CUAME

CASE STUDY

Dotting the Map: Modern Exclusion and the Making of the Disloyal Canadian

Canadians United Against Modern Exclusion · 31 July 2025

ABSTRACT

This case study analyzes Dotting the Map (DTM), a website by Found in Translation and Canadian Friends of Hong Kong that names Canadians allegedly acting as proxies for the Chinese government. Focusing on the facts behind the designation of Ng Weng Hoong as a proxy, we outline how DTM incorrectly conflates opposition to anti-Chinese racism with support for the Chinese government. Such labelling constitutes a form of modern exclusion, where individuals, especially of Chinese descent, are branded as disloyal and threatening to Canada based on their ethnic origin and are marginalized for expressing views that diverge from dominant narratives.

What is Dotting the Map?

On April 7, 2025, in the midst of the Canadian election campaign, the groups Found in Translation (FiT) and Canadian Friends of Hong Kong (CFHK) published Dotting the Map (DTM), a website featuring nine maps they say outline "the networks, tactics, and narratives behind the People's Republic of China's (PRC) influence and infiltration operations in Canada."

Among the maps is one titled *Weaponizing Anti-racism & Lawfare*, which purports to reveal Canadians that "could have close ties to the CCP & PRC and might have become their united front proxies in Canada." Their selection criteria centre on individuals who they allege "play the race card" by falsely

© Canadians United Against Modern Exclusion (CUAME) · cuame.ca

accusing critics of the Chinese government of being racist. In this case study, we outline how this mischaracterizes the motivations of those who speak up against anti-Chinese racism and contributes to the exclusion of certain Canadians.

Modern exclusion in practice

The map in question, Map 6, names public figures such as former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Justice Marie-Josée Hogue as possible "united front proxies," but also less prominent Canadians such as Ng Weng Hoong. It is on Ng's case that we focus in this study.

The specific allegations made against him centre on his involvement in the response to a Global News article written by Sam Cooper published on April 30, 2020, at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Cooper alleged that the Chinese government, through its consulates and the United Front Work Department, was directing Chinese Canadians to purchase N95 masks and other personal protective equipment to be sent to China. The obvious implication of this story is the narrative that Canadians of Chinese descent are Chinese first, Canadian second, and chose to help their compatriots to the detriment of Canadians in a time of need.

Shortly after publication, Carleton professor Dr. Xiaobei Chen led a petition asking Global News to retract the article and to apologize for deepening "racialized fears about Chinese Canadians (and other Chinese in Canada) and exacerbat[ing] the upsurge of anti-Chinese, anti-Asian racism, in spite of the fact that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) stipulates against discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin." In part due to her leadership in this effort, she is also named by DTM in the same map.

Ng promoted this petition through his online publication OnePacificNews and wrote to Global News multiple times asking for a retraction and apology. It is for his involvement that he was branded as a proxy of the Chinese government by DTM.

DTM argues that Ng and the petition organizers used false claims of racism to discredit critics of the Chinese government. This is simply not the case: of course it is not racist to criticize the Chinese government. What is racist is to believe that certain Canadians are loyal to a foreign government on the basis of their ethnic origin and that Canadians of Chinese, specifically mainland Chinese, descent are a monolith incapable of thinking and acting for themselves.

Why is this racist? On a basic level, that Chinese Canadians sent PPE to China does not mean that they did so because they were told to by the Chinese government. Research reveals that Canadians of mainland Chinese origin had diverse reasons for either sending, or not sending, PPE to China, such as a general concern about the global spread of COVID-19. More broadly, it is problematic that certain

Canadians were being judged differently because of their ethnic origin. Labelling an individual as a threat to Canada who cannot be trusted based solely on their ethnicity is a textbook definition of racism.

It was these concerns about anti-Chinese racism that motivated individuals such as Ng to mobilize in opposition to the Global News story. However, DTM paints a picture of Ng as pushing trumped-up charges of racism as a way to silence opposition to the Chinese government's call for PPE shipments. These are serious allegations for which DTM has, to date, provided no supporting evidence. Further, they have not responded to multiple attempts by Ng to clarify the basis of the claims made against him and to voice his opposition to his inclusion in the report. All of this is despite the disclaimer on DTM's website welcoming contact from individuals who "believe any information is inaccurate or unfair" and indicating they "will review your concerns."

