

Legislators find they are not welcome on mainland with protest petition

200 democrats on Beijing's blacklist

By Political Desk and
David Healy in London

THE unsuccessful protest trip by the Coalition to Oppose the Provisional Legislature to Beijing has revealed that China has a blacklist of 200 Hong Kong people who are not welcome on the mainland.

This list includes the entire leadership of the Democratic Party, which forms the largest bloc in the Legislative Council and which received more than 60 per cent of vote in last year's election.

The blacklist was revealed when public security officials checked the names of the protesters against copies in their hands.

Xinhua Hong Kong deputy director Zhang Junsheng last night denied the existence of such a list.

The eight coalition members who were barred from leaving their Dragonair flight at Beijing said they saw the names of all 40 members of the party's standing committee and its executive committee in the three-page document.

But the first name on the list was not a party member. It was legislator and former civil servant Elizabeth Wong Chien Chi-lien, who is also a member of the coalition and was to have accompanied the group but was denied a visa.

Other names spotted by the group were party chairman Martin Lee Chu-ming, party whip Szeto Wah, legislator Cheung Man-kwong, former Meeting Point vice-chairman Luk Shun-tim and Central and Western District Board chairman Yuen Bun-keung.

Until now it had been generally believed that just a handful of party leaders were persona non grata in China.

Mr Lee last night expressed surprise over the extent of the list. "I think the Chinese side wants to contain and eliminate our party," he said.

The coalition denounced the Chinese government as "a liar" for keeping a secret blacklist.

"Director Lu Ping has said the Democratic Party can participate in elections after the handover, but how can we be involved in politics when we can't get in or out of Hong Kong?" spokesman Andrew Cheng Kar-foo said.

The coalition will petition Xinhua News Agency today for the return of their home return permits. They will also meet Solicitor-General Daniel Fung.

The Hong Kong government and British Foreign Office both stated: "We are surprised that people travelling on valid PRC-issued travel documents have not been permitted to enter

China, but this is a matter between China and the people concerned.

"As we have repeatedly said, it would be in Hong Kong's interests for Chinese officials to talk to all shades of opinions in Hong Kong, especially the opinions of democratically elected representatives of the Hong Kong people."

Xinhua deputy Mr Zhang said the coalition's actions were a "political show" which would affect the national security of China even though they did not carry any weapons. Speaking after the launching of a new book on the Basic Law, Mr Zhang said coalition members must respect China's laws when in Beijing.

"Do you think that national security will only be affected when they carry weapons?" he asked. "You can think about it. They have already petitioned, paraded and protested here and com-

ing to our doorsteps to grab or burn or whatever. But these are their own matters.

"But when you come to Beijing you are in the mainland and you must abide by mainland laws and you must maintain and protect the stability of the state."

In London, Chief Secretary Anson Chan Fang On-sang said she was disappointed and surprised the legislators had been barred and said she would take it up with Beijing and the Xinhua News Agency in Hong Kong.

"I think the people of Hong Kong would prefer to see greater tolerance of broader points of view particularly for democratically elected members of Legco," she said, after a 40-minute meeting with Prime Minister John Major. She did not raise the issue with Mr Major.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

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| 6:30 am | ● Coalition members assemble at Kai Tak. |
| 8:00 am | ● Aircraft departs for Beijing. |
| 10:45 am | ● Aircraft arrives at Beijing Airport. |
| 11:00 am | ● 20 armed security forces board the plane to identify Coalition members. |
| 11:30 am | ● Five Hong Kong reporters flying in the same plane detained in a small house nearby. |
| | ● Coalition members isolated in the first class cabin. |
| 11:45 am | ● Six other reporters being accused of possessing related materials detained in the custom area of the Beijing Airport. |
| 12: 30-2:30 pm | ● Six reporters questioned individually. |
| 12:45 pm | ● More than 20 local and foreign reporters waiting outside the airport detained for two hours. |
| 1:30 pm | ● Coalition members and one reporter fly back to Hong Kong on the same aircraft. |
| 4:00 pm | ● Six reporters sign statement of repentance before release. |