

‘GREAT LEAPS BACKWARD’ IN CHINA

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Tragically, the death of Nobel Peace Prize winner Liu Xiaobo in a hospital under heavy guard last July highlighted the Xi regime's deepening contempt for human dignity. Its downward trend reflects the chilling effects of cybersecurity, new foreign NGO laws, increased internet surveillance and lengthy prison sentences for human rights advocates and advocates, including Gao Zhisheng, Tang Jingling, Wang Quanzhang.

Consider democracy advocate Dr. Wang Bingzhang, M.D., whose family is Canadian. Almost 16 years ago, he was kidnapped in Vietnam and remains in poor health in solitary confinement in China today under a life sentence. His daughter, Ti-Aana Wang, graduated from McGill Law school.



Dr Wang Bingzhang

Ti-Anna Wang



Making things worse, the party-state in Beijing has now removed a constitutional provision, prudently enacted by Deng Xiaoping, limiting presidents to two terms, which allows Xi Jinping to rule for life despite the host of serious problems associated with the final years of Mao Zedong, the last life-long ruler of China.

Google Dr. Li Zhisui and his 663-page book about his years as personal physician to Mao from 1955 until the latter's death in 1976 at the age of 82. Professor Andrew Nathan, a specialist in Chinese politics at Columbia U, wrote in part: "Here's a picture of the daily life of a man who has absolute power and the fascinating thing is how absolute power sort of deranges the possessor of it, so that the boundary between fantasy and reality is obliterated because there is nothing to check his will...everyone danced to his whims, and that has a lot to do with the tremendous disasters Mao wrought on the country as a whole because he was insulated from reality. His fantasies became reality."

Historians today include Mao with Stalin and Hitler as the worst mass murderers of the 20th century. His biographers Chang and Halliday note that "over 70 million perished under Mao's rule" in peacetime. Many governance problems in China today stem from the fusion of Mao's totalitarianism and his successor Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms.

Every 10 years or so since it seized power in 1949, the Party has launched some form of persecution on a minority in order to instil terror in the Chinese people generally. Consider just four of the campaigns launched since 1950:

- 'The Great Leap Forward' in the 1950s where an estimated 40 million people starved to death,
- 'The Cultural Revolution' of 1966-76 saw perhaps another two million killed as Mao attacked his rivals,
- The Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989, where soldiers killed thousands who were seeking openness and democracy, and
- The ongoing persecution of Tibetans, Uyghurs and CAG Christians, and in 1999 the start of the ongoing inhuman crackdown against Falun Gong.

The Chinese internet filled with complaints after the announcement. Censors have since removed much from it to maintain the pretense of widespread public support for the decision. Deleted words range from George Orwell classics *Animal Farm* and *1984* to phrases such

as “incapable ruler”, “I oppose,” and words, including “shameless,” “disagree” and “emperor.” They also include the term “Xi Zedong,” a portmanteau of Xi’s and Mao Zedong’s names, and Winnie the Pooh, a cartoon that critics use against Xi.

DEMOCRACY AND STRAIGHT FACES

The party-state in China still pretends to be a democracy. Isaac Fish, a senior fellow at the U.S. Asia Society’s Center on U.S.-China Relations, writes: “Beijing goes on insisting—despite its lack of free and fair elections, uncensored media, or an independent judiciary—that it’s a democracy...But... lying to the people does not the sound foundation of good governance make. In the seven years I lived in China, no Chinese person who was not a Communist Party hack could tell me with a straight face they were living in a democracy.”

Wei Jingsheng of the China democracy movement observes on whether democracy exists within the Party itself: “The constitution of the Chinese Communist Party very clearly states: the whole country of China must obey the CCP leadership, the whole CCP must obey the central committee of the CCP...Some people said Deng Xiaoping created a democratic atmosphere within the CCP... (He) was retired at home (in 1989) when he called a few retired old men who were just as angry as he was, and thus they were able to remove the Secretary-General of the Communist Party as well as decide on using the people’s army to kill the people. Is this “democracy within the Communist Party”?

“Great Leap Backward”

Jiayang Fan, staff writer at the New Yorker, concluded about the recent Party Congress:

... setting the precedent of a modern-day emperor ensnares Chinese politics in a cycle of volatility and unsustainability that renders an entire nation vulnerable, once again, to the whimsy of an individual. ‘Several thousand years ago, the Chinese nation trod a path that was different from other nations’ culture and development,’ Xi said in a speech to the Politburo in 2014. ‘We should be more respectful and

mindful of five thousand years of continuous Chinese culture.’ Xi’s vision for China’s future, even though it is up to 2050, suggests a great leap backward, in which old lessons remain unlearned.

Canadian Clive Ansley, who practised law in Shanghai for 14 years until 2003, notes:

(China’s legal system) is a completely bogus system, which was introduced in 1979 for reasons having little or nothing to do with any desire to implement Rule of Law... China is a brutal police state... There is a current saying amongst Chinese lawyers and judges who truly believe in the Rule of Law...: ‘Those who hear the case do not make the judgment; those who make the judgment have not heard the case’.... Nothing which has transpired in the ‘courtroom’ has any impact on the ‘judgment’.

