



Falun Gong in the USA

Vol. 1. No.6 August - September, 2003

UN Working Group Condemns China's Arbitrary Detention of Falun Gong Practitioners - Again

[United Nations, Geneva] During its recent 36th session, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention considered the cases of nine Falun Gong practitioners detained by the Chinese government, and concluded that the detention is "in contravention of Article 18 and 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and falls within the category II of the categories applicable to the consideration of cases."

The Working Group further "requests the Government to take the necessary steps to remedy the situation of these persons and to bring it into conformity with the standards and principles set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

According to the Working Group's criteria, category II refers to the deprivation of liberty involving the exercise of such fundamental rights or freedoms as opinion, expression, association, belief, or religion.

This is the fourth opinion (Opinion No.7/2003) adopted by the Working Group in the past three years to condemn the Chinese government's detention of Falun Gong practitioners. The previous three opinions (Opinions No. 35/2000, No. 36/2000, and No. 5/2002) also concluded the Chinese government's detention of Falun Gong practitioners to be category II of arbitrary detention.

As its standard procedure, the Working Group first transmits a pending case to the concerned government for comments before adopting an opinion.

Unlike its comments on the three previous transmissions, the Chinese government's response avoided any mention of Falun Gong, but "used disruption of social order" as pretext for the detention.

The Working Group, however, noted in its opinion that the people in question "were detained in connection with the practice [of Falun Gong]," and that "its free exercise should be protected by Article 18 on freedom of belief and Article 19 on freedom of opinion and expression of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." (See page 6 U.N.)

58 Falun Gong Deaths from Torture and Abuse in China Reported in Three Months

1. Mr. Zhang Xuewen Force-Fed Boiling Water and Tortured to Death

Mr. Zhang Xuewen, a 56-year-old farmer from Heilongjiang Province, was abducted several times and abused by the local police for practicing Falun Gong. In July 2003 prison guards force-fed

him with boiling water, causing him to have blood in his stool for the next ten days. Emaciated and unable to stand on his own, he was transferred to Hulan Prison where he died on the morning of August 8, 2003. At the time of his death he had been on a hunger strike for 90 days to protest his illegal five-year sentence. (See page 3 Death Report)

Former Chinese President Sued for Genocide in Belgium

Six Falun Gong practitioners residing in Belgium have filed a criminal lawsuit charging Jiang Zemin, the former Chinese leader, with genocide, crimes against humanity, and state-directed torture. Two of Jiang's senior aides are also named as defendants.

After handing the suit to federal prosecutors on August 20th, plaintiffs and their lawyer, Mr. Georges-Henri Beauthier, held a press conference inside the Brussels Justice Palace. In their press statement, the plain-

tiffs stated that "the real terror of Jiang's genocidal policy towards Falun Gong is not found merely in the number of dead or the number of imprisoned. What Jiang unleashed in July 1999 was a horrific form of genocide that not only seeks to 'physically destroy' 70-100 million people because they believe in 'Truthfulness, Compassion, and Tolerance,' but has sought to destroy that belief itself." (See page 4 Belgian Lawsuit)



Human Rights lawyer Mr. Georges-Henri Beauthier held a press conference inside the Brussels Justice Palace after filing the suit.

Nationwide Effort to Rescue Dr. Charles Li

Americans across the country have expressed concern over the conviction, beating, brainwashing and forced feeding of U.S. citizen Dr. Charles Li in a Chinese prison. Chinese authorities arrested Dr. Li on January 22, 2003, upon his arrival in Guangzhou, China, and sentenced him to three years in prison for intending to reveal the PRC's bloody persecution of Falun Gong by breaking through the Communist Party's tight control of the media. Since then, Dr. Li has been tortured and brainwashed by the Chinese authorities. (See page 5 Rescue Dr. Charles Li)



Detroit's TV station interviews Charles's fiancée, Yeong-Ching Foo, at the labor day parade .

