

Dear fellow Canadians, voters, political leaders and media,

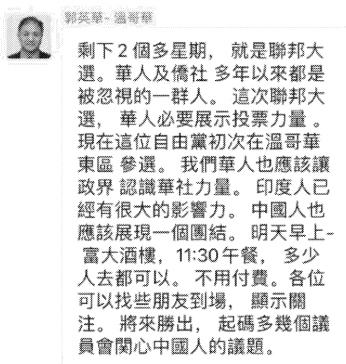
We are a group of concerned Hong Kong Canadians pleading for your urgent attention.

On Saturday Aug 28, a message was posted on a WeChat group, inviting people to bring friends to a free lunch featuring a Liberal party candidate, which was to take place in Vancouver Chinatown’s Floata Chinese Restaurant. The aim of the gathering, as stated in the post, was to show “the voting power of the Chinese people” and to have “a few more MPs who would care about issues of the Chinese people.”

It also comments on the South Asian community, saying that they “have a huge influence” related to federal politics.

While we greatly appreciate and welcome community events that help voters make informed decisions and encourage voter turnouts, we are very alarmed by the approach of using free meals as incentives, especially when the event is apparently to entice support for a specific candidate and or a specific political party.

Original WeChat message:



English translation:

Fred Kwok - Vancouver

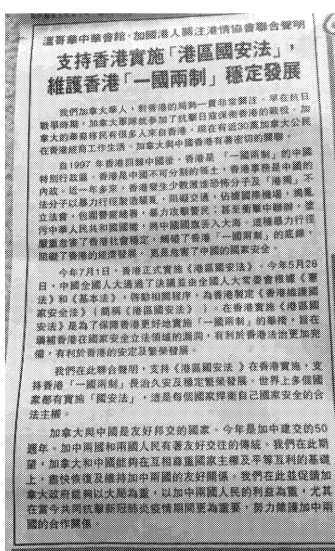
Just over two weeks left in the federal election. Throughout these years, the Chinese community and the Chinese people have long been neglected. The Chinese people must show their voting power in this election. Now that this Liberal candidate is running for the first time in Van East. We the Chinese people must show the voting power to the politicians. The South Asian people already have a huge influence. The Chinese should also show solidarity. Tomorrow morning at 11:30 am, lunch at Floata Restaurant. No matter how many, no need to pay. You all may bring some friends there to show that you care. When the future victory comes, at least there will be a few more MPs who would care about issues of the Chinese people.

As the world witnesses the on-going traumatic dismantling of the rule of law and election systems in Hong Kong, we, members of the Hong Kong diaspora, have vowed to stand on guard for the democratic institutions of Canada. That is why we are alarmed when we see in this WeChat message the déjà vu of a well-tried and successful vote-buying tactic in Hong Kong. The vote-buying networking tactic is commonly known and understood as feasting and gifting throughout the year, free sight-seeing trips and personal services such as hairdressing or nail polishing. (Locally known and summarized as “Snake feasts in the Winter, Vegetarian meals in the Summer, Mooncakes for the Mid-Autumn Festival and Rice Dumplings for the Dragon Boat Festival” (蛇齋餅糰)).

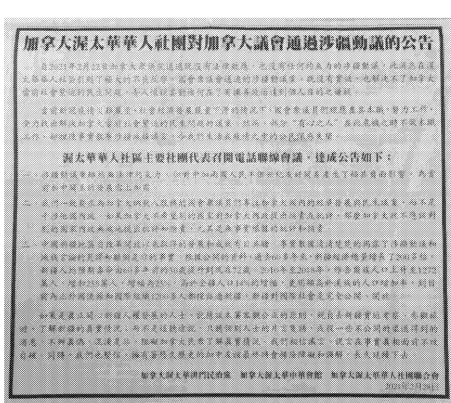
Pro-CCP political parties and politicians would give out goodies and provide free feasts during various occasions and festivals through out the year to secure support and votes in the local regions or voting areas. Such 'free meal deals' are essentially vote-buying carried out on a year-round basis. They erode the integrity and the fundamental principle of democratic elections over time. It is therefore of utmost important that such vote-buying tactics would never be allowed to take hold in Canada, be it outside or during election periods.