Human Dignity

Wang Yu after spending several years in prison has become a fearless champion of the abused. In 2013, she said, “Many people think: ‘China is rich, developing quickly ...has tall buildings, wide highways, fancy cars’...They don’t know that Chinese people are like animals that don’t have any basic rights”. Wang was arrested in 2015 and released the following year after being coerced to give a televised confession. Her human rights work is highlighted in the 2016 documentary Hooligan Sparrow. She was later awarded the 21st Ludovic Trarieux International Human Rights Prize and the American Bar Association’s inaugural International Human Rights Award

Gao Zhisheng, known by many as ‘the conscience of China’ and twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, was moved in 2014 from prison to house arrest, but could at the time barely walk or speak because of the torture he had undergone. In September 2015, in his first interview in five years, Gao told Associated Press that he was tortured with an electric baton to his face and spent three years in solitary confinement since 2010. “Every time we emerge from the prison alive, it is a defeat for our opponents.”

Gao says in his new book published outside China, *Unwavering Convictions*: “The number of people held in Chinese prisons has always

been highly classified. My personal and conservative estimate is that the number cannot be less than 15 million. China has far more prisons than universities. (It was only after years of working as a lawyer that I found out that there are more than 5,000 detention centers used for holding those on remand...)”.

BLOODY HARVEST

In 2006, the Coalition to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong in China (CIPFG) asked David Matas and me as volunteers to investigate persistent claims of organ pillaging/trafficking from Falun Gong practitioners. We released two reports and a book, *Bloody Harvest*, and have continued to investigate (Our revised report is available in 18 languages from www.david-kilgour.com). We conclude that for 41,500 transplants done in the years 2000-2005 in China, the sourcing beyond any reasonable doubt was Falun Gong prisoners of conscience.

A Nobel Peace Prize nominee and co-founder of the International Coalition to end Organ Pillaging in China, Ethan Gutmann’s 2014 book, *The Slaughter*, places the persecution of the Falun Gong, Tibetan, Uyghur, and eastern lightening church (CAG) in context. He explains how he arrived at his “best estimate” that organs of 65,000 Falun Gong and “two to four thousand” Uyghurs, Tibetans and Christians (CAG) were “harvested” in the 2000- 2008 period.

MID-2016 UPDATE

Matas, Gutmann and I released an Update on our two books in June 2016 in Washington, Ottawa and Brussels (accessible from the International Coalition to end Organ Pillaging in China at www.endorganpillaging.org).

- It provides a thorough examination of the transplant programs of hundreds of hospitals across China, drawing on medical journals, hospital websites, and deleted websites found in archives. It analyzes hospital revenues, bed counts and utilization rates, surgical personnel, state funding and other factors.
- We conclude cautiously that a minimum of 60,000 transplants per year are being done across China as of mid-2016, not the approximately 10,000 the government claims. This means that on average 164 persons a day were then being killed for their organs.

- We provide much evidence of a state-directed organ transplantation network, controlled through national policies and funding, and implicating both the military and civilian healthcare systems.

Gutmann adds, "For governments and the media, our (2016 update) represented the final tipping point: Our report was covered by global press ranging from the *New York Times* to the (UK) *Daily Mail* while the US Congress and the European Parliament passed nearly identical resolutions in the Summer of 2016 condemning the Chinese State for the harvesting of prisoners of conscience. In short, the Chinese medical establishment effectively lost the argument."

The party-state's current narrative claims that all transplantation organs since Jan 2015 are voluntarily provided through the semantical trick of reclassifying prisoner organs as "voluntary donations". Professionals who should know better, including the World Health Organization, the Transplantation Society (TTS) and the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, have accepted the party line, skipping over, as Louisa Greve of the International Coalition to end organ abuse in China (www.endtransplantabuse.org) puts it, "the admission that China's billion-dollar transplant industry was built on prisoners' organs".

FORCED LABOUR CAMPS

David Matas and I visited about a dozen countries to interview Falun Gong practitioners who had managed to escape 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 make a range of export products as subcontractors to multinational companies, including Christmas decorations and McDonalds' restaurants toys. This constitutes gross corporate irresponsibility and a violation of WTO rules; it also calls for an effective response by all trading partners of China.

CONCLUSION

James Mann, author of *China Fantasy* and former Beijing bureau chief of the *Los Angeles Times*: "...Democratic governments around the world need to collaborate more often in condemning Chinese repression — not just in

private meetings but in public as well...Why should there be a one-way street in which Chinese leaders send their own children to America's best schools, while locking up lawyers at home? The Chinese regime is not going to open up because of our trade with it..."

Premier Wen Jiao-bao noted before leaving office, "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...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. 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?

Most Chinese seek the same things as the rest of the world: safety and security, the rule of law, respect, education, good jobs, democratic governance, a good natural environment and prosperity for all. If the party-state ends its systematic violations of human rights and begins to treat its trade partners with respect, the 21st century can move towards greater harmony and coherence.

Thank you.