

BLOODY HARVEST

The killing of Falun Gong for their organs

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BLOODY HARVEST

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David Matas and David Kilgour



Seraphim Editions

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Chapter Eleven

Responses

The Chinese government has a pattern of response to evidence of human rights violations inflicted on Falun Gong practitioners. Its response to our work was part of this pattern.

The Government of China conducts a global campaign against the Falun Gong consisting of harassment, bullying, spying, disinformation, and pervasive and persistent anti-Falun Gong propaganda. The incitement to hatred which generates the persecution against the Falun Gong within China has become a primary message that embassies of China bring to the rest of the world. This global disinformation campaign against the Falun Gong has three basic prongs. One is getting out the Chinese government's own propaganda. The second is blocking in every way possible the flow of any contrary information. The third is initiatives from those trying to please China.

When it comes to propaganda against the Falun Gong, China's party-state does not make an effort to be accurate. The lies are shameless, blatant, patent, unabashed.

The Chinese are disciples of the big lie technique of former German Nazi leader Adolf Hitler. Hitler in his 1925 autobiography *Mein Kampf* defined the big lie propaganda technique as a lie so colossal that no one would believe that someone "could have the impudence to distort the truth so infamously".

The most obvious Chinese use of this technique is the constant labelling of the Falun Gong as an evil cult, though it has none of the characteristics of a cult. But the big lie is not just a single lie. It has many different facets.

The global Chinese campaign we have seen is unlike anything we see from Zimbabwe or North Korea or any of the other major human rights violators. As courtroom lawyers, we are used to having people

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disagree with us. But we have never seen anything like the disagreement with our report from the Government of China. The Chinese government's disagreement studiously avoids the plausible and gravitates towards the outrageous.

The Government of China Embassy in Canada issued its first response to our report the same day as our report, July 6, 2006 – and a second one dated July 26, 2006. The first statement dismissed our report out of hand. That meant that the Government of China engaged in no investigations to determine whether or not what the report contained was true. The second statement was almost three weeks after the release of our report, so Chinese officials had had time to delve into our report and produce contradictory information. But there was none.

The sole factual quarrel the Government of China had with the report had nothing to do with the substance of the report. It correctly noted that we placed two cities in the wrong provinces. We had indicated in an appendix that Wu Han is in Hunan, when it is in Hubei, and that Qin Huangdao is in Shandong, when it is in Hebei. These two errors – and they are the only ones anyone has been able to identify – do not justify questioning the analysis or conclusions of the report. Indeed, in two respects they strengthen it.

If this is all that anyone – including the Chinese government, with all its resources and inside knowledge – can produce to question the facts in our report, one can legitimately say that our report sits on a rock-solid foundation. Secondly, the practice of organ-harvesting from Falun Gong practitioners is even more widespread than we had originally reported, since, through our error, we had omitted reference to the existence of the practice in Hebei province. We had identified another site, Qianfoshan, in Shandong province, where the practice was occurring.

Both Government of China statements attribute initial reports of harvesting of organs in Sujiatun Hospital to Falun Gong practitioners. However, those initial reports about Sujiatun Hospital originated not from Falun Gong practitioners but from the ex-wife of a surgeon at Sujiatun Hospital. Neither the ex-wife nor her former husband is a Falun Gong practitioner.

Both Chinese government statements refer to a shifting Falun Gong narrative in consequence of a disproof of the original story about Sujiatun Hospital. Yet the ex-wife of the surgeon did not change or shift her story at any time.

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The second Chinese Government response refers to the statement of the ex-wife of the surgeon, which she made to us and which we reproduced in our report, that her husband removed the corneas of 2,000 Falun Gong prisoners in two years. The Government of China questions this figure on the basis that “he would have to finish three cornea transplantations within one day and every day without rest”, and then argues, “This is an absurd lie which no one with common sense would believe.”

The Government of China response mixes up transplanting and harvesting. The testimony of the ex-wife was organs harvested from two thousand persons, not two thousand transplants. She did not claim that her husband was engaged in transplant surgery. The husband was, according to her testimony, removing the corneas from the eyes of Falun Gong practitioners, not placing those corneas into the eyes of recipient patients.

Harvesting surgery is, obviously, quicker than the combination of harvesting and transplanting. Moreover, corneas, unlike other organs, are dead tissue. They do not need to be transplanted immediately once harvested. They can survive on the shelf for a considerable period. As explained in Chapter Nine, a cornea harvest can be completed in twenty minutes. For an operation that length of time, what the ex-wife said about the volume of corneas harvested in two years does not put her testimony in doubt.

The second Chinese government statement refers to the fact that journalists and diplomats visited Sujiatun Hospital after the initial reports had surfaced and found no evidence that the site was being used for organ-harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners. We would not have expected these visitors to find anything even if the initial reports of organ-harvesting from the ex-wife of the surgeon were true. An operation leaves no trace in an operating room after it is completed. Operating rooms are cleaned up, sanitized, made antiseptic after each and every operation.