Inside

**1: UN, Rescue Charles Li
2 :Around the Nation
3: Reports from China
4: News Digest - Lawsuits**

**5: Rescue Story, Chen Gang
6: China Revealed
7: Personal Story
8: Pictorial History - The April 25th Appeal**



Falun Gong Parade in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Milwaukee South Shore Parade

On July 12, 2003, Falun Gong practitioners of Wisconsin participated in the Milwaukee South Shore Frolic Parade, and won the "Best Appearance" award for its representation of rich Chinese culture. The Falun Dafa float was covered in purple and decorated with lotus flowers. Three practitioners demonstrated the Falun Gong exercises accompanied by peaceful Falun Dafa music. Thousands of people watched the annual South Shore Frolic Parade along KK Street. Over one hundred groups participated.



Signature collection in Oakland, California.

Seventh International Dragon Boat Festival

The Seventh International Dragon Boat Festival, held on August 9 and 10 at Jack London Square in Oakland, California, drew a crowd of over 15,000 people. Falun Dafa practitioners set up a booth at the Square's entrance, prominently displaying information about the genocide lawsuit against Jiang Zemin and about Dr. Charles Li, the American who is illegally jailed in China. Practitioners also introduced Falun Gong to visitors and told them about the severe persecution going on in China.

Boston Chinese's Mid-Autumn Festival

On Sunday August 3, Falun Gong practitioners from the Boston area participated in the annual "Chinatown Mid-Autumn Celebration" organized by the Chinatown Chinese Commerce Association. This is the largest activity in Chinatown. The Mayor of Boston, a Senator's representative, two County Mayors, and many Chinese community leaders attended the opening ceremony and gave speeches.

Members of the Yale University Falun Gong Club performed two traditional dances onstage, the "Fan Dance" and "Colorful Flying Clouds." The Falun Gong booth was crowded with visitors who watched the exercise demonstrations and took many Falun Gong materials. Children with colorful "Falun Dafa" balloons could be seen almost everywhere in Chinatown.



A Falun Gong practitioner draws a visitor's portrait at a Chinatown celebration in Boston, Massachusetts.

Over 5,000 Practitioners from Around the World Attend a Conference in Washington DC



Practitioners from all over the world gathered at Washington D.C. in July.

In July, more than 5,000 Falun Gong practitioners from all over the world gathered for an annual conference in Washington, D.C. At this year's conference, the largest ever, practitioners came from

North America, South America, Europe, Asia, and Australia.

The four-day event started on Saturday, July 19, with an all-day concert near the Capitol Building, featuring music and dance. Many songs focused on human rights violations against Falun Gong in China. One highlight of the concert was "Word of Mouth," the New York-based band backed by David Bowie's drummer, Sterling Campbell, playing "Free Charles Li," a song about the real-life story of U.S. citizen Dr. Charles Li, who has been imprisoned in China since January 22, 2003. On Sunday, practitioners gathered at the DAR Constitution Hall for an all-day conference where individuals shared their experiences in the practice of Falun Dafa.

Starting at noon on July 21, more than three thousand Falun Gong practitioners marched from the Washington Monument down Pennsylvania Avenue toward the Capitol, holding banners and signs saying, "Stop the Trampling of Human Rights, Try Dictator Jiang Zemin in a Court of Law", "Stop Persecution," etc. Others wore white and carried photos of some of the practitioners who have died as a result of the persecution in China.

Practitioners also held a rally on Capitol Hill. More than 10 U.S. Senators and Representatives and over 20 non-governmental organizations participated in the rally.



On July 19, "Yellow Express" Performs in Washington D.C. to call for an End to the Persecution of Falun Gong Practitioners in China.

The Torture of Expecting Mothers

Pregnant Women, Unborn Children Tortured to Death

Mother and Unborn Child Died in Police Custody

On November 22, 2002, the Tianhe District "610 Office" from Guangzhou City in Guangdong Province abducted Ms. Luo Zhixiang and her husband from their home. Despite her three-month pregnancy, the police forcibly sent Ms. Luo to a brainwashing class in the Huangpu Drug Rehabilitation Center, where she suffered severe mental and physical torture. She was later sent to the Tianhe Hospital because of a critical condition resulting from the torture. On December 4, 2002, the authorities notified Ms. Luo's family that she "fell" to her death from the 3rd floor, sustaining a fatal head injury. However, there was no formal explanation or investigation of her death.

