

# PART III

# THE TRUE STORY

## A Practitioner's Perspective

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### SECTION 1: WHAT IS FALUN GONG?

#### A Word on Part III

As we mentioned in the Introduction to Part I of this report, Part III represents a slight departure from the objective case materials contained and summarized in Parts I and II. In Part III, we do not look through the eyes of a neutral, nonpartisan reporter. We look in this Part through the eyes of a practitioner, one who knows Falun Gong from the inside, one who has studied its principles and strives to understand and live by them daily. Practitioners know Falun Gong to be a beneficial and extraordinary practice. From this perspective, we hope to shed light on the practice of Falun Gong, its history, and recent events. The insights contained herein are not to be found elsewhere, nor easily synthesized. We present to you the true story of Falun Gong.

#### I. A Brief Introduction to Falun Gong

Falun Gong is a form of what the Chinese call *qigong* (pronounced “chee-gong”), a system of exercises and teachings that deeply transform the mind and body. Owing much to its effectiveness in restoring health, Falun Gong has proved immensely popular throughout the entire world. Since being introduced to the general public in 1992 by its founder, Mr. Li Hongzhi, Falun Gong has spread to over 30 countries and is practiced by over 100 million people. Its means of diffusion has simply been word of mouth; those who practice often find the benefits too good to keep to themselves.

The practice of Falun Gong is simple, yet profound and effective. It consists primarily of two components: learning Mr. Li's teachings (as articulated in two English language books, China Falun Gong and Zhuan Falun) and practicing Falun Gong's five gentle exercises. The exercises are easy to learn, enjoyable to perform, and at once both relaxing and energizing. Many students of Falun Gong enjoy practicing in groups, as they find themselves benefiting from one another's practice. Most major US cities and universities have such groups. They are comprised of people from every imaginable walk of life, as Falun Gong appears to transcend cultural barriers.

While just reading the books or studying or practicing the exercises is beneficial, the combination of the two proves most effective for restoration of health. This is because, according to Falun Gong, a person must understand how to conduct him or herself well in everyday life. Namely, one learns to assimilate to the essential nature of the universe: truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance. As one's thinking and living become increasingly in accord with these principles, one will find that the benefits from the exercises and the study of Falun Gong increase proportionately. For someone sincere in his or her practice, the positive effects are typically rapid and

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noticeable. Students of Falun Gong often report dramatic health improvements where other practices and treatments have failed, and often in a short time, no less.

One health effects survey of over 12,000 practitioners conducted by some of China's top scientists found Falun Gong practice to have significant healing effects for 99% of those practicing, with a "cure" rate (indicating complete recovery) just over 58%. (see Attachments A3,A5) The forms of illness encountered in this survey ranged, incredibly, from cancers and heart disease to depression and fatigue. The study's researchers concluded that Falun Gong goes to the roots of illness, whereas many conventional and alternative treatments cannot. They have enthusiastically endorsed the practice, finding that it is suitable for people of all ages, level of fitness, educational backgrounds, etc. It has helped many persons to quit alcohol, tobacco, drugs, violence, and various unhealthy habits. In a word, it dramatically improves physical and mental well-being, while guiding people to live in greater harmony with themselves, society, and the universe. This, rather than a "spiritual vacuum in contemporary China," accounts for Falun Gong's remarkable growth and popularity.

### II. Recognition Past and Present

With its profound capacity to improve the mind, body and spirit, Falun Gong has brought benefits to both individuals and societies. Since its inception in 1992, Falun Gong has been recognized by a variety of institutions and persons. A brief survey of some of these recognition might prove helpful in understanding Falun Gong's public reception, as the Chinese government's propaganda juggernaut has done all possible to obscure Falun Gong's positive contributions.

The Chinese public and the Chinese government have both acknowledged the benefits of Falun Gong. In 1992 at the Beijing Oriental Health Expo (an event organized by the Chinese government), Falun Gong was named the "Star Qigong School," a widely-acclaimed distinction. In 1993 at the Beijing Oriental Health Expo, Mr. Li Hongzhi was honored with the greatly-coveted "Award for Advancing Boundary Science" and "Qigong Master Most Acclaimed by the Masses" title.

The China Qigong Association and its local offices, which are affiliated with China's Society of Science and Technology, organized all Falun Gong workshops from 1992 and 1994. Directors of the Association often accompanied Mr. Li to the opening sessions of his workshops and on many occasions gave preliminary speeches. Mr. Li's practice was fully-endorsed by the government in those early years.

In September 1993, the China Anti-crime Foundation issued an official letter to the Falun Gong Research Association expressing its gratitude to Mr. Li. He had twice raised funds on behalf of the foundation by giving qigong lectures and treating (by means of qigong healing) many outstanding award recipients who were injured or disabled due to anti-crime activities. The People's Public Security News, the official newspaper of the Chinese Ministry of Public Security, reported the events on September 21, 1993. It remarked that, "After the treatments, they unanimously agreed upon their remarkable improvements," and praised Mr. Li's contributions "in promoting traditional crime-fighting virtues of the Chinese people, in safeguarding social order and security, and in promoting social righteousness."

Chinese media—including national and local newspapers, TV and Radio stations—frequently covered Falun Gong activities during their first seven years, constantly reporting on the practice's benefits to practitioners. In 1994 the Chinese National Sports Committee, the Ministry of Public Health, and the China Qigong

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Scientific research Society even petitioned Mr. Li to set up a Falun Gong “scholastic organization” to coordinate nationwide teaching and promotional activities. Mr. Li declined the offer, upholding his commitment to keeping Falun Gong free of political ambitions and organizational or business formalities.

Shortly after publishing Zhuan Falun at the end of 1994, Mr. Li announced that he had completed his teaching in China. He traveled from China to all over the world giving lectures in Europe, Australia, and other parts of Asia. Since 1996 he has traveled and spoken at Experience-Sharing Conferences at the invitation of practitioners around the world, including in Sweden, France, Germany, Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the US. Many overseas students and local governments have been quick to recognize his contributions, indicating that Falun Gong transcends cultural boundaries.

### III. A History of Falun Gong Part I: The Teacher of Falun Gong, Mr. Li Hongzhi

Considering the story of Master Li Hongzhi's training as a “qigong master” and his delivery of Falun Gong to the public is a fitting point of departure, as this story is itself an exposition on the virtues he teaches. Born into an intellectual's family on May 13, 1951, in the city of Gongzhuling, Jilin Province, China, Mr. Li began receiving instruction at the age of four from a senior master of the Buddha School. By the age of twelve, young Mr. Li had come to see things in terms of *zhen-shan-ren* (truthfulness, benevolence, and forbearance)—the essential properties of the universe. As Mr. Li's mind and abilities developed over the years, he was visited by over twenty different masters, each imparting their best instruction and teaching him to different levels of comprehension. His training grew ever more difficult, even leading him to regularly practice painstaking meditation and qigong exercises through the night during the 1970s; this was the time of the Cultural Revolution, so one would not dare train in such disciplines in public.

With his qigong abilities remarkably developed and standing as the recipient of numerous unique, exclusive teachings, Mr. Li was by 1982 in position to launch whatever form of glorious healing, lecturing or performative career he so chose. But with his compassion so refined, Mr. Li instead saw humanity's suffering and brokenness and was called to respond quite differently. He realized that countless people are not as happy or well as they should be, having lost their basic nature—something in touch with the essential qualities of the universe. Humanity's spirit, Mr. Li felt, has become corrupt, leading to extensive suffering in body and mind. Spiritual qualities and developments clearly lag behind improvements in living standards and technological progress, creating a delicate, dangerous situation. But in order to actualize a more harmonious, ideal society, Mr. Li realized that people would need healthy bodies and more noble spirits; a happy life would otherwise remain an elusive fiction.

Mr. Li thus created Falun Gong, or “Falun Dafa” (as it is otherwise called), known as the true manifestation of the great Buddha Law. It is said to be his primordial belonging, something that came back to his mind after he attained enlightenment through many years of practice. This Falun Gong was to capture the essence of his instruction, yet offer it to everyday people in an appropriate form. Mr. Li spent the years of 1984 to 1992 designing this system with the collaboration of his

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teachers, and rigorously investigating the state of qigong in China and the needs of modern humankind. After training several apprentices from 1989 to 1992 as trial, Mr. Li and his apprentices were impressed by the results of this new self-cultivation system. He thus began an unprecedented mission: to impart the best high-level teachings on self-cultivation (encompassing the insights of the Taoist School and Buddha School) to the general public, and do so in a judicious, effective manner. This is something unknown to history, as the responsibility of doing so appears simply immeasurable.

In 1992, Mr. Li's teaching arena quickly shifted from the unassuming parks of Changchun city, in northeastern China (where Mr. Li had worked as a government clerk for some years), to the large auditoriums of Beijing municipality, China's capital. There Mr. Li would continue to embrace great hardships to transmit his Falun Gong, sleeping on the streets in the frigid winter, missing meals, holidays and even weekends, putting his teaching above all else. Before long, Mr. Li was officially proclaimed a "qigong master" by the China Qigong Scientific research Society (CQSRS), and soon he established the Falun Gong Research Society (FGRS), which was at that time under the auspices of the CQSRS; the principles of Mr. Li's system were approved by the CQSRS, along with its exercises and effectiveness. In both 1992 and 1993 at the Beijing Oriental Health Expo, Mr. Li and Falun Gong were given the highest honors and best received by attendees. Word of the practice and its dramatic healing effects on the mind and body spread quickly, swelling the numbers of students to over 100 thousand in just the first two years.

From the outset, the course assumed by Mr. Li for the dissemination of his Falun Gong has been unique. Namely, it has been a story of selflessness and dedication to the welfare of others. At virtually every turn, the effectiveness of Mr. Li's teachings and practice have incurred serious challenges—many of them in the form of lucrative chances for tremendous profit and fame. Yet Mr. Li has remained firm in his commitment, refusing such distractions without interruption, preferring instead to make Falun Gong accessible to all.

During his teaching of Falun Gong in China from 1992 to 1994, Mr. Li did everything possible to make his precious self-cultivation system available to everyone—regardless of financial situation, educational background, previous qigong experience, etc. Mr. Li lectured only upon invitation, refusing to promote or market himself or his teachings. There were fifty-four classes offered throughout China in those years, and all income was handled by the government-run CQSRS. Throughout, Mr. Li insisted that his instruction be offered at the lowest possible price. Fees were typically

one-half to one-third those of other qigong instruction, while typically Mr. Li's classes ran the length of nine or ten days. New students were to pay a mere forty yuan (five US dollars) and repeat students, who made up as much as seventy-five percent of the audiences, enrolled at a fifty percent discount (twenty yuan, or two and a half US dollars). Other qigong masters repeatedly implored the CQSRS to raise these prices, but Mr. Li remained adamant in his commitment to offering instruction without financially burdening students; the prices never rose.

Even more telling is that Mr. Li produced a regulation at the outset of his teaching career that he would keep intact throughout: he was to receive no personal income whatsoever from the classes, nor would any of his assistants. Of the gross income from a lecture or class, a generous forty percent would go to the hosting organization (ten to twenty percent was the norm). The remaining sixty percent would go to the CQSRS, of which perhaps some forty percent (twenty-five to thirty percent of the gross income) would end up with the Falun Gong Research Society. The FGRS would typically expend this funding on its working staff, space rental, the printing of teaching materials, and in meeting transportation costs. All remaining revenues were to go towards theoretical research and scientific experiments on Falun Gong, and the establishment of "cultivation centers"—locales, not institutions or property, providing an open forum for anyone to learn the practice, free of charge and obligation.

Were Mr. Li to have developed a yearning for fame and profit, the road to these would have been paved with roses for him during his two years of public instruction in China; however, his integrity remained unscathed, and his teachings likewise untarnished. No mixed agendas were allowed to contaminate Falun Gong, nor compromise the quality and form of Mr. Li's teachings. With four to five thousand people attending his classes in the later stages, were Mr. Li to have raised his fees to those expected, or, as was fully feasible, to double or triple the norm, he would have become exceptionally rich overnight. To the contrary, on many occasions Mr. Li graciously donated all FGRS income to charitable and needy organizations, such as the Red Cross of the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Region and the China Foundation for Heroes and Justice.

Mr. Li refused a tantalizing avenue to fame and political sway in 1994 when the Chinese National Sports Committee, the Ministry of Public Health, and the China Qigong Scientific research Society petitioned him to set up a Falun Gong "scholastic organization" to coordinate nationwide teaching and promotional activities. Mr. Li declined the offer, upholding his commitment to keeping Falun Gong free of political ambitions and organization-

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al or business formalities. Instead, he insisted that “practicing cultivation is up to the individual,” and that only people’s hearts count; no institution can spur the emergence of a sincere heart for practicing self-cultivation. One must be moved by the principles of Falun Gong, coming for the sake of self-cultivation.

In keeping with his mission to benefit humankind, Mr. Li’s decision to discontinue teaching Falun Gong at the end of 1994 was out of benevolence and compassion. Namely, Mr. Li’s teachings were becoming so acclaimed and so enthusiastically embraced that he no longer felt it appropriate to teach publicly in China: too many people were coming out for his lectures. With any further increase in size, much disruption of society might ensue. Mr. Li had by this time committed the content of his lectures to paper, and in 1995 produced the book, Zhuan Falun. By way of the book, people throughout China would now have access to Falun Gong, and no burden would be put upon lecture-hosting organizations and cities.

From 1995 to the present, Mr. Li has traveled the world to lecture, on invitation, at Falun Gong conferences outside of China. All such conferences are arranged by local students, and all funding comes from people’s own pockets; the meetings, called “experience sharing conferences,” allow students to share with one another about the process of “cultivating.” Throughout the course of these engagements, Mr. Li has continued his ways, refusing to accept any money or donations for his work. He has lectured in countries as diverse as Australia, Canada, Germany, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore, Switzerland, Taiwan, and the United States, with audiences ranging from five hundred to over four thousand. At these gatherings, Mr. Li has often answered dozens of students’ questions for four or five hours straight, making such meetings priceless. Were Mr. Li to suggest an admissions fee for such events, he could name his price, and he would not seem out of line to the casual observer; after all, countless spiritual figures and qigong masters have set this precedent in recent decades. Mr. Li has refused any such compromises, however, instead requiring that any Falun Gong activity—including such special occasions—be completely without charge and open to anyone interested. This is unprecedented, and again bespeaks of Mr. Li’s selfless aspirations.

No less distinguishing, Mr. Li has refrained from sanctioning his veteran students to go about and teach his Falun Gong in a manner similar to his own public teaching; practitioners may only teach the exercises, but never the philosophy or spiritual underpinnings. This work, the latter, is left to Mr. Li, himself, as he has painstakingly ensured that his Falun Gong teachings do not

become deformed, corrupted, or exploited. Mr. Li has written a number of articles clarifying these points. Every student of Falun Gong is aware of this, so they instead make use of video and audio recordings of Mr. Li’s lecture sessions in China, Zhuan Falun, and an introductory book, China Falun Gong. All of these are available for free download or viewing on the internet, as there is no interest in profit; the majority of the students in Europe are said to make use of these online sources, as books there are often hard to obtain. Once again, Mr. Li could have followed the example of numerous teachers and haphazardly conferred titles and degrees upon his students, sending them forth to teach—despite their limited understanding; this is already commonplace in the qigong community. But this would be antithetical to Mr. Li’s mission of genuinely bringing people to higher understanding, enlightenment, and right moral living in the world. It is an enormous responsibility to be the sole proprietor of such a system as Falun Gong.

Throughout the course of Mr. Li’s teachings on Falun Gong at home and abroad, he has remained truthful, benevolent and forbearing in the face of opposition from both within and outside his students. On the one hand, there have been the innumerable, seemingly benevolent gestures made by grateful students. These would include: some students in China who wanted to build a devotional “temple” for Falun Gong in China; countless attempted monetary gifts from students who recovered from serious illness through Falun Gong; attempted worship by those not understanding Mr. Li and his work; and even the attempted donation of a mansion in the state of New Jersey, USA. Each of these is not an uncommon expression of gratitude amongst students of great teachers or adherents of spiritual traditions. Yet each would stand to severely compromise Mr. Li’s mission, as he is offering Falun Gong and its benefits to the public without any conditions (save for that one have the heart to cultivate his or her “Buddha-nature”). Fittingly, all have been firmly declined and clearly explained.

On the other hand, Mr. Li has been dealt a number of more direct, confrontational challenges, yet nevertheless handled these with equal composure. From the earliest days of Mr. Li’s teaching in Changchun, a handful of detractors and defectors have made Mr. Li the object of their scorn. The earliest case proves illustrative. When Mr. Li personally trained and imparted some healing abilities to several of his students in the preliminary years (1989-1992), a few of these students came to have a confused understanding of their new-found abilities; these abilities were intended for treating illness on a small scale under specific conditions to promote Falun Gong. These things were imparted under special circumstances and for specific, limited usage, under Mr.

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Li's supervision. Yet these students became over-zealous and mistook their abilities as personal belongings fit for whatever use. They began treating patients in a capricious fashion, and even went so far as to try to establish a qigong treatment clinic; this was a deep violation of Falun Gong's principles, as institutionalizing and medicalizing Falun Gong for profit and personal aggrandizement is antithetical to its mission.

Mr. Li repeatedly made clear to these students that such pursuits and behavior were serious deviations from what Falun Gong's calls *xinxing*<sup>1</sup> requirements. Driven by their greed, they remained impervious to reminders, and in the end failed to heed all admonitions. Mr. Li had no choice but to remove them from their assistant positions, and sever any association between them and the practice. These students responded with intense anger and jealousy, resulting in a vicious campaign to demonize Mr. Li and Falun Gong. They even went so far as to draft three publications that leveled all sorts of fabricated accusations about Mr. Li and Falun Gong, presenting these to thirteen different departments of the central government. Yet the ensuing government investigations found no grounds for such claims, and instead, by 1994 it had declared Falun Gong to be excellent and impressive; the government went so far as to offer its patronage. Throughout the ordeal, Mr. Li and his students never stooped to the level of their accusers to "fight fire with fire"; this would have been a simple fight, given the number of Falun Gong students and its widespread support. Rather, they fought fire with truthfulness, benevolence, and forbearance, using the difficult situation as an opportunity to introduce Falun Gong to those involved (such as those government departments, relevant media, etc.) and present the situation and practice in a truthful, peaceful light. This is typical of Mr. Li and his students.

More recently, Falun Gong and Mr. Li have come under the most severe of pressure and attack, this time at the hands of the Chinese government; literally, a nation has officially turned itself—at an institutional level and in terms of policy—against the practice and its founder. Yet here, again, Mr. Li has endured this tribulation with great nobility and composure. Not only has he refrained from deriding or plotting against his unfounded accusers, but rather, he has looked at his oppressors with eyes of compassion. This past July 22<sup>nd</sup>, when the ban on Falun Gong was announced and the persecution begun, Mr. Li expressed his deep regret for China's actions, explaining that:

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<sup>1</sup> "heart-mind-moral nature"; this is what a practitioner of Falun Gong seeks to upgrade, thereby assimilating to the characteristics of zhen-shan-ren.

The current situation in China, as I see it, is of no benefit to either the Chinese government or the people. I hope the Chinese government will truly be able to handle this situation well, keeping the interests of the people in mind, and not making this confrontational... it's certain that these problems will ultimately have serious negative consequences for the Chinese government and the Chinese people.

Mr. Li has taught millions how to endure with a compassionate heart, and he has embodied his own teachings under this most trying of circumstances. Mr. Li has witnessed the Chinese government: threaten, harass and detain his family in China; groundlessly order his arrest through Interpol; publish and distribute millions of venomous comic books attacking him (entitled, Li Hongzhi: The Man and His Evil Deeds); pay hundreds of citizens to lie on television and to reporters about the "ill effects" of Falun Gong; detain, torture, and even beat to death his students just because they practice Falun Gong; and ban and then massively destroy all publications and materials bearing his name, among other actions. Were Mr. Li of anything less than superior moral character and understanding, he would have by now—and with the blessing of countless persons and nations—fought back with available means. One need search history no further than the middle of this century in Tibet to realize that even Buddhist monks and their Buddhist nation have not been above taking up arms to defend their tradition and rights with bloodshed. Mr. Li could have organized and directed Falun Gong students in protest or attack, as their numbers are great and the situation severe. But Mr. Li would no sooner do this than would his students, as each practices self-cultivation according to the essential characteristics of life: zhen-shan-ren. Any act of violence would represent a complete breach of Falun Gong's principles—it would be unconscionable. As such, there has not been a single violent act on record during this ordeal, nor will there be. Mr. Li has made clear that anyone acting in a violent fashion is no student of his whatsoever, and all benefits—physical, mental, etc.—will be withdrawn. One only harms oneself with such ill intentions.

