

TIBET's Report Card on:

Canada's bilateral human rights dialogue with China.

It's a FAILURE!

Recommendations :

- ✓ Suspend Canada's bilateral human rights dialogue with China until :
 - a parliamentary review is held;
 - clear benchmarks for progress are established;
 - all relevant documents are available to the public.
- ✓ Sponsor a China resolution at the 55th session of the UNCHR
- ✓ Return to Canada's principled position on the political status of Tibet
- ✓ Encourage negotiations without preconditions between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the representatives of the Dalai Lama.

CHINA'S HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE IN TIBET

UNIVERSAL RIGHT	GRADE	ACTUAL SITUATION INSIDE TIBET IN 1999
<i>Freedom of Religion</i>	FAIL	In 1998, 327 monks and nuns were arrested and 7156 more were expelled from religious institutions as the result of patriotic re-education campaigns. This figure represents a 700% increase over reports received in 1997. The systematic campaign to denounce the Dalai Lama intensified in 1998 and additional religious monuments were destroyed.
<i>Freedom of Expression</i>	FAIL	In 1998, 56 Tibetans were arrested for writing poems, shouting slogans or pasting posters. Others were arrested for questioning the re-education campaign. The PRC continues to block access to Tibet-related websites. Chinese officials did not agree to Canada's request to distribute a Tibetan language version of the UDHR inside Tibet
<i>Right to Development</i>	FAIL	Development projects are replacing Tibet's traditional economy with a market economy, creating jobs which are filled by Chinese settlers who benefit from governmental subsidies. Tibetan peasants are forced to provide for the new settlers. In 1998, CIDA sent a delegation of development experts into Tibet to assess the possibility supporting Chinese designed projects in Tibet.
<i>Freedom from Torture</i>	FAIL	In 1998, 19 Tibetans died as a direct result of ill-treatment in prison. Of these, 4 were women. 11 resulted from Chinese suppression of a peaceful demonstration in Drapchi Prison last May. Common methods of torture include beatings, the use of cattle prods and rape.
<i>Rights of the Child</i>	FAIL	Despite the bilateral human rights dialogues with China, no government has been able to obtain any information regarding the safety or whereabouts of the 9 year old Panchen Lama who has been held in incommunicado detention since 1995. Additionally, in 1998 there were 12 juvenile political prisoners in Tibet's jails. 93 others who were arrested as juveniles have become adults while imprisoned.
<i>The Right to Self-Determination</i>	FAIL	In 1997, the Sub-commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities reported that "Tibetans are now a minority in their own country". China's transfer of its population into Tibet threatens the cultural and physical survival of the Tibetan people. Despite international pressure and major concessions offered by the Tibetan government in exile this year, China still refuses to negotiate with representatives of the Dalai Lama.
<i>Right to Education</i>	FAIL	In 1997, Chinese officials announced that Tibetan would no longer be the language of education in Tibetan schools and would be replaced by Chinese. The percentage of Tibetans with university degrees is .09 compared to .42 for Chinese. The percentage of Tibetans with primary education is 21.92 compared to 43.47 for Chinese. The percentage of illiterate women is 84.22 for Tibet and 39.20 for China.