The first Chinese government statement then says: “It is obvious that their purpose is to smear China’s image.” We have no wish to smear China’s image. Our sole concerns are respect for the truth and human dignity.

Both Chinese statements say:

“China has consistently abided by the relevant guiding principles of the World Health Organization endorsed in

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1991, prohibiting the sale of human organs and stipulating that donors' written consent must be obtained beforehand and donors are entitled to refuse the donation at last minute.”

This was belied by the facts. The China International Transplantation Network Assistance Centre Website, until April of 2006, set out a price list for transplants.¹³¹ As well, many individuals can attest to paying for organ transplants in China. The statement in both responses that China has consistently abided by the principle stipulating that donors' written consent must be obtained beforehand is also belied by the facts.

Both Chinese government statements say:

“China has issued a regulation on human organ transplants, explicitly banning the sale of organs and introducing a set of medical standards for organ transplants in an effort to guarantee medical safety and the health of patients. The regulation requires medical institution which is qualified for practising human organ transplant to register at provincial level health department. Unregistered medical institutions are forbidden to practice human organ transplant. If the government finds any registered institution violating the regulation, it will cancel the registration and punish the people responsible.”

This legislation came into force only a few days before our report was first released on July 1, 2006. It is not an answer to our findings about what happened before that date. Moreover, in China, there is a huge gap between enacting legislation and enforcing it.

Our first reply, issued long before the second Chinese government response, made this point. Yet the second Chinese government response just repeats word for word what was in their first response on this point.

The Government of China wrote in its first response: “It is very clear that Falun Gong's rumour has ulterior political motives.” None of our findings are based on rumour. Every finding we make is sourced and independently verifiable.

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This claim of rumour is a constant Chinese government refrain. David Matas went to Israel to speak on May 30, 2007 at a symposium on organ transplants at Beilinson Hospital near Tel Aviv. The Chinese embassy in Israel circulated a statement at the symposium that the report we wrote on organ-harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners contains:

“... verbal evidence without sources, unverifiable witnesses and huge amount of unconvincingly conclusive remarks based on words like ‘probably’, ‘possibly’, ‘maybe’ and ‘it is said’, etc. All these only call into question the truth of the report.”

Nevertheless, all one has to do to is to look at our work to see that every statement we make in it is independently verifiable. There is no verbal evidence without sources. Where we rely on witnesses we identify them and quote what they say.

We have searched our manuscript for these words. At no place do we do link the words “probably”, “possibly”, “maybe” or the phrase “it is said” to our conclusions. Nor had we done so in the two versions of our report, which are word-searchable on the Internet.

As well, what could the politics of the Falun Gong possibly be? They are not a political party or movement with a political agenda. The Chinese Government describes their political agenda, in its second response, as being “against everything from China” – a bizarre charge, but all too typical of the hyperbole into which the Government launches when discussing this group.

The Falun Gong, to be sure, oppose human rights violations in China. But China is different from the Communist Party of China. And China is more than just human rights violations.

Human rights are not political. They are universal. The notion of politics suggests a legitimate debate between opposing points of view. But there is no legitimate debate between respect for human rights and violations of human rights. Violations of human rights are always wrong. Respect for human rights is always right.

The two Government of China responses attack us as not independent, and Falun Gong as an evil cult. Yet our work has to be judged on its merits. Attacking us is not an appropriate response.

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The second Government of China response is primarily an elaboration on the “evil cult” attack on Falun Gong. The second response has eight paragraphs. Only three deal with organ-harvesting. One talks about Canada-Chinese relations. Four paragraphs, the bulk of the response, are a venomous attack on Falun Gong, replete with false, slanderous allegations. It is this sort of slander which, in China, de-personalizes and dehumanizes the Falun Gong and makes possible the violation of their basic human rights. Indeed, the fact that the Government of China would make a hate-filled attack on Falun Gong the focus of its response to our report reinforces the analysis of the report.

Some people, for reasons of political or diplomatic or economic convenience, will swallow anything said by the Communist Party of China, true or not. For them, what is relevant is only that it is said by the Communist Party of China. Its truth is a matter of indifference. However, we have met others for whom the truth matters, who are not associated in any way with the Communist Party of China, but still assert, without having read our work, that it is based on rumour. The only explanation is that these dupes have heard or read Chinese Communist propaganda about our work and have been misled by the big lie.

When the Chinese government puts words in quotation marks and asserts that they come from our work, there is a tendency to assume that these quotes are real. Many people cannot believe that someone could have the nerve to distort the truth so grossly.