As members of the ethnic Chinese community, we are also appalled by the notion from such kind of free meal and goodie deals that votes from Chinese Canadians could be so easily bought by free lunches, rather than to be won by grassroots work in the community, sound policy platforms and great visions for Canada. For any political party, candidate or community leader to employ such strategy on any minority group, is insulting and offensive to that entire community as a whole.

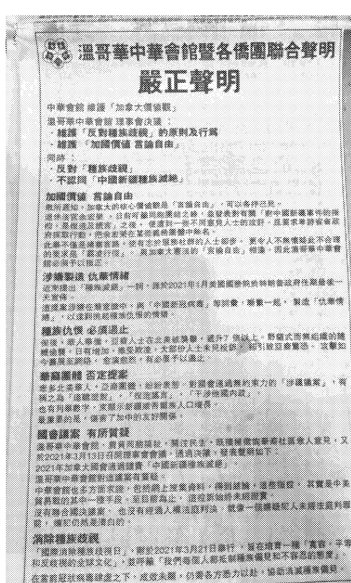
The WeChat message was posted by Fred Kwok, President of the Chinese Benevolent Association of Vancouver (CBA), Leader of the Chinese Freemason of Canada, and Chair of the government funded Greater Vancouver Chinese Cultural Center (CCC). CBA and Freemason have led other pro-Beijing groups in many advertising campaigns in the Canadian Chinese language media in recent years. Their statements including the expression of full support of the Hong Kong National Security Law, and the accusation of Canadian parliamentarians of being ignorance and groundless to interfere with China's internal affairs, because of the motion to recognize the Chinese Communist regime's persecution and genocide of the Uyghurs. Oblivious to the plights of Canadians like Huseyin Celil and the two Michaels, who are locked up in dark prison cells with bogus charges, the leadership of CBA and Freemason has been consistent in promoting the propaganda of the Chinese Consulate and toeing the CCP party lines.



Ad. supporting HKNSL

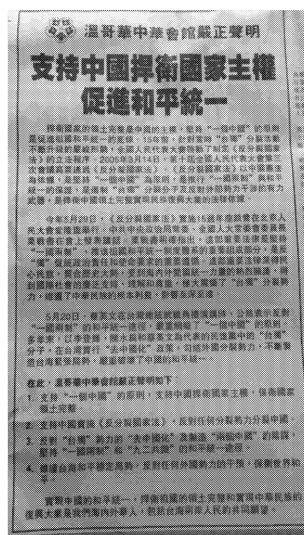


Ad. condemning the passage of the genocide motion



Ad. objecting the passage of the genocide motion

In an advertisement put out by CBA with a headline: “Support China to defend national sovereignty and promote peaceful reunification”, CBA proclaimed that “realizing China's peaceful reunification, safeguarding the territorial integrity of the motherland, and realizing the great cause of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation are the common aspirations of our Chinese at home and abroad, including the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.” This is an outrageously false representation. CBA’s stance doesn’t represent us and many more in the community at all.



Vancouver CBS ad. Titled:

“Support China to defend national sovereignty and promote peaceful reunification”

Bottom two lines:

“Realizing China's peaceful reunification, safeguarding the territorial integrity of the motherland, and realizing the great cause of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation are the common aspirations of our Chinese at home and abroad, including the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.”

Mr. Kwok’s WeChat post said the free lunch event was aim at having “a few more MPs who would care about issues of the Chinese people.” Judging from all the past statements from CBA, those issues would most likely be in Beijing’s interests, not Canada’s. Therefore, “the Chinese people” he mentions can’t be referring to Chinese Canadians and would not be in the best interests of Chinese Canadians either.

Federal election is the most critical time for Canadians to exercise our democratic power and to hold our federal government and parliament accountable. The integrity of the election is paramount for voter confidence and for a healthy democracy. We are not sure if Mr. Kwok’s message is in violation of the Elections Act, and we urge the media to confirm this with Elections Canada. In the case even if this ‘free meal deal’ does not violate the current election laws, but we hope voters, political leaders and media will work together to ensure that such vote-buying tactics will never happen again in this great country of ours. We don’t want Hong Kong to become our crystal ball.

