

[English]

The first time I visited China was in 1973 at the end of the cultural revolution. Since then as commercial, educational and cultural relationships between our two countries increased, I had the occasion to visit China on many occasions. I must say I took great joy in watching the evolution of that great country and the standard of living of its people and the *joie de vivre* on their faces as their living standards and freedom increased. In fact, it was not just joy with China but it was joy with the capacity of humankind to improve on its condition.

Throughout this period, however, as material conditions improved, two matters of increasing importance continued or began to appear on the scene. The first for those of us who talked to students either in China or here, the problem of favouritism began to manifest its face, the difficulty that young Chinese students who were not plugged into the Party, to the hierarchy, had in obtaining positions abroad or positions within China, or improving their own lives as indeed their education should have warranted.

The second was the fact that with increasing economic freedom came the demand for increasing political freedom, political freedom that was not forthcoming. It is paradoxical that in the Soviet Union the regime there has come to the conclusion that economic freedom and economic growth is not possible without increasing political freedom. It was manifested that China which in fact took the first steps along the road to economic freedom did not realize this fundamental fact. Many of us took the occasion to talk to the Chinese leadership, those that we had access to, as to how they would handle the problem. We were assured that they could, and we believed them, as indeed we were assured that they could handle the sit-ins in Tiananmen Square, and that this would simply be one more stage on China's march to progress.

It is with deep tragedy that we came to the realization that we were wrong. At the news of the army's action, the world was outraged. When we see pictures and television of wanton death, the world is horrified. When we talk to the Chinese students who are here in this country, we are pained by their isolation. Equally, we are affected by a profound sense of loss. So much progress has been halted by a leadership which is so very much out of touch.

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It is very clear that we must move to protect the Canadians who are in China. Clearly, we must move to protect the students who are here in Canada. We must also ask ourselves if at some point, as we begin to study the evolution of the United Nations itself, Canada should not begin to ask whether it should not extend its ability to react to situations where Governments make war on their people. We have all been brought up to understand and to agree to the principle that the United Nations must not interfere in the internal affairs of individual states. Surely at some point the actions of some Governments become so reprehensible that the world cannot stand by. Surely in any event it is not too much to ask that the great powers themselves come together and bring some kind of concerted action to this great tragedy.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that I rise to support the Government's resolution. I would like to say one thing on a slightly different issue. As a new Member, I have now been in this House for some six months. There have been highs and lows. I have watched partisan and petty bickering. I have seen things happen in this House which I do not think should have happened in a democracy. Sometimes, as with many others, we have asked ourselves: "What are we doing here?" I must say that it is on a night like tonight when this House comes together to express the total indignation and repugnance of our country that I am very proud to be a Member of this House.

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I also am joining with my colleagues on all sides of the House in supporting the resolution of condemnation. I am sorry that we did not have a chance to debate a similar resolution when the people of Kurdistan were gassed by the thousands and left dead in the streets, and when the people of Tibet were massacred by the thousands.

In each of these cases I think what causes us to rise and to swell in one collective indignation is the fact that in China this week, as we have seen in Kurdistan and Tibet, we see a small snapshot of man's inhumanity against humanity. We wonder whether it is a political system or whether it is in fact the collective reflection of how desperate people can be in the search for power. I too had an opportunity to visit China in 1982. I must say that it was a very fleeting visit.