Instead of stooping to violent actions or statements, Mr. Li has calmly called for dialogue with his oppressors. He has refused to see them as enemies, preferring to consider them misinformed and unaware of Falun Gong's beneficence. Mr. Li has regretted that the Chinese government could not have engaged him earlier in dialogue, feeling that doing so would have prevented this disastrous situation; he has repeatedly expressed that peaceful resolution can "be accomplished through dialogue." Even in this crisis, then, Mr. Li has put others—even his assailants—first and considered how they might



be negatively impacted. He has even gone so far as to state that, “Chinese people throughout the country have a very in-depth understanding of Falun Gong, and if the persecution continues, it could cause the people to lose confidence in the Chinese government and its leadership.” Mr. Li’s commitment to keeping his practice void of political ambitions has enabled him and his students to remain disentangled from allegiances and antagonism; as such, even the Chinese government can be engaged with benevolence.

### IV. A History Of Falun Gong Part II: Falun Gong’s Content and Impact

The seven-year transformation of Falun Gong—from a humble practice known to a few in a park in northeastern China to a global phenomenon that includes over 100 million participants—is a remarkable reflection of Mr. Li Hongzhi’s teachings. For it is these, his values, ideals, and insights, that have moved the hearts of millions. The entire practice has spread simply by word of mouth, from one grateful student to another, never relying on advertisement through conventional media. It has accomplished the goal of awakening people’s compassion, aligning them with the fundamental characteristics of life. Its profound health benefits are nothing but an affirmation that Mr. Li’s students have assimilated themselves to these characteristics through self-cultivation. Practitioners of Falun Gong have learned that through letting go of selfish desires, attachments to vested interests, and the need to compete for fame and profit, one can recover one’s true, pure nature and genuinely contribute to the betterment of humankind. And this aspiration has proven transcendent of cultural, linguistic, and racial boundaries, no less, reaching people of all walks of life in over thirty countries. Mr. Li’s selfless work in preparing and delivering Falun Gong have accomplished something unprecedented, affirming to the world—and in the face of tremendous odds—that being a good person is possible, rewarding, and worth the superficial costs. His uncompromising commitment to non-violent resolution of conflict provides a valuable model for citizens and institutions the world over to emulate; similarly, his students have provided a remarkable blueprint as to what it looks like to embody Mr. Li’s teachings and ideals.

Were it not for the efficacy of Mr. Li’s teaching, the world might have witnessed this year utterly horrific bloodshed and violence in China. Some 100 million plus Falun Gong students were suddenly and completely denied their peaceful, non-intrusive practice, when the Chinese government decided in late July of this year to ban Falun Gong. The government pulled from its files the accusatory documents used by Mr. Li’s early Changchun defectors in 1992 and 1993; never mind that the Chinese government had itself by 1994 found the accusations utterly groundless and befitting sharp criticism. Most Falun Gong practitioners’ homes were ransacked this July, with their Falun Gong related belongings stripped and destroyed. Many had already faced months of harassment in the form of tapped phone lines and email, while others were followed by undercover

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police upon leaving their homes. In the ensuing months after July, over thirty-five thousand Falun Gong practitioners have been arrested or detained, with several thousand being sentenced to remote labor camps without even a trial. Hundreds of imprisoned Falun Gong students, including many elderly women and young children, have even been tortured; over a dozen are already reported dead from torture. People are arrested if they do so much as gather to discuss their experiences practicing Falun Gong, while thousands of others have been fired from their jobs, dismissed from their schools, or fined for merely having practiced this system of self-cultivation. Every single Chinese Communist Party member who practiced Falun Gong was forced to choose between the practice and his or her job; anyone not renouncing Falun Gong would lose his or her job, home, and benefits.

Scapegoating Mr. Li's Falun Gong, the Chinese government has declared it an "evil cult" that has "caused unsurpassed social chaos and disruption," threatening even "national security." Despite the government's best attempts to frame Falun Gong and justify its policy of "smashing" this "societal tumor," Falun Gong has remained innocent on all accounts. Its only offense has been to touch the lives of too many people, becoming more popular than even the Chinese Communist Party (according to the CCP's own survey), and hence posing a theoretical threat. One can hardly imagine a greater tragedy than for China, and the world, in turn, to lose this beneficent practice. This situation perhaps stands as the single greatest human rights violation in the world today, as many millions of innocent practitioners of Falun Gong in China are being brutally denied their most basic human rights. And this is not to mention the impact of such persecution on the family—children, parents and grandparents cannot simply be plucked from their homes without serious, deleterious consequences.

Despite this deplorable situation, Falun Gong practitioners have to date yet to resort to violence—even once, in any form. Nor have the majority renounced their practice. Rather, they have consistently endured these trials with benevolent hearts, even looking into the eyes of their oppressors and feeling sincere compassion. Reports suggest that most practitioners have taken the hardships as opportunities for self-improvement, looking within at how this situation might have been prevented; looking outward, these students have shared their practice with their oppressors, inmates and those sympathetic throughout the world. Tens of thousands of Falun Gong students have even been compelled to travel many days—even by foot, as in the case of an eighty-year-old woman who traveled nine days and nights—to Beijing to share their positive experiences with government officials; the hope has simply been that anyone who under-

stands this practice could not possibly oppress it. In this undertaking, each person has risked his or her job, income, and even personal safety. According to recently publicized statistics from the Chinese government, during this past month of November, 1999, roughly seventy students of Falun Gong were arrested every day in Beijing for attempting to peacefully appeal the ban on Falun Gong; in all reported cases, they only wished to let their oppressors know the truth of the matter. Such perseverance and benevolence in the face of all odds is a resounding confirmation of the value of Mr. Li's teachings.

For practitioners of Falun Gong to react otherwise to China's vicious oppression would be unconscionable—*forbearance*, or *ren*, is key in Mr. Li's system of self-cultivation. The principle of *zhen-shan-ren* is understood as the essential nature of life, matter, and the universe, and as such it informs Falun Gong's self-cultivation practice. Its components, *zhen* (truth, truthfulness), *shan* (benevolence, compassion, kindness), and *ren* (forbearance, endurance, patience, tolerance), are lost sight of in the world. Only through nurturing these fundamental characteristics within oneself can one truly make progress in self-cultivation. All aspects of Mr. Li's Falun Gong practice can be seen as derivative of *zhen-shan-ren*. *Zhuan Falun* and Mr. Li's other works are expositions on this principle, articulating how one may transform this ideal into a lived, fertile reality.

Accordingly, Mr. Li's Falun Gong is not so much a way of acquisition (as is most every qigong practice today), such as gathering and storing energy, garnering special powers, or accumulating a pile of qigong titles and degrees, but a way of return. The return is not geographical so much as psychological, internal, or spiritual, as one cultivates *xinxing* (heart, mind, or moral nature/character) through renouncing selfish attachments and behaviors. These mental "attachments," such as to fame, personal gain, material benefits, one's close associates or kin, and pleasure, block one from assimilating to *zhen-shan-ren*; every possible form of conflict is therefore engendered, as one's ability to consider others first becomes disabled. What is more, this disjunction ensures the perpetuation of personal suffering, as in mental and physical discomfort. Yet suffering is contagious, as when someone hurts they are apt to hurt others. Mr. Li has made extremely clear the nature of this situation, as well as the means to its dissolution. In doing so, he has equipped his students with veritable tools for the efficient abandonment of burdensome attachments and their offspring, suffering. This is the soul of self-cultivation practice.

Mr. Li and his practice have empowered millions with a unique, dynamic system for physical, mental and spir-

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itual self-healing. Simply put, the effects of Falun Gong practice on health are difficult to believe. One is hard pressed to find a veteran student (a person with even a year or two of experience) who has not recovered or maintained exceptional health. This healing efficacy most likely accounts for a large part of Falun Gong's quick dissemination around the world. Countless students have found sicknesses and diseases, ranging from the mild cold to the severe cancer or even paralysis, reversed with regular practice and study. This is the result of students' self-cultivation, Mr. Li has explained, and not merely performance of some exercises; true benefits come from embodying zhen-shan-ren. A true Falun Gong practitioner, Mr. Li has taught and shown, is somebody deeply at peace with him or herself and, by extension, with his or her surrounding world and relations.

The efficacy of this healing practice inspired authoritative members of the medical community in China to conduct several studies on Falun Gong's health benefits. The results (see Attachments A3-5) were astounding in each study, prompting several Beijing researchers to declare in 1998 that Mr. Li's practice was simply "beyond the scope of modern medicine"—something so profound and effective that it could not be understood with available medical or scientific resources. Some ninety-nine percent of surveyed students had experienced marked physical health improvements, with fifty-nine percent experiencing complete recovery from diseases; ninety-seven percent of students experienced significant mental health improvements. Another study done in Dalian, China, in 1998, determined that Falun Gong practice can "claim huge economical savings by dramatically reducing healthcare utilization." The survey found that annual medical care expenses dropped by 2,409 *yuan* (the Chinese dollar) per person after one practiced Falun Gong; considering that sixty-two percent of participants were in the age range of fifty to seventy-one years, a time when chronic diseases increase steadily, the savings could actually be much higher. The healing effects of Mr. Li's teachings warrant much further discussion, but for purposes here, they just serve as yet another illustration of the profundity and benefits of what Mr. Li has given people. Health improvements, however, no matter how remarkable, are understood in Falun Gong as coincidental features which simply enable more sincere and effective self-cultivation. With such genuine practice of cultivation, one is able to conduct oneself in an upright manner, free of violence and conflict.

The practice of Falun Gong is thus a matter of endurance, sacrifice, enlightening. In light of a conflict, a Falun Gong student is taught by Mr. Li to look within him or herself, searching for the trouble's origin. Accusations are totally antithetical to self-cultivation,

representing a severe breakdown in understanding. It is understood that every conflict, no matter how seemingly unjust, is meaningful and purposeful, providing the Falun Gong practitioner with an opportunity to upgrade his or her xinxing, releasing attachments and selfish pursuits. Mr. Li's students garner a remarkably clear understanding of these things from their study of Zhuan Falun, seeing the nature and multiple-dimensions of a given conflict. One learns not only to forgive one's offenders, but even thank them for the occasion for self-improvement. To even raise a fist or have a thought of violence is to come up short when provoked; one's mind must become free of such self-preservative conditioning. One is no more likely to see a Falun Gong student in Beijing strike an oppressor than one is to see such a student curse, accuse, or insult. Falun Gong practitioners' capacity to peacefully endure—if not actually resolve—conflicts has begun to draw long-overdue attention in recent months; over a dozen major cities in the United States, the US Congress, Amnesty International, the Canadian Government, and United Nations permanent representative Rene Wadlow have all strongly voiced support for Mr. Li and his practice. Above all else, Mr. Li has taught an extraordinary preventive medicine—one that disarms conflicts at their origins, before they even arise.

To even the outsider slightly familiar with Mr. Li's Falun Gong practice, the remarkable composure of practitioners in China in recent months should come as no surprise. In his teachings, Mr. Li has from the outset focused on what is basic to the human condition, directly addressing the human heart and mind; there is no room for tracing lines of differentiation between exclusive identities, be they racial, religious, or national, for the human heart—which is not originally inscribed with particularities—is what is aimed at. The individual is the basic unit, and attention is directed inward. Religious, ethnic, or national conflicts are not possible with Falun Gong.

Befitting Mr. Li's aspiration of reaching across humankind, Falun Gong has always been made widely available and unusually accessible. This goes far beyond Mr. Li's offering all publications and materials free of charge through the Internet. Mr. Li's main writings, such as Zhuan Falun and China Falun Gong, have been translated into over a dozen languages; all such versions are also available free of charge. Furthermore, they are written not with the scholar of Asian religions in mind, but with thought of the common reader. The language Mr. Li uses is remarkably unpretentious, clear and accessible. These features make for a practice that, though Chinese in origin, extends across cultural and socio-economic barriers to reach the human heart. Such dissemination is

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remarkable in such a short time. More surprising yet, it has been accomplished fully by the generosity of Falun Gong students, as no money or rewards have ever been accepted by those involved in the translation or editing work. Not even a byline can be found revealing these hidden hands—be they behind a Tibetan or Thai version of Zhuan Falun, or behind a Canadian Falun Gong web page. Mr. Li's grateful practitioners are moved to do all their work out of gratitude and without thought of material or worldly gains. They have taken his teachings on selflessness to heart.

In keeping with this accessibility, Mr. Li's Falun Gong teachings accomplish something equally unique: they allow people to practice self-cultivation in the world. Throughout the many-century history of Buddhist and Taoist cultivation, this is also unprecedented, as cultivation of Buddhahood or "returning to the Tao" have remained the exclusive aspirations of temple monks and mountain-dwelling hermits. Teaching and practicing in the bustling, ordinary world was always considered unfeasible; the time requirements for practice reached to well over a dozen hours a day. But Mr. Li has done something exceptional, making a high-level practice of self-cultivation available to the general public, and unconditionally, no less. This is not to frustrate everyday folks who might have but a few hours remaining at the end of a workday—quite the contrary. Falun Gong is something practiced (as in its exercises) or studied (as in Zhuan Falun) whenever fitting and desired, be it two hours a day or two hours a week. Improvement of xinxing is what takes precedence, and this is something that one does in every environment, at every moment; one can be a good person at the workplace, at home, or in the streets. Hence, among those practicing Falun Gong are university professors, scientists, educators, business consultants, medical professionals, retired folk, students, government officials (including many former top China Communist Party officials), military personnel, farmers and factory workers, and even a number of monks and nuns, to name a few. Mr. Li has been most responsible to society, then, in proffering a spiritual teaching that gives great value to this world and its engagement. None with sincere hearts are excluded.

Perhaps Mayor Robert C. Lanier of the city of Houston, Texas, USA, said it best after he proclaimed Mr. Li Hongzhi an "Honorary Citizen" and designated him a "Good Will Ambassador." In his declaration of "Li Hongzhi Day" on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1996, Lanier stated:

Falun gong transcends cultural and racial boundaries. It resonates the universal truth to every corner of the earth and bridges the gap between East and West. Li Hongzhi has worked tirelessly to con-

vey Falun gong from China to the rest of the world. Along the way, he has touched the lives of countless people in many countries, earning an acclaimed international reputation.

Mr. Li's selfless commitment to the benefit of others informs his story of developing Falun Gong and bringing it to the public. Delivered in a most responsible, accessible manner, Mr. Li's teachings of Falun Gong aim directly at the human heart. They provide the philosophical insights and practical means requisite for successful adoption. The remarkable growth of Mr. Li's practice in just seven years testifies to its profundity and efficacy; the practice has managed to escape being culturally-bound and limited in appeal or applicability. The benefits conferred to humankind by Mr. Li's efforts appear immeasurable. Mr. Li's Falun Gong is both a remedy for those ailing and a prescription for those already well. Mr. Li's teachings act then to cure violence, alienation and illness, while positively upgrading people's hearts and understanding; they work simultaneously like the best preventive medicine, curing violence before it ever occurs—this sort of effect can never be fully quantified.

Mr. Li has thus provided people with a profound, yet practical blueprint for authentic living in a wounded, conflicted world. Equally important, he has shown people by way of example what the actualization of this blueprint looks like, and in the face of tremendous persecution, no less. It would be a travesty for this man and his transformative teachings to be remembered as merely something that antagonized and was persecuted to extinction by a hostile government.

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## SECTION 2: A REPLY TO THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT

### I. On Falun Gong's Allegedly Causing “1,400 Deaths”

While there is no accusation by the Chinese Government more haunting than that Falun Gong leads to health problems, mental illness, suicide and death, there is also no claim more deceptive and imaginative. Falun Gong has shown itself to have great healing efficacy, earning even the praise and endorsement of many of Beijing's elite scientists and medical professionals. (see Attachment A5) Several health surveys have found that Falun Gong practice is effective in healing disease over 90% of the time (with a “cure rate” near 60%), and greatly improves mental health and overall quality of life. (see Attachments A3-5) Falun Gong's enormous, quickly-developed popularity has in fact been in large part due to its unprecedented health benefits. In fact, this is what led the Chinese Government to patronize the practice for its first four years, before political winds shifted unfavorably. Despite the Chinese Government's recent, frightening claims, however, there is simply no supporting evidence that Falun Gong can prove injurious. What “evidence” the Government has provided is highly suspect, as the several cases of so-called “Falun Gong-induced deaths” that have been independently investigated have proven fictitious. (see Attachments A1, A2)

What's more, the alleged “causal” explanation for purported Falun Gong side-effects is grounded in either in one of two fictitious claims. First is the suggestion of some hidden causal link between Falun Gong practice and psychosis or suicidal tendencies. This is a claim for which there is no known medical or legal basis, however, and none has been offered by Chinese officials. Were such a causal connection to be established, it would quickly grace the covers of medical journals east and west. A variety of stories have been crafted to “illustrate” the deadly effects of Falun Gong. But when they are examined in the light of Mr. Li's teachings and careful analysis, they prove highly imaginative and deceptive. A statistical comparison of mortality rates owing to suicide in the general population as compared with among Falun Gong practitioners (as claimed by the Chinese Government) reveals that Falun Gong most likely saves some 10,000 practitioners from suicide each year.

Second is the pivotal Chinese Government claim that Mr. Li Hongzhi prohibits Falun Gong practitioners from taking medicine, putting them at risk. Examining Mr. Li's teachings reveals that this is an utter fabrication, as he never has prevented—nor could he prevent—practitioners from seeking medical treatment. In banning Falun Gong, the Chinese Government is thus “protecting” the Chinese people from something that does not exist. When the Chinese Government's much-paraded statistic “1,400 deaths due to Falun Gong” is analyzed here on its own terms, it again unravels, proving the exact opposite of what the Government intended. Using China's mortality rate for 1998, we could expect Falun Gong's 70 million practitioners to lose roughly 455,000 people to death. The Chinese government states that no practitioner is allowed to take medicine. Any Falun Gong practitioner who dies is therefore included in the “1,400 deaths due to psychosis, suicide, and refused medical treatment,” as he or she would supposedly refuse medical treatment even while dying; the Government here asserts a causal link. According to the Chinese Government's official statistics then, Falun Gong most likely saved around 454,000 lives in 1999 alone! Since some surveys have found that up to 68% of practitioners are 50 or more years old, one could expect the mortality rate among practitioners to be even higher than that of the general population, let alone if these poor “cult victims” forgo much-needed medicine.

Were the stakes of the Chinese Government's accusations not so high, they might even prove amusing for their fanciful, illogical qualities. Since these claims, however wrong, have found their way into the Western media and been the topic of several English-language Chinese Government publications, we offer here clarification.

#### 1. Falun Gong's Teachings on Medicine and Medical Treatment

Falun Gong is most accurately called a “cultivation practice” (*xiu lian*) (much akin to “self-cultivation” in the West), though it is more generically a form of *qigong* practice as it has five sets of gentle qigong exercises. As a cultivation practice, the emphasis in Falun Gong practice is on the improvement of one's *xinxing* (moral char-

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acter, or “heart/mind nature”). Cultivation of xinxing is mainly a matter of assimilating to the essential nature of the universe: truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance. Such assimilation is the goal of cultivation practice, in turn enabling the practitioner to develop his or her wisdom and reach “enlightenment”—an aspiration basic to Eastern spiritual practices, such as Taoism, Buddhism, etc. The goal of Falun Gong is thus not health and fitness, as in conventional qigong practices. Nevertheless, healing often occurs as a product of cultivating xinxing in Falun Gong practice. Hence, many people have been attracted to Falun Gong by its healing capacities.

Mr. Li Hongzhi, the teacher in Falun Gong, has made clear on countless occasions that the goal of Falun Gong practice is not to heal one's ailments. He has been explicit on this matter in both his writings and lectures, and refused to admit critically-ill patients to his lectures or classes. In the most widely-read Falun Gong book, Zhuan Falun, Mr. Li states, “I do not talk about healing illness here, and neither will we heal illness here”(p.3). He continues later: “Some people come here just to have illnesses healed. As to seriously ill patients, we do not let them attend the classes since they cannot give up the attachment to having illnesses cured or the idea of being ill... This person is unable to practice cultivation”(p.41).

