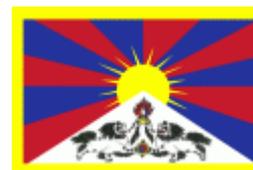


# World Tibet Network News

Saturday, July 6, 1996



## 3. Special Report - Shadow boxing on the path to Nirvana

The Guardian - London  
July 6, 1996

Members of the fasting growing Buddhist sect in this country are accused of waging a campaign to undermine the Dalai Lama.

Madeleine Bunting reports

MILE from the tearooms and knickknack shops of the Lake District town of Ulverston in Cumbria is a vast Victorian Gothic mansion. From a distance, the roofs, turrets and chimneys of Conishead Priory look like a small town. The drive sweeps through landscaped park-land to an imposing facade flanked by flowerbeds blazing with brilliant scarlet poppies. This is the headquarters of the New Kadampa Tradition, home to Britain's biggest, richest and fastest-growing religious sect. Beneath the battlements in one of the towers, lives its founder, in permanent semi-retreat, Geshe Kelsang, a Tibetan monk.

Conishead Priory is a fabulous folly built by a 19th-century millionaire for his wife; he went bankrupt in the process or so the story goes. Now its stone arches and stained-glass windows seem to be harbouring another fabulous folly, a sect whose members have launched a campaign, the effect of which, if successful, will be to destroy the reputation of the world's most famous Buddhist - the Dalai Lama.

Not that this strikes the hundreds of visitors who come to find peace in the lavish gardens and beautiful woods beside the wide expanses of sand and sea of Morecambe Bay. To them, the simplicity of the life - turnip soup, carrot cake and dormitories - appears to be Buddhism in action. The vast new gompa - temple - being built in the old, walled garden seems proof that the gods bless the NKT.

To the uninformed eye, the Manjushri Mahayana Centre seems no different from any of the other 800 or so Tibetan Buddhist centres in the West, apart from its vast size and its air of quiet, well-organised prosperity. But a Tibetan Buddhist would want to know immediately why there was no picture of the Dalai Lama respectfully displayed in the brightly-painted shrine room. Instead, placed centre stage is a framed photograph of Kelsang in his peaked yellow ceremonial hat, balanced on a frilly satin cushion and bathed in the glow of a brass lamp. Nothing could illustrate more graphically the pivotal importance of this man to the NKT.

In the same shrine room, the informed observer would also be taken aback by a small cabinet containing the statue of a fearsome, leering man riding

a lion. Both man and animal bare their teeth savagely. A much enlarged version of this same curious statue dominates a second, private, shrine room at the other end of the mansion. It represents the deity, Dorje Shugden - to the NKT faithful, an aspect of Buddha, but to many Tibetan Buddhists, a Faustian demon who brings its followers material wealth in the short term, but ultimately terrible misfortune. Geshe Kelsang has instituted the worship of Dorje Shugden as central to his teaching and study programmes in the NKT.

The dispute over this deity is at the heart of this story. It explains the history of antagonism within the NKT to the Dalai Lama, who has repeatedly warned of the dangers of worshipping this deity, and has recently declared that Dorje Shugden is a threat to his own life and to the cause of Tibet. The disagreement has come to a head during the last two months in the run-up to the Dalai Lama's visit to Britain later this month. A group calling itself the Shugden Supporters Community - the majority of whose members are also NKT - has mounted a high-profile international campaign, claiming the Dalai Lama's warnings against Dorje Shugden amount to a ban which denies religious freedom to the Tibetan refugee settlements of India. NKT members have been handed draft letters to send to the Home Secretary asking for the Dalai Lama's visa for the UK to be cancelled, arguing that he violates the very human rights - of religious tolerance and non-violence - which he has spent his life promoting.

Understanding Dorje Shugden is a journey into the medieval culture of Tibetan Buddhism, teeming with spirits, superstition, demons and oracles. Ironically, the gargoyles of the mock Gothic Conihead Priory are a helpful reminder of our own past in this territory. Much of Tibetan Buddhism is rooted in the shamanism which pre-dated the arrival of Buddhism from India in the seventh century. Buddhism harnessed the powerful beliefs in a multitude of deities and developed them into spiritual practices aimed at the Buddhist goal of enlightenment. These ancient deities fall into two classes. The first are benevolent, the second are earthly gods whom it is dangerous to worship because they can easily get out of control and become demonic.

