

Organ Pillaging/Trafficking In China Today

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On the issue before us today, we must keep in mind that China is primarily its peoples, history and cultures. The criticisms many of us within and outside the country make relate to its Leninist governance/crony capitalism model, not the hard-working and oppressed citizens.

Bloody Harvest

This presentation is about one instance of systematic violence committed by China's party-state periodically since 1949 on its deemed enemies: in this case, the large scale pillaging of vital organs from Falun Gong practitioners for commercial transplantation purposes. No-one survives these operations because all organs are seized and the bodies of "donors" are then cremated.

Falun Gong is a China-wide movement using exercises and meditation derived from Buddhism/Daoism, which numbered 70—100 million persons in the mid-1990s by the government's own estimate.

In May 2006, the Coalition to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong in China (CIPFG) asked David Matas and me to investigate the claims of organ pillaging/trafficking from living Falun Gong practitioners. We released two reports and one book and have continued to investigate this issue. (Our revised report is available in 18 languages, including German, from www.david-kilgour.com). We concluded that for 41,500 transplants done in the years 2000-2005 alone in China, the only plausible explanation for sourcing was Falun Gong.

Our main conclusion 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.”

Evidence of Pillaging/Trafficking

Permit me to mention only a small fraction 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 they had organs of Falun Gong for sale. We obtained on tape and then transcribed and translated admissions that a number of facilities trafficking in Falun Gong organs provided.

- Falun Gong prisoners who later got out of China testified that they were systematically blood-tested and organ-examined while in camps across the country. This could not have been for their health, since they were regularly tortured, but it is 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 interviewed the ex-wife of a surgeon from Sujiatun in Shenyang City, Liaoning. He told her that he had removed corneas from 2,000 Falun Gong prisoners between 2001 and 2003.

The Slaughter

The 2014 book, *The Slaughter* (Prometheus), by Ethan Gutmann places the persecution of the Falun Gong, Tibetan, Uyghur, and House Christian communities in context. It focuses mostly on Falun Gong, the group most viciously and continuously targeted since 1999.

Gutmann explains how he arrives at his “best estimate” that organs of 65,000 Falun Gong and “two to four thousand” Uyghurs, Tibetans and

House Christians were “harvested” in the 2000-2008 period alone. No “donors” survive pillaging because all vital organs are removed to be trafficked for high prices to wealthy Chinese nationals and “organ tourists”.

The closing words of *The Slaughter* are addressed to all responsible governments and persons: “No Western entity possesses the moral authority to allow the (P)arty to impede the excavation of a crime against humanity in exchange for promises of medical reform. As a survival mechanism of our species, we must contextualize, evaluate, and ultimately learn from every human descent into mass murder ... The critical thing is that there is a history. And only the victims’ families can absolve the (P)arty from its weight.”

WHAT CITIZENS AND GOVERNMENTS CAN DO

The world’s democrats, including our national governments and civil society institutions, should nonetheless continue to engage with Beijing and the broadest possible range of citizens across China. Democracy with very Chinese features is probably much closer than many think. No-one on the democratic side should forget that the values we represent include dignity for all, the rule of law and independent judges, multi-party democracy, corporate social responsibility, transparency and accountability.

European Parliament

The European Parliament resolution of May 19, 2010, an action plan on organ donations and transplantations (2009-2015), featuring strengthened cooperation among Member States, was a useful initiative. Circumstances would now appear to call for additional measures, including ones proposed by Dr. Torsten Trey, founder and executive director of Doctors Against Forced Organ Harvesting (DAFOH):

- A systematic and large scale pillaging/trafficking in vital human organs from unwilling “donors” has been going on for almost 15 years across China. The evidence that it is occurring is overwhelming, but the UN Human Rights Commissioner has been mostly hands-off about the actions of a permanent member of the Security Council of the UN.

- The European Parliament should enact penalties for those convicted of participating in illegal pillaging/trafficking in organs which enter the European Union.
- During three years, DAFOH and many other groups and individuals collected a total of two million signatures from people calling for action on organ pillaging/trafficking across China. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has to date not make a single comment. Contrast the silence there with the speed with which some reports on ISIS-triggered statements (see for example: <http://www.dafoh.org/open-letter-to-un-high-commissioner-human-rights-121014/>).

Finally, the European Parliament passed a resolution on December 12, 2013, which in part “Calls for the EU and its Member States to raise the issue of organ harvesting in China...” The European External Action Service (EEAS) is responsible to implement resolutions, but unless its officials propose a plan of action to the Council of Ministers, such resolutions are in effect dead letters. Matas learned that EEAS was last year unprepared to give the Council a proposal for “a full and transparent investigation ... into organ transplant practices in China” unless it knew, in advance of such an investigation, what it would establish. It is necessary for parliamentarians to lobby EEAS if it is to be persuaded to propose a plan of action to the Council of Minister to implement the resolution.

Parliament of Canada

On Feb 3, 2015, the Parliament of Canada all-party House Subcommittee on International Human Rights released a statement condemning the pillaging of organs from Falun Gong. It expressed “deep concern over credible allegations that prisoners of conscience and members of religious and ethnic minority groups, including but not limited to practitioners of Falun Dafa and Uighurs, in the People's Republic of China are being executed for the purposes of harvesting and transplanting their organs.”

The statement was adopted after testimony that “Witnesses indicated that police, military and medical professionals in a number of regions of China

were involved in illegal organ harvesting, implicating doctors, researchers, hospital and clinical staff, as well as justice sector professionals.”

