

A Family Day to treasure

Chinese mom, daughter, 2, allowed to remain in Canada

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Sun Media

Monday truly was Family Day for Hong and Sherry Zhang when the Chinese single mom and her Toronto-born daughter learned they will be allowed to remain in Canada as a family.

Zhang, 40, was beaming yesterday as she thanked the thousands of GTA residents who rushed to support her last April when, out of desperation, she tried to place 2-year-old Sherry in the care of Peel Children's Aid in case she was deported.

Because Sherry was born in Canada, the tot could have been left behind without her mom.

"It is a dream come true," Zhang said yesterday. "We never thought this day would happen."

Zhang received the desperately awaited good news Monday in a letter posted by Immigration Canada Feb. 13.

Plans to study

Zhang, who works in a factory, plans to study to become a personal support worker now that the future is more secure.

"I plan to work hard and give Sherry a good life in Canada," she said. "We want to thank everyone who offered to help us in a difficult time."

News of Zhang's imminent deportation and the pos-

sible fate of little Sherry so outraged *Toronto Sun* readers that the newspaper and Zhang's immigration, Roy Kellogg, were bombarded with more than 2,200 phone calls, faxes and e-mails from people wanting to help.

Kellogg said more than 20 men proposed marriage to sponsor Zhang to Canada.

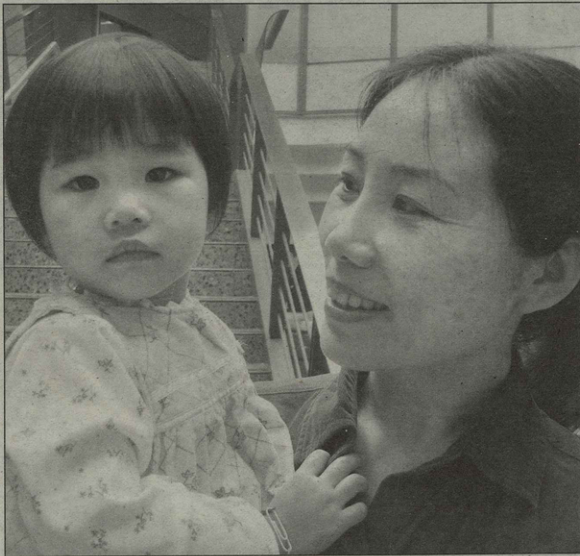
Adopt the family

Even Chief Zane Bell, of the Algonquin Woodland Metis Aboriginal Tribe, drove to Toronto from Minden in a bid for his tribe to adopt the family.

Kellogg said if Zhang was returned to China — where laws ban children out of wedlock — Sherry would have been treated as a second-class citizen. She would be fined \$140,000, not be eligible for health coverage, and not be allowed to attend school or obtain Chinese citizenship.

Zhang came to Canada in 1997 from Tian Jing in Sichuan Province and made a refugee claim, which failed. She appealed on humanitarian and compassionate grounds. Last June her deportation was deferred until the appeal could be heard.

Her application was granted "due to the hardship you would face if you had to leave Canada and apply from outside of the country," an immigration officer told Zhang in the letter dated Feb. 13.



Chinese mom Hong Zhang, with daughter Sherry, found out she won her deportation appeal on Monday to remain in Canada.

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