

ENDING ORGAN PILLAGING IN CHINA

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China's outgoing premier, Wen Jiabao, has spoken often about the need for democratic reforms and the rule of law in China. He also took the lead in blocking the advance of Bo Xilai to the Standing Committee of the Communist Party. Bo and his mentor, former President Jiang Zemin, are among the worst persecutors of the Falun Gong movement ongoing since July, 1999, including its inhuman organ pillaging commerce.

All of us in Japan, Canada and the responsible international community must hope that the Party faction led by Wen, Hu Jintao, president-designate Xi Jinping, premier-designate Li Keqiang and others prevails over the other camp (Jiang, Bo, security head Zhou Yongkang, propaganda minister Li Changchun, etc) in most of the appointments made to the Standing Committee next month. The Jiang group appears to have been behind the recent riots against Japan over the five Senkaku islets. The people of China themselves, of course, have the biggest stake in the outcome of the current political struggle in Beijing.

Falun Gong

Falun Gong (or Falun Dafa) is a spiritual discipline which seeks to improve body and ethics. It contains features of traditional systems, like Chinese Qigong, Buddhism and Daoism (Taoism), combined with a set of gentle exercises. Its core principles are "truth, compassion and forbearance". In China, where it first became public in 1992, the movement grew within seven years to 70-100 million practitioners by the government's own estimate. Then Party head Jiang Zemin in 1999 reacted irrationally at seeing citizens from all walks of life, including party members, engaging publicly in a form of exercise with more participants than his political party had members after only seven years of existence. The exercises could be done, moreover, anywhere at any time, singly or in groups, indoors or outdoors, which meant Falun Gong was impossible to control.

The party-state has repressed the movement brutally since July 1999. Torture, rapes, beatings to death, detentions in forced labour camps, brainwashing—all became the daily lot of many Falun Gong across China. Practitioners responded with a non-violent, but energetic defence of human dignity within China and in many other countries.

After 1980, the post-Mao Party began withdrawing funds from the health system across China, telling it to make up the shortfall from service charges to mostly uninsured patients. Selling the organs of executed convicted persons in time became a source of extra income for surgeons, the military and other participants. After 1999, Falun Gong prisoners of conscience became a vast live organ bank for wealthy Chinese patients and 'organ tourists' from abroad, who often preferred that the "donors" were Falun Gong, being healthy persons normally, rather than convicted prisoners.

Forced Labour Camps

In doing our final report on organ pillaging, David Matas and I visited about a dozen countries to interview Falun Gong practitioners sent to China's forced labour camps, who later managed to leave the camps and the country. They were sent to camps after mid-1999 without any form of hearing on only a police signature. The system was created in Stalin's Russia and Hitler's Third Reich and copied in the 1950s by Mao. The today well-documented treatment of this peaceful and large community across China, including the large scale murders of them for their vital organs, should remind the world of the Nazi death camps for this reason as well.

Some practitioners told us of working in appalling conditions in camps for up to sixteen hours daily with no pay and little food, crowded sleeping conditions and torture. They made a range of export products as subcontractors to multinational companies. This is gross corporate irresponsibility and a violation of WTO rules; it calls for an effective response by all trading partners of China. Each should ban forced labour exports by enacting legislation which places an onus on importers in each country to prove their goods are not made by slaves.

The camps allow the Party to send anyone to them for up to three years with neither any form of hearing nor appeal. One estimate of the number of the camps across China as of 2005 was 340, having a capacity of about 350,000 inmates. In 2007, a U.S. government report estimated that at least half of the inmates in the camps were Falun Gong. It is totalitarian governance and 'anything is permitted' economics that enable such practices to persist. Bo Xilai and others in the Jiang faction appear to have made illicit fortunes from this commerce; they clearly now want to conceal their activities in it.

Chen Ying

Consider the experience of Falun Gong practitioner Chen Ying, shown below, who was later awarded refugee status by the government of France:



“Because I would not renounce my Falun Gong convictions... I was imprisoned three times without any judicial process... Each time, I was mistreated and tortured by the police... At the end of September, 2000, as I would not tell them my name, I was called out by the police and taken to a hospital for a complete medical examination: cardiac, blood, eyes, etc. I had to carry chains on my legs and I was attached to a window frame.

The police injected me with unknown substances. After the injections, my heart beat abnormally quickly. Each one gave me the impression that my heart was going to explode...”

41,500 Transplants

According to research David Matas and I did, set out in our 2009 book *Bloody Harvest*, practitioners have been killed in the thousands since 2001 so that their organs could be trafficked to Chinese and foreign patients. For the period 2000 –2005 alone, Matas and I concluded that for 41,500 transplants done the only plausible explanation for sourcing was Falun Gong. This slaughter continues to the present day.