Similarly, Mr. Li has stated that patients with severe mental illness (psychosis) are forbidden from attending his classes or practicing Falun Gong. As their minds are not correct or balanced, they are unable to control themselves. One strict requirement for practicing Falun Gong (and not dissimilar from qigong in general) is that one must have self-control, both mental and physical. There must be mental alertness, and one must be cognizant of where one is and what one is doing at all times. If one cannot meet these requirements, one obviously cannot conduct oneself according to a practitioner's standard, following the higher principle of truthfulness, compassion, forbearance. Enlightening requires self-improvement and the development of wisdom, two things impossible without self-control. Mr. Li has been firm: people suffering from psychosis and the likes must seek help elsewhere. Nevertheless, people with minor mental illnesses consistently benefit from Falun Gong practice. (see Attachments A3-5)

A second issue needing clarification is the relationship between Falun Gong practice and taking medicine. The Chinese Government has repeatedly claimed that Mr. Li forbids all Falun Gong practitioners from taking medicine, thereby putting them at great risk and even incurring tragic deaths. In the heat of its crackdown on Falun Gong, the Chinese Government-run English newspaper, China Daily, ran four entire articles disparaging Falun Gong and Mr. Li. It went so far as to “report” that:

“By spreading these fallacious ideas Li has actually signed a life-and-death contract with his followers, who have to obey all his instructions and depend on him for everything. He forbids them to read other books or learn other theories and deprives them of the ability to choose between right and wrong... Li forces his practitioners to follow his fallacious ideas.”<sup>1</sup> And for the anti-Falun Gong campaign, forcing “followers” to not take medicine is apparently the biggest crime. Such reporting completely confuses the issue, however, suggesting cult-like dependency and suspension of personal choice. Never mind that it wantonly distorts what Mr. Li has taught and how practitioners have regarded his teachings.

Consider Mr. Li's own words on the issue of taking medicine, as stated in China Falun Gong (the introductory, first book). In response to the question, “Do we still need to take medicine while cultivating?” Mr. Li replied, “On this issue, you should think and decide for yourself”(p.138). Also, in a 1997 New York City lecture that has since been read by most every practitioner, Mr. Li stated: “An everyday person needs to take medicine when he gets ill. Now you are a cultivator, but I am not forcing you not to take medicine.” He continued in his lecture, adding: “Some people want to damage [Falun Gong], and on the issue of taking medicine they say ‘we're not allowed to take medicine once we start practicing this system.’ I do not, as a matter of fact, forbid you to take medicine.”<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, the Chinese Government and media have somehow felt empowered to translate such teachings to mean the exact opposite.

Confusion over this matter stems from the fact that so many Falun Gong practitioners choose not to take medicine anymore after beginning cultivation practice. The key term here is “choose.” As in every other facet of Falun Gong practice, how one handles one's health is a free choice. Since most every Falun Gong practitioner becomes or is healthy, they just choose not to take medicine. It is that simple: why would one want to take medicine if one feels healthy or doesn't consider one's body to have any illness? Several major health surveys done in China support such behavior, as the findings suggest that regular practice of Falun Gong is itself “good medicine.”(see Attachments A3-5)

Suffice to say, on the issue of taking medicine a practitioner of Falun Gong is totally free to decide for himself or herself—making right decisions is at the heart of

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<sup>1</sup> “Hard truth reveals Li's fallacies”, China Daily, vol. 19, 7/24/99, p. 4.

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cultivation practice. Should a non-practitioner family member or young child become sick, a practitioner would not hesitate for a second to take him or her for proper medical treatment. To think that Mr. Li could possibly “control” the daily decisions of practitioner in China when, in fact, Mr. Li has not given a public lecture in China since 1994, is simply absurd. Additionally, doing so would undermine the practice he has taught students. The Chinese Government says that Mr. Li fancies himself almighty, yet, ironically, it is the Government which bestows upon him the most mighty super-human powers.

With a little background on Falun Gong and the issue of medicine, one is ready to critically engage the Chinese Government's claim that Falun Gong causes mental illness, suicide, and death to its practitioners.

### **2. Examining the Alleged “1,400 Deaths” and Harm Caused by Falun Gong**

According to Chinese Government sources and official, state-run media, the official number of deaths attributed to Falun Gong has been recently set at an even 1,400. Despite repeated requests for further information about this statistic, Chinese sources have not been able to offer sources or methods used in producing this number. The number has a somewhat elastic and mysterious feel to it for those who have been following the crackdown, as the first statistic given by the Chinese Government was almost half this number, 743.<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of the crackdown, a Ministry of Public Security spokesperson stated that “superstition” and “witchery” spread by Li and Falun Gong were to blame for the deaths of these 743 “followers” who had refused medical treatment, committed murder, or committed suicide.<sup>4</sup> Yet more strange is that in Falun Gong's seven years prior to the persecution, never were any of these alleged 743 or 1,400 cases reported. The number just appeared, mysteriously, along with many other indictments. One should recall from Part III, Sec. 1, that Falun Gong was promoted by the government for several years on account of its profound health benefits. Could it really be that Falun Gong practice suddenly went devious across the country in its latter three or four years? Going on the Chinese Government's numbers and explanations, a number of

issues beg consideration and analysis.

#### **a. the claim that Falun Gong induces psychosis and suicide**

First, we can consider the claim that Falun Gong “caused” severe mental illness, resulting even in irrational behavior, suicide and death. According to the Chinese Government, “Since beginning the practice of Falun Gong, many people have lost their appetites, some appeared to be disorganized in words and behavior, and some became paranoid. Still others found themselves suffering from hallucinations. A number of people jumped into rivers or off buildings, or killed themselves in other ways. Some even cruelly injured or killed relatives and friends.”<sup>5</sup>

This dramatic claim is more frightening propaganda than reality. The first key term is “caused.” The reasons for mental illness are very complex. Modern medical science refuses, in fact, to speak in simplistic, reductionist language in handling the etiology of mental illness; the Chinese Government apparently assumes the general public is too ignorant to notice its pseudo-medical speak. To employ the wild language of mental illness to attack Falun Gong does not conform with basic medical knowledge and finds no legal basis whatsoever. The Government is offering rhetoric, not scientific knowledge. If there is any connection between qigong practice and mental illness, it exists in the pages of Chinese folklore and not medical literature. To posit, then, that Falun Gong practice works mechanistically to somehow induce psychosis is irresponsible and deceptive. Were the Chinese Government's remarks about Falun Gong's alleged, unpleasant mental side-effects true, one might wonder if millions of people would continue with or begin this practice—particularly when there are many alternative qigong and taiji to choose from.

There is no question that mental illness is a serious problem facing China today: over 16 million mentally-ill patients are distributed in all occupations and social

<sup>2</sup> from Mr. Li Hongzhi's March 23, 1997 lecture in New York City.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, “China's crackdown on Falun Gong dismays many”, *The New York Times*, 8/1/99.

<sup>4</sup> “Arrest order on cult leader”, *South China Morning Post*, 7/30/99, front page. This initial number still remains in the article “Li Hongzhi is Wanted” on the Chinese Embassy's “Faluncult” webpage. ([www.china-embassy.org/Press/Faluncult.htm](http://www.china-embassy.org/Press/Faluncult.htm))

<sup>5</sup> “Falun Gong Practice Causes Health Problems and Death”, from the Chinese Embassy's “Faluncult” webpage, [www.china-embassy.org/Press/Faluncult.htm](http://www.china-embassy.org/Press/Faluncult.htm).

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groups of Chinese society.<sup>6</sup> The bigger question, however, lies in attributing mental illness to Falun Gong. Can it be expected that none of these 16 million people have decided to practice Falun Gong, regardless of Mr. Li's admonition for mentally-ill persons not to? Given that all Falun Gong materials were for years available for inexpensive purchase, that all materials are available for free viewing or download on the internet, and that nobody will stop you from practicing (as there is no organization, leadership, or membership), it is very likely that some of these persons would take up the practice of Falun Gong. These people, as Mr. Li has stated, are not suited for practicing. Unable to grasp the principles of Falun Gong and live according to them, the mentally-ill person will not receive health benefits characteristic to Falun Gong. Neither will their mental problems find relief. Sadly, they are bound to suffer the same symptoms and challenges of before, as they are certainly not genuine, self-aware, Falun Gong practitioners. When they commit bad deeds or harm themselves, can this be blamed on Falun Gong? Should they attend church, should their behaviors be blamed on Christianity? Simply, one cannot assert causality when at best there might exist affiliation.

The Chinese Government has also erred with its wild rhetoric in asserting that some of those alleged "1,400 deaths" are Falun Gong-induced suicides. First, it can be said that where there is suicide there is mental disturbance; most likely there is some form of mental illness, be it common (as in depression) or severe (as in psychosis). Now if there is no known medical basis for asserting that Falun Gong could induce mental illness, how can one go so far as to suggest that it incurs suicide? Even the Chinese Government has not tried to assert that Falun Gong is a self-destructive practice, as every page of Mr. Li Hongzhi's teachings tell otherwise.<sup>7</sup> At a very minimum one can say that suicide has a very complex variety of triggers, not easily isolated. One is thus again

left to assume that there is some causal mechanism being posited by Chinese officials. Such a claim is even more imaginative and not worth pursuing any further.

But for the sake of argument we can pretend—only to illustrate the absurdity of the "1,400" number—that a good number of 100 of those alleged deaths were indeed by suicide. Leaving aside the question of causality, we can consider the matter of suicide in China from a broader perspective: that of population statistics. For the year 1999 in China, some 200,000 people committed suicide.<sup>8</sup> As the population of China in 1998 was 1.25 billion,<sup>9</sup> this means that the death-by-suicide mortality rate in China is 0.16 (that is, 16 people out of 100 thousand would die of suicide). This means that if one were to take a random sampling of the population, 16 of 100 thousand people could be expected to die in a given year from suicide. We can assert that Falun Gong had 70 million practitioners as of early 1999.<sup>10</sup> (Note: 70 million is likely a conservative estimate, as the Chinese Government itself figured by way of an early 1999 census that the number of practitioners was between 70-100 million.) If this group of practitioners did not practice Falun Gong and were members of the general population, we could project that 11,200 would have died by suicide in 1999. According to what is supposed to be the Chinese Government's incriminating "facts," however, perhaps a mere 100 or so practitioners died by way of suicide in seven years (note: the 1,400 number is for alleged deaths in Falun Gong's 7 year history). Were all of these alleged deaths to have come in the year 1999 alone, we could still say that Falun Gong had saved around 11,100 lives. So to have some number of deaths out of 1,400 in 7 years be allegedly by suicide in a population of 70 million persons (practitioners) is remarkable, as one would expect over 11,000

<sup>6</sup> as stated by the Minister of Public Health and the Public Health Department in China News Digest, cm 1999, 11c, hz8.

<sup>7</sup> This has not stopped the Chinese Government from trying to frame Falun Gong on this matter. On several occasions letters supposedly by Mr. Li Hongzhi have been forged by various Government offices. The letters have made all sorts of ridiculous statements, such as "make sure and come to such and such a place on this date for the group suicide" or "it is time for us to leave this world." These fake letters have tried to mislead practitioners into suicide—a crime punishable in most nations. Yet on no occasion have any practitioners been reported to have shown up. Such things are easily recognized as grossly fabricated.

<sup>8</sup> as stated by the Minister of Public Health and the Public Health Department in China News Digest, cm 1999, 11c, hz8.

<sup>9</sup> China National Statistics Bureau, 1999. Available at: [www.peopledaily.com.cn/english/china/19990914A105.html](http://www.peopledaily.com.cn/english/china/19990914A105.html)

<sup>10</sup> The New York Times, along with others, reported this statistic in its accounts of Falun Gong last April. See "In Beijing: A roar of silent protestors" and "Notoriety now for exiled leader of Chinese movement" in The New York Times, 4/27/99, International Section. Realizing later the proportions of what it had tackled in banning Falun Gong, the Chinese Government later adjusted this figure to 2 million. Unfortunately, the Western media seems to have taken this doctored, euphemistic figure at face value, forgetting that the estimate of 70 million was provided by the Chinese Government.



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deaths in just one year alone. Falun Gong could be said to be astoundingly effective in preventing suicide when examined in this light. Several health surveys done on Falun Gong practitioners in China confirm that Falun Gong is exceptionally beneficial to mental health. (see Attachments A3-5)

All numbers aside, murder and suicide—or even simply harming others intentionally—are acts absolutely incongruous with the principles of Falun Gong. With truthfulness, compassion and forbearance guiding cultivation, acts that harm others are totally unacceptable. This is why there has yet to be a case of a Falun Gong practitioner fighting back when abused during the past year's persecution; it is why the Zhongnanhai incident (see part 2, below) was perhaps the most peaceful protest gathering of 10,000 in history; this is why practitioners do not commit acts of violence—towards oneself or others. Mr. Li has been explicit on this topic, indicating that one is better off not even swatting a mosquito; even this is an act of violence to a Falun Gong practitioner. Should a “practitioner” commit suicide or murder, there is something seriously wrong with this person and he or she is anything but a Falun Gong practitioner. Most likely, this person was one of those psychotic persons who wrongfully tried to practice Falun Gong. But this does not mean there is any connection between the two, let alone a causal connection.

If one violates the rules of an organization, religion, or club one might no longer be considered a member of that group. If one violates a serious rule of society, one is imprisoned for it and no longer considered to be a member of that society. Falun Gong, as a serious practice, has some serious principles that one pays attention to. Even these, however, are up to the individual person to decide to follow. But if a person should decide not to, how can he or she be considered a practitioner of Falun Dafa? Understanding the principles is an essential aspect of Falun Gong. People who violate its principles are not considered practitioners, and those unfortunate people with psychosis were never considered practitioners.

When people are free to make individual choices, some irresponsible people might make irresponsible choices. But when the choices are completely opposite to what cultivation practice teaches, the cultivation cannot be blamed. If a teacher teaches something and the student chooses to do the opposite, does one then point one's finger at the teacher or the student? This should be easy to see.

This has not stopped the Chinese Government from employing twisted logic. If the Chinese government can medically demonstrate the mechanisms by which Falun Gong supposedly induces psychotic behavior in previ-

ously healthy people, they will be ushering in a new frontier in psychiatry. Such findings would undoubtedly be quickly found in prestigious medical journals. But until now, they have only been found buried amidst venomous propaganda churned out by China's state-run media. Such claims cannot be taken seriously. Sure enough, alleged “cases” that have been subjected to independent investigation have been revealed as falsification. (see Attachments A1, A2) Until that unlikely day, people are better off going on the statistics of the several major medical studies which found Falun Gong practice very beneficial to mental well-being. (see Attachments A4, A5)

### **b. the claim that Falun Gong causes death through abstention from medicine**

As already shown in part 1 (“Falun Gong's teachings on medicine and medical treatment”), Mr. Li and his Falun Gong have always, unequivocally stated that people must make their own decisions on pursuing medical treatment; one can also peruse Mr. Li's writings, lectures, and interview Falun Gong practitioners to easily confirm this for oneself. What's more, as indicated, the validity of alleged “cases” in this regard are also questionable. (again, see Attachments A1, A2) In this part what we would like to do is take the argument a step further, and consider the issues of medical treatment, medical complications, and death in statistical relief by way of population data. In this light, the picture is the same: the Chinese Government is manipulating numbers to serve its political agenda.

So here we will consider the Chinese Government's case on its own terms, examining the feasibility of its numbers. First, for the sake of argument we will imagine that 1,400 practitioners of Falun Gong died as a result of forgoing medical treatment, and that these deaths all somehow occurred in 1999 (though this is actual a seven-year total); we will generously allow that the initial 743 number was some sort of miscalculation. Along with this we will suppose that all Falun Gong practitioners cannot take medicine, as claimed by the Chinese Government; the vast majority opt not to take it anyway, so it is very fair to say that any practitioner's death in 1999 should have been included in this “1,400” figure. The next supposition is that 70 million people practiced Falun Gong in China at the time of the ban. Notably, the vast majority of Falun Gong practitioners came to the practice with some degree of illness, often seeking relief from their symptoms through cultivation; many were affected with chronic illness that had resisted efforts by conventional medical treatment. Also significant is that the bulk of

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practitioners were retired, elderly persons; death and illness, of course, are much nearer for this segment of the population. Some surprising things can be determined from these suppositions.

Consider the following analysis on the issue of abstinence from medicine for the year of 1999 alone. What we ask here is: What would have happened had these practitioners sought medical treatment while practicing Falun Gong, rather than abstaining from it? Of the 70 million Falun Gong practitioners who each, allegedly, abstained from medical treatment, 1,400 passed away. This means that a miniscule 0.02 Falun Gong practitioners died for every 1000 that practice (0.02 mortality rate). Now consider that in the United States some 140,000 people die in a given year as a result of Adverse Drug Reaction (ADR), while another 98,000 die from medical error;<sup>11</sup> this puts total deaths due to medical treatment at 238,000 per year. In a population of 268 million,<sup>12</sup> this equates to 0.89 persons dying for every 1000 (0.89 mortality rate). To be generous, we will assume that medicine in China is as advanced as in the United States, enjoying numerous quality controls and checks, regulatory agencies, etc. Thus, we will figure that the same risks are involved in China in going to the hospital for medical treatment. So if this population of 70 million were to experience the same mortality rate by way of medical error and ADR as does the United States population (0.89), we could expect a whopping 62,300 deaths! That means that simply by virtue of abstaining from medicine and practicing their exercises, Falun Gong practitioners changed their projected annual death toll (due to medical complications) by 60,900. In other words, it would appear that Falun Gong is not so much murderous as miraculous.

Now let's compare Falun Gong practitioners' mortality rate for 1999 (0.02) to that of the general, overall Chinese population. Here we ask: What would have happened to these persons were they not practitioners; i.e., were they subject to the same statistical averages as the general population. The age-adjusted mortality rate for China in 1998 was 6.50 (650 deaths per 100,000 people).

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<sup>11</sup> for findings on ADR, see Journal of the American Medical Association vol. 277(4), Jan 1997, 301-306. For findings on medical error, see The National Academies: Testimony to Congress, 12/13/99.

<sup>12</sup> Statistical Abstract of the United States, US Census Bureau, 1998 ed.

<sup>13</sup> China National Statistics Bureau, 1999. Available at: [www.peopledaily.com.cn/english/china/19990914A105.html](http://www.peopledaily.com.cn/english/china/19990914A105.html)

<sup>13</sup> So if this mortality rate were to be assumed for those 70 million persons who practiced Falun Gong in 1999, one would anticipate an astounding 455,000 deaths! That is, this many people would have died according to the laws of averages if they were not practicing Falun Gong and were members of the general population. Apparently Falun Gong practice has a bigger positive impact than previously imagined. And this statistic is taking the aggregate number of 1,400 deaths and putting them into one year alone, no less. This means that Falun Gong practice—which “forced” practitioners to abstain from medicine, recall, according to the Chinese Government—saved the lives of 453,600 persons in 1999. Not bad for a practice that supposedly causes “dire consequences” to people's health, according to Chinese Government literature. Even compared with the age-adjusted mortality rate for the US in 1999, 4.87, the number 1,400 is nothing.<sup>14</sup> Had those practitioners lived in the US, one would still anticipate 340,900 deaths, and this with medicine, no less!

Even if we were to take the Chinese Government's recent, politically-tailored figure of 2 million to represent the number of Falun Gong practitioners in 1999, then we could still expect that 13000 practitioners would die in a given year (with China's 6.5 mortality rate) if they were members of the general population. But with only 1,400 supposed cases being scrounged up, this means that Falun Gong practice has still saved about 11600 practitioners' lives. And again, this is supposing that all alleged deaths occurred in just one year, no less. The scaffolding behind the “1,400 cases” is all-too-easily revealed.

Finally, take into account all of the other factors involved: that the majority of practitioners are elderly; that they often come to the practice ailing; that the alleged 1,400 deaths occurred in fact over 7 years; and that China's medical situation is not on par with that of the US. Obviously, even the most basic, conservative of statistical analysis demonstrates the absurdity of the Chinese Government's accusation that Falun Gong practice is dangerous. With these other factors taken into consideration, the claim that Falun Gong adherents' abstaining from medical treatment is dangerous is not only groundless, but completely out of touch with reality. The facts say just the opposite, and do so resoundingly. And all of this comes simply from engaging the Chinese Government's claims on their own terms. One should not forget, either, the previously stated matters: that Falun Gong does not require avoidance of medicine; that the

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<sup>14</sup> Statistical Abstract of the United States, US Census Bureau, 1999 ed.

Chinese Government blatantly lied about Mr. Li's teachings and Falun Gong's principles; that there is no legal or medical evidence that Falun Gong could possibly induce psychosis or suicidal behavior; and that the alleged "1,400 deaths" have neither held up under investigation nor been properly documented. Ultimately, the "1,400 deaths" are in fact evidence that Falun Gong embodies remarkable healing capacities: the mortality rate is incredibly lower than that due to medical error or that of the general population—a population privileged to medical treatment, unlike the poor, "victimized" Falun Gong "followers."

The irony in all of this, of course, is that Falun Gong's popularity owes greatly to its profound healing effects—effects that deeply improve both the mind and body of the practitioner. These have been repeatedly documented and investigated. An enormous number of individual cases of radical healing exist, including many persons rescued from terminal and chronic illnesses. Were Falun Gong dangerous in a manner remotely similar to that portrayed by Chinese officials, would the practice have spread to over 70 million people by word of mouth in a mere 7 years? Would these health seeking, aging persons not have opted for less high-risk systems, such as the government sanctioned taiji and qigong forms? Clearly, people found not risk but benefit in the practice of Falun Gong. And people continue to today, as Falun Gong is now practiced in over 30 countries; its health benefits appear hardly bound by culture.