Ms. Luo's husband, Mr. Huang Guohua is still detained. Mr. Huang's parents are also Falun Gong practitioners, and have suffered repeated detentions and torture.

Woman in her Sixth Month Beaten with a Wooden Rod

On August 20, 2003, the police abducted and severely beat a Falun Gong practitioner with a wooden rod, even though she was six months pregnant.

Photographs taken of the woman (whose identity has been withheld for her protection) following her release clearly show that she was severely beaten on the stomach, back and legs.

According to the victim, the police kidnapped her and other Falun Gong practitioners from a friend's



Police beat Six-month pregnant woman with wooden stick because she practices Falun Gong.

home and detained them in a local police station. "They jumped on me, and beat me with a large wooden stick, while grabbing my hair and punching my face," said the woman. "My face and mouth were covered in bruises and blood, I had loose teeth, and my clothes were blood-stained." Prior to her release, the police extorted 3,000 Yuan in bail money from the woman's husband. (The average monthly income of a Chinese worker is about 500 Yuan.)

Pregnant Woman Tortured for Six Months - Baby Died.

In May 2003, the Tianjin police arrested a 35-year-old resident of Qi County in Tianjin City, despite the fact that she was three months pregnant. After nearly six months of torture, she was sent home just before the birth of her child. The baby was born dead. The police detained the practitioner again within 20 days.

Death Report

(Continued from page 1)

2. Bai Xiaojun Tortured to Death

Prof. Bai Xiaojun, 35, was a faculty member at Northeast Normal University in Jilin Province. Because he went to Beijing to appeal to the government to stop the persecution of Falun Gong, he was sentenced in July 2000 to one year of forced labor at the Weizigou Labor Camp in Jilin Province. Since he refused to renounce Falun Gong, his one-year term was extended for seven months, and he was sent to the Chaoyanggou Labor Camp. He developed scabies all over his body due to the inhumane, unsanitary labor camp conditions.

The guards ordered inmates to pour salt water on his wounds to cause intense pain. Continued torture damaged his body so severely that in June 2003, Prof. Bai started vomiting whatever he ate. He became so weak that he could not stand up, was bedridden, and on the verge of death. He was extremely emaciated, could not eat anything, and could not even drink water. On July 6, 2003, when it was clear that Prof. Bai was dying, he was sent to a hospital, where he was diagnosed with tuberculosis. At that time, he was so malnourished that his every bone could be seen. An X-ray showed that one of his lungs had collapsed. Prof. Bai passed away on July 18, 2003.

3. Ms. Deng Shiyang Dies from Extended Torture

On July 19, 2003, after ten months of severe torture, 42-year-old Ms. Deng Shiyang died in a Women's Prison in Jilin Province.

Ms. Deng was detained twice. The first time was in February 2000, when she was sentenced to one year of forced labor because she refused to write a statement renouncing Falun Gong.

Police tortured Ms. Deng by shocking her with electric batons, lashing her to a metal bed for extended periods, beating her with rubber tubes, violently force-feeding her, etc. She was not allowed to sleep at night, and was forced to do heavy labor during the day. After her one-year term was over, her term was arbitrarily extended for another 9 months and 8 days.



Ms. Deng Shiyang died in a Chinese prison camp after more than 10 months of severe torture.

Ms. Deng's second arrest was on September 15, 2002. The police suspected that she had made and distributed flyers exposing the human rights violations against Falun Gong practitioners in China. On February 18, 2003, the Intermediate People's Court in Jilin Province sentenced Ms. Deng to seven years in prison.

