

Testimony: Persecution of and Peaceful Resistance by Falun Gong
by
Dr. Charles Lee, Spokesperson
C: 201-765-0552; charleslee2010@verizon.net
Global Service Center for Quitting the Chinese Communist Party, <http://quitccp.org/cms/>
40-48 Main Street, No. 201, Flushing, NY 11354

at
Hearing of Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC)
Hearing Topic: Falun Gong in China: Review and Update
Rayburn House Office Building, US Capitol, Washington DC
Tuesday, 10 am – 12 noon, December 18, 2012

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and the distinguished members from the U.S. House and Senate, as well as executive branches of the government, for giving me the opportunity to testify today.

1. Falun Gong and the benefits of the practice

Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is an ancient meditation system that consists of five meditative exercises and the principles of “Truthfulness Compassion Forbearance,” which all practitioners are supposed to assimilate themselves to.

The practice has an ancient lineage, yet it was only made public on a large scale in 1992. After that, it spread in China like wild fire. It is free and easy to practice; there is no formal membership and no places of worship. Those of us who practice Falun Gong find that it brings significant health benefits, reduced stress, and that its moral principles bring harmony to interpersonal relationships, our workplaces, and wider communities. At the end of 1998, Chinese government sources estimated that 70 to 100 million people were practicing it in China.

2. The persecution on Falun Gong by the CCP

In the 1990s, the government of China enthusiastically promoted Falun Gong on the basis that it improved public health and helped reduce healthcare costs. Yet the rapid growth of the practice, coupled with the fact that it had a spiritual philosophy rooted in traditional Chinese beliefs, caused some Communist Party leaders to view Falun Gong as a threat to their monopoly on moral authority. Moreover, Falun Gong’s values of “Truthfulness Compassion Forbearance” stood in sharp contrast to the corruption and violence of the Communist Party.

In July 1999, the Communist Party started the campaign to eradicate Falun Gong and promote the supremacy of Party’s leadership and loyalty to the party.

The Party has always tried to control every facet of life in China. It has done this partly through force and coercion, and creating an environment of fear where nobody dares to speak out. Secondly, it has systematically indoctrinated the whole country, destroyed traditional religions and value systems, and exercised complete control over all the media and information outlets. These are the same techniques it uses to persecute Falun Gong.

This persecution is one of the greatest tragedies happening in the world today. Hundreds of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners have been detained extralegally in this persecution. In many labor camps and detention centers, former prisoners report that Falun Gong practitioners are the majority of detainees.

Central party authorities have sanctioned the use of systematic torture against Falun Gong practitioners. In the labor camps, authorities are told to use any measures necessary to force Falun Gong practitioners to recant their beliefs, and are told that they will not be punished if Falun Gong practitioners die in custody. Authorities at all levels of government are given economic incentives and penalties that are tied to their success in cracking down on Falun Gong. Former prisoners, many of whom are not themselves Falun Gong practitioners, regularly report that Falun Gong detainees are singled out for mistreatment in prisons and labor camps; in a 2006 UN Special Rapporteur report, two-thirds of reported torture cases in China were against Falun Gong practitioners. The torture methods include sexual assault, beatings, shocks with electric batons, violent force-feedings with feces and salt solutions.

3. The cruelties of the persecution and the death toll

So far, 3,627 reports of deaths have been documented and confirmed by Falun Gong practitioners. However, the true death toll should be much higher. An untold number of Falun Gong practitioners have disappeared amidst persecution in the last 13 years.

More gruesome still, China's massive organ transplant industry has been supplied by organs taken from Falun Gong prisoners of conscience. Canadian investigators David Matas and David Kilgour have estimated that between 2000 and 2005, more than 40,000 Falun Gong practitioners may have been killed and their organs sold to supply China's organ transplant industry. Researcher Ethan Gutmann says that about 65,000 were likely killed for their organs between 2000 and 2008. The actual number of deaths can be many times more, because the CCP has always been manipulating numbers to mislead people or simply tell the blatant lies in order to cover up the atrocity. And much of the data collected by the researchers were from the official figures. There have been also many underground organ transplantation operations as well.

There is also evidence that Falun Gong practitioners' bodies have been sold to plastination companies, which put them on display in body exhibits.¹ Human beings

¹ For information on the body exhibits, see

<http://www.zhuichaguoji.org/en/sites/zhuichaguoji.org.en/files/record/2012/11/236->

have been turned into commodities and been used to maximize profits. These atrocities recall the Nazis' medical experiments and their use of human hair as pillow stuffing, and skin as lampshades. As Chairman Smith wrote, the possibility of mass organ harvesting from Falun Gong "pushes us into a horrific beyond, a beyond that challenges our language, making 'barbaric' too calm a word, too leached of horror."

The volume of Falun Gong practitioners was so high that the party actually built new labor camps just to contain them. In March 2006, a retired military doctor revealed that there were 36 such large concentration camps in the country. He claimed that one camp, 672-S in Jilin Province, held more than 120,000 Falun Gong practitioners.