The main conclusion of our 2009 book is that there “continues today to be large-scale organ seizures from unwilling Falun Gong practitioners ... Their vital organs, including kidneys, livers, corneas and hearts, were seized involuntarily for sale at high prices, sometimes to foreigners, who normally face long waits for voluntary donations of such organs in their home countries.” Our revised report is accessible in 18 languages from www.david-kilgour.com.

International Initiatives

Have the efforts of many in China and around the world to stop these crimes against humanity made any difference? I'll mention only some of the initiatives:

United Nations

In August 2006 and again in January 2007, U.N. Special Rapporteurs asked the Chinese government for an explanation of the serious allegation of organ harvesting from live Falun Gong. They pointed out to Beijing that a full explanation would disprove the allegations, but it provided no substantive answer, simply denying the charges. These experts then asked for explanation of a critical issue: the source of organs for China's organ transplant operations.

The two joint letters sent by Special Rapporteur on Torture, Prof. Manfred Nowak, Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion, Ms. Asma Jahangir, and Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, Ms. Sigma Huda, are accessible from the following links:

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/7session/reports.htm> (document number: A/HRC/7/3/Add.1) and from

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/7session/reports.htm> (document number: A/HRC/7/10/Add.1).

In a report submitted to the tenth Human Rights Council session, Nowak stressed that “New reports were received about harvesting of organs from death row prisoners and Falun Gong practitioners.”¹ Independent experts of the U.N. Committee against Torture also addressed the issue of organ pillaging from Falun Gong.²:

¹ <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/10session/reports.htm> (document number: A/HRC/10/44/Add.5).

² one report with the document number of CAT/C/CHN/CO/4 (full text available from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cat/cats41.htm>),

“information received that Falun Gong practitioners have been extensively subjected to torture and ill-treatment in prisons and that some of them have been used for organ transplants.”

The U.N. Committee against Torture made the following recommendation:

“The State party should immediately conduct or commission an independent investigation of the claims that some Falun Gong practitioners have been subjected to torture and used for organ transplants and take measures, as appropriate, to ensure that those responsible for such abuses are prosecuted and punished.

European Parliament

In September 2006, the E.U. Parliament adopted a resolution condemning the detention and torture of Falun Gong, and expressing concern over reports of organ pillaging. The issue was also raised by direction of the EU troika leadership through Finnish Foreign Minister Tuomioja, who met that year with China's Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing in Helsinki.

United States

The U.S. State Department finally acknowledged in its 2011 Human Rights Report, released in May, 2012, that “Overseas and domestic media and advocacy groups continued to report instances of organ harvesting, particularly from Falun Gong practitioners and Uighurs.” Since mid-2011, the online U.S. non-immigrant visa application requires the following information from the applicant: “Have you ever been directly involved in the coercive transplantation of human organs or bodily tissue?”

Earlier this month, 106 Members of Congress from both parties wrote to their State Department, urging it to release information on organ pillaging in China from Falun Gong practitioners and other religious/political prisoners, and seeking the release of any information it might have, including details that former Chongqing deputy mayor Wang Lijun is believed to have transmitted during his brief sanctuary in a U.S. consulate in February. [Their letter reads in part: "Medical doctors in the United States and around the world are growing increasingly concerned about alleged unethical organ procurement practices and abuses of transplant medicine abroad...While at the US Consulate, it is claimed that Wang Lijun may have divulged information about the harvesting of organs from still living Falun Gong practitioners. If such evidence was received and brought to light, measures could be taken to help stop such abominable abuses. We therefore ask that the State Department release any information it may have that relates to transplant abuses in China..."]

The full text of the letter is accessible at:

<http://en.minghui.org/html/articles/2012/10/7/135751.html>

Wang Lijun was personally involved in organ harvesting practices with his then boss Bo Xilai. Wang founded a research centre on organ transplantation while police chief of Jinzhou City in Liaoning Province. It conducted several thousand organ transplant operations with unexplained organ sources. The letter to the State Department mentioning Wang also referred to a Sept. 12 Congressional hearing, “Organ Harvesting

of Religious and Political Dissidents by the Chinese Communist Party.” Witnesses there implicated Chinese hospitals and doctors in forced organ pillaging from prisoners, consisting mostly of living practitioners of Falun Gong, but including Uyghurs, Tibetans and “House” Christians.

Congressional hearing witness, Charles Lee, M.D. is a Falun Gong practitioner who was imprisoned for three years in China. He testified that while imprisoned blood samples were taken from him without being told the reason. He noted that but for the international attention on his case, he could have become a victim like thousands of anonymous Falun Gong.

Another witness, Ethan Gutmann, an investigator into China’s organ transplantation practices and author of *Losing the New China*, discussed eight Falun Gong he interviewed. They had undergone peculiar medical tests, which he said, were “strikingly similar.” The doctor was usually from the military, drew a large volume of blood, and took a chest x-ray and urine sample.

