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# China can learn from Dalai Lama

**Re: Cancel meeting with Dalai lama or face consequences, China tells PM. APRIL 16.**

Prime Minister Paul Martin's decision to meet with the Dalai Lama today sets a shining example for the leaders of China's other trading partners. It shows that commercial interests might not be placed above considerations for human rights, freedom, and democracy.

It is arrogant for the Chinese government to warn Canada that "we think the Canadian government should not provide a stage and place of activity for a politician such as the Dalai Lama, who is engaged in activities to split the motherland." Just whose motherland is China talking about? Tibet is a country with its own culture, religion, and language, and a history that is probably longer than China's. It is a province of China only in the eyes of the Chinese government, no one else.

While the new leaders of China have made significant economic progress and political reform since the end of Mao Tse-Tung's xenophobic dictatorship, it is unfortunate that they have not been able to drag themselves out of Mao's imperialist design toward China's smaller neighbouring states. One can only hope that they will eventually learn the Dalai Lama's lessons of compassion, generosity, peace, and devotion to humankind. Only then will Tibetans be able to live as free citizens of an independent and sovereign state in the family of world nations.

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