The most simple and obvious vehicle for Chinese propaganda is Chinese embassy websites. Go to any Chinese embassy website anywhere in the world and you will find posted there an attack on the Falun Gong.

The Embassy of China in Canada website home page has three links connecting the reader to anti-Falun Gong propaganda.¹³² One is entitled “Cult Falun Gong”. The second is “Memorandum on Falun Gong”. The title of the third is “Response to the so-called Revised Report on China’s Organ Harvesting”. No other topic merits more than one link. Tibet has only one link. So does Taiwan.

Politicians or civil servants who meet with Falun Gong, as well as media who interview them, are often the recipients of spammed anti-Falun Gong propaganda. A lead spammer is Charles Liu, who also uses the name Bobby Fletcher. He is a down-the-line Chinese government apologist, generally parroting positions of the Government of China, including denial of the existence of the Tiananmen Square massacre of

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1989. But his main efforts have been directed to discrediting the Falun Gong, through directed e-mails, discussion groups, letters to the editor and Internet blogs. The *Western Standard* magazine reported:

“Liu’s actions mirror disinformation campaigns waged by the Chinese government in the past. Typically, these include the deliberate spreading of false or misleading facts to sow confusion or doubt among the conflicting accounts.”¹³³

The Government of China publishes, prints and distributes Chinese and local language newspapers in foreign countries which are nothing more than anti-Falun Gong propaganda tracts. In Canada, an example is *La Presse Chinoise*. It is a small Montreal newspaper with a usual print run of 6,000 copies. In August 2006 it published an issue thirty-two pages long, printed 100,000 copies and distributed them across Canada. This issue had no advertisements. It was distributed for free. And it contained no news whatsoever, only an attack on the Falun Gong. The issue did not say it was financed by the Government of China. But according to an investigative report by Mark Morgan of *La Grande Époque*, that was the reality.¹³⁴

The Embassy of China in whatever national capital it is located will write letters to editors of local newspapers, setting out Chinese propaganda and disinformation. As well, embassies will send letters or e-mails to friendly reporters, filled with the usual Communist bumph. Letters are often published in the papers to which they are addressed, which gives free, widespread, local language distribution to this propaganda. Stories are written that the Government of China objects to this or that, as if there were justification or grounding to the objection. For instance, the Chinese embassy in Canada sent off in January 2007 an e-mail to the *Ottawa Citizen* protesting the NTD TV Chinese New Year dance spectacular then just performed in Ottawa. The *Ottawa Citizen*, in all seriousness, published a story setting out the Chinese embassy objections.¹³⁵

Chinese government goes from hi-tech to lo-tech in its abuse of Falun Gong, from digital media to simple flyers handed out at meetings. Embassy and consular officials wander around to public gatherings handing out anti-Falun Gong literature.

One such set of flyers, handed out by officials of the Calgary consulate led to a hate crimes investigation. The Chinese officials placed

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anti-Falun Gong hate literature outside a conference room of the American Family Foundation Conference at the University of Alberta in Edmonton in June 2004. The Edmonton Police recommended hate crimes prosecution of Chinese consular officials Cao, Jianye and Yeh, Chi Yao for this distribution.¹³⁶

There is a similar story with the electronic media. CCTV-4, a Chinese government TV satellite broadcaster, sought permission to broadcast into Canada on a digital basis. On December 22, 2006 the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission concluded that this broadcaster had a history of abusive comment, incitement to hatred and contempt, incitement to violence and threats to physical security against the Falun Gong.¹³⁷ The CRTC approved the application, but with a warning that unless CCTV-4 is free of abusive comment it would be removed from the list of eligible satellite services authorized for digital distribution in Canada.¹³⁸

One form of harassment of Falun Gong practitioners is incessant phone calls with taped messages. The messages harangue the listeners in Chinese and English in three-minute recorded statements demonizing the Falun Gong. The tapes include Chinese patriotic songs.

Some practitioners have received as many as twenty-five calls a day. Calls have been made to homes, cellphones and workplaces. The calls fill up message machines. Calls made to cellphones pile up charges which are based on use. The high frequency of the phone calls prompts phone owners to turn off their cellphones.

Complaints to phone companies or the police lead nowhere. The calls have been traced to mainland China. Foreign police and phone companies can do nothing about such calls.

Write to the Chinese embassy to ask them to stop the persecution of the Falun Gong and it will send you by return mail a barrage of anti-Falun Gong propaganda. The embassy sends out booklets and video compact disks filled with disinformation about the Falun Gong. The embassy sends out this same disinformation unsolicited to government officials, members of legislatures and parliaments, and even civic officials who raise concerns or who might possibly raise concerns about the treatment of the Falun Gong.

If anyone wants a guided tour and a heavy dose of anti-Falun Gong propaganda, China is more than happy to oblige, all expenses paid. Academics are usually self-respecting enough to avoid these tours. They are prepared to go so far as to keep silent about the Falun Gong in order to get access to China.