Taiwan In 2007, Hou Sheng-mao, then Director of Taiwan’s Department of Health, reported requesting that Taiwanese doctors not recommend to patients to travel to mainland China for transplants.

Australia

In 2006, the Australian Health ministry announced the abolition of training programs for Chinese doctors in organ transplant techniques at the Prince Charles and the Princess Alexandra Hospitals, as well as banning joint research programs with China on organ transplantation.

China

The party-state of China today accepts in principle at least that sourcing organs from prisoners is improper. Deputy Health Minister Huang Jie in 2009 said that executed prisoners “are definitely not a proper source for organ transplants.” While Bo Xilai was governor of Liaoning Province from 2001-2004, the persecution and organ pillaging of organs from Falun Gong was among the worst in China.

Canada and Belgium

Two Belgian senators, Patrik Vankrunkelsven and Jeannine Leduc, introduced into their Parliament in 2006 a proposed law, which addresses organ tourism. Former Canadian MP Borys Wrzesnewskyj introduced into our House of Commons extraterritorial legislation banning “transplant tourism” in 2008. Both measures would penalize any transplant patient who receives an organ without consent of the donor where the patient knew, or ought to have known, of the absence of consent.

France

Valérie Boyer and other members of the National Assembly proposed legislation in late 2010, which sets out reporting requirements. Every French citizen resident obtaining an organ transplant abroad would be obliged to provide a certificate stating that it was

donated without payment. Every French doctor would be required to report the identity of everyone the doctor examines who had a transplant. A health agency would have to report any person for whom there are reasonable grounds to believe was involved in payment to obtain an organ.

Israel

In 2008, Israel banned the sale and brokerage of organs and ending funding through the health insurance system of transplants in China for Israelis. Jay Lavee in the recently-published book, *State Organs*, explains the legislation as a reaction to the abuses in China.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Some pharmaceutical companies, such as Novartis and Pfizer, have voluntarily pulled away from pharmaceutical trials of anti-rejection drugs in China because of ethical concerns. There is, however, still need for binding national regulation in this area. Arne Schwarz in *State Organs* and David Matas in a recent speech in Philadelphia detail a wide range of a pharmaceutical trials of anti-rejection drugs done in China. Some were conducted in hospitals from which our telephone investigators obtained admissions that they were selling organs of Falun Gong.

Unfortunately, such international initiatives have not yet ended the trafficking in organs across China. Since we began, the number of convicted persons sentenced to death and then executed has decreased overall quite dramatically, but the number of transplants, after a slight decline, rose to earlier levels. Since the only other substantial source of organs for transplants in China, apart from Falun Gong, is prisoners sentenced to death, a decrease of sourcing from that population means an increase in sourcing from Falun Gong.

Recommendations

For organs trafficked in China, Matas and I would encourage Representative Hiroto, who is presiding here today, and other Diet members to consider our recommendations, including:

Urging the party-state in China to:

- cease the repression of Falun Gong;
- cease organ-pillaging from all prisoners;
- remove its military from the organ transplant business;
- establish and regulate a legitimate organ donor system;
- open all detention centres, including forced labour camps, for international investigation; and
- free Gao Zhisheng and many other prisoners of conscience.

Implement the following measures until organ pillaging from prisoners ceases:

- >medical professionals in Japan and every country which respects human dignity should actively discourage their patients from going to China for transplant surgery;

- >no government should issue visas to Chinese MDs for training in organ transplantation;
- >MDs from outside China should not travel there to give training in transplant surgery;
- >contributions submitted to medical journals about experience with transplants in China should be rejected; and
- >pharmaceutical companies everywhere should be barred by their national governments from exporting to China any drugs used solely in transplant surgery.

Japan`s Diet and government could also enact measures to combat international organ transplant abuses: extraterritorial legislation, mandatory reporting of transplant tourism, health insurance systems not paying for transplant abroad, barring entry of those involved, etc.

Conclusion

All democratic governments ought to enact tough safeguards to combat the ongoing organ transplant abuses across China. Now is opportune because the political issue which sustains these mass murders, the persecution of Falun Gong, appears to be a factor in the struggle for positions on the new Standing Committee of the Communist Party. Japan could join all of us across the world who will urge the new leadership next month in Beijing to end both organ pillaging and the persecution of Falun Gong.

People in and beyond China might now have some real impact on the future of this grave matter, not only because it is necessary for tens of millions of Chinese Falun Gong practitioners and their families, who have been torn apart across China, but also because it is good for China and the international community as a whole. We all want a China that enjoys the rule of law, human dignity and democratic governance.

As indicated at the outset, the current leadership struggle in Beijing also appears to be a major undeclared reason for the Senkaku crisis. By encouraging public demonstrations against Japan, the Jiang faction appears to be seeking to divert attention away from Falun Gong organ pillaging, which is linked so inextricably now to its supporters. Disclosing this reality more effectively in Japan and elsewhere now might help to end this new crime against humanity.

Thank you.