In early March 2003, she was transferred to the Women's Prison of Jilin Province, where she was severely tortured. Prison camp officials often incited 7-8 criminals to beat her. Ms. Deng remained true to Falun Gong's principles of expressing compassion for others, and continually encouraged her tormentors to live according to their conscience. However, as the beatings and torture escalated, Ms. Deng was barely able to remain conscious; she vomited continuously, and felt extreme pain throughout her body.

On the morning of July 17, 2003, two police officers went to Ms. Deng's home in Jilin City and attempted to extort 3,000 Yuan from her family as "bail for medical treatment." The next day, police officers at the prison called Ms. Deng's family asking them to take her home immediately. When her family arrived at Changchun City's No. 1 Hospital, Ms. Deng was already unconscious and near death.

Ms. Deng Shiyang died at 1:00 p.m. on July 19, 2003.

WOAT Letter to Belgium Prime Minister in Support of Lawsuit

Excerpts from the WOAT Letter

Dear Mr. Verhofstadt:

The World Organization Against Torture USA supports the continuation of the investigation under the Belgium Universal Jurisdiction law of criminal charges concerning Jiang Zemin, the former President of China and two of his senior colleagues, Luo Gan and Li Lanqing. These charges include genocide, crimes against humanity and crimes of torture. It is important to apply the principles of Universal Jurisdiction law to this case and to make certain that these individuals do not escape responsibility for these serious human rights abuses they have perpetrated.

The principle of universal jurisdiction mandates that all nations have responsibility to bring major human rights abusers to justice is firmly established in international and domestic law; including the Belgium Universal Jurisdiction law. Criminal accountability through the application of Universal Jurisdiction is mandated by the statutes of the international tribunals for Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone as well as

the statute of the International Criminal Court, and by the Genocide Convention. [...]

[...] We strongly believe in this case against Jiang Zemin and support your efforts to investigate this case and bring it to trial under your Universal Jurisdiction law. [...]

We are aware that recent amendments have been made to your Universal Jurisdiction law to limit its use to cases where there is a more direct connection to Belgium residents or actions. But we believe these amendments have been met in this case. Nor do we believe that Jiang's status as a former head of state prevents his prosecution. In the case of Belgium v. Congo, the International Court of Justice held that high officials may be immune from prosecution. There are reasons why this decision does not bar Jiang's prosecution. First, he is a former head of state not a current one; he can no longer claim immunity. Second, international law recognizes that certain actions like genocide and torture cannot qualify for immunity. [...]

Sincerely,
Morton Sklar,
Executive Director

Belgian Lawsuit

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Beauthier is a renowned international human rights lawyer known for his role in bringing charges against former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet. He also brought the first successful case under Belgium's human rights law against two individuals for their roles in the



Ms. Jane Dai, a plaintiff of the lawsuit, and her 3-year-old daughter. Ms. Dai's husband was tortured to death in China two years ago.

Rwandan genocide of 1994.

The Belgian lawsuit is the eleventh international lawsuit in eight countries to emerge

over the past two years charging high-ranking Chinese officials or government bodies for their roles in persecuting Falun Gong. Meanwhile, Falun Gong practitioners in several other countries are preparing similar lawsuits in their courts.

Criminal Lawsuits Filed in Europe Charging Head of Gestapo-like Agency in China with Crimes of Genocide and Torture

For the second time in three days, Luo Gan, Standing Committee member of the Chinese Communist Party's Politburo, has been served with a criminal lawsuit for his role in implementing a policy of genocide against Falun Gong practitioners. As vice-director of the notorious "610 Office" - described by the U.S. Congress as an agency charged with "overseeing the persecution of Falun Gong [practitioners] through organized brainwashing, torture, and murder" - Luo personally inspected political and judicial systems as well as labor camps around China to ensure compliance with former Chairman Jiang Zemin's order to "smear [Falun Gong practitioners] reputations, bankrupt them financially, and annihilate them physically."