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Some journalists are different. They take the trips and figure that they are maintaining journalistic ethics as long as they report the reality of Falun Gong persecution in the same articles as the disinformation the Chinese propaganda machine has fed them.

Though the Government of China prefers working through intermediaries it can bully or pay, when all else fails it will send a representative to repeat in person anti-Falun Gong slander. That is what happened at the organ transplant forum at which David Matas spoke in May 2007 at Beilinson Hospital in Israel.

Once the Chinese embassy found out that the event was going ahead with Matas on the speakers' list, they sent down a spokesman to reply to his intervention. They distributed on every chair before the symposium a paper titled "Position Paper of Chinese Government on Allegations of So Called organ harvest". It contained the usual nonsense.

The Chinese remarks were mostly not about our report; they were, rather, a slanderous attack on the Falun Gong, and had nothing at all to do with organ-harvesting. These remarks were incitement to hatred, akin to Holocaust denial, manifesting the very bigotry which led to the violation that they were denying.

The Government of China uses its embassies and consulates to mount public displays against the Falun Gong. For instance, the Chinese consulate in Toronto, Canada has displayed an array of anti-Falun Gong posters along the wall where people wait in line to apply for visas. The title of the exhibition is "Combat Cults and Protect Human Rights". The posters state "Falun Gong is a Scourge".

For blocking to be effective, China needs to know not only what is being said, but also what is being planned. Accordingly China engages in spying – or what is euphemistically called intelligence-gathering – on the Falun Gong. Defectors tell us that this intelligence-gathering is the primary task of Chinese embassies around the world. Falun Gong practitioners everywhere are constantly being monitored and spied on by the Government of China. This is an invasion of privacy of Falun Gong practitioners. But the consequences are a good deal worse than that.

Defectors Chen Yonglin and Hao Fenguin made public statements about the Chinese Falun Gong intelligence-gathering and spy network. Chen defected from the Chinese consulate in Sydney, Australia in May 2005. Hao worked for the 610 Office in Tianjin City, China. (As indicated in Chapter Two, the 610 Office is the bureaucracy in China

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designated with responsibility for repression of the Falun Gong.) Hao visited Australia in February 2005 and sought asylum once there.

Chen said that there were as many as 1,000 Chinese government spies in Australia. Hao confirmed Chen's statement.¹³⁹

The Falun Gong has on occasion been spied on by persons who practise Falun Gong in order to accumulate information about other Falun Gong practitioners, information which is then communicated to the Government of China. A few of these people have been unequivocally identified. For a number of others, there is suspicion but no certainty.

Falun Gong practitioners find that their e-mail accounts are hacked. It is possible for customers to find out from their Internet service providers the locations from which the e-mail accounts have been accessed. Falun Gong practitioners who have made inquiries discover that their e-mail accounts are being accessed from places they have never been.

In order for an e-mail account to be accessed, the person accessing the account would need the password for that account. The passwords of those Falun Gong practitioners are presumably identified by prior hacking efforts or by double agency. If one Falun Gong practitioner uses the computer of a second practitioner to access the e-mail account of the first practitioner and the second practitioner (the one whose computer is used) is an agent of the Government of China, then Chinese officials have access to the password of the first practitioner.

One use to which the Chinese government puts information gathered through its spying is to send computer viruses to Falun Gong practitioners and those in contact with them electronically. The virus sender assumes the identity of one person on a listserv so that the message with the virus appears to be coming from someone known to the listserv.

In the course of arranging a visit David Matas made in 2007 to Australia to speak at NGO events paralleling the APEC summit, he, along with the rest of a listserv he was on, received such a virus. A technical expert traced back the virus to mainland China.

Fortunately, the virus did not infect his computer because of the systems he uses. Others were not so lucky. The receipt of viruses by Falun Gong practitioners traced to mainland China is commonplace.

Websites hosting information about the Falun Gong are subject to cyber-attacks from China. For instance, the website Bestnet, which hosted a mirror site of a Falun Gong site, reported on July 30, 1999 a

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denial-of-service attack which “appears to be coming from sources inside China”.¹⁴⁰ Webmaster John Walker wrote: “The Government of China may use intimidation to rule inside its own borders but I’ll be damned if I will let them get away with it here.”

A denial-of-service attack is a flooding of requests with incomplete information which eventually causes the target machine to crash. Internet sleuths were able to trace the Internet protocol address. From that they were able to find the name and street address of the owner of that IP address. Though the name of the owner was innocuous, the street address was the headquarters of the Government of China Ministry of Public Security.¹⁴¹

The Government of China does not just attempt to disrupt live events. It wades into the media as well, attempting to use its diplomatic weight to shut up or distort local media information about the persecution of the Falun Gong. Again, here is an example from Canada. The CBC announced that it was broadcasting in November 2007 a TV documentary by Peter Rowe on the persecution of the Falun Gong in China which featured our report. The Government of China phoned up the CBC (something the CBC admitted) and the CBC pulled the show. It was replaced with an old documentary on Pakistan because, so the CBC spokesman said, recent turmoil in Pakistan made the rebroadcast timely.