The Dalai Lama believes Dorje Shugden is an earthly god. Kelsang believes it is a manifestation of Buddha. The dispute is given added edge because Dorje Shugden has long been seen by Tibetans as a kind of patron saint or guardian angel of the Gelug, one of the four schools (or denominations) of Tibetan Buddhism. Dorje Shugden has long been seen by Tibetans as a kind of patron saint or guardian angel of the Gelug and, as such, has been associated with bitter factional fighting amongst Tibetans. Both Kelsang and the Dalai Lama are members of Gelug, but the Dalai Lama, as political leader of Tibet, has gone out of his way to be open to all four schools of Buddhism as a way of unifying his people. To other members of his Gelug school, such as Kelsang, the Dalai Lama is corrupting the purity of his school by drawing in elements from other schools.

The problem for the Dalai Lama since he first spoke publicly against Dorje Shugden in 1978 is summed up by Paul Williams, Reader in Indo-Tibetan Studies at Bristol University: "The Dalai Lama is trying to modernise the Tibetans' political vision and trying to undermine the factionalism. He has the dilemma of the liberal - do you tolerate the intolerant?"

Kelsang was invited to England from a Tibetan monastery in India in 1977 to teach in Cumbria. He quickly established a devoted following there during the eighties. It was not until 1991 that the NKT was formally set up. Since then the sect has embarked on a dramatic expansion plan which now totals about 200 centres in the UK and about 50 in Australia, Malaysia, Brazil and Mexico as well as the US and Europe. There are currently 21 residential centres in the UK with up to 400 full-time residents. The number of residential centres has trebled in the past three years; five have opened this year alone. Many of these new properties are substantial: Todmorden, North Yorkshire, is a Victorian castle in 23 acres; Kilnwick Hall, Pocklington, is a Georgian mansion and the new Derbyshire centre, Ashe Hall, is a neo-Jacobean mansion in 38 acres of grounds. The new centre at Bridgewater, Somerset, which is due to open this month, is a former school.

The method of expansion is that residential centres support branch centres, which are often no more than a group meeting in someone's house; or a hall is rented to run the NKT courses. When the group has reached a size sufficient to sustain a centre, a property is bought. The NKT maintains that each centre is entirely autonomous and is only "spiritually joined" to the NKT, although it admits that the two principal officers of each centre are NKT members. The aim is to establish a centre in every major UK town with the NKT as the biggest umbrella Buddhist organisation in the West.

Given this rate of development, the NKT needs a large income. At the Manjushri Mahayana Centre in Cumbria, virtually all the information pamphlets for visitors include a plea for money in one form or another. Where There's A Will, There's A Way offers advice on how to include the NKT in your will: "Even students who are now relatively poor often stand to inherit houses," it says. The Cumbria Centre has a =A31.2 2million building programme for the new gumpa and new accommodation blocks. Donation of up to =A3 1,500 are requested and will "create enormous merits" in future lives, supporters are told.

In many of the pamphlets there are references to supporters giving "interest-free loans". This of the NKT's main methods of funding their expansion. One ex-NKT member became concerned when she saw the business plan for a new centre. The nine-bedroom mansion was to be bought with a mortgage of more than =A3100,000. The deposit of about =A325,000 was made up from "loans" from supporters of between =A3500 and =A32,000. But there was no provision to pay back the loans in the business plan; when questioned, the centre involved said they only paid back loans if really pushed.

"But the whole teaching makes you ashamed to push. You give money to gain merit and you" supposed to give willingly to Kelsang. The argument is that if you can afford to give to Kelsang then you don't need the money anyway," she says.

"I knew of one person who had got his parent lend him =A32,000. They asked me for =A3500 and they asked me to take a loan from the bank. They were very insistent; they told me I'd been picked out by Kelsang as a leader - I'd never met him but, course, he knows everything anyway.

An official statement released by the NKT in response to these and other allegations concerning the organisation states that there is only one outstanding loan of =A3200. Many other loans to individual centres "spiritually joined with the NKT" are listed however in accounts lodged with the Charity Commission. On another occasion, this same ex-NKT member was asked for more again: "I was asked to covenant =A340 a month along with six or seven others in the group. Kelsang wanted our teacher to come off the dole because she was so high-profile and they wanted us to support her. I was rung up three times and each time I refused because I didn't have the money."

