

KONCENTRATIENS LAGER/CONCENTRATION CAMPS IN CHINA AND ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Hon. David Kilgour, JD.

Notes for seminar, Human Rights Days (14-16 November)

Ugglan Hall, Culture House

Stockholm, Sweden

Nov 15, 2013

Thank you for the invitation to speak at this so well-attended annual event.

Many of us in the international coalition to end organ pillaging/trafficking across China can be very pleased that you are doing this. I hope this meeting and others being held in Stockholm next week on this topic will contribute to ending a new crime against humanity.

Time is very much of the essence. I am certain that innocent men and women, Falun Gong practitioners, are currently being killed in China for their organs in 350 or more concentration camps across the country. The camps were created by Mao in the 1950s, following models created by Hitler and Stalin. The *International New York Times* indicates this morning that the Communist party yesterday announced again that the camps will be closed, a step forward which we can only hope will finally be carried out.

David Matas and I visited about a dozen countries to interview Falun Gong practitioners, who managed to leave both the camps and the country. They told us of working in appalling conditions for up to sixteen hours daily with no pay and little food, crowded sleeping conditions and torture. Inmates made a range of export products as subcontractors to multinational companies, including Christmas decorations and various garments. This constitutes both corporate irresponsibility, a violation of WTO rules and calls for an effective response by all trading partners of China. Our governments should ban forced labour exports by enacting legislation which places an onus on importers in each country to prove their goods are not made in effect by slaves.

LOOKING BACK

Trafficking in organs from death row prisoners has been a practice since the 1980s in China. The party-state in China made it appear like a plausible practice: "They are dead anyway"; "They are murderers".

What are the facts? One goal was to supply organs for high ranking party officials. As the bodies of the prisoners were the property of the party-state, it was entitled to use their vital organs for transplants.

A refugee, a Chinese surgeon, testified in the US House of Representatives in 2001 and in Edinburgh earlier this year about his own participation in transplant surgery of executed prisoners in the 1990s. He felt forced to flee, and stop the work because the victims were shot, but often not killed. Instead they were paralyzed, and he had to harvest the organs from one living human being before leaving China.

http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa73452.000/hfa73452_of.htm

INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION

In May 2006, the Coalition to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong in China (CIPFG) asked David Matas and myself to investigate allegations of large scale organ seizures from living Falun Gong practitioners. We released two reports and one book and have continued to investigate the issue as volunteers.

We found numerous pieces of evidence that the crime was and is occurring. Based on our

research for the period 2000-2005 alone, Matas and I determined that for 41,500 transplants done, the only plausible explanation for sourcing was Falun Gong.

Our main conclusion was 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.”

CHEN YING

The experience of Falun Gong practitioner Chen Ying, who was later awarded refugee status by the government of France, is fairly typical:

“Because I would not renounce my Falun Gong convictions, between February 2000 and November 2001, 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.”



GAO ZHIZHENG

Chinese human rights advocates, such as the twice Nobel-Peace Prize nominated Gao Zhisheng, and their international supporters care deeply about improving the well-being of the Chinese people. Gao, aged 47, is often called “the conscience of China”. He gained world acclaim for donating his lawyer’s skills to defend workers, evicted farmers, miners, dissidents and the disabled.

His criticism of the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners triggered seven weeks of torture for himself. It stopped only when he agreed to “confess” in an article saying that the party-state treated his family well and that Falun Gong had tricked him into writing a letter to the U.S. Congress. Shortly after his release for a brief period, Gao wrote a letter detailing his ordeal and authorized its release to the public in February, 2009, although threatened with death if he spoke publicly about his torture. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has called on the party-state of China to release Gao, terming his detention a violation of international law.

It was originally Gao who invited us to China to investigate allegations of organ pillaging from Falun Gong practitioners. We continue Gao’s struggle for elemental human dignity on this issue.

PRINCIPAL VICTIMS: FALUN GONG

In order to understand what the party-state in China is doing, it helps to understand the principal victims. Falun Gong (or Falun Dafa) is an ancient spiritual discipline from the Buddha school that seeks to improve body and mind. For the body, it contains a set of gentle exercises that improve health. For the mind, its core principles are “truthfulness,

compassion and forbearance,” which echo those of many faiths.

In China, where it was introduced to the general the public in 1992, Falun Gong grew within seven years to 70-100 million practitioners by the government’s own estimate. It has a belief system which is entirely different from the atheistic, materialistic Communist Party ideals of today. The practice is not a formal, organised religion which made it impossible for the Party to control.

On July 22, 1999, the Communist Party leadership launched a protracted and violent campaign whose stated purpose was to—quote—“eradicate” Falun Gong.

A U.S. government report estimated that at least half of the inmates in the labour camps were Falun Gong. Other detainees interviewed by Human Rights Watch consistently observed that Falun Gong were the largest group in the labour camps and were singled out for torture and abuse.

Millions of non-violent Falun Gong have been deemed subhuman by their government. They can accordingly be killed on demand without any recourse whatsoever in China. This is the barbaric national policy.

EVIDENCE

Very briefly, I’ll look at some of the evidence that led us to our conclusion. Investigators made many calls to hospitals, detention centres and other facilities across China claiming to be relatives of patients needing transplants and asking if the hospitals had organs of Falun Gong for sale. We obtained on tape and then transcribed and translated admissions that hospitals were using Falun Gong organs throughout China.

Falun Gong practitioners, who were detained and later got out of China, testified that they were systematically blood-tested and organ-examined while in detention in forced labour concentration camps across the country. The blood testing and organ examination could not have been for their health, as they were regularly tortured, but it would have been necessary for organ transplants and for building a bank of live “donors”.

In a few cases, family members of Falun Gong practitioners were able to see mutilated corpses of their loved ones between death and cremation. Organs had been removed. We even have some photos of that.

We interviewed the ex-wife of a surgeon from the Sujiatun district in Shenyang City in Liaoning. She told us that her surgeon husband told her that he removed corneas from 2,000 Falun Gong practitioners between 2001 and 2003, at which time he refused to continue. The surgeon made it clear to his wife that none of these sources survived the experience because other surgeons removed other vital organs and all of the bodies were then burned.

Finally, there's no other explanation for the transplant numbers than sourcing from Falun Gong. China's the second-largest country in the world after the U.S. for transplantation, yet until 2010 China did not have a deceased donation system, and even today that system produces donations that are statistically insignificant. The living donor sources are limited in law to relatives of donors and are officially discouraged because live donors suffer health complications from giving up an organ.

The number of prisoners sentenced to death and executed, that would be necessary to supply the volume of transplants in China, is far greater than even the most exaggerated death penalty statistics and estimates, in the tens of thousands. Moreover, in recent years death penalty volumes have gone down, but transplant volumes, except for a short blip in 2007, have remained constant.

Recommendations

Matas and I would encourage your legislators and all parliaments 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:

- 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.

Conclusion

Sweden, Canada and other responsible nations should enact measures to combat international organ transplant abuses: extraterritorial legislation, mandatory reporting of transplant tourism, health insurance systems not paying for transplantations abroad, barring entry of those involved in trafficking organs.

Many of us in and beyond China ought now have greater 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, dignity for all and democratic governance.

Thank you