But, as it turned out, timeliness was not the concern. The CBC went back to the producer Peter Rowe and asked for changes. He initially balked and then made some. But the changes he made were not enough. After the producer refused to co-operate any further, the CBC made more changes on its own and then broadcast its concocted product.

The CBC version of the documentary was broadcast, on November 20. Since the original version had already been aired, without notice, in the middle of the night in Montreal a few days earlier, and became available on YouTube, it was possible to compare the two.

The parts deleted from the original version were items which constituted hard evidence to substantiate the findings we had made of the mass killings of Falun Gong. One item deleted was the playing of tapes of telephone admissions from hospitals in China acknowledging that they were selling Falun Gong organs. Chinese government denials remained.

The additions were typical Chinese propaganda. The CBC on its own, for instance, added this screen to the documentary: “Amnesty

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International does not have conclusive evidence to back up the allegation the Falun Gong are killed for their organs.”

Yet, silence is not evidence of anything. Amnesty International silence on a human rights violation is not proof and not even evidence that a violation is not occurring. The organization does not claim to be a verifier or source or encyclopaedia of all human rights violations.

The CBC, before the commercial which led into the documentary, flashed onscreen, with footage of Falun Gong practitioners, a bit of Chinese propaganda straight up: “China regards Falun Gong as a cult.” For people who know nothing about the Falun Gong that sort of introduction was bound to mislead.

Not to be outdone by the CBC, Radio-Canada went one further in a show which aired in October 2008. Crescent Chau had published, through *La Presse Chinoise*, standard Communist Party propaganda against Li Hongzhi and the Falun Gong – material which was, according to the Quebec Court of Appeal, defamatory. The libels led Falun Gong practitioners to protest in front of the offices of *La Presse Chinoise*.

Radio-Canada reported these protests in a way that would have warmed the heart of the most hardened Chinese government bureaucrat. Falun Gong was depicted as an organization which is “highly structured” with “no shortage of money”, composed of different organs working in lockstep. This mythical organization was then blamed for tension in Montreal’s Chinatown – because some practitioners had the nerve to protest their being libelled by Crescent Chau and *La Presse Chinoise*. Radio-Canada preyed on the ignorance of the Canadian public to propagate the Communist Party line, blaming the victims for protesting their victimization, adding to the propaganda by describing the Falun Gong as “little known and bothersome”, and “whose presence creates malaise”.

Yet Falun Gong is not an organization. Nor does it have any money. Indeed, the very notion of a set of exercises having money is a form of Orwellian newspeak only a communist party and its fellow travellers could concoct. If other innocents with no connection to China who engaged in a common harmless practice were to protest outside a metro daily because the daily reported that, when they were not practising, they were engaged in bestiality or vampirism – some of the milder charges Crescent Chau and *La Presse Chinoise* levied against Falun Gong practitioners – it is unlikely Radio-Canada would report the protests as some sort of conspiracy.

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The Epoch Times is a globally-distributed newspaper which is general in nature but which has a focus on Chinese human rights violations. Many Falun Gong practitioners are involved in the paper. Businesses which advertise in *The Epoch Times* report anonymous threatening telephone calls, as well as calls from the local Chinese consulate urging them not to advertise in the paper. So do businesses which serve as distribution depots for the newspaper, places where the newspaper can be picked up by customers.

The telephone calls slander the Falun Gong and warn the advertisers and distributors of a loss of business if they persist. For instance, a travel agent in England was warned that, if his agency continued to advertise in *The Epoch Times*, his agency would no longer be able to book flights on Chinese airlines. Though these callers did not identify themselves as Government of China representatives, only representatives of the Government of China would be in a position to utter such threats.

These threats have had an impact. *The Epoch Times* reported a drop-off in advertising and number of distribution points after the calls began. In England these calls were the subject of a complaint to the U.K. Foreign Office. However, the Foreign Office refused to take any action, claiming that there was insufficient proof that the calls were made.

Because of limited bandwidth, radio and TV broadcasters have needed regulatory permission to broadcast. The Government of China has lobbied foreign broadcast regulators, asking them to use their powers to keep off the air any broadcaster who would provide information about the persecution of the Falun Gong.

New Tang Dynasty TV applied in February 2005 to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) for approval to broadcast in Canada. NTD TV is a global satellite TV network which began in 2002. It broadcasts in Chinese, as well as other languages. Its programming is more than 90% Mandarin. It is independent of the Government of China and reports on Chinese human rights abuses. Because of that, it has aroused the enmity of the Government of China.