CHINA'S PROGRESS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN TIBET

INDICATOR	GRADE	ACTUAL SITUATION INSIDE TIBET IN 1999
<i>Women's Rights</i>	FAIL	In 1998, there were 432 reports of forced sterilization of Tibetan women inside Tibet. The UN's CEDAW Committee recommended that the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women; its Causes and Consequences, visit Tibet to investigate the growing numbers of forced or coerced sterilizations and abortions.
<i>Rule of Law</i>	FAIL	Amnesty International reported in 1998 that political trials "continued to fall far short of international standards with verdicts and sentences decided by authorities before the trial and appeal hearings usually a mere formality." Administrative detention in which prisoners serve their term under "re-education through labour" is controlled by local police and officials independent of the judiciary. Tibetans detained under this practice are denied their right to counsel or hearing.
<i>Labour Rights</i>	FAIL	Compulsory labour programmes persist in Tibet. In 1998 refugees testified that forced non-paid work on road construction, in mining ventures, and on hydro-electric stations continues. Local peasants are taken from farm responsibilities without warning and forced to work on a variety of Chinese-controlled projects. There are no independent trade unions inside Tibet.
<i>Militarization</i>	FAIL	There are 300,000 Chinese troops in Tibet of which 200,00 are permanently based there. Up to 1/4 of China's nuclear missile force is situated in Tibet including the infamous "Ninth Academy". Once a peaceful buffer state, Tibet is now home to 17 radar stations and 14 military airfields; 8 missile bases; at least 8 ICBMs; 70 medium-range missiles; and 20 intermediate range missiles – all of which point down to the rest of Asia.
<i>Environmental Protection</i>	FAIL	Trophy hunting in Tibet is encouraged by the Chinese and there are now 81 endangered species on the Tibetan plateau. Old growth forests have been clear-cut and in some areas up to 80% of the forests have been destroyed. Hydro-electric projects have caused fresh water springs to dry up and destroyed scarce agricultural land. Large scale mining has resulted in soil erosion, pollution and exploitation of Tibet's rich ore reserves. In 1998, Canadian mining companies reported that the Export Development Corporation will provide assistance for projects inside Tibet.

CANADA’S POLICY COHERANCE ON TIBET

THE DIALOGUE’s PROMISE	THE DIALOGUE’s RESULT	Grade
<p><i>Constructive Engagement</i></p> <p>“We have reached out... and engaged in serious human rights dialogue”.</p> <p>“I look forward to discussing with the Chinese Foreign Minister, our efforts to further advance co-operation on human rights issues.”</p>	<p><i>... but not for Tibet</i></p> <p>Unlike many western governments, Canada has still not publicly advocated negotiation as a means of resolving the conflict between China and Tibet.</p> <p>When the Tibetan Foreign Minister requested a meeting with Minister Axworthy in 1997, the meeting was denied because of Tibet’s political status.</p>	FAIL
<p><i>Principled Positions before 1997</i></p> <p>“Canada takes no position with regard to specific Chinese territorial claims; it neither challenges nor endorses them.”</p> <p>“Tibet”</p> <p>“China and Tibet”</p>	<p><i>... Sold Out in 1999</i></p> <p>“Canada does not recognize the Tibetan Government in Exile led by the Dalai Lama based in Dharmasala, India.”</p> <p>“The minority region of Tibet”</p> <p>“China including Tibet”</p>	FAIL
<p><i>Transparency / Accountability</i></p> <p>“Canada is one of the most active countries in assisting China to develop a better human rights environment... we promote the emergence of a civil society... Transparency and rule of law are fundamental to the development of such a society”</p>	<p><i>... but not for China</i></p> <p>Canada’s bilateral dialogue with China is held behind closed doors and official reports of the dialogue sessions are not released to the public. No benchmarks have been established to evaluate progress made by the bilateral dialogue. No date has been given for progress assessment of the bilateral dialogue. There is no public criteria for the selection of NGO participation in the dialogue. Chinese “NGOs” taking part in the bilateral dialogue are “chaperoned” while in Canada.</p>	FAIL
<p><i>Multilateralism</i></p> <p>“Multilateralism has been at the heart of Canada’s foreign policy... because multilateralism was consistent with our vision of what the world order should be like and what means should be used to achieve it.”</p>	<p><i>... circumventing the UN System</i></p> <p>As part of the bilateral dialogue, Canada and China co-sponsored a “plurilateral symposium” on human rights to which they invited representatives of several other governments. The in-camera symposium will be repeated in 1999, creating what amounts to a parallel Commission on Human Rights circumventing the public and accountable UN human rights system.</p>	FAIL

Sources: *International Commission of Jurists, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, World Tibet Network News, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, Tibet Information Network, Government of Canada web page. All quotations on this page are taken from the letters or speeches of Minister Axworthy, except those under the heading “principled positions” which are taken from DFAIT briefing documents. Precise references available upon request.*