We find the Chinese Government's venomous "medical facts" to instead be fabrications and distortions both morally repugnant and indefensible. Worse yet, they have been the foundation for a brutal campaign of persecution and violence directed at Falun Gong practitioners. We would invite the World Health Organization to conduct an independent, fair investigation of this matter. Please, dear reader, consider helping to facilitate such an investigation. We feel it would serve the world well to have the truth of this matter confirmed by an authoritative third party.

## II. The Zhongnanhai Gathering: The Facts and Their Meaning

On April 25, 1999, over 10,000 Falun Gong practitioners gathered in neat order at Zhongnanhai, the Chinese Government leadership compound in Beijing. In a very peaceful manner, they pleaded with the government to provide an open environment for practicing Falun Gong. This request was precipitated by several incidents of harassment and persecution in weeks prior to April 25. Because this took place at Zhongnanhai, people refer to it as "the Zhongnanhai incident." This incident became an instant focal point for the whole world because it happened at the most sensitive place in China, and because of the unusually calm and peaceful manner the Falun Gong practitioners consistently maintained. Since the time of the incident and during the current large-scale crackdown, Chinese authorities have utilized this incident to justify their harsh treatment of Falun Gong. As Falun Gong practitioners, we feel it is important to present the truth of the entire incident, so that people will not be misled by the propaganda campaign launched by the Chinese Government. The Chinese Government has referred to this incident as supposed "evidence" that Falun Gong has political aspirations, is a threat to the government, and disrupts the social order. These claims have been repeatedly pronounced by Chinese media both in China and abroad, compounding popular misunderstanding of the event. An honest investigation into the event provides a remarkably different picture, however, and we feel this is long overdue. Such an inquiry leads to several conclusions radically unlike those drawn by the Chinese Government.

### 1. Sequence of Events

The Falun Gong practitioners went to Zhongnanhai because the Public Security Bureau (PSB) in the city of Tianjin had recently and unlawfully detained 45 Falun Gong practitioners. Since Falun Gong helps people to improve their physical and mental health, the number of its practitioners had increased rapidly in Mainland China, approaching tens of millions in number. According to a government census done in early 1999, the number of Falun Gong practitioners in China was anywhere between 70 million and 100 million. This caused the Chinese government to consider it a potential political threat, despite its having no political aspirations. Some government officials took advantage of this situation by creating problems in order to gain political credit. Thus, news agencies controlled by the govern-

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ment have been constantly publishing untrue stories and articles that attack Falun Gong.

The Zhongnanhai incident was triggered by the Tianjin event, where He Zuoxiu, from the Chinese Science Academy, published an article titled “I do not agree with adolescents practicing qigong” in Science and Technology for Youth (published by Tianjin Education College). In the article, he fabricated stories about Falun Gong leading to mental illness, and implied that Falun Gong could become an organization similar to the Boxers’, who led a rebellion in the 19th century that destroyed the nation. Many Falun Gong practitioners were disturbed by this spreading of untruths. With no alternative, some practitioners used the government-approved approach of appealing to related organizations to correct the false accusations. On April 18, they went to Tianjin Education College and other related offices to report the facts about Falun Gong. This article will explain later why there was no other way to report such accusations.

It was an utter shock when the Tianjin PSB showed up to harass practitioners. They refused to communicate with practitioners appropriately. Instead, they sent people to beat some of the practitioners. On April 23, they started to disperse people and detain them, which eventually blocked the only channel Falun Gong practitioners had for reporting the truth to the government. Practitioners turned to Beijing on April 25 to plead to a higher authority. They asked for the release of the innocent people, for an open and legal environment in which to exercise, and for the easing of the pressure that the government had put on Falun Gong practitioners for a long time.

Initially, practitioners gathered around Zhongnanhai. Later, several policemen told them that one place was not safe, and that another place was off limits. Following these rules, the practitioners divided into two groups that circled Zhongnanhai. Later, He Zuoxiu arrived, trying to disturb the practitioners; but no one responded to him.

According to a witness, on the evening of April 24, some practitioners working in the public security department had already submitted their name cards to Zhongnanhai, asking for a chance to report the situation. There was no response. At 9 p.m., practitioners started to gather on Fuyou Street near Zhongnanhai, some with luggage, some with meditation mats. Most of them were from cities outside of Beijing.

At 6 a.m. on April 25, a witness went to the north entrance of Fuyou Street, and discovered that policemen were blocking the way to Zhongnanhai. None of the practitioners attempted to force their way through, but they witnessed an astonishing scene. Police first led the

practitioners from the east side of the street to the west side, and then directed them to walk south towards Zhongnanhai. Meanwhile, another group came from the opposite direction, also led by police, and both groups met right outside the main entrance of Zhongnanhai. According to the media, there were over 10,000 practitioners gathered outside Zhongnanhai.

Soon there were practitioners approaching from all directions. They filled all the sidewalks outside of Zhongnanhai. But the traffic was not blocked at all; even the route for the handicapped people remained clear. There were 70-year-old and 80-year-old men and women, pregnant women who were near the end of their term, and mothers holding their newborn babies. Many of them hardly ate any food or drank any water to reduce the time needed for using the restroom. No one knew where others came from. They “came from nowhere, disappeared to nowhere.”<sup>15</sup>

Practitioners did not wander on the streets, did not have any slogans or signs, and did not start any fights. In China, appealing to the government does not require a permit from the PSB. Each practitioner went to represent only his or her own views. They came to report the mistreatment that they and their friends had been experiencing, and did not violate any laws or regulations. Since practitioners thought that they had achieved the goal of expressing their concerns and seeking understanding and support from the government, they quietly dispersed at 11:30 p.m. (4/26, Central Daily).

### 2. Causes of the Incident

On the surface, the Zhongnanhai incident seemed to be triggered by the Tianjin incident and an anti-Falun Gong article from He Zuoxiu. In fact, the original reason for such incidents stemmed from the central authorities’ anxiety about the unprecedented popularity of Falun Gong. Seven years after Mr. Li’s first public lecture in 1992, there were about 70 to 80 million practitioners in Mainland China. This is to say that understanding the incident is very complex, as it had both long term and short term causes, and was related to political struggles inside the Communist Party.

#### a. long-term and short-term causes

The long-term cause of the Zhongnanhai incident was the ongoing suppression of Falun Gong. With the rapid

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<sup>15</sup> see eyewitness reports at [www.minghui.ca](http://www.minghui.ca)

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spreading of Falun Gong, the central authority was afraid of losing its control over the people. The government had therefore been attempting to undermine Falun Gong through the media, by banning books, by conducting underground investigations, and by disrupting practice sites in recent years. The government had already been attempting to destroy the practitioners' environment for practicing Falun Gong. There was no other way to express the facts about the incidents and the practice than to appeal to central authorities. The April 25 gathering at Zhongnanhai aimed at doing just this.

The central authorities began their criticism of Falun Gong on June 17, 1996. On that day, the Guangming Daily (the official voice of the State Council, articles that reflect only the opinions of government officials) published an article criticizing Falun Gong as an "anti-science" and "superstitious" practice, and labeled its practitioners as "stupid" people.

On July 24, 1996, the Chinese News Publishing Office issued a notice about "immediately confiscating five books, including China Falun Gong" nationwide. Following that, dozens of newspapers and magazines started to join the campaign against Falun Gong. Some official scholars such as He Zuoxiu were also active in the campaign. They used their being considered "scientists" to slander Falun Gong. The Central Office of National Publication and Central Propaganda Ministry also ordered all publishing companies not to publish books related to Falun Gong.

Some official departments started investigating Falun Gong at the beginning of 1997. The Public Security Ministry deployed a nationwide investigation of Falun Gong, using the rationale that Falun Gong fit into the category of so-called illegal religious activities. Since Falun Gong practice contains no such activities, this investigation found nothing to prosecute. Related official departments then formed a team to monitor Falun Gong. Meanwhile, they ordered all Physical Education departments to investigate Falun Gong activities. Although all responses from PE departments were positive, and although their reports indicated that Falun Gong is an activity that improves health, cures illnesses, and has no illegal religious elements, the Public Security Ministry nonetheless insisted that a close monitoring of Falun Gong activities was necessary.

On July 21, 1998, some official departments again issued a "Notice for conducting investigation against Falun Gong", insisting that Mr. Li was spreading an evil cult and that Falun Gong key members were conducting criminal activities. The notice also ordered all local public security and political protection departments to investigate the internal activities of these people and to look

for evidence of any crimes within Falun Gong. It is apparent that the public security departments had labeled Falun Gong as engaging in criminal activities, without any evidence. This was, in other words, an incident of conviction before investigation.

After this document was issued, many local PSB's announced that Falun Gong activities were considered illegal assemblies. They dispersed group practices, confiscated the private property of practitioners, and detained, arrested, beat, and verbally abused Falun Gong practitioners. In some areas, practitioners were fined, and Falun-Gong related books were banned. Practitioners tried many times to appeal through normal channels, but were not successful.

In Mainland China there is only one official voice, so many articles have been published that have criticized, cursed, and slandered Falun Gong in the past four years. No articles defending Falun Gong were able to be published. Under these conditions where no other options were available, Falun Gong practitioners went to Zhongnanhai, asking the government to give them an unrestricted environment in which to practice. In short, the Zhongnanhai appeal was caused by the long-term slandering that Falun Gong had suffered at the hands of the government. In addition, practitioners had no other venue for reporting the facts in Mainland China—there is no other way to practice freedom of speech.

The other, short-term reason for appealing to Zhongnanhai, as mentioned above, was to ask for the release of the practitioners arrested in the Tianjin incident. The attempt to report that incident to authorities in Tianjin backfired and the Tianjin PSB detained 45 practitioners. In Mainland China, an appeal is not only a legally protected right, but also the only channel that practitioners can use to report the facts. The practitioners' gathering in Beijing was a legal appeal, the only anomaly was that the number of people that attended was so large.

### **b. political causes**

The government's suppression, which led to the Zhongnanhai incident, was likely related to political struggles among high-level officials. Different groups within the central government held a variety of views on Falun Gong. Among them, a few tried to capitalize on destroying Falun Gong in order to advance their political careers. According to a report from the Central News Agency (5/4 from Taipei), the government's political scheme behind the April 25 incident could be described as a "release before capturing" and a "ruse of suffering [by the government] before charging [against Falun

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Gong]”. The purpose was to make Zhongnanhai appear to feel pressure, and then to outlaw Falun Gong, allowing the government to demonstrate its might in demolishing this so-called threat.

As early as 1996, the rapid development of Falun Gong was noticed by some departments in the central government. Luo Gan, Secretary General of the State Council at the time, ordered the Public Security Ministry to conduct a secret investigation. Personnel in the public security system participated undercover in various Falun Gong activities, but no evidence of criminal conduct was seen.

Even with the lack of evidence, there were still two opinions inside the government about how to deal with Falun Gong. One side thought that Falun Gong was a public security issue and not a political problem. Therefore, it should not be banned. The other side worried about the increasing popularity and influence of Falun Gong, which could potentially be a force opposing the Communist Party regime. They insisted on banning it. Luo Gan, Secretary of the Central Committee of Political and Legal Affairs in early 1998, actively advocated the banning of Falun Gong. Prime Minister Zhu Rongji rejected the idea, and President Jiang Zemin did not express an opinion.

Luo Gan is a relative of He Zuoxiu of the Chinese Science Academy. Zuoxiu had used the media to openly slander Falun Gong, and tried to create conflict between Falun Gong and the central government. His purpose was to create incidents that would lead all groups in the Communist Party to agree that outlawing Falun Gong was correct and necessary. After the April 25 incident, Luo Gan reported that Falun Gong had tens of millions of followers, possessed a religious and superstitious nature, and that Mr. Li, who currently lives in New York, was suspected of having a complex network of international connections. He reported that Falun Gong was, therefore, a potential threat to social stability. These opinions were even widely distributed to Hong Kong and the international media, intending to exaggerate the potential “threat” of Falun Gong. How could those practitioners, without having an organization, appear to be “well organized and directed”? Could this be why public security officers pretended to be practitioners? Three days before the Zhongnanhai appeal, the public security departments had already received information of the appeal and had started to monitor the situation closely. They did not report this information at the time before the incident, but preferred to take the blame afterwards. Wasn’t this a “ruse of suffering before charging”?

Other evidence showed that the April 25 incident was a trap set up by the public security personnel, and inno-

cent Falun Gong practitioners stepped into the trap before they knew it. The next part will analyze this topic.

### **3. Some Clarifications**

#### **a. surrounding Zhongnanhai was the Chinese Security Department's trick**

It is claimed that Falun Gong practitioners “surrounded” Zhongnanhai because they formed a circle around the area. In fact, this arrangement was set up by the Security Department. In the first part, we shared an eyewitness description of the events. He stated that the Falun Gong practitioners were led by police to take two routes that converged at the front entrance of Zhongnanhai and formed a circle. Even as that witness was telling us the facts, he did not notice that the police had tricked the people. He simply stated what he had seen. Many people, including Falun Gong practitioners, were not aware of the situation after reading his description. It wasn’t until June 24 that some practitioners pointed out this plot in an article they published on the Internet.

It was mentioned in part 2 that three days before the April 25 incident, the Security Department had received information and was closely monitoring the situation. They chose not to report the information and to rather take the criticism afterwards. It was also reported that when He Zuoxiu was asked to comment on the incident, he said, “For the time being, I will not comment because I do not want to mess up the whole arrangement.”<sup>16</sup> Did certain people in some government departments plan the April 25 incident? Might the articles of He Zuoxiu and the arrest of Falun Gong practitioners in Tianjin Security Bureau all have been small traps that were part of one master plan?

#### **b. Falun Gong practitioners went to Beijing only to make an appeal**

As stated in part 2, practitioners went to Beijing and Tianjin because there was no other way to report the truth. The approach they took is called “appealing,” which is a right protected by Chinese law. According to Item 41 in the “People’s Republic of China Constitution,” citizens have the right to submit criticism

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<sup>16</sup> Mingbao, 5/5/99, electronic edition. (this is a Hong Kong newspaper)

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of and suggestions for any national institutions and staff. Citizens have the right to appeal to, file suit, or speak up to national institutions regarding any conduct of institutions or staff that violates the law or fails to fulfill responsibilities. It is stated in the 10th Code of the Chinese “Appealing Codes” that issues in the appealing process should be submitted to related executive departments, or to one level higher, as these departments have the legal right to make decisions.

The gatherings of Falun Gong practitioners in Tianjin and Zhongnanhai should not be considered demonstrations. After the Tianjin PSB arrested practitioners on April 23, some practitioners gathered at the Office of Appeals of the Tianjin City government just to appeal and present the facts. The appeal was not well received, however. Instead, about 40 more people were arrested. As a result, Falun Gong practitioners had to appeal to the level above the Tianjin City government, which is the central government in Beijing. Practitioners didn’t wander around the streets, so it can’t be called a parade. They didn’t have banners or signs, so it can’t be called a demonstration. In China, appealing does not require application to the PSB. Each practitioner just represents himself, reporting the unjust treatment he or his friends and relatives have experienced. The appeals in Tianjin and Beijing did not violate any regulations.

Mr. Li has always taught Falun Gong practitioners that they must not violate the law. Anyone genuine practitioner would abide by this teaching, one of the principles of Falun Gong, and would not violate the law. Therefore, throughout the incidents, practitioners have always maintained peaceful and kind conduct. They were orderly and cooperated with the arrangements and directions of the police. They stood where the personnel from the Office of Appeals and the traffic police told them to, waiting to be received by officials. The whole process did not involve any signs or slogans, nor did it block the traffic. Practitioners even picked up all the trash on the ground in the area. Such details were reported by international media.

### **c. the Zhongnanhai incident was not planned by Mr. Li or any genuine Falun Gong practitioner**

In the ten thousand-word report prepared by the Chinese PSB, Mr. Li was accused of being in Beijing the day before April 25, supposedly orchestrating the whole incident behind the scenes. In fact, Mr. Li passed through Beijing on his way to Australia to attend a Falun Gong conference, but was not in Beijing on that day. To reduce the cost of his airline ticket, he had layovers in Beijing

and Hong Kong. He stayed for 48 hours in Beijing during the transfer and left Beijing on April 24 for Hong Kong. The Chinese government claims that this was not an accident and that Mr. Li was planning things while using the excuse of transferring airplanes.

As stated in Part 2, however, there are also people wondering whether the Zhongnanhai incident was planned by a few people from the public security departments. We do not know for certain, neither do we want to speculate about who planned the Zhongnanhai incident. We would simply like to question the false accusation that Mr. Li arranged it.

The Chinese government wondered how, without any organization, so many people arrived at Zhongnanhai at the same time. In fact, it was largely due to practitioners’ personal networking and exercise environment. The spread of Falun Gong is mostly done by individual practitioners who, after personally benefiting from it, tell their friends and families. Many people practice in parks with groups. Without having an organization, and without anyone official to plan it, any activities would still have been known by many people in a short period of time through this type of personal network.

### **d. how 10,000 can gather without being “organized”<sup>17</sup>**

Disbelief surrounding the gathering of 10,000 in the absence of an organization stems from a lack of understanding Falun Gong itself. One needs to begin by understanding that practitioners work on their self-cultivation practice daily. They strive to improve themselves, performing the exercises and working on personal conduct. They find this practice to be extraordinarily good, and typically experience great mental and physical benefits. Their hearts are touched in a profound way, so they enjoy sharing these benefits with others in need. So when practitioners found Falun Gong being viciously slandered and misrepresented by the media, they wanted to see it corrected. They wanted to give their perspective, allowing readers to know the truth.

One can easily imagine a person in this situation thinking, “I can’t appear on TV, get a news article published, or get anyone to tell my side of the story. I feel very strongly about it, so I’ll just go express my opinion.” If we can imagine one person feeling this way, can we imagine two? Why not three individuals thinking this

<sup>17</sup> for further discussion of this term as it has been applied to Falun Gong, see “Is Falun Gong an organization?”, below, in section 3.

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Where those who are genuinely perplexed by the Zhongnanhai gathering get tripped up is with the number 10,000. It is easy to imagine one, two, or three people deciding to go appeal. But 10,000—that seems necessarily coordinated and planned. But why so? We are really talking about individuals making individual decisions. Yes, there were a lot of individuals at Zhongnanhai, yet there are a lot of individuals who practice Falun Gong, quite a lot. Most did not go. If those who practice Falun Gong had leaders that were coordinating them to make a grand statement, would we expect only 10,000? Consider that there were then between 70-100 million people practicing Falun Gong in China. We have seen in the oppression that followed Zhongnanhai (and that continues now) that practitioners have been willing to subject themselves to detention, arrest, beatings, and physical abuse in order to let the facts be known. They have demonstrated willingness to lose their jobs, opportunity for education, social standing, and economic security in order to uphold their belief in the principles of Falun Gong. With such tenacious dedication to Falun Gong, if they had leaders orchestrating a grand movement—a big, politically-bold one—would we expect to see a mere .01% of this determined “membership” turn out? Wouldn’t an orchestrated movement allow time for countless non-locals to arrive for the event? Having .01% turn out to make a statement for something that so upset those people indicates that the Zhongnanhai incident was certainly not an orchestrated campaign.

Still, people have trouble imagining so many people going to Zhongnanhai on their own. Could they really have made that decision independently? One need only recall that in 1980, spontaneous gatherings in Europe cropped up all over the country and in many other parts of the world to rally for the slain John Lennon. People appeared with banners, drawings, candles, music and memorabilia. Who organized this? What committee dispatched them? Who distributed the photos and records they carried? We know, of course, that these were people spontaneously following their hearts. Such was the case at Zhongnanhai.

Some remark, “Well, the discipline at Zhongnanhai was described as being higher than that of the official police on the scene. This takes training.” Yes, it would take extensive training to get a large crowd to be that disciplined. But what if each individual had been disciplining him or herself every day for years—learning principles and improving him or herself until impulsive emotional responses were gone, learning to consider others first, and training to be a better and better person in every regard? Falun Gong is a serious practice. Every one of those people at Zhongnanhai was simply manifesting

what they had learned in Falun Gong, following the principles that had spiritually improved, moved, and elevated them. This is the standard of behavior they try to maintain every day—in their homes, workplaces, schools, and so on. Why should their behavior at Zhongnanhai be any different? If one examines it carefully, it is not so hard to understand. It is much easier for an individual to be disciplined than a crowd. This was a crowd of disciplined individuals. No traffic was disrupted, no slogans chanted, no banners or signs waved, and nobody harassed or intimidated. The Falun Gong practitioners not only picked up their own litter, they picked up the cigarette butts flicked by police officers. This was clearly no political protest.

