



No. 5

January 7, 1992

CANADIAN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT EXPELLED FROM CHINA

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall today expressed regret and disappointment at the forced departure of three Canadian Members of Parliament and a representative of a Canadian non-governmental organization from China on January 7, 1992.

Mrs. McDougall stated, "I am particularly offended at this affront to the institution of Parliament and the treatment of democratically elected representatives of the Canadian people. In my view, this incident confirms the validity of the emphasis we have placed on human rights in our dealings with China. Our concerns were most recently emphasized to senior levels of the Chinese government by my colleague Bill McKnight while in China in October. We would all like to believe that the Chinese record on human rights is improving, but, unfortunately, the Chinese authorities continue to demonstrate no evidence of this."

The three MPs, Beryl Gaffney, Svend Robinson and Geoff Scott, were taken by Chinese security officers to the Beijing International Airport. It is evident that some force was employed by the Chinese security authorities in effecting the departure of the MPs.

The MPs were in China to discuss with Chinese officials the human rights situation and to meet with Chinese citizens. Their visit was sponsored in part by the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs, affiliated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Canadian government is not aware the MPs broke any Chinese law or of any plans they had to do so.

The Canadian Ambassador to China, Mr. Fred Bild has protested the Chinese actions, a protest which has been reinforced at a senior level in Ottawa with the Chinese Ambassador to Canada.

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