

ENDING ORGAN PILLAGING/TRAFFICKING

NOTES FOR TESTIMONY TO HEALTH COMMITTEE OF GREEK PARLIAMENT BY Hon. David Kilgour, JD.

Athens

June, 4, 2014

Mr. Chairman and honourable members,

It is a pleasure to be back in Greece, where your nation has had such a profound influence on so many of the world's civilizations, including their philosophy, literature, art, sculpture, theatre, music and governance during about thirty centuries.

Falun Gong Persecution

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. Because it grew astonishingly rapidly across China from its inception in 1992, the Party saw it as a threat, labeled it a cult, and commenced persecution against practitioners from mid-1999 to the present day.

After 1980, the post-Mao Party began withdrawing funds from the health system across China, requiring it to make up the shortfall from service charges to mostly uninsured patients. Selling the organs of executed convicts became a source of income for surgeons, the military and other participants. After 1999, Falun Gong prisoners of conscience became a 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

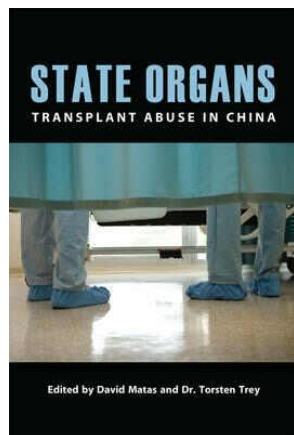
David Matas and I located independently numerous kinds of proof about this commerce in respect of Falun Gong. According to our research, set out in our book *Bloody Harvest*, Falun Gong have been killed in the thousands since 2001 so that their organs could be trafficked for large amounts to Chinese and foreign patients. For the period 2000-2005, we arrived at the figure of 41,500 such transplants by deducting from the 60,000 transplants

claimed by the government for the period our best estimate of the number of executed criminals (18,550).

Matas and I visited about a dozen countries to interview Falun Gong practitioners sent to labour camps, who later managed to leave 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. They made a range of export products as subcontractors to multinational companies. This constitutes both corporate irresponsibility and a violation of WTO rules; it shrieks for an effective response by all trading partners of China. Governments, including your own, 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.

Permit me to mention only a little 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 various facilities were using Falun Gong organs.
- 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 camps across the country. The blood testing and organ examination could not have been for their health, since they were regularly tortured, but it would have been necessary for organ transplants and for building a bank of "donors".
- We interviewed the ex-wife of a surgeon from Sujiatun district in Shenyang City in Liaoning. She stated that he told her that he had removed corneas from 2,000 Falun Gong practitioners between 2001 and 2003, at which time he refused to continue. He made it clear to her that none of these sources survived the experience because other surgeons removed other vital organs and all of the bodies were then burned.



In the 2012 book *State Organs*, researcher Ethan Guttman estimates that 65,000 Falun Gong were killed for their organs during the years 2000-2008 from about 1.2 million of them interned in China's forced labour gulag. As with similar camps created by Hitler and Stalin, on which the party-state ones were adapted by Mao in the 1950s, a police signature remains enough to commit anyone for up to three years. No charges, no appeals. In 2007, a U.S. government report estimated that at least half of the inmates in 340 camps were Falun Gong.

SOME INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

European Parliament

In 2006, the European Parliament conducted a hearing and adopted a resolution condemning the detention and torture of Falun Gong practitioners and expressing concern over reports of organ harvesting. There were also hearings this past December and January in which Tunne Kelam on the Foreign Affairs Committee, noted, "if we don't take knowledge seriously about this practice, we have become morally and politically co-responsible for what's going on."

United States

Since June 2011, the online U.S. non-immigration visa application (Form DS-160) asks applicants if they have been involved in transplant abuse.

In July 2013, Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.) and Rep. Robert Andrews (D-N.J.) introduced House Resolution 281 in the Committee on Foreign Affairs which calls on China immediately to stop the practice of organ trafficking from its prisoners.

Israel

Israel has passed legislation banning the sale and brokerage of organs. The law also ended funding through the health insurance system of transplants in China for Israeli nationals. Transplant surgeon Jay Lavee in his contribution to the book, *State Organs*, explains Israel's law as a reaction to transplant abuse in China.

Ireland

Last July, the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade conducted a hearing and unanimously passed a motion which called on the Irish Government to support the UN and Council of Europe initiatives to oppose the practice of forced organ harvesting in China.

Australia

In the parliament of New South Wales, legislation was proposed in 2013 against organ trafficking, which would bar any resident of the state from buying a trafficked organ anywhere. In March, 2013 the Senate unanimously passed a motion urging the government to oppose the practice of organ harvesting in China. The motion also calls on the government to follow the example of the United States in implementing a new visa requirement.

NGOs

Various medical organizations have issued statements urging the investigation and measures to stop organ pillaging in China. In 2006 the World Medical Association (WMA) demanded that China stop using prisoners as organ donors. Recently the policy of the WMA includes a paragraph that organ donation from prisoners is not acceptable in countries where the death penalty is practiced.

Doctors Against Forced Organ Harvesting (DAFOH) have also been very active in this issue in a growing number of nations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Matas and I would encourage Greece's 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; and
- open all detention centres, including forced labour camps, for international investigation.

Implement the following measures until organ pillaging from prisoners ceases:

- 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

Greece, 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 transplant abroad, barring entry of those involved in trafficking organs. The easiest legislative remedy is simply to ban the use of trafficked human organs by Greek nationals.

Thank you.