khensur Tubten Tséring was one of those who were arrested and imprisoned for participating in the uprising and then released by the first general meeting of the public sentencing tribunals in 1960 to set an

example of lenient treatment for those who confessed their crimes. After several years of civilian life, he was eventually inducted into the Lhasa city CPPCC and groomed for service in such ventures [as the defamation campaign]. In 1964, before he joined the CPPCC, he and I were together in the Nga-chen power station canal work camp. Since he was physically strong and a genuinely energetic laborer, and did not appear to be someone who flattered others to save his own neck but rather was always cheerful and liked to joke, his fellow workers liked to have him as a partner. Later on, after he joined the CPPCC, when I occasionally passed him in the street we would exchange greetings and chat for a few moments. Even after he made speeches defaming His Holiness there was no need for me to turn hostile, and I used to greet him just as before, but his cheerful demeanor had been replaced by one of severe regret and apprehension, and he would just smile at me from a distance and keep going. And who can blame him? His participation in the heinous business of defamation was in no sense voluntary or unprompted. All Tibetans at that time felt loyalty to their people and were united in their devotion to and faith in His Holiness, but at the same time those unable to renounce personal reward and even attachment to their own dear lives had no option but to reluctantly comply with the Chinese pressure on them to tell such lies.

Dulwa Khensur was among the first of many CPPCC delegates to succumb to this treatment, and when his vitality was affected as a result, he had to be withdrawn. Because he lacked courage to thoroughly renounce his attachment to this life and the frailties of the physical body, he was unable to resist Chinese intimidation, and there is no doubt that he uttered those soul-destroying lies involuntarily. Thereafter he was wracked with remorse, and passed away not long after.