In some centres a substantial proportion of NKT resident members are on income support and housing benefit. Nuns and monks told former NKT members that they took off their traditional Tibetan robes to sign on at the local benefit office. "At the Tara Centre in Derbyshire, they told me that all 24 residents were on benefit except one Swiss nun," says the ex-NKT member.

The mortgages on the large properties are being serviced by rents paid by residents - at most centres it is by far the source of income. More income generated by accommodation charges or courses and festivals. The result is some fairly prosperous centres; in the latest accounts filed with the Charity Commission, the Cumbria centre reported a surplus for 1994 of =A3171,119. Many centres receive sizeable donation in 1993, the Bath centre received =A323,644; the Heruka Centre, London, got =A320,181 in 1994 and in 1993, the small Hull centre received =A337,430.

Geshe Kelsang, in his mid-sixties, is a diminutive figure with a quizzical, pixieish face behind his large glasses. Despite having lived in England for nearly 20 years, he doesn't speak good English. Yet he has established a reputation as a brilliant teacher of Buddhism. He has had 16 books published in English on Buddhism; two have reached UK bestseller lists. But he is a recluse, rarely appearing in public, and followers have to wait weeks for an appointment. NKT members refer to him with adulation. "He is absolutely amazing. He's our spiritual guide. I've never met anyone who works so hard to spread Buddhist teaching in the West and to help overcome everyday western problems. His whole life is dedicated to helping other people," declares one NKT follower who has been involved for two years. Another equally enthusiastic member praised Kelsang's humility and said she only had to pass him in the corridor to feel spiritually uplifted.

Referred to as Geshe-la, a term of respect, by his followers, he is not just their teacher but seen as the Third Buddha. The first Buddha founded Buddhism 2,500 years ago, the second founded the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism in the 15th century, and now the NKT believe Buddha has appeared in the form of Kelsang to establish Buddhism in the West. To other Tibetan Buddhists this is unbelievably arrogant and self aggrandising.

Followers are told that Kelsang is all-knowing and all-powerful; one even left her children alone at home on the evenings she attended courses, confident that "Geshe-la would look after them". Followers are told to pray to Kelsang and he will answer their prayers. They attribute to him all the characteristics of a Buddha. He is pure wisdom, pure compassion and omniscient; he is above all physical needs so he does not need to

breathe, eat, sleep, go to the lavatory, scratch an itch or cough. However, he does all these things out of compassion for us ordinary mortals so that we can identify with him. There are even more outlandish stories of how he has to load his robes with rocks or he will involuntarily levitate when meditating.

To see your spiritual teacher as Buddha-like is central to Tibetan Buddhism, but in the NKT, as a lecturer in Tibetan Buddhism put it, this practice has been wrenched from its cultural context and conflated with Western theism so that Kelsang becomes a sort of god.

Geshe Kelsang has responded to this criticism in a letter to a former follower in June last year. "People can say anything; that Geshe Kelsang is a pure being like the Wisdom Buddha, or that he is an unpure being, like a bad person ... However, from my side, I will never pretend that I am a Special person, like a holy being ... I am just a foolish man, but it is my good fortune to have a great opportunity to benefit Western people by helping them to gain greater day-to-day happiness and peace.

"My teaching explains to people how to maintain a peaceful and calm mind day and night throughout their life ... That solves all their human problems...

"During teachings the teacher sits on a throne and the disciples make prostrations and recite verses of praise to the Spiritual Guide. These are also general practices throughout all Mahayana Buddhist traditions. They are not specific characteristics of the NKT. This tradition comes from the Buddha. The purpose of these practices is simply to increase the students' merit or good fortune. It is a very positive, wholesome activity.

But for one former NKT member, the meeting with Kelsang after all the build-up was the beginning of her disillusionment with the organisation. "I went to a teaching by Kelsang at the Manjushri Centre in Cumbria. It was unintelligible. I thought it was a case of the emperor's new clothes because everyone was saying how wonderful he was but you could tell by people's faces that they hadn't understood him. It was like crowd hysteria and I was made to feel it was my fault that I didn't agree with them."

Significantly, some former members draw a distinction between their disillusionment with the NKT and Kelsang himself, whom they insist is a good, pure man: "He is not a power-crazed monk. Kelsang is incredibly kind. I've seen him helping people who are dying or have lost their baby."