Luo, on a tour of Europe, was charged with torture, genocide, and crimes against humanity on September 8th while in Iceland, and with



Mr. Li Shao, a Falun Dafa practitioner from the UK, and Mr. Ragnar Adalsteinsson, renowned Icelandic human rights lawyer representing the plaintiffs in a lawsuit filed against Luo Gan for crimes of torture and genocide.

genocide and torture on September 11th while visiting Finland. Both suits are based on the United Nations conventions that Iceland and Finland have ratified, giving these countries authority to hear cases alleging violation of their terms.

According to human rights lawyers, Luo does not qualify for diplomatic immunity. Mr. Ragnar Adalsteinsson, a renowned Icelandic human rights lawyer representing the plaintiffs in

the Icelandic suit, commented, "Even if Luo had been on an official visit to Iceland, he doesn't enjoy diplomatic status to merit protection from the Vienna Convention. Further, even if Luo did have diplomatic status, his crimes of genocide and torture would exempt him from any immunity internationally."

The Finnish lawsuit is the thirteenth international lawsuit in ten countries to emerge in the past two years against high-ranking Chinese officials or government bodies for their roles in persecuting Falun Gong. It is the fifth international lawsuit to target Luo and/or the "610 Office" he oversees.

Plaintiffs include Falun Gong practitioners from Australia, Canada, the United States, the UK, Italy, Holland, Denmark, and Ireland.

Ironically, media reports say that one of the reasons for Luo's trip to Europe is to learn and exchange ideas about judicial systems. Peter Jauhal, spokesman for Falun Dafa in London, commented that Luo's trip may indeed serve as a crash course in the rule of law. "If Luo really wants to see how justice is served in a democratic society," Mr. Jauhal concluded, "these lawsuits may give him first-hand experience. Legal action can be pursued even after Luo has left the countries where the complaints are filed. Let's hope that Iceland, Finland, and others can uphold their own standards, and in doing so help vindicate the rule of law as a check on the tyranny of the likes of Luo Gan."

Son Reunited with Family after Three Years of Torture and Persecution in China

A man from China visiting his parents in the USA should be a normal occurrence. However, for Mr. Gang Chen and his parents, their reunion on July 18, 2003, was an extraordinary event, because he had undergone three years of torture and persecution in a forced labor camp. Ms. Ningfang Chen, a renowned flutist in China, was overjoyed to see her son. "Before my son came, I kept wondering if my dream would come true.... I knew he had suffered a lot and I had learned from the Internet how vicious it was in the Tuanhe Forced Labor Camp in Beijing. However, what I learned was not very specific. I could not imagine that the persecution conducted there was as brutal and terrifying as what he experienced."

Three years ago, Gang Chen was arrested at his home, and sentenced to one year of forced labor because he practiced Falun Gong. At Tuanhe Forced Labor Camp



Gang Chen (fourth from left) and his family express their gratitude to the American People.

in Beijing, he suffered all kinds of inhuman torture. His term was extended several times. Gang Chen noted, "The regulations for forced labor education say that after a one year term expires, one's term can be prolonged for up to one more year. In order to get practitioners to give up

Falun Gong, the police dragged us each to a secret place, stripped off our clothes, poured water over our bodies, and used over a dozen electric batons to shock us. If any of us still refused to renounce Falun Gong, the police did the same thing to us the next day. This went on day after day, relentlessly."

Gang Chen said, "After I came to the United States, I felt that it is so free and fortunate here. Practitioners in China suffer so much. Their lives are extremely difficult. Support from abroad has encouraged practitioners in China a lot. International support has a great impact."

Rescue Dr. Charles Li

(Continued from page 1)

The "Coast to Coast Drive to Rescue Charles Li" car tour of the United States to bring Dr. Li's plight to the attention of the American people started on August 13, when Bay area practitioners held a press conference in front of San Francisco's City Hall. Said one practitioner, "In addition to Dr. Li, the Chinese government has jailed and tortured dozens of Americans' family members in forced labor camps, simply for practicing Falun Gong. The persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China is indeed grim. We will try to visit as many cities as possible, to collect signatures from the American people. We will take the signature petition to Washington."