The implications of modern exclusion

The exclusion referred to here is modern in the sense that it is neither explicit nor direct; Canadians such as Ng are not restricted from expressing their views and face no threat to their status in Canada by doing so. Rather, modern exclusion describes a reality where Canadians deemed to have views in alignment with foreign governments, specifically governments viewed as hostile to Canadian interests, are characterized as acting in the interests of that country over Canada. Their views are at risk of being dismissed as being unduly influenced by that foreign government, and they may be intimidated into engaging with politics and expressing their opinions as a result. With the passage of Bill C-70 in June 2024, this wariness is compounded by the risk of being prosecuted under the Foreign Interference and Security of Information Act, which carries penalties of up to life imprisonment for Canadians suspected of being under the influence of a foreign entity.

The narrative advanced by Global News seemingly promoted Canada's interests by placing the blame for a problem, low supply of PPE while COVID-19 cases were rising in Canada, on the Chinese government. Opposition to this narrative by Ng and others focused on the conflation of actions of the Chinese government and Chinese Canadians and the weakness of evidence supporting the idea that the behaviour of the latter group was directed or at least influenced by the former. However, this was construed by groups such as DTM as promoting the interests of the Chinese government, even though the focus was on Canadians and the protection of their freedom and agency.

There is a difference between the Chinese government and Chinese Canadians. DTM understands this, as an entire section of their website is dedicated to explaining the importance of this distinction. They say that "one should always remember that the PRC today under the CCP does not constitute or represent the Chinese Canadian community... Also worthy of note is that for decades, the PRC and its operatives have been treating Chinese Canadians as if they were PRC subjects and affiliates. This is as erroneous

and ludicrous as treating Americans as if they were the subjects of His Majesty the King of England."

That DTM recognizes it is wrong to see Chinese Canadians as "PRC subjects" makes it all the more concerning that they would support outlets and reporting that promote such a view. The fact that Ng is of Chinese descent, even though he has no connection to mainland China and does not even speak Chinese, does not mean he acts under the direction or influence of the Chinese government. For the record, Ng has no connection to mainland China and does not even speak or write Chinese Mandarin. He is a Canadian citizen simply exercising his freedom of expression.

While we focused here on the specific case of Ng, he is just one of scores of Canadians named in the DTM maps. By virtue of their ethnic origin and/or refusal to accept anti-China narratives, these individuals have been labelled proxies of the Chinese government, creating a dangerous precedent that threatens all Canadians' ability to speak freely. Accusing Canadians of aligning with a foreign government based on their ethnicity and the views they hold excludes them from full and equal participation in politics and society. Recognizing this form of exclusion is essential, and so is taking steps to address it when it occurs.

References

1. Found in Translation was founded by an anonymous group of Canadians of mainland Chinese origin that "investigates and reports on the influence strategies and activities of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in Canada and other democratic societies." https://foundintran.substack.com/about

2. Canadian Friends of Hong Kong describes itself as a "non-partisan, member-funded network formed by Canadians who are Hongkongers, ex-Hongkongers and friends of Hongkongers." While some members of CFHK have been mentioned in news articles, its membership, specifically those involved in DTM, has not been made public.

3. https://web.archive.org/web/20250803195608/https://foundintran.substack.com/p/fit-and-cfhk-teamed-up-to-launch

4. https://www.canfriendshk.ca/_files/ugd/82e0d6_1f535384ef5547db9d6dff8b4f58c1f3.pdf

5. https://globalnews.ca/news/6858818/coronavirus-china-united-front-canada-protective-equipment-shortage/

6. https://www.change.org/p/to-press-global-news-to-retract-two-reports-against-chinese-canadians-and-to-apologize

7. Xiaobei Chen. 2025. "Crises, Scapegoating, and Anti-Chinese Racism." *Migration, Mobility, and Displacement* 7: 7–28.

8. Since April 21st, Ng has reached out to DTM through the contact page of their website three times and emailed them at canfriendshk@gmail.com thrice. He never received a reply from his messages on the website and his emails to the account bounced, with an indication that the email account does not exist.

9. https://www.canfriendshk.ca/about

10. https://www.canfriendshk.ca/prc-vs-chinese