A close follower of Kelsang's for years was harshly repudiated by him but still maintains: "He is totally honest and he embodies Buddhist ideals. He is a gentle, kind and powerful person, and totally other-worldly, but he is very naive and committed to his tradition. It's amazing what things are done in the name of purity., Around him are a set of people who are very worldly and he is using them and they are using his energy. The core of the NKT's power is the purity of the man at the centre."

Another long-time follower of Kelsang, who has grown increasingly critical of the NKT, emphasises that Kelsang has been a brilliant teacher of Buddhism to the West: "I have a lot of respect for his spiritual realisation and his capacity to explain Buddhism. I don't doubt his

motivation and his integrity. Butt would question the implications of what he is doing at a geo-political level. Nor am I sure whether Kelsang understands how Tibetan consciousness interacts with the Western consciousness."

Kelsang has never put her under pressure to join the NKT or give up other Buddhist teachers, but she has become increasingly anxious as she sees the adulation of students, and she fears that Kelsang has little understanding of the West and westerners. "If someone gave him =A350 and told him to look after himself in London, he wouldn't know what to do. If you asked Kelsang about Plato and Western consciousness, he wouldn't know what you were talking about."

"Geshe-la says" seems to be the motto of the NKT; everything is referred back to this mysterious man, every decision justified by reference to him. Teaching is done by Kelsang or by Kelsang's students and, on the NKT teaching programmes, students study Kelsang's translations of Tibetan texts.

The once large and diverse library at Conishead Priory has been sold off. The NKT is an entirely self-referential system. The total dependence on a single charismatic figure is unorthodox in Tibetan Buddhism. At least one ex-member has found the exclusive focus on Kelsang to be enforced with astonishing strictness. He had visited the Cumbria centre regularly for years when he was overheard telling a visitor that he admired the Dalai Lama; within 40 minutes he was handed a letter saying he was banned from the centre. Another family who had been closely involved in the centre for 15 years were sent a letter banning them because they had other spiritual teachers and had questioned the total dependence on Kelsang; their NKT friends dropped all contact with them.

One former member wrote to Kelsang with a number of concerns about the NKT. In his reply, Kelsang rejected all the criticism and threatened legal action if any of the criticisms were ever published. In June, the NKT wrote to an Internet user, referring to legal action because he had disputed the history and origins of Dorje Shugden. Kelsang wrote to one follower after he left him: "You are going against my spiritual wishes and as you say ... rebelling against my system, such a thing has never happened before in Buddhist history." To a devout Buddhist, this was devastating.

The NKT's official statement does not deny that individuals have been expelled from centres spiritually joined to the NKT when they have been engaged in activities "incompatible with the individual charity's aims". Such activities include "spreading disruptive information about NKT.. or where an individual was found to be taking drugs or unable to pay bills."

If a follower expresses dissent or has difficulty accepting NKT teachings, the response is to exonerate the organisation and throw the blame back on to the dissenting individual. An ex-NKT member explains: "My problems or difficulties with the NKT were explained in terms of your bad karma from a previous life which can only be purified by prayers and pujas."

Another ex-NKT recalls: "When I questioned things, an NKT teacher took me aside and told me that I had to devote myself to Geshe-la. That I must not

question and that it was maras - Buddhist demons - which were getting into my head to tempt me." The NKT statement dismisses this recollection as "fanciful".

Another ex-NKT had been targeted as a possible future teacher. When he confessed that he still revered other spiritual leaders as well as Kelsang, he was told: "Why do you need to go elsewhere for answers? If you think you know any answers, then you are wrong. The only explanations you can ever possibly need are contained in Geshe Kelsang's teachings." "That's when I left," he says.

A 35-page manual for the NKT teacher-training programme urges students to "internalise Geshe la's books so that we can quote liberally from them, word for word" and claims "if it is found in the works of Geshe Kelsang it is completely reliable". "The more devotion we have to our Guru the more qualified we are as a Teacher Every NKT Teacher must give exactly the same explanation, otherwise the NKT will disintegrate... Therefore this generation of Teachers must try very hard to come to complete consensus as to what is the correct interpretation of every single section of every one of Geshe-la's books."