#### **4. Summary: Who has Actually “Disrupted Social Stability”?**

The Zhongnanhai incident originated from a legal attempt to appeal to a government agency. Why was there such a tragic result? It was surely not expected by those well-intentioned and peaceful Falun Gong practitioners who went to the appealing offices. If we had not read through so much information and tried to find clues, we would not have been able to identify the causes of the incident. The Zhongnanhai incident was not planned by Mr. Li Hongzhi or by any other genuine Falun Dafa practitioner. Since the central authority has been worried about the large numbers of Falun Gong practitioners, and since they have refused to believe that Falun Gong would not cause any political problems, they obviously sought a way to eliminate Falun Gong. It was an opportunity for the central authority to suppress and prosecute Falun Gong. The Zhongnanhai incident created the perfect situation for execution of their plans.

One CCTV program alleged that, after beginning to practice Falun Gong, one man turned his back on his family and relatives, and instead got obsessed with doing the exercises day and night. In so doing, this man, in fact, had already deviated far from a basic principle of Falun Gong practice, which is to be a normal family member and worker, without ever going to extremes in one’s practice. Mr. Li has, in many of his lectures, repeatedly reminded practitioners of the importance of the relationships between self-cultivation and work, and between self-cultivation and family life, asking that all practitioners accord their practice of Falun Gong to the activities of normal, everyday life. For example, Mr. Li states in Zhuan Falun, “Of course, during cultivation in the society of common people, we should respect parents, guide our children, and try to be good and kind towards others under all circumstances, not to mention our relatives. We



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should treat everyone the same, be nice to both parents and children, and be considerate toward others in everything we do. Such a heart will be unselfish, kind and benevolent.” The above so-called Falun Gong practitioner is not a genuine practitioner, because he actually did not comply with the standards of Falun Gong whatsoever.

Practitioners of Falun Gong are known for being exemplary citizens. In the workplace, they are diligent, committed, and honest workers, are not concerned with personal gains or losses, are strict with themselves, and kind and considerate toward others. Many Falun Gong practitioners have been well known as the best workers in their work units. In the city of Changchun, there was a saying that circulated among employers who were hiring, “We will hire whoever is practicing Falun Gong, because we wish our minds to be at ease.” At home, practitioners are good husbands, good wives, and good children, always working to ensure a peaceful and harmonious family life. These qualities do not disrupt social order, but ensure it.

Mr. Li has clearly stated, “All Falun Gong cultivators have to strictly obey the laws of various countries. Any behaviors that violate the policies and laws of a country are prohibited by the virtues of Falun Gong.” Emphasis on compassion, harmony and serenity ensure a society that runs smoothly, matching well the Chinese Government’s desire to have “Stability above all else.” No matter whether they are on the street, at work, or with their families, all Falun Gong practitioners try their best to help others and be a positive part of society. Rather than praising and embracing Falun Gong’s positive impact on society, the government has instead chased millions and millions of good people to the opposite side of the government and has stirred up strife, causing great social unrest. Parents have been hauled off to jails or sent to labor camps, leaving their kids behind, sometimes even unattended. Families and communities have been physically ripped apart by the Chinese Government’s persecution. Mother’s have been made to slander their daughters, sons to turn in their fathers, and neighbors to police and report on one another. Literally, nobody has been allowed to remain neutral. Countless students have been kicked out of school for practicing Falun Gong. Numerous adults have been dismissed from work and heavily fined for not renouncing their practice. Who then, we ask the Chinese Government, has disrupted social stability? If Falun Gong had, somehow, in some minor way disrupted social stability (and this has yet to be shown at all), then the Chinese Government has clearly, objectively outdone the practice one-hundred fold.

### III. Is Falun Gong a Cult, Religion, or Organization?

#### 1. Is Falun Gong a Cult?

It is understandable why this question is raised in the West: It comes from not knowing. Confused by a barrage of persuasive, dramatized accusations rippling forth daily from the Chinese Government’s propaganda machine, Westerner’s often learn to associate the terms “cult” or “religion” with Falun Gong. These characterizations are, however, grossly misleading. They tell more about Chinese Officials’ political agenda than about Falun Gong. Due to the problematic connotations of the derogatory label “cult,” we think a response to this accusatory term is due. Falun Gong is most comfortable being subjected to fair scrutiny.

Most simply, Falun Gong is not a cult. Cults dominate all aspects of their member’s lives, negatively controlling their minds and bodies. Members surrender all material goods, both to enrich the cult itself and to render the cultists completely dependent. Cults typically live communally, with members being deprived of sleep and food, all the while being brainwashed with the cult’s doctrine. All Falun Gong activities are free and entirely voluntary, as practitioners are never asked for money or donations. They live normal lives, with their own families, and hold ordinary jobs of all kinds. Whether they practice or not simply depends on whether they believe it to be a good thing, for there is no supervision or compulsion of any kind.

The first issue usually connected with cults is that of money. Cult members are pressured to bring in money by raising funds and from their own homesteads. The results are typically catastrophic for their families and friends. Falun Gong is not involved in any such activities. No one is asked to donate anything, no one raises any funds, and money is not exchanged. Our practice is very simple and does not require any material resources. If we attend an experience sharing conference out of town, we will often travel together and share hotels. At the end of a trip, travel and lodging expenses are often paid on one account for convenience. Great care is taken that everyone pays only his or her own share and that no one has finished with any profit. If someone overpays it is not accepted and the difference is returned. It is done the way you would expect when traveling with friends you greatly trust.

Some materials are often used in Falun Gong that may be purchased by practitioners should they wish.

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They are ordinary and actually quite optional when it comes to purchasing them. The most important of these are the books. There has been a lot of criticism of Mr. Li because of the sale of books. This is ridiculous—Stephen King is never criticized for selling books, regardless of their content. Nor are spiritual figures, such as the Dalai Lama or Tich Nhat Hahn—both of whom have published dozens of books—or other Buddhist masters. Everybody understands and fully expects someone to make money if they publish a successful book. But if Mr. Li has created Falun Gong in order to trick people and is doing it for the purpose of making money, then he is doing so in an extremely inefficient and foolish manner.

The books of Falun Gong are China Falun Gong and Zhuan Falun, with Zhuan Falun being the primary text. Every practitioner should read Zhuan Falun for a firm understanding of the practice, but it's not necessary a practitioner to buy it. A beginner approaching the practice site is welcome to borrow a copy. If he becomes interested in practicing Falun Gong, he probably will not be asked for its return (although this would be up to the person who loaned it—it's just that practitioners are usually very generous and are happy to see someone's interest develop; the question of property of the book isn't an issue). If the new person decides he is not interested in Falun Gong, he might be asked to return the book. It is never necessary for him to buy a copy in order to find out if he is or is not interested. This would never happen in a cult, or even in most ordinary organizations. The interested borrower usually returns it anyway. He then may buy his own copy, borrow one from a library, or even download a free copy from the Internet. It is not necessary to buy one at all. If one has no Internet access, someone will download and print a copy for that person, taking no money for it.

The price usually charged for martial arts books, taiji quan books or meditation books are usually higher than “regular” books—often much higher. Yet as of Fall, 1999, one could get the books of Falun Gong for as little as \$6 to \$12 each. This is at least half of the fair market value of “regular” books and easily one third of what one would expect to buy martial arts books for. Zhuan Falun is more than 390 pages long and most copies are imported from Hong Kong. These people obviously are not after our money. With production, publication, import, all of the various people that have to be paid percentages, etc., when a book is published and distributed, what large profits is Mr. Li taking? He surely could take more and it would be completely reasonable, simply on the business level. He has chosen otherwise, however, making the practice accessible to all economic classes.

There is an exercise video available. The copies some people have are dubbed duplicates. They are copied at

the suggestion of practitioners who loan them. Should one buy it, one could get it for a mere \$9-\$12. It comes in a professional plastic case with a color insert. One might wonder how they clear the material expenses, as there is obviously no profit in it. Have you ever priced a kung fu or taiji instruction video? Kung fu videos are often even as high as sixty dollars or more; twenty at least. And what does it cost to learn Tae Bo? All instruction in Falun Gong throughout the world is free. No one is persuaded to buy anything and the materials are available for free. If you decided to take up Falun Gong and don't wish to spend a penny on it, this is completely possible. No practice site in the world collects any money, as no fees or donations are accepted. This is a lousy way to run a business, but a great way to run an upright self-cultivation practice.

Another feature evident in cults is the preoccupation with recruitment and isolation of its new members. Practitioners of Falun Gong are very interested in getting the word out about our practice. What does this mean? Simply, they want to let people know there is such a cultivation practice known as Falun Gong, or “Falun Dafa.” Why? We find the benefits simply too good to keep to ourselves, for many of us have enjoyed remarkable improvements in health, mind, and spirit. Practitioners will mention to others that there is a book called Zhuan Falun by Li Hongzhi, and that it teaches good things. They have found the practice to be exceptionally good and leading them to a higher understanding; the positive results manifest in a variety of ways. So they wish to share it and get the word out. But getting the word out does not include coercion or even persuasion. A book to read, exercises to learn—the rest of Falun Gong is up to you. Practice with a group, fine. Practice at home, fine. Read with the group, read at home—all the same. We think it is very good for beginners to at least be in contact with an experienced practitioner, as there is often interference when someone begins a serious self-cultivation practice. But it's up to the beginner to establish this contact—asking questions, etc. If you've borrowed a book from someone and they haven't heard from you, they may call to ask if you're finished with it; please return it if you're not interested in reading it. But you will never find a practitioner showing up at your door, your workplace, calling you on the phone, etc., telling you why you should be interested. Self-cultivation is up to you—no one can do it for you and no one can persuade or convince you into enlightenment. It is nothing so cheap! If you can do it, great. You will find there is support. If you cannot, how can someone push you to do it? In fact, it would be detrimental to one's own progress in cultivation if someone were to push a person to do something he or she didn't want to do or to drag some-

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one to a site he or she didn't want to go to. As a simple example, how could anyone meditate if they didn't want to? Wouldn't it be impossible? It is up to you to decide to do it. Falun Gong is also like that.

No practitioner is under any pressure, guidance, encouragement or reward to bring in or recruit other people. We would never do that. You can "hear" the Fa (law or principle of the universe) or you can opt not to—that is your own business. We certainly want people to know that it is available to them, but that is all we can do. Also, practitioners are not isolated in any way. We do not leave our normal environment or undergo an "indoctrination." When we are introduced to Falun Gong and as we progress in cultivation, we do not leave our families, our schools, or our workplaces. What would be the purpose? For an upright system, there is none. Everything in Falun Gong is in the open. Our principles are described in the book. Our practice sites are open. There is nothing hidden. The openness is most remarkable.

We can promise that if you are approached for money or pressured to do or say something against your will for the sake of Falun Gong, it is not a genuine Falun Gong site or that person is not a true practitioner. We simply do not behave this way. If you tried to pay a practitioner he or she would not come close to accepting it. This is the case the world over.

One further feature of cults that the Chinese Government has tried to attribute to Falun Gong is apocalyptic prophecy. According to the numerous state-run publications in China, Mr. Li Hongzhi has prophesized the end of the world, claiming that only he can prevent its complete annihilation; if people do not "follow" him, they are said to be in grave danger. China's Civil Affairs Ministry has claimed that: "The evil ideas and fallacies that Li Hongzhi has preached are diametrically against modern science and civilization and contrary to moral standards... He has predicted the end of the world and that the Earth will blow up. He has styled himself as the only savior of the world and alleged that disasters and sufferings can be avoided only by practicing Falun Gong."<sup>18</sup> And according to China's official state press, "Because of his doomsday prediction, Li ordered his followers to concentrate on Falun Gong and forbid them to hold any other human belief."<sup>19</sup> The same article continues, "Li's doomsday idea denies the truth of the existing world and it has created strong anti-government and anti-social sentiments. Its true purpose is to win public support for his wicked political ambitions." (Note: somehow this is officially-sanctioned "news" in China.) As with the matter of the alleged "1,400 deaths," were such zealous rhetoric not so consequential it would prove almost laughable.

In actuality, these are outright lies which clearly intend to deceive their reader. Mr. Li has been explicit about the "doomsday" topic on a number of occasions, as from Falun Gong's early days certain spiteful individuals have circulated this rumor. Consider Mr. Li's own words:

There are some crooked religions that are spreading. All of them teach about the end of the world—they all talk about these things. Of course, I have said that catastrophes do exist. Buddhism also believes in them, and Christianity, Catholicism, and Taoism share the same viewpoint as well. This is the law of the universe's evolution, but it is absolutely not like what those wicked religions have professed... I can proclaim here to everyone in all earnestness that all of those alleged catastrophes on earth, the doom of the universe, and things of this sort in the year 1999, are absolutely non-existent. Why would there be catastrophes?<sup>20</sup>

Nowhere in any of Mr. Li's writings has he stated anything to contradict this statement, and neither has he uttered otherwise in any lecture. The Chinese Government has put words in his mouth which suit its violent agenda: to totally eliminate Falun Gong from the face of China, if not the world. If the Chinese officials have so clearly distorted the truth on this matter, we can hardly find reason to seriously engage its claims that Falun Gong and Mr. Li have produced anti-government or anti-social sentiments, that they harbor any political ambitions, or other such imaginings; such claims are built upon complete fabrications, as just shown. It is the Chinese Government that forbids any other belief, not Mr. Li or Falun Gong. It would seem that the accuser is projecting its guilty conscience on the accused.

So it is understandable why someone who knows nothing about Falun Gong or who knows of it only through the news may think it could be a cult. Anyone

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18 "Million reasons for fear", South China Morning Post, Analysis section, 7/24/99.

19 "Hard truth reveals Li's fallacies", The People's Daily, 7/24/99, p. 4.

20 From Mr. Li Hongzhi's March 29, 1998, lecture at the first conference in North America, held at the Jacob Javit Convention Center, New York City. This lecture, transcribed in its original language, Chinese, and printed as a book, was widely circulated and read by practitioners in China. The passage would have been just as available to Chinese Government authorities as Mr. Li's other works.

who looks closely at what we believe, how we behave, or what Mr. Li has taught will not reach such a conclusion. There has been a lot of propaganda and lies spread about Falun Gong recently by the Chinese government. We appeal to everyone to investigate before accepting these misrepresentations. One will quickly find no correspondence between the Chinese Government's claims and what one experiences for oneself.

## 2. Is Falun Gong a Religion?

Of course a church is not a requirement for a religion. But religions do have ritual, worship or devotional practices, special observances, sacraments, etc. The only thing resembling ritual in Falun Gong is the exercises we do, and that no more qualifies as ritual than the stretches one does before aerobics. Believe it or not, one will find more ritual at a baseball game than in Falun Gong.

There is no deity offered for worship in Falun Gong—not even a personality to follow. This probably surprises a lot of people who will point out that Li Hongzhi is entitled “Master,” suggesting that he servers such a role. Mr. Li, however, tells us that he is not a figure to be worshipped, and neither does he present any deity for us to follow. Instead, we “follow” the Fa (Way or Principles) of Nature. “Master” is a respectful title for one’s teacher used in Asia. Throughout Asia, one of the most respected members of society is the teacher, irrespective of the subject. Mr. Li is indeed a profound teacher and is highly respected and revered, but he is not worshipped. It is the teachings and their principles that teach us how to elevate ourselves to higher levels. Progress is made by the practitioner according to how well he or she practices self-cultivation. Falun Gong simply shows people how they can cultivate themselves to higher levels of wisdom, understanding, and health.

In martial arts, it is typical to bow to the portrait of the master when entering the practice area or school. No one considers Aikido, for example, to be a religion, though its founder is revered in such a manner. Falun Gong does not even have this minor formality of bowing to the teacher. It is completely formless. Mr. Li has repeatedly deflected and shunned misguided attempts to honor him as a religious figure. It is the practitioner’s heart and conduct that count in Falun Gong, not one’s reverence and devotion towards the teacher.

Neither will one find in Falun Gong some form of initiation ritual or consecration that delineates “membership” or “profession of faith.” The boundary between a true practitioner, an on-and-off practitioner, and your average person on the street is not a matter of formal designation, allegiance, or membership. That is, you will not

find anything like baptism, first communion, confirmation, taking of vows, donning of particular garments (such as the Buddhist robe or the Nun’s habit), barmitzva, or the likes. If you want to practice Falun Gong, fine. You can practice the exercises with a group or at home, just as you can study Mr. Li’s book on your own or with a group. You can do these on and off or all the time. You can call yourself a “practitioner” or not. These things are the external trappings, the forms our inner self-cultivation takes. But performance of these does not mean one is or is not a practitioner; we don’t even bother to consider such things, as they are not what matters. We just each pay attention to how we must each improve ourselves. It is the heart that matters, and no practitioner can or would want to judge another person’s heart. There is obviously no such thing as membership, then.

Some people remark, “It looks strange, all of you carrying around the same books.” This sight should not seem strange. We are students. The same thing happens in every college classroom in the country; those textbooks cost more, too. Religious texts teach people how to devotionally honor a deity, pay respects, pray for intercession, etc. Zhuan Falun, however, teaches us how to improve ourselves. It is centered on the practitioner, not on a distant god or on receiving divine assistance. It does teach us high level principles and answer questions so many people have never found the answers to anywhere else—including in religions. One often finds a tendency in religion to “resolve” the sticky issues by appealing to faith. Faith is an important component in religion, so this is not necessarily a criticism. Yet Zhuan Falun gives a concrete guide to cultivation and does not ask the reader to take up cultivation practice out of “faith.” The book is very rational, systematic, and even scientific. Many Ph.D. scientists and Medical Doctors practice Falun Gong. Were Falun Gong interwoven with superstition, pseudo-science, New Age mysticism, or appeals to faith, these discerning professionals would most likely stay far away from the practice, even shunning it. The reason we read Zhuan Falun regularly is because it is a subtle and profound book. As we reach higher levels of understanding, the book reveals higher principles. It has been compared to a ladder, and reading the book each time is like climbing up another rung of understanding.

We have no temple in Falun Gong, no priests, no objects of worship, no ritual, and no consecration. Mr. Li’s texts simply outline the principles of self-cultivation. Each person follows them or not according to his or her understanding and aspiration. There is respect for the teacher, naturally, but it is the principles for improving ourselves that we follow and look to. Embracing empathy and compassion for others, putting our self-interests behind others’, improving our morality, getting rid of bad

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habits and interests—these principles have helped us, enriched us, elevated us and even liberated us from what we were. Thus, we continue practice Falun Gong enthusiastically.

### 3. Is Falun Gong an Organization?

A lot of misunderstanding comes from the basic problem of looking at Falun Gong practitioners in the collective and trying to interpret what they do on the basis of organizations (such as religions) that exist for other people or purposes. Those organizations are familiar and easy to understand. Yet Falun Gong is done on an even more simple basis—the individual.

Start by considering the following: How does one begin the cultivation system known as Falun Gong? A person might for whatever reason (curiosity, health seeking, mention from family/friends) attend a lecture, join a practice session in the park, attend an experience sharing conference, read a book, explore a website—there are countless avenues into Falun Gong. He or she finds the things he encounters to be good and interesting. Many people feel as if “this is something I’ve been searching for all my life”.

With their interest sparked, they naturally try to find others for more information. Perhaps they find a local practice site and learn the exercises or borrow, buy, or download a video for the same reason. They are taught the exercises and are told that they should read the book Zhuan Falun thoroughly (this is no easy book to grasp) to understand the principles. As their understanding increases, questions are asked and responded to. Practitioners give each other encouragement to get through the difficulties that are involved in improving oneself. The real “organization” of Falun Gong, however, remains at the individual level—it is all dependent on one’s relation to and understanding of the teachings and on one’s own cultivation experience. This is a critical issue to grasp when trying to understand many of the questions that are asked.

Some people persist, “But surely, practice sites are structured, maintained and organized.” Not really. Frankly, an aerobics practice site is more strictly organized than a Falun Gong practice site. Aerobics has a teacher who is in charge of everything—including the organization of the session—and who teaches the movements and leads the practice. In my experience, there is no one like this at the Falun Gong practice site. A practice site is simply wherever practitioners decide to gather to practice together. There is no leader and no position of instructor. If you must root out a leader, who are your candidates? The person who established the site? Who is he or she?

Someone said “How about \_\_\_\_\_ park?” and others agreed. In the case of one local “group,” we found it convenient to use the porch of a local community center. Someone volunteered to contact the center to get the permission and to schedule a time. So he “established the site,” you could say. Is he the leader? Hardly—anyone could have done it. The skeptic continues, however: “Well, then, candidate #2- who supplies the music? How about the mats you sit on?” Someone got a hold of some carpet remnants and thought they would be good to use as mats and so cut them up. One person lived close to the center and said he would bring them to the site each week; he lives closest and simply carries them. Because he needed to be counted on to attend most days (since he was to bring the mats), his wife said she would bring a tape player for the practice music. Are these the leaders? Anyone can do these things. They were simply the ones who volunteered—it was convenient. Perhaps one asks, “Well surely the person who greets newcomers and teaches them the exercises and lends a book is important.” Why so? Actually, different people do this at different times. Normally, a practitioner is eager to share Falun Gong with someone who approaches him or her. We do these exercises every day, and they are quite simple. Who would be unable to teach them? Usually there are extra books, so anybody can pass one on. If not, the newcomer can borrow a practitioner’s.