After leaving San Francisco, the western van tour stopped in Corvallis, Salem, and Portland, Oregon and then went on to Olympia, Tacoma and Seattle, Washington; Boise, Idaho; Salt Lake City, Utah; and Jackson, Wyoming.

Three days after the western tour started, the Texas branch of the car tour began with a press conference in front of the Chinese consulate in Houston, followed by stops in Lake Charles and Lafayette, Louisiana; Biloxi, Meridian, and Jackson, Mississippi; Montgomery, Mobile, Dothan, and Birmingham, Alabama; Pensacola, Florida; Tennessee; Arkansas; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and Topeka and Wichita, Kansas.



A press conference in front of the Chinese consulate in Houston.



Amnesty International representative speaks in Indianapolis, Indiana.



Van Tour stops at Topeka, Kansas.

A third group traveled through the Carolinas, with stops including Spartanburg, Gaffney, and Greenville, North Carolina.

In each city many government officials, the press, local television, and hundreds of people expressed their concern for Dr. Li. In Topeka, the capital of Kansas, for example, the car tour held a press conference in front of the Capitol building, where WIBW13-TV interviewed them. Then in Wichita, Kansas, NBC news and a local newspaper came to their press conference. Besides the story of Dr. Charles Li, a U.S. practitioner also talked about going to Beijing to appeal for Falun Gong two years ago, and how he was arrested and repatriated to the U.S.

Practitioners gathered signatures for Dr. Charles Li at every stop. Over 10,000 signatures had been collected even before the western van tour left Oregon.

Signature Collection



Washington, D.C.



Biloxi, Mississippi.

Exercising Their Rights

Fayetteville Online, North Carolina:
By Allison Williams, 2003-09-03

Thai Ton was jailed for 16 hours when he tried to practice Falun Gong during a visit to China.

It gave him a taste of the persecution some Chinese are subjected to because of Falun Gong, which is meditating and exercising in public places. China outlawed Falun Gong in 1999

So when Ton had an opportunity to raise awareness of the problem in North Carolina, he took a day off work as a biologist at Research Triangle Park. Practitioners of Falun Gong are touring the country to talk about the practice and to gather support for Charles Li, a Chinese-American who is imprisoned in China. Supporters say he is being punished for practicing Falun Gong.

"You say you practice truthfulness, tolerance and compassion," Ton said, "but you must put it into action."

[...]

They did get to talk to the mayor in Rocky Mount, and earlier in the week, the mayor of Wilmington signed their petition.

"I think I have to tell the truth and raise awareness," said Kathy Li, a software engineer at Research Triangle Park. "Everybody has a right to practice. In China, people have no rights."

When Li Hongzhi made the movement public in 1992, the Chinese government supported Falun Gong. But within a few years, the number of practitioners outnumbered members of the Communist Party. China outlawed the practice in 1999 and thousands of people have been arrested, jailed, beaten and tortured since. Some of those arrested have been sent to labor camps without trials.

The Chinese government calls the group a cult. Falun Gong supporters deny that accusation. The group has no leaders, formal worship practices, dues or list of practitioners.

Ton says practitioners are trying to improve their character and body through exercise, meditation and by emphasizing three principles: truthfulness, tolerance and compassion.

"It is tragic that people are trying to be healthy and good," Ton said, "and they are tortured to death."

New York Beating Case

NY State Assemblyman James Tedisco Takes a Stand against Civil and Human Rights Violations

The Assistant Minority Leader Pro Tempore and Councilman of the New York State Assembly, James Tedisco, has taken action in



NY Assemblyman
James Tedisco.

support of the human and civil rights of Falun Gong practitioners who were surrounded and beaten by a group of Chinese, led by pro-communist leader Guan Jun Liang, president of the New York Confederation of Chinese Associations in New York's Chinatown.

In a letter dated August 13, 2003, to Sheldon Silver, the speaker of the New York Assembly, Mr. Tedisco wrote, "We cannot idly sit back and tacitly permit human rights violations and hate crimes to occur in our own back yard."