The manual demonstrates an aggressive evangelising which is at total variance with 2,500 years of Buddhist teaching against proselytising. Among the tips on attracting new recruits, it includes: "Be very careful not to give the impression it is a recruitment drive We need to come over as really quite ordinary and quite matter-of-fact at the beginning... We should not worry about converting people at the beginning... To start with we need to agree with people, to show that we understand where they are at, not to resist them or argue with them. If we have a wild horse, the best way to tame it is to mount it, to go with it."

Geshe Kelsang has been a source of anguish among other Buddhist organisations for more than a decade. But Buddhists have held strongly to the principle of religious tolerance. Most of the 130,000 Buddhists in this country are in the caring professions, or are academics, or are part of an ex-hippy culture; they are trusting, idealistic and naive. They thought Buddhism was immune to the fanaticism and hypocrisy which riddles all religions. The controversy surrounding the NKT is shattering illusions that Buddhism was the one fail-safe religion.

"Other Buddhist organisations are amateurs compared with the NKT, who are going to wipe the floor. The NKT are using the language of Western capitalism, of expansion. People with marketing skills have been attracted into the NKT and they are very professional," says one Tibetan Buddhist academic.

What has been causing increasing concern to close observers is that the people being drawn into the NKT are completely unaware of the nature of the organisation. The NKT is benefiting from 2,500 years of positive publicity for Buddhism, said one. Another pointed out that, ironically, the NKT's is riding on the immense public appeal of the very man their members are attacking, the Dalai Lama, one of the few global leaders left to inspire heart-felt admiration.

"A lot of young people go into the NKT from a drug-oriented life and find

the emotional force of the cult is tremendously compelling. Many recruits do not know that the NKT is a branch of one school of Tibetan Buddhism. They think that the NKT is Tibetan Buddhism and they don't have the context to question what they're involved in," the Buddhist teacher added.

The NKT's a fascinating, entirely new chapter in the history of Eastern spirituality in the West. There are no salacious sex scandals here, nor any suggestion of material corruption - there are no fleets of Bhagwan-style Rolls Royces. The spiritual naivety of Westerners has not been exploited for spiritual or material gain, but they have become foot soldiers in a Tibetan feud. In many respects the NKT teaches standard Buddhism - the need to develop awareness and compassion through a peaceful state of mind. The official statement stresses that the NKT is "a centuries old tradition that has passed through India and Tibet". It takes a considerable, detailed knowledge of Tibetan Buddhism to grasp the subtle differences of how Westerners understand Kelsang's teaching and the significance of the centrality of the worship of Dorje Shugden. It takes detailed, inside knowledge of the NKT organisation to understand its ambitions and the fact that it subordinates basic Buddhist ideals of tolerance and compassion to achieve them.

There is no apparent secrecy about the NKT; you can walk into any of their centres and be greeted by friendly, forthcoming people. Only people who are trusted are taken into an inner core and learn of the contradictions in the NKT. At first sight, its message is the kind of tolerant, take-it-or-leave-it Buddhism which is so attractive to Western individualistic sensibility. There is no overt sale patter; visitors are told they must find a teacher who suits them. The NKT statement points out: "Many hundreds, possibly thousands, of people have come along to NKT classes and courses and have subsequently moved on quite happily to other forms of religions or beliefs without any repercussions whatsoever."

But there is a subtext of superiority which is evident in all the literature; firstly the NKT teaches "pure" Buddhism and is thus laying claim to being the true descendants of the Buddha, just as fundamentalist Christians believe they are the true followers of Christ. Secondly, the NKT claims that Kelsang is the first teacher to adapt Buddhism to Westerners' needs. (This is patently ludicrous when nuns and monks all wear outlandish Tibetan burgundy robes, take Tibetan names and make offerings of chocolate and Aqua Libra on altar of very Tibetan-looking deities.)

Kelsang tells his followers he believes Buddhism in Tibet is dead because of the Chinese occupation and that it has already died in India. Buddhism's future is in the West and, of course, it lies with Kelsang. A religious tradition of 2,500 years is in the hands of a core of dedicated and totally loyal NKT members.

Two months ago, the stakes were upped dramatically when the Shugden Supporters Common (SSC) was setup. What was just a story about some confused British Buddhists took on some geo-political implications as a challenge to the Dalai Lama. The NKT claim that the SSC is an entirely separate organisation. However, Nick Gillespie, chief spokesman of the SSC, is the company secretary of the York centre spiritually joined to the NKT. At a demonstration in London last month, a random sample found all

those questioned but one were NKT members.

