

The repression is part of a concerted attempt since June to stamp out "counterrevolutionary elements". People are exhorted to denounce those involved in last Spring's unrest. Mandatory "study sessions" have been instituted. However, China is far from returning to the anarchy and systematic gross violations of human rights which occurred during the Cultural Revolution, and despite the desires of the hardline leadership, a return to the ideological fervour of the Cultural Revolution is unlikely.

Canadian Position

On June 30, 1989, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, announced a series of measures designed to express our strong disagreement with these developments. These measures included suspension of a number of programs of cooperation, and the imposition of new criteria for continuation of development assistance and export credit: (1) no support for the military, security or propaganda apparatus; (2) encouragement of the preservation of existing academic, business and cultural links so as not to isolate the Chinese people; and (3) focusing new initiatives on people-to-people exchanges.

Well before the events last Spring, Canada made known its concern with respect to the situation in Tibet and human rights in China generally. Officials from the Department of External Affairs have met with Chinese officials on these issues, and Prime Minister Mulroney raised human rights concerns with the Chinese Government during his 1986 visit to China. These matters were also raised during the May 1989 visit to Canada of the Chairman of the National People's Congress, Mr. Wan Li.

In September 1989, we supported a resolution adopted by the UN Subcommittee on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities asking the UN Secretary General to report on the human rights situation in China in 1990. Our ambassador to the UN, Yves Fortier, raised China's human rights record in his address to the General Assembly in November 1989.

While we remain concerned about the human rights situation in China, and have strongly criticized the Chinese leadership, Canada believes the door must be kept open to China, and it must be encouraged to return to the slow but steady progress it was making prior to last June. The Cultural Revolution taught us that China's worst human rights abuses have occurred during its times of greatest isolation.