We enjoy practicing together, and generally find it easier to do in a group. After all, why do aerobics people gather together? Once they learn the routines, isn’t it easier to do it at home without travel? Well, no: the group inspires you. Aerobics is surely easier to do in a group. It is not so different for Falun Gong, although plenty of people elect to do the exercises at home anyway. What is the difference? There are no “requirements” to come to an exercise site. The only requirements are the requirements of cultivation, and those are all internal: striving to be a better person, getting rid of bad habits and attachments to unhealthy things. If you can do it, you are a practitioner. If not, all the studying and group exercise you do will be minimally effective. Yes, we do have to agree on a time if we wish to practice together. But this is no more than is involved in meeting for lunch. We have to be organized enough to show up at the same place at the same time. Does that make us an organization?

The fact remains the same: all activities are completely free, open to the public, and run totally by volunteers. There are only volunteers in Falun Gong, actually, as nobody is given ranks or positions, such as in the martial arts or some other qigongs. Rankings and positions usually reflect levels of initiation or investments of time and energy; they provide sort of a tangible reward or recog-

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tion or one's efforts. Obviously, this is antithetical to the nature of Falun Gong: we just practice self-cultivation—something unconditional—and support one another in this endeavor. Hierarchy would be of no benefit to our practice. What is more, there is no keeping of money, desire for material profit, or accepting of donations involved at any level; an organization can hardly sustain itself without some form of charity or donation. It is hard to have an “organization” without organization, such as rank, duty and position. As Falun Gong has none of these, it can hardly be considered an organization.

The Chinese Government has alleged that Falun Gong is highly organized and a menace to social stability. The Government has tried to substantiate such imaginative claims by a variety of means. Most notable of these is its supposed exposure of Falun Gong's “organizational structure,” something said to consist in China of tightly-knit, multi-leveled branches.<sup>21</sup> Such incriminations are based on distortion and misrepresentation, rather than fact. Yes, in China there were a number of “assistance centers” set-up by Falun Gong practitioners. Yet these were completely voluntary ventures, much like those in the Western world, consisting of individual practitioners seeking to share this beneficial practice with others. In China, the demand for teaching Falun Gong to newcomers was exponentially higher than elsewhere, as in just 7 years over 70 million people came to learn this practice. Simply, the most efficient and sound way to teach newcomers in this situation is to have some people volunteer to do so; at the same time, veteran practitioners would have a place to gather to read and discuss. This was done by way of setting up “centers.” These centers, however, are not like the institutions we in the West might imagine them to be. Rather, a “center” might be an office in some one's workplace, an extra room in somebody's apartment, or a local sports center's unoccupied space. They are not so much property purchased for the purpose of Falun Gong activities as they are spaces occupied by people wanting to learn or improve in their Falun Gong practice. These centers do not accept donations, and neither do they keep money.

So what of the long-since defunct Falun Gong Research Society, one might ask? This was the closest thing to an “organization” that Falun Gong has had in its brief history, but it was nothing like one might expect. This was simply the name under which Mr. Li first reg-

istered himself and his several assistants in 1992 when he sought to introduce Falun Gong to the general public. In China, one best not dare go on a lecturing tour without some sort of official recognition—one must be fully “legal,” and this means registered. Thus, the Research Society was born. How “organized” was this fledgling institution? Apparently not much, as all of its activities (which lasted from 1992-1994) were run by a Chinese Government organization, the China Qigong Science and Research Society (CQSRS). The Research Society merely handled expenses involved in the lectures and travel costs. The one other institutional function it assumed was also mandated by Chinese law, and this involved efforts to coordinate the publication of Mr. Li's two books. Some of the publishing was even done through a Government-run organization, ironically, and only guided by the Research Society. When Mr. Li would give a lecture, it would be orchestrated by the CQSRS and local hosting organizations. Come 1994, when Mr. Li finished his public teaching, the “organization” no longer was needed, and he soon filed for withdrawal from the CQSRS. There is little issue of Falun Gong acting in China as an “organization” (in the negative sense) as we in the West might imagine.

Perhaps some people are misled by larger-scale Falun Gong activities, such as “experience sharing” conferences. Indeed, such conferences take a bit more organizing than practice sites, but it is really just the same thing on a larger scale. Someone volunteers to book a room. Someone volunteers to get the word out “where and when.” Perhaps one would like to share some of his or her experiences in practicing cultivation—it may help others. Many people thus do so, while many more never do. Who attends? Whoever wants to. Transportation and hotels are arranged individually—just as you would do it. The conferences are funded, as needed, completely out of individuals' pockets and individual contributions. They are absolutely free and open to the public, as nobody is excluded and no profit is made or sought.

Falun Gong's teacher, Li Hongzhi, is usually invited to attend these conferences. Sometimes he is able to make it, sometimes he is not. We all look forward to listening to his lectures and anytime he attends and agrees to lecture he is definitely the keynote speaker. But it actually is not his conference—it is the practitioners' gathering, as they began it and it is for their self-cultivation. Many practitioners will speak and usually the things they have to say are very moving and powerful. We find ourselves much benefited through such sharing, and so enjoy organizing and pulling off such conferences. Many regions and practice groups like to host these, and their size can be anywhere from a 20 person rendezvous to 1998's gathering of over 3,000 in New York City.

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<sup>21</sup> according to the *South China Morning Post* (“Million reasons for official fear”, Analysis section, 7/24/99), the Chinese Government's “police investigation” determined Falun Gong to have “39 branches nationwide, with 1,900 sub-units and 23,000 assembly places.”

### IV. Has Mr. Li or Falun Gong Amassed Wealth?

The Chinese Government has been using all kinds of means to persecute and defame Falun Gong. One of its more recent accusations is the groundless claim that Falun Gong has accumulated wealth using “illegal” and “unfair” means. Chinese authorities have been trying hard to find fault with Falun Gong in its financial aspects, but they simply cannot find any incriminating evidence. Its accusations without support, the Chinese Government has proceeded to take liberty with words and events, reshaping them to fit its agenda.

It would seem that for the Government's indictment of Falun Gong to be complete, it must identify a chief culprit, a ringleader per se. With such a villain conjured, the whole story of the supposedly dangerous Falun Gong practice becomes more recognizable, more familiar. When the story assumes the form of familiar narratives, it is all the more easily grasped by the public. The unwitting consumer is given something he or she can easily, passively swallow: it was all about money and power. So goes the Chinese Government's story of Mr. Li Hongzhi and his Falun Gong.

#### 1. Lecture Sessions

One of the bigger distortions surrounds Mr. Li's lecturing sessions, conducted over two and a half years (1992-1994). Not too long ago the Beijing Bureau of Public Security established a special committee in order to find evidence for the Government's accusation that Falun Gong made 2 million Yuan (about US\$250,000) in 13 teaching sessions. But the result was that they could not find any supporting facts for this purpose. For instance, they investigated the Second Institute of the Ministry of Aviation, which had sponsored two Falun Gong teaching sessions in Beijing. The former working staff who had handled the financial activities handed in a clear account: each teaching session lasted for 9 days, the total number of students attending the two teaching sessions was no more than 3000. Among these 3000 people, 75% percent were veteran students (i.e., those who had attended previous teaching sessions). The fee for veteran students was 20 Yuan (US\$2.50), and the fee for new students was 40 Yuan (US\$5). Some of the income was used to pay for the space's rental, and some was paid to the China Qigong Science Research Society (CQSR, hereafter abbreviated to “Qigong Research Society”)—a government sponsored organization for administrating qigong activities in China; Falun Gong Research Society

was under its supervision before 1996. The remaining money, which was no more than 20,000 Yuan (US\$2,500) was taken by the Falun Gong research society. The Falun Gong research society had to pay for the expenses of its own working staff, the teaching materials handed out in teaching sessions, and transportation. The remaining sheer income was rather miniscule. In fact, the two teaching sessions held in the Second Institute of the Ministry of Aviation were rather large ones among the 13 teaching sessions held in Beijing. So the scales of the income from the other teaching sessions are fairly easy to imagine; they would be significantly lower. Thanks to fact that the working staff of the Second Institute of the Ministry of Aviation has kept its original accounts, a strong rejection of the Government's false charges still exists.

When Falun Gong started its teaching in 1992, the teaching sessions were all held directly by Qigong Research Society. All the income was administrated by Qigong Research Society. It would regularly pay for various expenses from the total income, and then it would give a limited amount to the Falun Gong Research Society according to the contract. For each session (which lasted about 9 days), the Falun Gong Research Society would receive about 4000 to 5000 Yuan (US\$500 to \$625). Then the Falun Gong Research Society would have to pay for its internal expenses from this amount. At that early time, there were about 250 students in the first teaching session, and 350 students in the second teaching session. Many of them were veteran students (the charge for them was 20 Yuan, about US\$2.50). In total, there were 1500 students in the first 4 teaching sessions; 850 of them were new students. The money that the Falun Gong research society received from these 4 teaching sessions was about 20,000 Yuan (US\$2,500). At that time, the Falun Gong practitioners who assisted with the teaching sessions all felt that it was very difficult to make ends meet with this small income.

The facts are very clear. There were 13 teaching sessions held in Beijing. In total, about 13,000 students attended them. More than half of them were veteran students. The total raw income was no more than 300,000 Yuan (US\$37,500). Part of it was used to pay various expenses, part of it was handed over to Qigong Research Society, and the rest went to the Falun Gong Research Society, which had to pay for its internal expenses. According to a regulation set up by Mr. Li, all income from classes was to be used in theoretical research on cultivation principles, scientific experiments, establishing centers for practicing, etc. No such income was to go to Mr. Li, himself, and no individuals were to use this income. All financial records were to be kept by local chapters. So it is obvious how much Falun Gong

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Research Society could have made. It is rather unfortunate that the original accounts were not kept except for the two sessions in the Second Institute of the Ministry of Aviation, as the exact amount is hard to obtain. But many people who took part in these teaching sessions can still remember how large the auditoriums were, how many seats there were in these auditoriums, and what was the rough numbers of students. They can serve as witnesses. So it is really a ridiculous accusation that the Falun Gong research society made 2 million Yuan off of these teaching sessions.

One should be reminded that the fees charged by the Falun Gong teaching sessions were the lowest in China. The amount charged to each student by Falun Gong was only about 1/3 to 1/2 of the amount charged by other qigong teaching sessions. Because Falun Gong charged so little, other Qigong masters repeatedly asked Qigong Research Society to intervene and require Falun Gong to increase its charges. If Mr. Li Hongzhi had wanted to make more money, this would have been a good opportunity to increase do so. But Mr. Li insisted on the lowest fees in order not to bring financial burden to students. His goal was to make Falun Gong available to people from all walks of life, excluding nobody by virtue of income or economic background. In fact, Mr. Li only cared about teaching Falun Gong principles to his students to make them better and healthier people. That is why Mr. Li earned the hearts of so many people.

### **2. Pocketing Revenues?**

Certain “files” crafted by the Chinese Government also allege that Mr. Li pocketed all the money from his teaching sessions, and that revenues were never donated to others. The facts say just the opposite. Mr. Li has lived up to the strict requirements for handling funds that he set for himself and his students early on. Consider the following case of donation, for each of which there are still receipts and certificates of proof.

On December 27, 1993, Mr. Li made a technical presentation on qigong at the ‘93 Oriental Health Exposition in Beijing. The total income for that was 4,000 Yuan. All of it was donated to the China Foundation of Heroes and Justice.

On May 14 and 15, 1994, the China Foundation of Heroes and Justice invited Mr. Li to lecture twice on scientific qigong research in the auditorium of Beijing Police University. The total income was nearly 60,000 Yuan, and it was entirely donated back to the Foundation. Meanwhile, Mr. Li gave 1000 copies of his book China Falun Gong to the Foundation as gifts for libraries. The total cost of the books was 6,600 Yuan. Deeply moved by

the principles of Mr. Li’s practice, two people from his Beijing Police University class also made donations. They anonymously donated 100,000 Yuan and 1,500 Yuan, respectively.

On August 27, 1994, Mr. Li held a class in Yanbian Korean Autonomous Region. The total income for that class was 70,00 Yuan, and it was donated in its entirety to the Region’s Red Cross.

Mr. Li not only donated many times to China Foundation of Heroes and Justice—he also paid his respects to the heroes who fight for justice in other ways. In August 1993, the Central Propaganda Department and the Ministry of Police jointly organized the Third National Convention for heroes fighting for justice. The Foundation invited Mr. Li to provide health consulting for these heroes. This invitation received great support from leaders of Qigong Research Society, including its General Secretary, Zhang Jian, Deputy Secretary, Guan Qian, and the Director of the Cultivation Methods Committee, Fei Quande. On August 31, Mr. Li took some students to treat these hundred heroes. The Ministry of Police sent a letter of appreciation to the Qigong Research Society, citing that out of the hundred heroes, other than the one who did not have any serious injury, all others showed various degrees of obvious improvements in their health.

On September 21, 1993, People’s Police published a photo of Mr. Li, taken by the Deputy Chief of the Beijing Police Department, Li Xiaojing. With the photo was a quote from Mr. Li, saying, “All heroes who have been verified by the China Foundation of Heroes and Justice are qualified to receive free consulting from this practice.” On May 16, 1994, China Laws Daily quoted the General Secretary of the China Foundation of Heroes and Justice, Mr. Zhou Shishang, stating that “the virtue promoted in China Falun Gong by Mr. Li Hongzhi agrees with the fundamental principles of our Foundation.” It is not hard to see that Mr. Li is supportive to people that fight for justice, and neither is it hard to see that his support was done in an honest and upright manner. This, of course, should come as no surprise, as Mr. Li consistently conducts himself according to the principles of “truthfulness, benevolence, and forbearance.” Every upright person can draw a just conclusion about this issue of Mr. Li’s allegedly pocketing all funds from his lectures.

### **3. Tax Evasion?**

Another groundless accusation has also surfaced and holds that Falun Gong evaded taxation. The Falun Gong teaching sessions in different parts of China were all held



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by Qigong Research Society and other related, official organizations. Falun Gong Research Society only took care of teaching. There were clear contracts, and these stated that the organizations holding the teaching sessions were responsible for paying all the various taxes and related expenses. Therefore, the organizations would take 40% of the total income. Other qigong masters would typically only relinquish 10-20% of the total income. Therefore, Falun Gong was highly welcomed by related organizations to hold teaching sessions, and these groups were very cooperative. These hosting organizations were always responsible for handling tax matters. The income of the Falun Gong Research Society was the income after taxation.

Mr. Li Hongzhi stopped holding teaching sessions after the publication of his major work, Zhuan Falun, at the beginning of 1995. The number of Falun Gong practitioners then increased at an astonishing rate, to the extent that Mr. Li was not able to meet in person with practitioners in China because they numbered so many. In the past several years, Mr. Li has taught only outside of China, giving numerous public lectures in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Australia, Sweden, Germany, Singapore, Switzerland, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States. His lectures have usually lasted 4-6 hours, and each is attended by anywhere from 500-3500 people. There was absolutely no admission fee for anybody in any of these lectures. But practitioners all recognized the profundity and preciousness of his teaching. There is a qigong master who charges US\$1000 for a lecture in the West, and many charge from US\$400 on up for a one-time six-hour class. If Mr. Li had really wanted to make money, he could have become a millionaire with just one lecture. Doing so, however, would be antithetical to Mr. Li's principles as well as those of Falun Gong.

### 4. Selling Books and Audio/Video Tapes

The accusation that Falun Gong accumulated wealth from selling books and audio and videotapes is also untenable. The first edition of the Falun Gong exercise-teaching videotapes was recorded and sold by the Qigong Science Research. Falun Gong Research Society was not even involved in this undertaking. The second edition was made and sold by the Publishing House for Physical Education. Again, Falun Gong Research Society was not even involved. At that time, there was a flexible verbal agreement: when there was income, the Publishing House for Physical Education would give an appropriate amount to Falun Gong Research Society. Later, a higher quality, newer edition was made and sold by Beijing TV Art Center. It was a legal publication that

went through all formal procedures. The contract stated that the publishing house was to give some of the income to the Research Society as royalties. It was also decided that Falun Gong Research Society was allowed to sell the videotape among practitioners when there was a need for the teaching sessions. The retail price of the videotape was the lowest among the genre. It was only about 1/3 to 1/2 the price of other qigong videotapes. The videotape sold at 55 Yuan (US\$7).

During the Falun Gong teaching sessions in different places, many local students volunteered to help. Sometimes, because of students' demands, local manufacturers had to be asked to make some exercise-teaching videotapes; these were then sold to students without any profit.

Falun Gong books were published in order to make it easier for more people to learn Falun Gong. In order to publish the first book, China Falun Gong, Mr. Li Hongzhi, himself, had to borrow 40,000 Yuan from an individual to pay the publishing house. The debt was paid off only after the books were sold. Then the Falun Gong Research Society had to find money to publish the second edition of China Falun Gong. It was not like some treasury existed for the Society or Mr. Li to draw upon. In 1995, when the Falun Gong Research Society tried to get the book Zhuan Falun published, many publishing houses dared not to publish it for fear that it might not sell well. At that time, the Chinese Broadcasting Publishing House had been in financial difficulties for a long time, and they took a big risk, deciding to publish Zhuan Falun. Because the books sales were excellent, it enabled the Chinese Broadcasting publishing house to overcome its financial difficulty. The books of Falun Gong were all published by following official regulations. The publishing house would pay the author royalties, and this was usually stated in the contracts. At some Falun Gong assistance centers, many contact people were enthusiastic about helping new practitioners obtain books. So they bought some books and then sold them at the exact same price. They did it voluntarily, and they did not make any profit from it whatsoever. Doing so would have been antithetical to the principles of Falun Gong.

It was the publishing house's own business as to how much it sold the books for to book distributors. The Falun Gong Research Society and assistance centers did not get involved in these matters. In July 1996, Chinese authorities prohibited the publication of Falun Gong books. The Chinese Broadcasting Publishing House thus stopped printing the books, and the contract was terminated. Yet Falun Gong books were still in great demand. Pirate versions consequently appeared in many places. These publishers had nothing to do with Falun Gong, as they violated the law—something antithetical to Falun

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Gong practice. Mr. Li has told his students on several occasions to destroy any pirated versions they have obtained; illegal books undermine society. Some companies in Shandong and Wuhan had signed contracts with Falun Gong Research Society for publishing Falun Gong audio/video tapes and books. It was also a normal publishing affair, just like the relationship with the Chinese Broadcasting Publishing House. These companies published Falun Gong books according to normal procedures and it was their own, normal business. They had nothing to do with Falun Gong, save for an agreement to print some of its books. The contents of the contracts always conformed to state policies and laws. As to the books' circulation, that was the business of those companies.

uncritical readers in China, they have no business being disguised as “news,” much less being spread around the world. Their intent, just as with the other depictions of Mr. Li gushing from China, are clearly vengeful and politically laced. One need only recall Chinese President Jiang Zemin's giving US President Bill Clinton a copy of the book, Li Hongzhi: The Man and His Evil Deeds, to know how deeply invested China's leadership is in this campaign. There representations of Mr. Li could not be further from the truth. But then again, truth seems to carry no weight for the Chinese Government in this affair.

### **5. Luxury Homes and the Good Life?**

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Some people have contrived the story that Mr. Li Hongzhi owns three luxurious houses. More imaginative Chinese media took pictures of a Manhattan skyscraper and reported in China's news that this was but part of the real estate Mr. Li had amassed abroad. One learns also from Chinese media that Mr. Li has accumulated sports cars, enjoys fine wine and frequents brothels. Various scandalous stories have been engineered, all seeking to viciously defame Mr. Li. Their source repeatedly turns out to be none other than the twisted imagination of Mr. Li's persecutors. We can set the record straight here: each we have seen is completely nonsense, just like the other “news” stories. This is obvious to anybody who knows Mr. Li or who takes the time to investigate things for himself.

Mr. Li had a simple dormitory during the decades he lived and worked in Changchun (northeastern China). How could Chinese people have their own houses during the 1970's, 80's, and early 90's? Later, because of construction, Mr. Li could no longer live in his dorm, and so he had to find another dwelling place. Those veteran practitioners who had been to his home all know that it was a place without lit stairways and with water only available at certain times. Slandering someone who lived in such a place is simply mocking his modest life.

It has also been alleged that Mr. Li had a luxurious house in Beijing. This, too, is rather far-fetched, as there he only lived intermittently, and in a common two-bedroom apartment. Mr. Li prefers to live a simple life, in keeping with his teachings. He currently resides in New York, with his wife and daughter.