He added: "On behalf of the Falun Gong practitioners in my Assembly District and around the world, I am asking that the Assembly, through a Resolution, formally condemn anyone and any government officials who direct or commit an act of violence against Falun Gong. In addition, I would ask that you contact the Chinese consular officials in New York to express your outrage over the civil and human rights violations against people involved in peaceful demonstrations."

On August 8, 2003, Mr. Tedisco wrote to Chinese Consular Yao Chen, "This is not the first incident of violence against Falun Gong practitioners in the United States, and I am deeply concerned that this action may have been condoned by the Chinese government, or at least by certain government officials opposed to the practice of Falun Gong. As an elected state representative, I cannot idly sit by while human rights violations and crimes continue to occur in our own back yard." He furthermore requested that the Chinese consul take the necessary steps to ensure that Falun Gong practitioners be allowed to participate in legal activities without fear of violence.

United Nations

(Continued from page 1)

As most of the nine Falun Gong practitioners were detained in forced labor camps, the Working Group noted that this "does constitute a coercive measure designed to undermine the freedom of those persons to adopt beliefs of their choosing."

The Falun Gong Human Rights Working Group, a volunteer group specializing in documentation of the Chinese government's human rights violations against Falun Gong practitioners, submitted all nine cases to the United Nations.

Mayor Takes Stand on Human Rights

On August 16, 2003, a ceremony was held in the Echo Park branch of the Los Angeles Public Library to celebrate Los Angeles County "Falun Dafa Week." 15 California state senators and assembly members, 10 mayors of different cities, city council members, and Los Angeles County issued 40 proclamations for this celebration. West Hollywood Mayor Prang gave a speech, in which he told how the Chinese consulate had sent him hate materials containing



West Hollywood Mayor Prang (right) presents a proclamation to Falun Gong.

many fabrications that slandered Falun Gong. Prang quoted from a letter he sent in response to the consulate: "I reviewed all of your materials and I found your materials to be childish. They were not persuasive, and indeed the more information I get the more it persuades me that your government is wrong. Coming from a city, West Hollywood, where we put a high priority on acceptance, on tolerance, on civil rights, on human dignity, I think the Chinese government has fallen down on their obligation to their own people, and I invite you, the consul general, to join me in the city of West Hollywood and lobby your government in Beijing to change its policies towards Falun Gong."

The Path to Health and Harmony

I would like to share my experiences of practicing Falun Dafa for the last four and a half years as a testimony to the great healing effect of Falun Dafa.

After tumultuous years of sentimental tragedies, I was sick and without family or a job. One morning in September 1998, while walking around a lake, I saw a young man doing a meditation. I felt that I would like to practice that meditation with him. Something stronger than my own wish was pushing me to talk with him, but I couldn't because I felt respect for what he was doing and didn't want to interrupt him. The next day, the same thing happened. On the third day, I couldn't hold my strong desire any longer; and I decided to interrupt his exercise practice. I introduced myself to him. After a short, exciting conversation, I asked him if there were books describing his exercises. Thirty minutes later, he was at my home with a set of books: *China Falun Gong*, *Zhuan Falun*, and one exercise tape. Since that day, thanks to Falun Dafa's wonderful teachings of cultivation - Truthfulness, Benevolence, and Forbearance - my life has changed a great deal.

In 1958, I had an accident. I fell to the ground from gymnastic rings, and my vertebral column was twisted. My head was bent forward toward my chest. Of course, my physical flexibility and range of motion became limited.



Augusto teaching Falun Gong exercises at a practice site.

Because of this back condition, I could not sit with my legs crossed in the sitting meditation for even three minutes. I had to hold my legs with my hands to avoid falling on my side or on my back. It was very painful. At the end of the first month, however, I was able to increase my practice time to 15 minutes, even though the pain was still severe.

