

Dalai Lama's ties to Aum sect exposed

by Mary Burdman

The story that the Dalai Lama of Tibet, Hollywood's favorite guru—who is also committed to tearing apart China—is a patron of Aum cult leader Shoko Asahara, is now out in China, after European media spread the story widely last month. *EIR* first published the Dalai Lama-Asahara connection on April 14, after it was reported in India. Asahara's cult members released the deadly nerve gas sarin on a Tokyo subway on March 20, killing 11 and injuring 4,700.

The magazine *Focus*, the second-largest political weekly in Germany, reported on Sept. 18 that "in total, Asahara and the Dalai Lama met five times, first in February 1987, in India. Following this, the Tibetan god-king wrote recommendations for him." The article is accompanied by a photo of the Dalai Lama and Asahara holding hands, and smiling.

The revelations began in anticipation of the Dalai Lama's visit to Berlin at the beginning of September, as a patron of the scandal-ridden non-university, the "Potsdam Peace University." Other friends of the "Peace University" are Gregor Gysi, the former national party chairman of the "post-communist" PDS of eastern Germany, and Green Party parliamentary leader Antje Vollmer, who wrote a recent book promoting pre-Christian pagan cults.

Stern magazine on Aug. 30 published the story of the Dalai Lama's and Asahara's many meetings. "In two exposing letters of reference, [the Dalai Lama] praised the sect leader (who, meanwhile, is under arrest), as a 'competent religious teacher.' . . . Even weeks after the first gas attack, the Dalai Lama called the sect terrorist a 'friend, though not necessarily a perfect one.' "

Focus added more details. On May 26, 1989, the Dalai Lama wrote a "To Whom It May Concern" document, which he signed, stating that: "Aum, according to my knowledge, endeavors to promote public awareness through religious and social activities. Apart from providing intensive meditation guidance, its members also practice Mahayana Buddhist traditions. Aum has also been providing generous offerings for our Buddhist community in exile, particularly for monk students who have recently arrived from Tibet. These have been very useful and much appreciated." The magazine featured an English-language facsimile of that letter.

Already, one day before this recommendation, *Focus* notes, the "Council for Religious and Cultural Opportunities

of His Holiness the Dalai Lama" had praised Master Asahara as a "competent religious teacher" and an "experienced practitioner of meditation," and had stated: "According to our best understanding, Aum seeks to promote, through various religious and social activities, the public welfare, for example, through Buddhist teachings and yoga." According to *Focus*, the religious and cultural experts of the Dalai Lama recommended, in particular, the "ethical practices" in the Aum seminaries. The Dalai Lama's influence enabled the Aum sect to get tax-exempt status in Japan.

But this "Unholy Alliance," as *Focus* called it, did not end in 1989. In April this year, 18 days after the poison-gas attack on the Tokyo station, the Dalai Lama praised Asahara, in an interview with Kyodo News Service, as a "friend, if also not a person without flaws."

In his own book *Supreme Initiation*, Asahara says that he was initiated into the Mahayana tradition by the Dalai Lama, who personally gave him the task of "reforming Buddhism" in Japan, with the instruction: "You should spread real Buddhism there. You know it very well."

The French press have also made some damning revelations about the Dalai Lama's ties to Asahara, by citing an unnamed spokesman for the Tibetan government-in-exile, that it had accepted donations from Asahara.

Dalai exposed in China

It is not surprising that this story had a big impact in China. On Oct. 9, both the *People's Daily* and the *Guangming Daily*, the two most important newspapers in China, published the scandal. A commentary in the *Guangming Daily*, the leading paper for Chinese intellectuals, states that Asahara became such an influential figure in Japan due to the Dalai Lama's help. The commentary describes the Dalai Lama's promotion of Aum, and his role as "guarantor" for its tax-exempt status, even while the cult was using tax-exempt funds to produce lethal gas. Aum also donated large funds to the Dalai Lama. Even after the Tokyo gas attack, the Dalai Lama still regarded Asahara as his friend. "This demonstrates that the Dalai Lama knew what he was doing," the *Guangming Daily* wrote. "The relationship between the two is unusual."

"The Dalai Lama wields a religious pretense while attempting to separate China from Tibet, and the relationship between Shoko and the Dalai Lama should sound an alarm among people worldwide," the commentary concluded. British-orchestrated efforts to pry Tibet loose from China, and to make Tibet into an independent nation, are a threat to China's national existence.

The phrase "should sound an alarm" is likely intended to give the White House and German Foreign Ministry a better idea of just who this Tibetan lama, whom they have recently welcomed as a guest, really is. Even better would be some moves to curb the Dalai Lama fan club in cult-ridden circles in Hollywood and London.