We can imagine plenty of other elaborate homes and indulgent lifestyles the Chinese media would like to attribute to him. While these might evoke the ire of some

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## V. The True Reasons Behind the Suppression of Falun Gong

According to statements in the July 27, 1999, edition of *The People's Daily* and quotes from many officials, the conflict between Falun Gong and Communism is seen by Party leaders as a struggle between theism and atheism, superstition and science, and idealism and materialism. These dichotomies are in fact grossly inaccurate. Regardless, these ideological issues are not the true reasons for banning Falun Gong. Falun Gong does not talk about superstitions or idealism, and it is by no means against Communism. Were Falun Gong “against” communism or the Government, this would mean that millions of practitioners were “against” themselves: millions of practitioners were Chinese Communist Party members before the ban, and this includes many high-ranking officials. This whole matter has been thoroughly explained in practitioners’ “Ten Thousand-Word letter” to the Central Government. We offer here several reasons behind the central authority’s suppression of Falun Gong.

### 1. Historical Issues

Classifying Falun Gong as a “cult” was simply an excuse to try to eliminate it. Many relatives of senior officials in the Communist Party are Falun Gong practitioners. Mr. Li conducted public teaching for several years, and the public has seen that Falun Gong has impacted society very positively. The Public Security Department has investigated Falun Gong for years. Members of the Department have clearly stated in their duty reports that they see no dangers or violations in Falun Gong. (see Attachment A6) Some have even decided to begin the practice upon learning through their investigations just how upstanding practitioners are. How could the Department and other offices not know that Falun Gong is an upright practice? How could they not know that Mr. Li has always taught people to be good citizens with higher morals? How could they forget that Mr. Li has repeatedly told practitioners not to interfere with national politics or to violate any laws? Officials’ collective amnesia, it seems, is highly strategic.

The fundamental reason for the suppression of Falun Gong is that the Communist Party does not trust Falun Gong practitioners since they are such a large group. There is a historical precedent for fear of large groups in China, so perhaps one could imagine an awareness of history factoring in. Chinese, as a people, are very aware of their history. And these people need think back no fur-

ther than the last few centuries to recall that two of Chinese history’s bloodiest rebellions, the Boxer Rebellion and the Taiping Rebellion, each began with a charismatic religious figure. Traditional thinking, which posits that history repeats itself in predictable cycles, still holds sway in the minds of many Chinese. Many auspicious dates have come and passed in Falun Gong’s brief history, and each such event has made the practice’s detractors anxious. The past 100 years have been a bloody, unstable century for China, and ruthless competition for power (primarily internal, no less) has left many historically-conscious citizens skeptical of groups claiming benevolent intent.

Yet any knowledge of Falun Gong’s principles and behavior should render such historical thinking irrelevant. If Falun Gong is examined outside of socio-historical contexts, one sees that this popular practice is quite unlike both its predecessors and kin. This can be said of not only its practitioners, but also of its teacher and his teachings. Falun Gong has, however, become guilty of one intolerable offense in Mainland China: as of early 1999, the number of Falun Gong practitioners happened to exceed the number of Communist Party members. It was estimated by a Government sponsored census that the number of Falun Gong practitioners was 70-100 million, while the Communist Party’s membership totaled only 60 million. Falun Gong practitioners typically gather every day in the park for two or more hours to practice their qigong together. Meanwhile, a typical Party member might attend a total of one Party meeting, lasting maybe two hours, in an entire month; his or her membership might be a mere formality that affords certain social privileges. Were Falun Gong a political entity, some apprehensions by Chinese Government officials would be understandable. During its numerous investigations, China’s Public Security Department found that many practitioners were both party members and government officials. As a result, the Chinese Communist Party believed that Falun Gong had been “taking people away” from them. Bound by historical thinking, officials could not imagine a group this size having anything but political aspirations.

Although the population practicing Falun Gong has become large, most practitioners are outstanding citizens with high moral standards. They form a strong force that upholds social stability, if any social influence exists. Falun Gong’s teacher, Mr. Li Hongzhi, has been explicit that practitioners are not to involve Falun Gong in political matters whatsoever. Falun Gong is about benefiting others through an individual’s self-cultivation practice, not through political means. Why should the Communist Party be against it? It is because they cannot believe that there are people in the world who would not interfere

with politics or seek power. Despite Mr. Li's repeatedly explaining to the Government that Falun Gong will not interfere with politics now or in the future, the Government has tenaciously clung to the belief that if the practice is allowed to continue, it will form a strong force against the government.

## 2. Social Issues

In terms of China's current social predicament, the country is currently experiencing incredible changes in every aspect of society. Nothing short of a "crisis in values" is unfolding, as foreign values indigenous to capitalist markets and radically different societies pour into Chinese culture daily. Little is in place to check this influx of values and ideas. As the dying embers of deep-seated traditional culture—culture that even weathered the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), to some extent—go out, all sorts of problems novel to China emerge. Discontent and dis-ease with current conditions are common to many. While such issues are far beyond the scope of this essay, suffice to say that political leadership in China is very uncertain over how to handle these things.

Falun Gong finds itself amidst some of these tensions, and certain self-seeking Chinese Communist Party officials have exploited this. Most notably, Falun Gong finds itself at the intersection of traditional Chinese cultivation arts (such as qigong and taiji) and modern Western science and biomedicine. For thousands of years, the Chinese have enjoyed traditional healing arts such as acupuncture, herbal medicine, and qigong. More importantly, these aspects of traditional culture provide deep understanding of human life, nature, the universe, and the relationships among them. During the Cultural Revolution, these arts were slapped with the labels of "superstition," "fraud," "backwards," "unscientific," and even "embarrassing," amongst others.

Although the Chinese Government has promoted these practices in the last two decades as a means to resolving a terribly-burdened health care system, these traditional arts have never fully recovered their nobility. Thus, when it serves certain persons' political purposes, those labels are once again hauled out and thrown around to incriminate others. This is easily accomplished as anything grounded in Western science (such as Western biomedicine) is seen as "modern" and "progressive" in contemporary China. It should come as little surprise, then, that the Chinese media ran numerous stories in the last couple years declaiming Falun Gong as "superstitious" and wreaking of "feudalism."<sup>22</sup> As many of its practitioners discontinue medical treatment (due to improved health, as discussed in Attachments A3-5), some people

have suggested that Falun Gong is antagonistic to modern science and medicine. Ironically, at the same time, many hard-line Party members—some of whom are well-known scientists in China—continue to believe that Maoism and Marxist doctrine are "hard science," meaning akin to physics and chemistry. As among Falun Gong practitioners there are many accomplished scientists, such rhetoric has not gone unnoticed or unchallenged.<sup>23</sup> So even science has become a politically-charged entity in China today. Many supposed "scientists" have allied themselves with those in political power and attacked Falun Gong for personal gain. We thus witness the political campaign against Falun Gong being heralded as a "scientific achievement."

While Chinese leaders like to describe 1999 as a year of "challenge and opportunity," the "challenge" segment is what has largely prevailed for the Government. Economic growth has come to a grinding halt, worrying many leaders. Majority of the Government's state owned enterprises are constantly losing money, and many now face bankruptcy. Unemployment is skyrocketing, while the gap between the rich and the poor has widened dramatically. Class tensions are emerging in a distinctly poignant, modern form, of which China has not seen the likes. Demonstrations by those who are unemployed take place across the country almost every day. As this develops into a nationwide problem, it grows ever more hard to control. All of this makes for novel, severe health care problems. Demoralization is perhaps the highest it has been in years. These matters lead into the issue of China's political situation.

## 3. Political Issues

Politically, today's China is focusing on economic and technological development. The political forum is set up for those who have expertise in the economy, technology, and management. Those who specialize in political propaganda and in fighting battles over ideology have lost their opportunities for political advancement. Yet many of these persons have had important roles in the history of the Communist Party. A stable, peaceful,

<sup>22</sup> "feudalism" is a harsh, derogatory term in modern China that connotes backwardness.

<sup>23</sup> see Attachments A3, A5 for a glimpse at some of the scientists involved in the practice of Falun Gong. At Beijing's prestigious Tsinghua University, an engineering school known as "the MIT of China," several hundred students, researchers and faculty in the natural sciences are Falun Gong practitioners.

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and prosperous China, however, gives them very little chance to maintain the powerful positions they once enjoyed when political campaigning was the focus of the Party. To remain necessary components of the government, these people desperately need political unrest. Hence, they have in fact been working hard to create unrest. Falun Gong, they decided, was just what was needed.

These individuals began by having police officers harass Falun Gong practitioners at the local level. They next fabricated evidence to defame Falun Gong and its teacher, spreading negative publicity through government-run newspapers and television. Soon after, police were ordered to beat and arrest people who expressed their concerns to those newspaper editors, such as in the city of Tianjin incident. When practitioners went to the central government at Zhongnanhai to appeal for the release of those arrested (see article 2), they were channeled in a certain manner so as to create the appearance of assaulting the Chinese leadership compound. By the time of the Zhongnanhai incident, those self-seeking Party members had almost succeeded in creating a “crisis” to scare top Chinese officials into thinking they needed to call on these political experts for help. The peaceful resolution to the Zhongnanhai gathering (facilitated by Premier Zhu Rongji’s kind intervention) disappointed these political plotters. To China’s misfortune, however, President Jiang Zemin—who is also the Communist Party’s General Secretary—was convinced that his power was threatened by this large group of people. Those who plotted all of this once again enjoy center stage of the Chinese political arena, driving the anti-Falun Gong campaign at break-neck speed. They also find themselves enjoying an opportunity to harm their political rivals. Clearly, Falun Gong has been misinterpreted in every possible way to serve political purposes in China.

One important thing to note is that self-interest has been laced with a most potent thing throughout this matter: fear. Recall that in an editorial in The People’s Daily it was stated that the government believes Falun Gong is fighting with them for people, and that Falun Gong has penetrated into the Party and political institutions—including key departments, attempting to develop a force against the Chinese Government. Wang Zhaoguo, Minister of the Chinese United Front Line, and Hu Jintao, Vice President of China, believe that the creation and alleged penetration of Falun Gong denotes a political struggle with the Communist Party for the its people.

Though often unassociated, a number of phenomena exist alongside Falun Gong that drive Party members’ paranoia. Being the year of the 10th anniversary of the student Democratic movement in Tiananmen Square,

political dissidents were more active than before in 1999 and tried to organize an oppositional political party. The ethnic groups in Xingjian as well as Tibetans are struggling for independence. To the east just across the Taiwan straight, Taiwan is also voicing its independent status. Instead of addressing larger issues, the Chinese leadership has chosen to demonstrate its intolerance of any independent expression. A show of strength has been opted for over a show of concern. This has failed to resolve any of these issues, instead inducing larger conflicts. But conflict, it turns out, is the medicine chosen by many Party officials to recover the nation’s health and to vault personal standing.

Should anyone doubt that Party leaders are conscious and concerned by such things, he or she need look no further than to the accidental NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Yugoslavia and its aftermath. China’s state-run media seized the mishap as an occasion for whipping-up a strong sense of national identity and cohesion. Conspiracy theories and the claim that America did this “intentionally” and “viciously” were fed to a non-discerning public. Chinese officials relished the opportunity to scapegoat America (which it equated with NATO, somehow) and spur Chinese nationalism—something not aroused anytime too recently.

To solidify this connection between Party officials’ anxiety and the crackdown on Falun Gong, one can recall that the same week Falun Gong was banned, President Jiang Zimen and other senior officials blasted Taiwan and its President Lee Teng-hui for its “separatist tactics.” Calling Lee “an evil man” and “a traitor to all Chinese people,” the Chinese propaganda machine did all it could to create a national spirit.

In the end, something Chinese was chosen as the grand scapegoat: Falun Gong. Every imaginable social, political and economic problem has been placed upon the back of the Falun Gong sacrificial lamb. In doing so, the Chinese Government has done all possible to make itself out as the hero, protecting the Chinese people from the immanent, dangerous presence within China—Falun Gong. In the name of “social order,” the Government has engineered and executed a ruthless persecution of Falun Gong. Nothing could be more ironic, as Falun Gong was perhaps the best answer to some of China’s deep social woes. In making the persecution of Falun Gong out to be a heroic, noble, necessary deed, the Party has manufactured every imaginable piece of “evidence” to justify its terrible actions. On the sly, the Government has also intensified its persecution of ethnic minorities, unofficial religious groups, and democracy advocates. Even the practice of other qigong schools is now outlawed in public places—a fact revealing that it is not Falun Gong that scares leaders, but anybody doing something out of their

control.

All of this seems to reflect the Party's having lost its ability to deal with critical issues. The Party does not feel secure with the existence of any social group that could possibly exert wide-ranging social influence. They find such a presence—no matter how benign or even beneficial—intolerable. This is no acceptable way to deal with insecurities or larger, unaddressed social, political, and economic issues.

### VI. Some Thoughts of Mine (Li Hongzhi, June 2, 1999)

Recently it was reported in the news that Mainland China seeks a reduction of US\$500 million worth of trade surplus (with the U.S.) in exchange for my extradition back to China. With regard to this issue, I would like to make some comments. I only teach people to be compassionate. At the same time, I unconditionally help people eliminate their illnesses, and I enable them to reach higher realms of mind. I do not accept any monetary or material reward. All of these have had a positive impact on society and mankind, bringing goodness to people's hearts and dignity to human morality. Are those the reasons for which they seek my extradition? Do they intend to have me return to China to let more people obtain the Fa and cultivate their hearts? If that is the case, please do not let the country lose US\$500 million to strike a deal. I can go back myself.

I have heard, however, that normally the people who are extradited are all war criminals, public enemies, or criminal offenders. If so, I do not know into which of the above categories I would be placed.

As a matter of fact, I keep teaching people to conduct themselves according to the guiding principles of Zhen-Shan-Ren (truthfulness, compassion, forbearance). So naturally I have also been setting an example. During the times when Falun Gong disciples and I, myself were being discredited for no reason and being treated unfairly, we always exhibited hearts of great compassion and tolerance so as to give the government sufficient time to understand us, and we endured all of it silently. Nevertheless, such endurance absolutely is not because Falun Gong practitioners and I fear anything. It should be known that once a person learns the truth and the genuine meaning of life's existence, he will not regret giving up his life for that. Do not take our hearts of compassion and great tolerance as fear, so as to double the efforts [against us] recklessly. In fact, those are enlightened practitioners, and they are cultivators who have learned the genuine meaning of life. Also, do not label Falun Gong practitioners as people who engage in alleged "superstition." There are so many things that mankind and science have not yet come to understand. As far as religions are concerned, don't they also exist as a result of faith in God(s)? In reality, it is only the true religions and ancient beliefs in God(s) that have enabled the morality of human society to be maintained for several thousand years, making the existence of today's mankind—which includes you, me, him, etc.—possible. If this were not the case, mankind would have committed sins long ago that led to disasters. Human ancestors probably would have become extinct long ago, and today's events would never have occurred. Human morality is, in fact, extremely important. If people do not value virtue, they

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can commit all kinds of wrongdoing that are extremely dangerous to mankind. This is what I can tell people. Actually, I have no intention of doing anything for society, nor do I wish to get involved in issues of everyday people at all, let alone take power away from anybody. Not everyone considers power to be so important. Isn't there a saying among mankind that "everyone has his own will"? I only wish to let those who can practice cultivation obtain the Fa, as well as teach them how to genuinely improve xinxing (moral character); that is, to elevate their moral standards. Furthermore, not everyone will come to learn Falun Gong. Also, what I am doing is bound to have no relationship with politics. Yet, for any country or nationality it is a good thing to have cultivators whose hearts have embraced benevolence and whose moral levels have been upgraded. How can it be labeled an evil religion for helping people to heal their sicknesses and keep fit, while raising human moral standards? Every Falun Gong practitioner is a member of society, and each has his own job and career. They simply go to the parks to practice Falun Gong exercises for half an hour or an hour every morning, then going off to work. There are no required religious regulations of any kind to observe, nor are there any temples, churches, or religious rituals. People can come to learn it or leave as they please—there is no binding membership. In what way does it have anything to do with religion? As to the label "evil," how can it fall into the category of "evil" for teaching people to be benevolent, healing people's sicknesses, and keeping them fit without accepting any money [from them]? Or should something be considered evil if it is outside the category of communist theories? Besides, I know, evil religion is just evil religion, and it is not up to a government to decide. Should an evil religion be called "upright" if it conforms to the views of some people in government? On the other hand, should an upright one be defined as evil if it does not conform to their views?

Actually, I know exactly why some people insist on opposing Falun Gong. Just as reported by the media, there are too many people practicing Falun Gong. A hundred million people is indeed no small number. Yet why should having too many good people be feared? Isn't it true that the more good people there are, the better, while the fewer bad people there are, the better? I, Li Hongzhi, unconditionally help practitioners improve their moral quality and keep people healthy, and this in turn stabilizes society. Additionally, with their healthy bodies, people can better serve society. Isn't this bringing good fortune to the people in power? In reality, this has indeed been achieved. Why, instead of recognizing this and showing me appreciation, do they want to estrange more than 100 million people from the government? What kind of government would be so inconceivable? Furthermore, among these 100 million people, who doesn't have a family and children, relatives and friends? Is it merely an issue of 100 million people? So the number of the peo-

ple they are going against could be even more. What has actually happened to "the leadership of my beloved country"? If I, with the life of Li Hongzhi, can dispel the fears towards these good people, I will go back at once and leave everything to their disposal. Why bother with "going against the will of the law under heaven," wasting manpower and capital, and using politics and money to seek a deal that violates human rights? The United States, however, has been a leader in respecting human rights. Given this, how could the U.S. government be willing to betray human rights for such a deal? In addition, I am a U.S. permanent resident that lives under the jurisdiction of U.S. law.

I do not intend to condemn any particular person. It is just that I do not understand the way things are being handled. Why miss a good opportunity to appeal to the hearts of the people, instead placing more than 100 million people on the opposing side?

It was reported that many people went to Zhongnanhai and that some people were outraged by this. In fact, the number of people who went there was not large at all. Think about it, everyone: There are over 100 million people practicing Falun Gong, and only over ten thousand people showed up. How can that be considered a large number? There was no need to mobilize practitioners. Among 100 million practitioners, since you wanted to go and he wanted to go, in a short while, over ten thousand people would be there. They did not have any slogans or any signs, nor was there any improper conduct. Furthermore, they were not against the government. They merely wished to present the facts to the government. What was wrong with that? Please allow me to ask: Have there ever been such well-behaved demonstrators? Shouldn't one be moved by such a sight? Why do some people keep trying to find fault with Falun Gong? Besides, the approach of resorting to any and all means in order to eliminate Falun Gong is really outdated. Falun Gong is not terrible, as some people might have imagined it to be. Instead, it is a great thing. Any society has everything to gain from it and nothing to lose. On the contrary, losing the hearts of people is the most formidable thing. To be frank, the practitioners of Falun Gong are also human beings who are in the process of practicing cultivation; so they still have human minds. As they are being treated unjustly, I am not sure how much longer they will be able to endure it. This is the issue about which I am most concerned.

## SECTION 3: THE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

### I. The United States

#### U.S. State Department's Press Briefing

August 26, 1999

"The United States strongly believes that individual spiritual beliefs should be respected in accordance with international covenants that China has signed. It's also our long-standing belief that no one should be persecuted for peaceful assembly, association or peaceful expression of their views. We therefore urge the Chinese government to live up to its obligations under international human rights instruments and protect freedom of thought, conscience and religion."

#### US House and Senate Pass Resolutions to Stop China's Persecution of Falun Gong

On November 18, 1999, the United States House of Representatives unanimously passed a resolution criticizing Chinese government's crackdown on Falun Gong. On November 19, the United States Senates also passed a related resolution.

The following is the resolution H. CON. RES. 218 passed by the House.

#### CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress that the Government of the People's Republic of China should stop its persecution of Falun Gong practitioners.