Zhang Jiyuan, the defecting wife of a Chinese diplomat, smuggled out of the Chinese embassy in Canada a document showing an embassy plan "to knock down NTD TV's attempt to enter the cable television network". Huikang Huang, deputy head of the Chinese embassy, suggested rallying Chinese Canadians and Chinese visa students to write to the CRTC to oppose the NTD TV application.¹⁴² Subsequently the

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public record shows that the CRTC did in fact receive nearly identical letters opposing the application from the National Congress of Chinese Canadians, the Federation of Ottawa Carleton Chinese Organizations and the Chinese Student Association of the University of Ottawa.¹⁴³ The NTD TV application to the CRTC, nonetheless, succeeded.¹⁴⁴

The Chinese government establishes organizations abroad which are nominally independent from the government but in fact act as its agents. Many universities have Chinese student organizations which are tightly connected to the local Chinese embassy or consulate. The Chinese government uses threats of exit visa denials and intimidation of the family back home to get students abroad to spy on their classmates and intimidate the Falun Gong.

David Matas was witness to the activities of these groups at Columbia and Princeton universities when he spoke there in April 2007. A group came to the venue at Columbia with banners and red flags, which security personnel required them to leave outside. They nonetheless held up placards which said in Chinese and English that Falun Gong is an evil cult. David Matas had obtained the e-mail which they had used to bring their colleagues out, and for his talk proceeded to read through it and react to it. Not liking what they were hearing, the group left his talk and the room en masse in midstream. In Princeton, there was a similar gang protest, though this time the Chinese government agents were allowed to bring in posters which they held up at the back of the room.

The Chinese government gives grants for universities to establish Confucius Institutes. These institutes are supposedly for Chinese studies. But once established, they become spy outlets for the Chinese government and leverage on the university to attempt to ban Falun Gong activity.

The use to which a Confucius Institute is put depends on the local embassy or consulate which grants the funds. We have been to some universities which report that the ethnic Chinese staff of these institutes, once established, become targets of Chinese government officials seeking out information about Falun Gong activity on campus.

Tel Aviv University removed in 2008 an exhibit on Falun Gong meditation. Professor Yoav Ariel, a lecturer in the East Asian Studies Department, confirmed that he had ordered the exhibit removed because of a request by the Chinese embassy. Ariel said that the university must take into consideration its ties with Chinese universities, with which it conducts student exchanges. The university has had a

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Confucius Institute, endowed by the Government of China, since 2007.¹⁴⁵

Another use the Government of China makes of intelligence-gathered information is to attempt to thwart every public event which would disclose the persecution of the Falun Gong. The Government of China leans on hosts, asking them to cancel such events. One particularly sorry example of this is the global Chinese government effort to undermine the touring dance spectacular sponsored by NTD TV. For instance, the Chinese embassy in Sweden called on city officials in Stockholm and Linköping to cancel the venues for the Chinese dance spectaculars scheduled there for January 2008 because the performers had links to the Falun Gong.¹⁴⁶

A similar effort was successful in Seoul and Pusan, South Korea. In 2007, two venues in Seoul, the National Theatre of Korea and the Convention and Exhibition Centre, terminated their contracts with the dance company as the result of pressure from the Chinese embassy.¹⁴⁷ (A successful lawsuit against the Convention and Exhibition Centre meant that the event was eventually performed at a later date.) In 2008, the Korean Broadcasting Corporation theatre in Pusan behaved in a similar fashion, backing out of a contract for a dance performance after the Government of China protested.¹⁴⁸

Where an event is going ahead despite Chinese efforts to cancel it, the Government of China as a second recourse tries to shape the event. It asks for changes to, or deletions of, elements of the program which its officials claim are offensive to China.

Here is an example. We have already mentioned the organ transplant forum in May 2007 at Beilinson Hospital, at which David Matas was asked to speak. When Matas arrived in Israel on the Sunday before that event, he was told that the Chinese embassy had asked Israeli Foreign Affairs to cancel the event. The Foreign Affairs Assistant Deputy Minister Avi Nir and the Health Assistant Deputy Minister Boz Lev put the request to the Beilinson Hospital, which refused. Foreign Affairs and Health then asked the hospital to withdraw the invitation to him to speak even if the program continued. The hospital refused that too. Foreign Affairs and Health then asked the hospital to withdraw the invitation to Roy Bar Ilan, a Falun Gong practitioner, to be part of the closing panel. This the hospital did, even though the program, as advertised even on the day of the event, included his name.

The event was a marathon, going from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. with a dozen speakers. For the very last portion of the symposium, there was a panel of all the previous speakers plus a few new ones. The new ones

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made short statements and then all speakers took questions from the floor.