One day while meditating with fellow practitioners, I heard loud cracking sounds coming from my vertebrae. One by one, they were stretched and straightened. It was a moment of tremendous bliss. The whole experience only lasted about five seconds, but the feeling of relief was indescribable. Although I cannot yet completely cross my legs during the meditation, my knees are now closer to the ground.

Augusto Andrade, 65, is a retired mechanical designer living in Sanford, North Carolina. During a gymnastic exercise in 1958 he permanently twisted his spinal column. Two months after he started practicing Falun Dafa, his spinal column became straight again.

It is hard to believe that, as a person previously full of complexes, miseries, and misunderstandings, I am now in harmony and have peace of mind. With the straightening of my back, I probably grew about two inches in physical height. Also, the left side of my jaw was broken and had been dislocated for 48 years. On January 1, 2000, it fell down completely and with a touch of my left hand, it came back to its original position. A tendon in my left hand's little finger had been contracted since I was born. In February this year it stretched out without my doing anything. I had an inflamed prostate gland and I occasionally had tremendous pain while releasing small kidney stones. Now these uncomfortable experiences never happen.

Because of these dramatic changes, today I am a healthy, happy person, full of tenderness, benevolence, love, respect, tolerance, understanding, and forgiveness, not only for my family members, but for all of humanity.

Ever since the first miracle, I have had a desire to promote and share Falun Dafa. I hope that I can share this profound and beneficial teaching with many others, so that they can benefit, just as I have.

Power of the Truth

A follow-up report on signature collection at the Fremont Art Festival in California

On the second day of the Fremont Art Festival in California, a Chinese girl came to our booth as soon as we set it up. She asked for some materials about Falun Gong and started reading them right away. When we asked whether there was anything we could help her with, she replied that her grandmother had taken a VCD from our booth the day before and asked her to play it at home. Her grandmother cried after

watching the VCD and said she had lived in lies for so many years.

This girl also watched the VCD. She told us that when she was in China, her school gave every student a book about Falun Gong. The content of the book was totally different from what was on the VCD. She wanted to find out what the real story was, and so she came to our booth. After speaking with us, she asked for several copies of each type of material to bring to her classmates and friends.

What is Falun Gong ?

Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is an ancient cultivation practice of both mind and body. Along with five gentle meditation exercises, Mr. Li Hongzhi's teachings of Falun Gong emphasize the cultivation of one's moral character with the goal of bringing one towards wisdom and enlightenment through following the characteristics of the universe:

Truthfulness, Compassion, Forbearance.

For more information, please visit: www.falundafa.org



The "April 25th Peaceful Appeal": over 10,000 practitioners spontaneously gathered outside of the State Council Appeal Office in Beijing on April 25, 1999.

The benefits of Falun Gong practice to the citizens and society were originally recognized and commended by various levels of the Chinese government. The increasing popularity of Falun Gong, however, proved to be too much for a few officials within the Chinese government. From clandestine undermining in early 1994, to the orchestrated smear campaign and the banning of Falun Gong books in 1996, to police harassment in 1997, certain power blocs within the Chinese government gradually escalated their persecution to overt assault. On April 23, 1999, in broad daylight, armed police forces in the city of Tianjin violently assaulted hundreds of Falun Gong practitioners and arbitrarily detained 45 of them. The local authorities refused to negotiate with practitioners in Tianjin and suggested that they go to the central government to appeal.

Two days later, on April 25, 1999, over 10,000 Falun Gong practitioners gathered quietly in Beijing outside the State Council Appeal Office to petition for the release of practitioners who were detained in Tianjin and the lifting of the ban on Falun Gong books. The gathering was peaceful, orderly, and lawful. After Premier Zhu Rongji met with a few of the gathered practitioners and ordered the release of those detained in Tianjin, the practitioners quietly dispersed. However, the peaceful appeal disturbed then-Chairman Jiang Zemin, who soon ordered a brutal nationwide crackdown against Falun Gong practitioners.

The Falun Gong in the USA Newsletter

Published by The Falun Gong Human Rights Working Group

10299 Scripps Trail #226
San Diego, CA 92131
flghrwg@faluninfo.net