

**The Dalai Lama And Obama Meet**  
**Historic Significance**  
By Sidney J. Gluck

The meeting between the Dalai Lama and President Obama should be viewed in a positive sense. Obama's personal understanding of China has been expressed to me in a letter June 6th of this year (copy enclosed). "I believe there is much to be gained from a closer working relationship with China. Indeed, there are very few global challenges, if any, we can address effectively without China's active cooperation."

As for the Dalai Lama, he is still invited to Beijing on one condition, accepting federalization and finding a form of integrating Buddhist politicalization. At Radio City in New York in 2009, he even generalized that Communism is better than Capitalism.

The necessity for national integration, federalization, and ethnic integration underlies the changes in China that are taking place under the leadership of the Communist Party. It had gained control of a backward colonial country that had been vandalized by colonialism and emerged to independence less than forty years before they gained power with little having been developed. The process will no doubt take one or two generations, even though, in the past thirty years, China has become the second largest industrial producer in the world supplanting Japan and predicts that it will overtake the gross national production of the USA by 2016 (although, personally, I would think it would be closer to 2018-2020). They would still have to produce three-and-a-half times as much to reach the per capita production of the USA, though they have become an economic power.

However, integrating the peripheral undeveloped areas culturally and economically is a delicate process and requires special consideration by the Han-dominated political structure and industrialization, especially with care to avoid industrial accidents that damage the lives of ethnic people in the process.

**As for the cultural impact, ethnically based music and art, which encompasses the lives of 8% of the population, with 92% Han, must be viewed on both sides with mutual respect in China's industrialization and politicalization. An article in the New York Times on July 17th deals with the integration of ethnic musicians and relates suggestions for non-conflicting integration with Han culture to avoid contentiousness.**

**No doubt the Dalai Lama discussed the question of self-rule rather than independence for Tibet. I would guess that Obama cautioned him not to create more conflict and consider how this would be reflected in the relationship of other peripheral territories. The separation of Church and State may be historically difficult for Buddhism since it held state power under the Emperor, an unusual combination that lost its historic content with industrial development.**

**It is commendable that the meeting was private, which augurs understanding rather than conflict, as both leaders take an objective view of the legitimacy of federalization in China that has promised to develop new forms of democracy as industrialization knits the country together and eliminates regional states' rights.**