David Matas took advantage of this question period to raise his own question. He prefaced the question by saying that it was not about China but about Israel, since there were many Falun Gong practitioners in Israel, including several in the room. He asked Roy Bar Ilan, who was in the audience and who, he noted, was supposed to be on the panel, to answer the charges the Chinese embassy official had made against the Falun Gong.

The chair, in response to that question, without giving Roy a chance to answer it, said, abruptly and unceremoniously, that the symposium was over. And it was. No thanks were given. There was no applause for the speakers. Everyone simply dispersed.

One phenomenon we have both experienced is diplomatic Chinese efforts to prevent parliamentarians and government officials from meeting with us. On a trip to Australia, in August 2006, David Kilgour spoke on our report at a forum in Melbourne hosted by Liberal Party member Victor Perton. The Melbourne Chinese consulate had sent a letter to all members of the Legislative Assembly asking them not to attend the forum.

Similarly, when David Matas was in Finland in September 2006 meeting with the Finnish parliamentary human rights committee, its chair informed him that the Chinese embassy had called, urging them not to meet with him. The chair replied that embassy officials were welcome to meet separately with the committee, but that the committee would nonetheless meet with him.

Where events go ahead despite the best Chinese efforts to stop them, the Government of China tries to discourage people from attending them. Letters are sent from embassies and consulates to notables and dignitaries, slandering the events and the Falun Gong and urging non-attendance. For instance, a letter from the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China to New York Assemblyman Michael Benjamin dated December 11, 2007 urged him not to support in any form the dance spectacular hosted by NTD TV in New York in 2008, suggesting that to do so would impair U.S.-China relations. Assemblyman Benjamin indicated he would attend the event regardless, and made the letter public.

The general approach of Chinese officials to foreign officials and political leaders on the subject of the Falun Gong is a mix of incitement to hatred and bullying. For instance, in a letter in March 2003 to

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Canadian Member of Parliament Jim Peterson, the Chinese chargé d'affaires in Canada “advised the Canadian government of the sensitivity of the issue [of the Falun Gong] in the overall bilateral relations [between Canada and China]”.¹⁴⁹ In other words, sympathy to the plight of the Falun Gong would impact adversely on Canadian-Chinese bilateral relations.

The Chinese consulate in Toronto wrote city councillors in 2004 urging them to oppose a motion for the proclamation of a Falun Gong week. The letters said: “If passed, the motion will have a very negative effect on our future beneficial exchanges and co-operation.” Among the “beneficial exchanges and co-operation” Toronto City Councillor Michael Walker heard mentioned as threatened were the sale to China of a Canadian-made nuclear reactor (the CANDU), the construction by the Canadian company Bombardier of a rail link to Tibet, and a two-panda loan to the Metro Toronto Zoo.¹⁵⁰

At Columbia University, an organization titled the Columbia University Chinese Students and Scholars Association had posted a threat on its website in April 2007 when David Matas was speaking there on our report. The threat was this: “Anyone who offends China will be executed no matter how far away they are.”

When David Matas spoke at the forum in Broadbeach, Gold Coast, Australia August 4, 2008, the forum was connected through the Internet to participants in China, over 150 in total. The local as well as the Internet participants asked questions after the formal presentation was over. One of the Internet participants was a Chinese government police official. This is the question, in translation, he asked David Matas:

“Are you afraid of death? You are brutally interfering in our Party’s internal policies. Are you afraid of our revenge? Our revenge against you, we’ll take revenge against you, are you not afraid of that?”

Incitement to discrimination leads to discrimination. While hate propaganda is most effective in a closed society like China, it has its insidious effect even in open societies.

Active discrimination becomes a way of getting the message out. If Falun Gong practitioners are denied access to service and benefits,

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even abroad, simply because they are practitioners, it becomes a way of discouraging the practice.

For example, the Ottawa Chinese Seniors Association terminated the membership of Daiming Huang because she practises Falun Gong. As well, the Association confronted her about her beliefs, organized petitions against her practices, and subjected her to demeaning comments about her beliefs. The Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario in January 2006 ruled that this was discrimination, exposing the woman to contempt and loss of standing, and isolation within her community, and was an affront to her dignity. The Tribunal ordered the Association to pay Mrs. Huang \$18,000.00 as well as to allow Falun Gong practitioners to become members of the Association.¹⁵¹

The opportunities for the Government of China on its own to inflict discrimination abroad on Falun Gong practitioners are few. Mostly the Government of China has to act through local agents. However, there are some matters which, by the very nature of sovereignty, remain within their control abroad.

Chinese nationals abroad whom the Chinese government has identified as Falun Gong practitioners will be denied passport renewal unless they renounce in writing their belief in Falun Gong. We have visited dozens of countries in order to promote the recommendations of our report. In the course of those visits, we met many Falun Gong practitioners in different countries who have been denied passport renewal. They have been told by their embassies that the reason is that they are Falun Gong.