The SSC accuse the Dalai Lama of being an "oppressor" and a "ruthless dictator" who is bad as the Chinese because of his alleged ban on Dorje Shugden. "Your smiles charm, your actions harm," said the placards at a demo attended by 300 chanting Buddhists outside the Office of Tibet last month. More demonstrations are planned for the Dalai Lama's visit this month. Press releases are being sent to more than 300 media outlets around the world, followed by a 51-page dossier, purporting to detail how the Dalai Lama is oppressing religious freedom. Amnesty International says SSC has not yet succeeded in substantiating the claims it has made.

BUT the campaign is working; last month's demonstration was reported on the BBC national news. It was the second item on the World Service that day and Indian newspapers took up the story. And the campaign may get further exposure by exploiting the media's proclivity for smashing idols - the line that the Dalai Lama can't be as good as he is cracked up to be and its ignorance of a vastly complicated subject like Tibetan Buddhism. What the media do claim to understand is human rights and freedom. Hence, this is the language adopted by the SSC's campaign; their dossier includes a letter from the "Freedom Foundation", a little known human rights organisation which has no charity number and does not return calls and which the NKT statement admits is "a pressure group set up by individuals including some who are involved with the NKT".

What provides a vestige of plausibility to the SSC's claims of religious oppression is that some of the Dalai Lama's devoted followers, such as the Tibetan Youth Congress, have taken it upon themselves to see that His Holiness's advice on Dorje Shugden is observed. They have visited Tibetan monasteries in India asking monks for "loyalty pledges" to the Dalai Lama. There are also rumours of house-to-house searches for images of Dorje Shugden in the 100,000-strong Tibetan refugee community in India, but the Office of Tibet, representatives of the Dalai Lama in London, insist these allegations are baseless.

The SSC is cleverly employing another tactic to smear the Dalai Lama. They drag into the open the side of Tibetan Buddhism which is alienating to westerners - the dependence on oracles and astrology. The Dalai Lama is a product of his culture and the SSC are exploiting this vulnerability to the full; they accuse him of using divination by throwing balls of dough to determine the status of Dorje Shugden. This is exactly the tack the Chinese take, arguing that Tibetans are a backward and completely unreasonable people.

The possible consequences of this campaign are far-reaching. A fundamentalist sect built on the spiritual naivety of its followers has harnessed Western organisational abilities and propensity for aggressive fundamentalism in the late 20th century and is applying them to a battle which originates in the bitter internecine factionalism of a medieval Tibetan culture. Undermine the Dalai Lama's prestige in the West and you deal a devastating blow to the clout of the Tibetan government-in-exile and to the cause of a free Tibet in capitals around the world.

Robbie Barnett of the Tibet Information Network says: "The Tibetan community is a classic exile entity living on borrowed time and borrowed

space, and is thus enormously susceptible to destabilisation. Everyone expected that to come from China. The only resource the Tibetan government has is its image of moral probity which is indivisible from the perception of the Dalai Lama. A systematic campaign against his moral credibility has to be considered as an attempt to damage the whole sustainability of the exile community."

The relationship between the 100,000 Tibetan refugees and their Indian hosts has always been a sensitive one, dependent on India's policy towards China. Any damage to the Western image of the Dalai Lama could have serious repercussions here. The SSC seem to be hastening such a development in their latest dossier, claiming that the Indian government is increasingly unhappy about the Dalai Lama because of his oppression of religious freedom, and they dragged out a case (they omit to mention that it dates from 1994) of an Indian who was stabbed by a Tibetan as evidence of deteriorating relations.

The SSC's campaign against the Dalai Lama is a dream scenario for the Chinese government. In 1993, they decided their best tactic for Tibet, this most troublesome province of the People's Republic, was to divide the Tibetans among themselves. Eighteen months ago, Chinese documents began to appear undermining the Dalai Lama as a religious authority, indicating a shift of strategy. The SSC insist in their press releases that they have no connection with the Chinese. But are they inadvertently doing the Chinese's work for them? The NKT itself insists it supports fully a free Tibet.

Nevertheless, Kelsang is presenting the Dalai Lama with one of the greatest challenges of his 36 years in exile. For the first time, his moral authority is being challenged on the international stage - until now the scene of his greatest success. Not for nothing did His Holiness say on his 60th birthday last year that this was a dangerous time in his life.

Additional research by Ruth Cohen.

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