For the love of this country,

Chinese-Canadian Concerned Group on
the Chinese Communist Party’s Human Rights Violation

September 3, 2021

Media Contact: Ivy Li ivy.cfhk@pm.me

致各加拿大公民、選民、政界領袖及傳媒：

我們是來自香港的加拿大公民，想向大家作出緊急呼籲。

在八月廿八日星期六，一個微信群組中出現一則短信，邀請各人在翌日帶同朋友出席一個免費午餐聚會，以表達對溫哥華東區自由黨參選人的支持，地點是溫哥華華埠的富大酒樓。根據該短信，聚會的目的是要展示華人的投票力量，及有「多幾個議員關心中國人的議題」。

該微信亦提到印裔社區，指出他們在政界已經有了很大的影響力。

我們樂見能夠幫助選民作出知情決定，或鼓勵更多人投票的社區活動，但對這種以免費餐宴為餌的籠絡手法絕不苟同，尤其是當其目的是要為個別候選人或政黨爭取支持，更要嚴正並且公開指出其危險走向。

保衛加拿大的民主機制人人有責，來自香港的我們更是責無旁貸，因為香港的法治及選舉制度正在全世界眼前被逐步摧毀。所以，當我們看見類似香港的買票技倆在這微信中出現的時候，怎能不深感震驚！這種長期以免費餐飲、送禮、免費觀光團、免費理髮或修甲服務等方式來籠絡街坊的手段，香港人將之統稱為「蛇齋餅糶」，即是冬天蛇宴、夏天齋宴、中秋月餅和端午糶子的簡稱。

每逢節日，香港的親中政黨和政客會在選區內派發禮品和提供免費餐宴以爭取和鞏固票源，這實質上就是全年無休的買票活動。這種買票技倆會逐漸蠶食民主選舉制度的基礎和誠信。因此，無論是在選舉期間或是其他時候，大家都絕不能讓這種買票手法在加拿大植根。

作為華裔社群的一份子，我們對那些以為免費餐宴就可以得到華裔選票的想法深痛惡絕。若有任何政黨、候選人或社區領袖採用類似的買票策略來招待少數族裔群體，而並非在族裔社區深耕細作、提供優良政綱和對加國的遠大願景來爭取支持的話，是對有關社群的侮辱和冒犯。

上述的免費午餐微信來自郭英華先生。郭先生是溫哥華中華會館理事長、加拿大洪門機構全加盟長、及受政府資助的大溫哥華中華文化中心主席。中華會館和洪門在近年領導其他親中團體刊登了不少廣告聲明，包括全力支持港

版國安法，和指斥加國議員確認維吾爾族被北京進行種族滅絕為無知、無根據和干預中國內政。中華會館和洪門的領袖無視被中共禁錮虐待的加拿大公民如 Huseyin Celil 及兩位 Michaels，長期充當中領館喉舌和宣揚中共的路線。

溫哥華中華會館曾獨自刊登了一則題為「支持中國捍衛國家主權、促進和平統一」的聲明，其結語說：「實現中國的和平統一，捍衛祖國領土完整和實現中華民族的復興大業是我們海內外華人，包括台海兩岸人民的共同願望。」這是完全失實和無恥的強行代言！中華會館的立場絕不代表我們及其他很多的華裔人士。

郭先生在他的微信中說那免費餐聚會的目的是「多幾個議員會關心中國人的議題」。根據中華會館過去的聲明，所謂「中國人的議題」應是指北京的議題，而非加拿大的議題。而他口中的「中國人」亦不會是指華裔加拿大人，真正受惠的也不可能是華裔加拿大人。

聯邦選舉是加國公民行使民主權力、監察聯邦政府和國會最重要的時刻。選舉的誠信是民主制度健全與否的關鍵，更是選民對整個制度信心的基石。我們並不清楚郭先生的做法有否違反選舉條例，所以在此促請傳媒向選舉事務局查詢。假如這種免費餐宴的做法並沒有違反現時的選舉條例，我們希望選民、政治領袖及傳媒能通力合作，以確保這種買票技倆永遠不會在加拿大出現。我們深切希望香港不會成為加拿大的水晶球。

加拿大華人關注中共違反人權小組謹啓

二零二一年九月三日

Media contact:

Ivy Li ivy.cfhk@pm.me