For Chinese nationals abroad, the absence of a passport causes difficulties with the host countries. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality."¹⁵² Passport renewal denial based on the beliefs of the passport holder violates this right.

China uses its visa entry and exit system for anti-Falun Gong propaganda purposes. Known Falun Gong practitioners are not allowed to leave China. And no one is allowed entry who is known to be Falun Gong or sympathetic to Falun Gong, especially where the purpose is as benign as even simply meeting other Falun Gong practitioners in private. This is true even of Hong Kong. More than 70 Falun Gong practitioners from Taiwan were denied entry to Hong Kong in February 2003 to attend an experience-sharing conference. This denial is currently the subject of court proceedings.

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It would be going too far to say that the only China scholar who is reliable is a person who has never been to China. But there is a grain of truth in that assertion. Scholars who criticize the human rights record of the Government of China, particularly its treatment of the Falun Gong, are unlikely to get visas to enter China.

Another example is the Olympics. According to an Associated Press report of November 8, 2007, Li Zhanjun, director of the Beijing Olympics media centre, in reacting to news stories of a Bible ban during the Olympics, said texts and other items from major religious groups that are brought into China for personal use by athletes and visitors are permitted. Li also said religious services – Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu and Buddhist – would be available to athletes in the Olympic Village. However, he said, the policies do not apply to Falun Gong. Li added:

“We do not acknowledge Falun Gong because it is a cult. Falun Gong texts, Falun Gong activities in China are forbidden. Foreigners who come to China must respect and abide by the laws of China.”

Local laws are never a justification for violation of international standards. Though the Government of China says foreigners must respect local laws, that statement, like almost everything else China says about the Falun Gong, is misleading. It is China which must respect the international prohibition against discrimination on the basis of belief.

While journalists the Government of China has identified as sympathetic are given a royal tour, all expenses paid, journalists identified as likely to report on Chinese human rights violations are denied visas. An example is the visas granted reporters accompanying Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin on his visit to China in January 2005. Originally, Danielle Zhu and David Ren of NTD TV were granted visas for the trip. But then the visas were revoked. PEN Canada protested the revocations, but to no avail.¹⁵³

China insists that the people with whom it does business not have Falun Gong practitioners in their employ. It insists that anyone who deals with China in any way practise the discrimination China does. Just as Nazi Germany in the pre-war days refused to deal with anyone who was Jewish, no matter what their status abroad, today the Government of China refuses to deal with anyone, no matter what the

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connection of the person to the business or project or government with which they are dealing, who is a Falun Gong practitioner.

For instance, the Government of Canada funds projects in China through the Canadian International Development Agency. Canadian recipients of CIDA funding provided through contribution agreements which mandate the beneficiaries to do work in China are required by the Government of China not to allow any Canadian citizens who are Falun Gong practitioners to participate in the work funded by the contribution agreement.

Theft of copies of *The Epoch Times* is endemic. It is distributed free in bulk at boxes and commercial establishments for passersby to pick up. In many places, the newspapers disappear from their distribution points soon after they are dropped off. Distributors have caught culprits stealing the papers who acknowledge being paid to do it without saying who is paying them. Though complaints are laid with the police, the police will not prosecute, saying it is not a crime to steal what is free.

The problem reached such proportions in California that the legislature actually enacted a law to deal with it.¹⁵⁴ The legislation, passed in September 2006, creates an offence of taking more than 25 copies of a free newspaper if done to deprive others of the opportunity to read the newspaper. The person who introduced the bill, Assembly Minority Leader George Plescia, Republican, La Jolla, acknowledged that the bill was a response to, amongst other incidents, the disappearance of thousands of copies of *The Epoch Times* in the San Gabriel Valley.¹⁵⁵

The most grotesque form of blocking of protest against Chinese human rights violations is the beating of protesters. These beatings are not as systematic as the other forms of blockage. But they occur with regularity.

An example is Argentina, where a group of protesters were beaten in December 2005. At the time Luo Gan, head of the 610 Office, was visiting Buenos Aires. During his visit, the Falun Dafa Association filed a criminal lawsuit against him, relying on his presence as the basis for court jurisdiction. The next day Falun Gong practitioners protesting at Congress Square in Buenos Aires were assaulted by a group which, according to Amnesty International, were “connected to officials of the Chinese government”. The practitioners were beaten. Their banners and photo displays were stolen.

The police were present at the beatings but did nothing to stop the attackers. A policeman told one Falun Gong practitioner that the

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police had orders not to interfere with the attack. The Amnesty International director for Argentina, Pablo Marsal, said: “Officials of another country are violating our Argentine sovereignty in our country.”¹⁵⁶