It is estimated that there are 300 million transient population in China. These include the migrating city workers from the countryside, tens of millions of appellants who constantly appeal to the governments for their injustices, and millions of unyielding Falun Gong practitioners who have lost their jobs, schools, and families, and left their hometown to escape the persecution. In the past decade, many of them disappeared/vaporized and nobody can trace them down. (We have many practitioners in the U.S. with their practicing family members cannot be located or found.)

Tens of millions of Falun Gong practitioners had recovered from their illnesses (including terminal diseases) and benefited from an improved health. The persecution on Falun Gong in the past 13 years has forced many of them giving up the practices, and in consequence, facing with deteriorated health and eventually died. My mother was one of them.

The total deaths caused by the persecution should have reached several millions, if all types of death are included. What is outlined here is only part of the clues on this heinous crimes in human history. It is extremely important for governments and people, both in the West and the East, to know/find-out the scale and severity of the largely-undisclosed persecution. Much more efforts are needed to stop this crime against humanity and to fully investigate and lay down the framework for the long-overdue justice to be served.

4. Peaceful resistance by Falun Gong practitioners

Even though we have faced such severe persecution, there is not a single case in which a Falun Gong practitioner used violence against the perpetrators. Instead, we have resisted persecution by peacefully informing Chinese people about the true situation, debunking the propaganda that the Chinese government has produced against us.

One way we have done this is through underground "material sites" all across China, where practitioners can use proxy services to bypass the censorship firewall, download

and share reports of persecution, and create informational literature and DVDs telling the truth about Falun Gong and the persecution. Courageous practitioners then distribute this information at great personal risk. There are estimated to be about 200,000 such material sites in China today, and between 20 and 40 million practitioners.

Overseas practitioners have also developed various media outlets and circumvention software to bring information in and out of China uncensored.

5. My own experience

In 2002 and 2003, I also sought to resist the persecution by breaking through the veil of censorship in China. I traveled to China with the goal of tapping into state television broadcasts to show videos about the true situation of Falun Gong and the persecution. However, I was abducted in January 2003, and sentenced in a show trial to three years in Nanjing prison.

Even though I was an American citizen, the prison guards still did everything possible to brainwash and intimidate me. In addition to the physical torture and forced slave labor, the brainwashing sessions lasted for all three years. They forced me to watch TV programs defaming Falun Gong and praising the Communist Party. Very often, they cut off all my information sources for weeks on end, not even letting me talk with anybody. After these periods of isolation, they would subject me to intensive brainwashing sessions in the hopes that my resistance would be reduced. If I weren't an American citizen whose case was internationally known, the treatment I experienced would have been much worse.

I thank the strong support from friends around the world, especially the US Congress, that allowed me to come back to this country with my body intact and my will unbroken.

6. Awakening of Chinese People

While I was imprisoned, I would wonder to myself how it was that people could so readily abuse and torture their own compatriots. I wondered to myself how they'd allowed themselves to be deceived, and how they came to be so full of hatred.

The book titled "Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party" published in November 2004 by the Epochtimes has given the answer and led to a truly historical awakening of Chinese People.

In the past 60 plus years, the party distorted the Chinese people's sense of right and wrong. It taught them to view each other as enemies, and to struggle against each other. The party's ideology is so pervasive that people are even unaware of their inability to think independently. What's more, from a young age, Chinese people are taught that the party and the country are the same concept, so whenever someone criticizes the party, they feel that it's an attack on the nation of China and on themselves as Chinese.

If there is to be freedom and lasting peace in China, it will only come after the Chinese people take a principled stand and reject the culture of violence and deceit promoted by the Communist Party. This is beginning to happen already. In the last several years, tens of millions of Chinese people have renounced their membership in the Communist Party, Youth League, and Communist Young Pioneers. They are making the choice to live according to their own conscience—not the will of the party—and are refusing to participate in further violations of human rights. The process of renouncing the party (known in Chinese as “Tuidang”) is thus a deeply spiritual, personal, and moral process, and a matter of reconnecting with traditional Chinese values of human heartedness and compassion. To date, 129 million renunciation statements have been received from people taking this important step.

As more and more people’s consciences are freed from the CCP’s control, the broader social and political environment is changing. The CCP is losing the battle for the hearts and minds of the Chinese people, a process that will ultimately lead to the CCP’s disintegration. Today, Chinese people are becoming unafraid of suppressions and crackdowns by the CCP regime, and more and more people are taking a public stand to support Falun Gong and oppose the persecution.

I would like to conclude my testimony by thanking the leadership of Congressman Smith and Congressman Andrews, along with 106 members of Congress from 33 states, for their bipartisan Dear Colleague letter to Secretary Clinton, expressing serious concern over China’s forced organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience (particularly from Falun Gong detainees) and asking the Department of State to release all information about unethical organ harvesting in China, including what Wang Lijun might have shared with U.S. diplomats while seeking his asylum at U.S. Consulate General in Chengdu. To my knowledge, the Department of State has not yet responded to the Dear Colleague letter.

We believe that the United States as a world leader in protecting human rights has a moral obligation to speak out and help bring an end to this horrific crime against humanity. We also believe that by doing this, the US will protect itself from being further deceived and harmed by the CCP regime.

Thank you.