

## **Falun Gong's 20th Anniversary/Recent Events in China**

Remarks by Hon. David Kilgour

Parliament Hill Celebration

Ottawa

May 9, 2012

---

The 20th anniversary of the first introduction of Falun Gong (also known as Falun Dafa) concepts to the Chinese people is being celebrated in more than 100 countries. Festivities are to be held across Canada this month.

Falun Gong is a traditional self-improvement cultivation practice. It brings practitioners to better mental, ethical, and physical well-being through gentle exercises, meditation and the principles of 'truth, benevolence, and forbearance'. Tens of millions of persons across the world have practised it. In China alone by the government's own estimate, there were 70-90 million doing so in the late 1990s.

Falun Gong has received wide recognition, including awards and proclamations. It has been honoured by officials across Canada, including Ottawa mayors, who have proclaimed May 13 as Falun Dafa Day here during the past decade.



International gathering of Falun Gong practitioners.

While an inhuman party-state-led persecution has continued for 13 years across China, Falun Gong spread across much of the democratic world. The treatment of Falun Gong by Beijing since mid-

1999 has overall been even worse than the persecution of other religions and cultural minorities in China.

### **Current Beijing Developments**

The dramatic fall in recent months of several Party leaders inside China at the centre of the persecution is sudden and encouraging. Reform-minded leaders, including premier Wen Jiabao, appear to be grappling with whether to end the suppression. Voices of support for doing so from the international community might well help make a difference.

Mark MacKinnon, the Globe and Mail bureau chief in Beijing, for example, wrote recently (Apr. 20):

The fall of Bo Xilai, once the rising star of China's Communist Party, was spectacular to watch. Initially purged last month because his superiors feared he might launch a "new Cultural Revolution," the ouster was shocking enough to spark rumours that Mr. Bo and his allies were planning to seize power in Beijing via a coup d'état. Then came stories of a British businessman... turning up dead in a hotel room in Chongqing, the Yangtze River metropolis governed by Mr. Bo. Chinese investigators have since connected Mr. Bo's high-profile wife, Gu Kailai, to the killing...

The very public humiliation of Mr. Bo...has brought to the surface the decades-old split that pits a group of liberal-minded reformers like Premier Wen Jiabao against a hard-line wing of the party...It's the biggest rupture inside China's ruling elite since 1989, when Zhao Ziyang was ousted as Communist Party chairman after he sided with the pro-democracy demonstrators on Tiananmen Square. The shift comes at a critical juncture, just months before the Communist Party will unveil its new leadership lineup...The new Politburo lineup will set the direction for the world's rising superpower for the coming decade.



Premier Wen Jiabao

Photo credit: [zimbro.com](http://zimbro.com)

After years of being the lone voice at the top advocating greater economic and political openness within China's one-party system, the scandal has given Premier Wen the upper hand. It was Mr. Wen himself who launched the move against Bo Xilai, declaring on March 15 that 'without the success of political reforms, historical tragedies like the Cultural Revolution could possibly happen again'. It was a clear reference to Mr. Bo, who encouraged Chongqing residents to sing "red" songs associated with the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and '70s...At his fateful press conference, Mr. Wen said Chongqing administrators needed to 'reflect' on their errors. Within 24 hours, Mr. Bo was ousted and the tales of murder and corruption started coming to light.

I should add here that what the Party did to the blind lawyer Chen Guangcheng and his wife over his criticism of forced sterilizations and abortions also did much harm to its reputation at home and internationally.

### **Persecution of Falun Gong**

In mid-2006, Canadian lawyer David Matas and I were asked to report independently on allegations that peaceful Falun Gong practitioners were being killed for their vital organs. To our dismay, we located 52 kinds of evidence that a new crime against humanity was occurring across China on a large scale, which continues today. You can access our revised report in 18 languages at <http://organharvestinvestigation.net/> or our 2009 book, *Bloody Harvest*, which is available in Mandarin and English.

Matas and I have since travelled as volunteers to more than 40 countries, meeting with Falun Gong practitioners who managed to leave both forced labour camps across China and the country itself, citizens, legislators, government ministers, academics and journalists in a campaign to persuade the Party to cease its inhuman national and international commerce. I understand that Wen Jiabao has recently called on the Party to cease the persecution.

### **Conclusion**

Like yourselves, I admire the people of China greatly, including their often heroic protests against acts of misfeasance by their government. The next to go will hopefully be Zhou Yongkang, the Party head of security, who worked closely with former President Jiang Zemin and Bo in the persecution of Falun Gong.

The differences the real friends of China in open societies everywhere have are with the party-state. Four major areas of concern at home and internationally today are continuing Maoist governance practices, persecution of religions, state capitalism, and systematic attacks on Internet freedom. One discussion of these realities can be accessed at [http://www.david-kilgour.com/2012/IOWA\\_TALK\\_BY\\_DAVID\\_KILGOUR\\_2012.pdf](http://www.david-kilgour.com/2012/IOWA_TALK_BY_DAVID_KILGOUR_2012.pdf).

At a recent international conference held in Ottawa, important and timely points were made by China experts about the current developments. Permit me to mention some only:

- General public anger about social, political and economic conditions across China, particularly corruption, inequality of incomes and lack of jobs for young people, is growing, with 180,000 public protests reported during 2011 alone. One-party authoritarian governance has no democratic legitimacy; the so-called “performance legitimacy” will disappear overnight if the economy stalls.
- To deal effectively with endemic corruption requires the creation of multi-party democracy and the rule of law; one-party government guarantees corruption everywhere. In 2003 alone, an estimated three per cent of China’s GDP was lost to theft of public

funds. Even the Party's People's Daily reported last July that 4000 corrupt officials have fled with approximately. \$50 billion.

- All of the candidates for membership on the Standing Committee of the Party, including president designate Xi Jinping, who spent nine years working in rural China, suffered during Mao's Cultural Revolution. They are aware that all modern societies are democracies and that premier Wen is correct that without political reform China could face a dead end. The self-explosion of Bo Xilai and others has been an enormous public relations disaster for the Party mostly because it demonstrated for the entire world the myriad flaws of political Leninism in China. The country is at a governance and economic crossroads.

Beijing is currently making major political changes in its senior personnel. Those appointed should seek dignity for all Chinese if they wish to achieve sustainable prosperity. The people of China want the same things as the rest of us: respect, education, safety and security, good jobs, the rule of law, democratic governance and a sustainable natural environment. If the party-state ends its violations of human dignity at home and internationally and begins to treat all members of the human family in a transparent and equitable way, the new century can bring harmony for China and the world.

Thank you.

---