In its call to end the transplantation of organs from living or deceased donors without consent, the subcommittee:

- “encourages Canadian medical professionals, scientists, researchers and their professional organizations as well as regulatory bodies to continue their efforts to put an end to illegal and unethical transplantation practices.”
- “calls on medical and scientific professional and regulatory bodies to name, shame and ostracize individuals, institutions and their affiliates involved in the forced harvesting and trafficking of human organs.”
- “calls on the Government of Canada to consider ways to discourage and prevent Canadians from taking part in transplant tourism, where the organs have not been obtained in an ethical, safe and transparent fashion.

DOCTORS AGAINST FORCED ORGAN HARVESTING (DAFOH)

DAFOH, the medical organization which has brought so much international attention to this issue, has cautioned policy makers not to accept at face value Beijing’s latest promise to end the harvesting of organs from executed prisoners. It noted that the party-state has a lengthy record of “secrecy, misleading numbers and contradictory statements, and, despite mounting evidence and international demands to stop, the government has refused to acknowledge the illegal harvesting of organs from prisoners of conscience.”

A recent media release by DAFOH stresses that a reduced reliance on executed capital offenders means “an increased reliance on organ

procurement from prisoners of conscience. This vulnerable group, of which the brutally persecuted Buddhist... Falun Gong, among others, is the primary target, is at increased risk of falling victim to the demand for forcibly procured organs”.

The release points at several issues:

- Since an implemented regulation in 1984, China has harvested organs from executed prisoners. Incredibly, in a recent interview, party-state transplant spokesperson Dr. Huang Jiefu denied that the policy was ever an official “law”, thereby rendering organ procurements since ‘84 unlawful. David Matas dissects Huang’s “self-contradictory baffle-gab” on organ pillaging/trafficking in his paper at this event.
- Chinese hospitals have been scrubbing their websites of evidence to downplay the extent of the transplant business.
- China is not ready to join the ethical value- based transplant community as an equal, trusted partner. In order to take the Chinese government's claims seriously, international monitoring groups and medical organizations must demand: full disclosure of the use of prisoners of conscience as organ sources, transparency of organ sources, and access to China's organ procurement pathways.

Forced Labour Camps/Climate Change/Exports/Jobs

Related to organ pillaging is the use of forced labour to manufacture products in 350 or so camps across China. Matas and I visited about a dozen countries to interview Falun Gong, who managed to leave both the camps and the country. They told us of working in appalling conditions for up to sixteen hours daily in these camps with no pay and little food, crowded sleeping conditions and torture. Inmates made a range of export products as subcontractors to multinational companies. As indicated by Jennifer Zang and Charles Lee in the film, *Free China-The Courage to Believe*, inmates make all manner of exports for Western consumers.

This constitutes corporate irresponsibility and a violation of WTO rules; it also calls for an effective response by all trading partners of China. Every government should place an onus on importers to prove their goods are not made in effect by slaves.

Professors Peter Navarro and Greg Autry in California have pointed out in their book, *Death by China*, that across the U.S. more than 50,000 manufacturing plants and more than 20 million American jobs in the sector have been outsourced over several decades, mostly to China.

Dr. Eija-Riitta Korhola, a former member of the European Parliament for Finland, examines in her Ph. D. dissertation the Kyoto Protocol and Climate Change. Her central point is that most government emission control initiatives have not achieved their objective to combat climate change and reduce greenhouse gases effectively. Instead, EU countries reduced CO₂ emissions with a number of initiatives, but the costs to meet them resulted in the relocation of much manufacturing from Europe to nations, such as China, lacking any effective regulation of emissions.

Korhola adds: "...the EU's unilateral and expensive climate measures... can be called decarbonising of the production or outsourcing the jobs or emissions, but the EU strategy does not mitigate the emissions globally... the impoverishing (of) our continent, along with inefficient climate and energy policy, is a significant political damage."

Nature of Economy in China

He Qinglian, a Chinese author and economist, wrote a few years ago that in China today. "Over 100 million farmers do not have land. Tens of millions of city dwellers are unemployed...there are four basic requirements for a society to sustain itself: the ecological system...; the moral system...; basic living rights...; (and) a political system that maintains the normal operations of a society. Currently, the...only thing left is the political dictatorship. "

A report on state capitalism in the January 21, 2012, issue of *the Economist* made related points. For example, it quoted a central bank of China estimate that between the mid-1990s and 2008 some 16,000- 18,000

Chinese officials and executives of state-owned companies “made off with a total of \$123 billion (about six million each).” It concluded, “By turning companies into organs of the government, state capitalism simultaneously concentrates power and corrupts it.”

Former premier Wen jiao-bao noted before he left office, “The reform in China has come to a critical stage. Without the success of political structural reform, it is impossible for us to fully institute economic structural reform. The gains we have made... may be lost, new problems that have cropped up in China’s society cannot be fundamentally resolved and such a historical tragedy as the Cultural Revolution may happen again.”

Governments, investors and business people should examine why they are supporting the violation of so many basic human rights in order to increase trade and investment with China. For years this has resulted mostly in national jobs being outsourced to China and continuous increases in bi-lateral trade and investment deficits. Are we so focused on access to inexpensive consumer goods that we ignore the human, social and natural environment costs paid by abused Chinese nationals to produce them?

Conclusion

The people of China seek the same things as the rest of the world: safety and security, the rule of law, respect, education, good jobs, democratic and accountable governance and a good natural environment. If the party-state ends its systematic violations of human rights and begins to treat its trade partners fairly, the 21st century can move towards harmony and coherence for China and the world. The first step in a better direction is to end organ pillaging now.

Thank you.