Whereas Falun Gong is a peaceful and nonviolent form of personal belief and practice with millions of adherents in China and elsewhere;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China has forbidden Falun Gong practitioners to practice their beliefs;

Whereas this prohibition violates China's own Constitution as well as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Whereas thousands of ordinary citizens from all over China have been jailed for refusing to give up their practice of Falun Gong and for appealing to

the government for protection of their constitutional rights;

Whereas there are many credible reports of torture and other cruel, degrading and inhuman treatment of detained Falun Gong practitioners;

Whereas the People's Republic of China has enacted new criminal legislation that the government's official newspaper hailed as a 'powerful new weapon to smash evil cultist organizations, especially Falun Gong';

Whereas some of the detained Falun Gong members have been charged with political offenses, such as violations of China's vague 'official state secrets' law, and under the new legislation Falun Gong practitioners will be chargeable with such offenses as murder, fraud, and endangering national security;

Whereas other Falun Gong members have been sentenced to labor camps, apparently under administrative procedures allowing such sentences without trial;

Whereas Chinese authorities in recent months have reportedly confiscated, burned, or otherwise destroyed millions of Falun Gong books and tapes;

Whereas thousands of Falun Gong practitioners in China have lost their jobs and students have been expelled from schools for refusing to give up their beliefs; and

Whereas the brutal crackdown by the Chinese Government on Falun Gong is in direct violation of the fundamental human rights to freedom of personal belief and practice, expression, and assembly: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that—

the Government of the People's Republic of China should stop persecuting Falun Gong practitioners; and

the Government of the United States should use every appropriate public and private forum, including but not limited to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, to urge the Government of the People's Republic of China—

(A) to release from detention all Falun Gong practi-



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tioners and put an immediate end to the practices of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment against them and other prisoners of conscience;

(B) to allow Falun Gong practitioners to pursue their personal beliefs in accordance with article 36 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China; and

(C) to abide by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### **President Clinton denounced China's crackdown on Falun Gong**

On December 6, 1999, in his speech to proclaim the Human Rights Day, Bill Of Rights Day, and Human Rights Week of 1999 in the U.S., President Clinton called the detention of Falun Gong practitioners, "a troubling example" of China's stifling "those who test the limits of freedom."

### **U.S. to Sponsor Rights Measure Critical of China**

Washington Post and AFP (Jan. 12, 2000)

"The Clinton administration said yesterday that it will sponsor a resolution critical of China's human rights record at the next meeting of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, scheduled for Geneva in March."

" 'China's human rights record has continued to deteriorate,' said State Department spokesman James P. Rubin, citing Beijing's crackdown on political dissent, the Falun Gong spiritual movement, unregistered churches and ethnic minorities, especially Tibetans. " "Controls on the media and the Internet have also been tightened. "

" 'We will obviously try to work closely with our colleagues in Europe who care about human rights and who understand the value of using an international forum like the commission to promote human rights. ' Rubin said. "

### **US State Department Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1999**

**State Department Human Rights Report Highly Critical of China**

New York Times, February 25, 2000

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25 -- Using its toughest language since the pro-Democracy movement was crushed by Beijing more than a decade ago, the United States sharply criticized China today for what it called a marked deterioration in human rights.

The annual country reports on human rights released by the State Department dealt with more than 100 countries, but much of the focus was on China...

"The government's poor human rights record deteriorated markedly throughout the year, as the Government intensified efforts to suppress dissent, particularly organized dissent," the report said.

After noting Beijing's actions against the Falun Gong and the China's Democracy Party last year, the report said: "The government continued to commit widespread and well documented human rights abuses in violation of internationally accepted norms. These abuses stemmed from the authorities' extremely limited tolerance of public dissent aimed at the government, fear of unrest, and the limited scope or inadequate implementation of laws protecting basic freedoms."

[The State Department Report has a long section on the persecution of Falun Gong in China, which cannot be fully quoted here. For details, please refer to [http://www.state.gov/www/global/human\\_rights/1999\\_hrp\\_report/china.html](http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1999_hrp_report/china.html).]

## II. Europe

### European Parliament resolution on the human rights situation in China

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 11(1) of the Treaty on European Union and Article 177 of the EC Treaty, which establish the promotion of human rights as an objective of the CFSP,

- having regard to its resolution of 12 June 1997 on a long-term policy for China-Europe relations[1] and its resolution of 8 October 1998 on the European Union and Hong Kong: beyond 1997[2],

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the violations of human and minority rights and religious freedom in China,

- having regard to the conclusions of the EU-China Summit held in Beijing on 21 December 1999,

A. whereas the human rights situation in China has continued to deteriorate with an increasingly high number of executions, further suppression of organized political dissent, intensification of controls on unregistered churches and interference in the process of appointment of Roman Catholic bishops, the official banning of the Falun Gong movement and harassment of ethnic minority groups, especially Tibetans, Mongolians and Uighurs,

B. Whereas China has made no progress in ratifying the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights nor the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

C. whereas, with regard to Hong Kong, the undertakings relating to freedom of expression, political freedom and the rule of law, given by China in the Hong Kong Basic Law and the handover of power, are being infringed, for instance through the request to the NPC Standing Committee to reinterpret parts of the Basic Law after the judgment of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal,

D. whereas the flight of Tibet's Karmapa Lama to Dharmshala is indicative of religious repression,

E. whereas Chinese Vice-Premier Wu Bangguo and Vice-Minister Long Yongtu will visit Brussels on 25 January 2000 to discuss China's accession to the WTQ with EU representatives,

F. whereas the 56th Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights is scheduled for 20 March 2000 in Geneva,

1. Urges the Chinese Government to respond to international calls for improvement in the human rights situation and to guarantee democracy, freedom of expression, freedom of the media and political and religious freedom in China, in particular in Hong Kong and Macao, as well as in Tibet;

2. Calls on the Commission, the Council and the Member States to continue to exert pressure on China to improve her human rights record in accordance with international standards and to make clear to the Chinese Government that progress in EU-China relations, including China's WTO accession, is linked to such an improvement;

3. Urges the Commission, the Council and the Member States to raise specifically the issue of religious persecution, since there is an increasing trend towards violations of freedom of religion;

4. Calls on the Council to join efforts with the USA and co-sponsor a resolution on China at the forthcoming session of the UN Human Rights Commission and to work actively, through high-level diplomatic lobbying, to encourage the other members in the Human Rights Commission to do likewise, while discouraging countries represented in Geneva from voting for a no-action motion on China, which would prevent the Human Rights Commission from even discussing the situation in that country;

5. Urges the Chinese Government to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

6. Calls on the Council to inform Parliament and its Committee on Foreign Affairs on the strategy pursued and the results obtained by the EU at the UN Human Rights Commission;

7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Member countries of the UN Human Rights Commission and the Government of the People's Republic of China.

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### III. Canada

#### Letter from Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada

September 3, 1999

“The Government of Canada regrets the detention of Falun Gong members and the banning of the organization. We are very concerned about this suppression of the basic rights of freedom of expression and spiritual practice and call on the Chinese government to respect these essential human rights.”

#### International Center for Human Rights and Democratic Development

#### **FALUN GONG PERSECUTION MUST STOP**

Montreal, July 29, 1999

The International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development strongly condemns the Chinese government's persecution and nationwide ban on the practice of Falun Gong aimed at suppressing the group.

“The large-scale arrest of Falun Gong practitioners in China and the arbitrary detention of its leaders contravene international law, including the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which China recently signed,” Warren Allmand, President of the International Centre, said today in a statement. “China is not only making a mockery of its international obligations but it also violates its own constitution which guarantees the rights to freedom of belief, assembly and association,” he said.

... ..

In a letter sent today to Mr. Axworthy, Mr. Allmand stressed there is little evidence that bilateral dialogue is helping the human rights situation in China. “In the last year, we have seen the sham trials of labour and human rights activists, the imposition of long prison sentences against them, the continuing crackdown against dissidents and a lack of progress on the Tibetan question.”

The International Centre reiterated its call that Canada should conduct a substantive and public assessment of this bilateral human rights policy and to suspend further sessions of the Joint Committee.

### IV. Human Rights in China (HRIC)

(Editor's Note: Human Rights in China (HRIC) is the largest independent organization focused on monitoring and promoting human rights in the People's Republic of China. Founded in 1989 by a group of Chinese scientists and scholars, HRIC maintains offices in New York and Hong Kong.)

#### Sentencing of Falun Gong members reveals the true face of China's “rule by law”

Press Statement 27 December 1999

Human Rights in China (HRIC) strongly condemns the secret show trials and severe sentencing to up to eighteen years imprisonment of four key members of the Falun Gong spiritual group on December 26. Two of the sentences, for 18 years in one case and 16 years in another, were the harshest sentences handed down to peaceful demonstrators in the last ten years, and are reminiscent of the lengthy and arduous prison terms meted out to at least seven members of the China Democracy Party (CDP) earlier this year (HRIC press statement).

... ..

“The sentencing of peaceful Falun Gong practitioners reveals the true face of China's ‘rule by law,’” said Xiao Qiang, HRIC executive director. “This is representative of the systematic way in which the Chinese government not only violates universally recognized human rights standards that are enshrined in its own Constitution, but compounds the outrage by manipulating the law to rationalize its violations. Under the CCP, the law is designed not to preserve and protect the rights of the Chinese people, but to preserve and protect the power of the ruling elite.”

These, and other “legal” aspects of the campaign against the Falun Gong, provide a telling manifestation of what the Chinese leadership, despite its highly public show of “legal reform,” really means by “ruling the country according to law.” The December 26 trials and verdicts are the latest indication that those who see such “rule by law” as a bridge toward an impartial and independent rule of law are viewing Chinese reality through rose-colored glasses.

HRIC urges the Chinese government to show a true commitment to international human rights standards with the immediate and unconditional release of Li Chang, Wang Zhiwen, Li Jiewu and Yao Jie, as well as all other detained Falun Gong practitioners. HRIC believes that the ban on the Falun Gong should be lifted,

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and will be raising this case with the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights. HRIC will additionally be asking the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance, who visited China in 1994, to take up this issue with the Chinese government as a matter of urgency.

### **Crackdown on Falun Gong demonstrates clear violations of human rights**

Press Release of 23 July 1999

Human Rights in China (HRIC) strongly condemns the current crackdown on Falun Gong practitioners, including the detention of more than 100 group leaders and thousands of followers, apparently solely for engaging in peaceful protests and exercising their rights to freedom of association and freedom of thought, conscience and religion. In some of China's major cities, large numbers of followers have been detained in stadiums and other locations, and in certain cases police have been seen to use excessive force in arresting people engaging in non-violent demonstrations. HRIC believes that the order to ban the group is a violation of the right to freedom of association, which is enshrined in China's constitution, as well as in international human rights instruments.

"The scope and intensity of the campaign against Falun Gong attest to a new high tide of repression in China," said Xiao Qiang, HRIC executive director. "This clearly demonstrates that China's human rights abuses directly infringe upon the everyday lives of its vast population. China's human rights abuses are not only a matter concerning political dissidents. By banning this group and suppressing its practitioners, the Chinese government is merely increasing tensions in society. Real stability can only be constructed when people's human rights are respected and protected."

... ..

HRIC urges the Chinese government to respect international human rights standards and to abide by the provisions of the Chinese constitution. HRIC believes the ban on the Falun Gong group should be lifted, and demands the release of all practitioners detained. HRIC will be raising this case with the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights and will be asking the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance, who visited China in 1994, to take up this issue with the Chinese authorities as a matter of urgency.

## V. Amnesty International

### **Falun Gong Movement Detentions: Alienating and Potentially Destabilizing**

23 July 1999

The arbitrary detention and continuing crackdown against followers of the Falun Gong movement in China are a new example of the authorities' tactics of harassing detaining or criminalizing citizens who are peacefully exercising basic human rights. This crack down flies in the face of the Chinese government's commitments to increase social freedom and marks the beginning of yet another circle of stifled dissent and repression.

... ..

The Ministry of Public Security simultaneously decreed the following activities illegal and liable to prosecution: distributing or promoting Falun Gong materials or gathering to carry out meditation exercises to promote Falun Gong anywhere at any time; silent sit-in's, gatherings marches or demonstrations to protect or promote Falun Gong; fabricating or spreading rumors to incite social disorder, organizing or directing activities to protest relevant government decisions.

This directive includes blanket criminalization of the exercise of basic freedoms enshrined in the Chinese constitution and in international human rights treaties.

### **Open Letter to the President of the People's Republic of China**

27 September 1999, on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of China  
(Note: the following is excerpted from the full letter)

The past few months, however, have seen a major leap backwards, with the most serious and wide-ranging crackdown on peaceful dissent carried out by the authorities since 1989. At the same time, despite growing references to "rule by law" in official statements, there is no evidence that effective measures have been taken to stop entrenched practices in the law enforcement and justice system, which violate Chinese law and lead to human rights violations.

... ..

Among the latest victims of the crackdown are followers of the Falun Gong, a spiritual movement banned by the government in July 1999. Thousands of its followers were arbitrarily detained and put under pressure

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to renounce their beliefs and denounce the group. While many of those initially detained were held for short periods, some were reportedly tortured or ill-treated in detention and arrests have continued since then. Hundreds, possibly many more, of the group's followers remain in detention. According to recent reports, some are now being prosecuted, including editors and bookstore owners reportedly charged with printing or selling books about the Falun Gong which are now described as "illegal publications". Members of Christian groups have also been arrested in several provinces in recent months and some were reportedly sentenced to long prison terms.

... ..

Amnesty International believes that entrenching basic rights for all will be the best guarantee of China's future stability and development, enabling the energies and aspirations of all Chinese people to be fully harnessed.

On this historic occasion, we are calling on the government to take steps without delay to stop arbitrary detention, torture and executions and to take radical action to reform the law enforcement and justice system in China, showing the international community a real commitment to implement meaningful human rights reforms in China.

Yours faithfully,

Pierre Sane, Secretary General

### **Reports of Torture and Ill-treatment of Followers of Falun Gong**

Public document, AI Index: ASA 17/54/99, 22 October 1999 (total of 18 pages)

"Amnesty International is deeply concerned by reports that detained followers of the Falun Gong have been tortured or ill-treated in various places detention in China. In early October 1999, one member of the group, a 42 year-old woman, was reportedly beaten to death in police custody in Shangdong province. Many followers of the group remain in detention across China and it is feared that followers be at risk of torture or ill-treatment. Many Falun Gong practitioners are middle-aged or elderly people, with a large proportion of women among them."

### **Amnesty Says China's Human Rights White Paper Is A Whitewash**

(Agence France Presse Feb 18, 2000)

Amnesty International on Friday rejected China's latest human rights report as a whitewash and accused Beijing of waging the largest crackdown on peaceful dissent for more than 10 years.

The London-based human rights group said the white paper released by China on Thursday contained empty guarantees and failed to address repressive legislation and rampant abuse of power.

"Constitutional rights have been severely proscribed by newer laws or are simply not delivered in practice," said an Amnesty statement faxed to AFP.

Amnesty rejected the Chinese government's long-held view that it must put the priority of feeding and improving the lot of its 1.3 billion people ahead of Western interpretations of human rights.

"This is a weak and unconvincing explanation for Beijing's failure to act decisively against torture, to allow thousands to be detained, to carry out unfair trials and to deny constitutional rights to critics and perceived opponents of the regime," said the statement.

... ..

Rights groups say several thousand Falun Gong have been rounded up across China this month. China admitted to detaining 35,000 between July and November last year, and sentenced group leaders to up to 18 years in jail.

... ..

"The ongoing crackdown on peaceful dissent — the most serious and widespread in China since 1989 — is alienating and potentially destabilizing China. "So indeed are corruption and abuse of power, issues that find no mention in the White Paper."

### VI. Human Rights Watch

#### United Nations Must Censure China for Rights Violations

(New York, December 27, 1999) — Human Rights Watch today condemned the harsh sentences handed down to four leaders of the Falun Gong movement on December 27, 1999, and called for the release of more than one hundred others who have been formally charged but not yet put on trial for their involvement with Falun Gong. Following a summary trial on Sunday in Beijing, Li Chang, Wang Zhiwen, Ji Liewu, and Yao Jie were given sentences ranging from seven to eighteen years in prison.

“These Falun Gong members should never have been arrested, much less given heavy sentences,” said Mike Jendrzeczyk, Washington Director of Human Rights Watch’s Asia Division. “If freedom of association and assembly mean anything in China, then Falun Gong members should be free to recruit others, to practice their exercises and meditation in public, and to protest their own persecution.”

Human Rights Watch called on the United Nations to publicly censure the Chinese government at the next meeting of the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva for the suppression of Falun Gong, imprisonment of pro-democracy activists, widespread torture and ill-treatment of detainees, and other violations of international human rights standards.

#### China Uses “Rule of Law” to Justify Falun Gong Crackdown

Press Release, November 1999

Human Rights Watch called on the international community to step up pressure on Beijing for an end to the crackdown, and also urged Mary Robinson, the U.N. High Commissioner on Human Rights, to again intervene with the highest level officials in Beijing.

“Cloaking this campaign in rhetoric about the ‘rule of law’ doesn’t give any greater legitimacy to China’s crackdown on Falun Gong. The official ban on Falun Gong should be lifted. The government’s announcement that it was a ‘true cult’ and must be suppressed should be rescinded. All Falun Gong members in detention, formally charged, or sentenced to labor camps for peaceful activities should be immediately released.”

### VII. World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

#### Case CHN 270799.1

#### Follow-up to case CHN 270799

The International Secretariat of OMCT requests your URGENT intervention in the following situation in China. ... ..

According to the information received, since the ban of the religious movement in July 1999, thousands of followers have been arrested and detained. Many have been charged and even sentenced with “endangering state security and leaking state secrets.”

The International Secretariat of OMCT has also received numerous reports of ill-treatment and alleged torture of these detainees who have been placed in labour camps, mental hospitals and detention centers across China. Reports of torture and severe beatings are numerous. In some cases, detainees on hunger strike have been force fed with highly concentrated salt water which has a suffocating effect. Further testimonies include followers being injected with unnecessary medicines with damaging side effects in mental hospitals.

... ..

#### Action requested

Please write to the authorities in China urging them to:

take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of all persons held in detention, and order their immediate release;

order an immediate full and impartial investigation into the above allegations of torture, ill-treatment and arbitrary arrest in order to identify those responsible, bring them to trial and apply the penal, civil and/or administrative sanctions provided by law;

put an immediate end to the persecution and harassment of followers of Falun Gong;

guarantee the respect of human rights and the fundamental freedoms throughout the country in accordance with national laws and international human rights standards

Geneva, February 22, 2000

### VIII. EU Urged to Sponsor China Resolution

#### EU MUST SPONSOR CHINA RESOLUTION

**Joint Press Release From Amnesty International, Human Rights In China, Human Rights Watch, Int'l Federation of Human Rights, International Campaign for Tibet, Reporters Sans Frontières.**

10 February 2000

As the 56th session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights approaches, we, the undersigned organizations, urge the European Union to fully acknowledge China's deteriorating human rights situation by co-sponsoring a resolution on China.

Since 1997, the European Union has abandoned support for a China resolution at the Commission in favor of relegating criticism of Beijing to behind-the-scenes discussion, in the framework of "constructive dialogue on human rights". But the approach of dialogue alone has proved futile in stopping rights violations, let alone in fostering fundamental human rights progress.

The Chinese government is currently conducting the most ruthless repression of dissent since the 1989 crackdown. This is most vividly evidenced in the drive against the Falun Gong movement and the harsh sentencing of labor, political and spiritual activists and Tibetan religious leaders to prison terms of up to 18 years. Thus we are seriously questioning the substitution of quiet diplomacy for multilateral pressure as a way to effectively improve the human rights situation in the People's Republic of China.

In the history of the Commission, a China resolution has not yet been adopted. Thus its full potential has never been realized. Yet, even in its unfulfilled state, the resolution has provided a key focus for debate about the state of human rights in the PRC and has exerted an important form of pressure on Chinese authorities. The experience of the last several years demonstrates the Chinese government's extraordinary sensitivity to the prospect of debate on its human rights record in the U.N.'s highest human rights forum, since, among other things, it would mandate some specific monitoring of China's human rights situation. The past shows that the kind of pressure resulting from the tabling of a resolution on China has generally been a successful tactic for achieving concessions from Beijing, such as the occasional release of prisoners, promises to sign U.N. treaties, or steps toward legal reform. By the same token, when the prospect of a resolution was abandoned, these kinds of concessions dwindled.

Dialogue must not become an end in itself, and that is now happening with China. Continuation of the dialogue, with the prospect of predictable marginal concessions which have no bearing on the current crackdown, cannot be enough any longer. We strongly believe that multilateral pressure must now be part of the strategy to enforce respect for human rights in China. Dialogue without pressure in the face of persistent gross violations of human rights is simply appeasement and degrades the authority of international human rights standards.

The United States has already announced that it would support a resolution on China this year. In the interest of upholding the universality of human rights, it is of utmost importance that the issue of human rights in China be taken up as a multilateral effort, and not be reduced to a topic of US-China politics. In accordance with its own aims in relation to Common Foreign and Security Policy, namely to develop and strengthen democracy and rule of law as well as human rights and fundamental freedoms (art. 11 EU Treaty), the European Union has a significant role to play.

Although the main impetus for change will come from within China, we believe that international, multilateral pressure provides crucial leverage to those forces inside China that favor progress towards more respect for human rights. The European Union has asserted that the possibility of tabling a resolution would be re-examined every year, depending on the progress of the human rights situation in China. We firmly believe that there is sufficient indication that China has taken a radical step backwards in the realm of human rights. Thus we urge the European Union to support a China resolution at the 56th session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights.

## SECTION 4: ATTACHMENTS

### A1. Chinese Authorities Admit That Slandorous Report Was a Total Fabrication

**E**ditor's Note: [The slandering has gone to such an extent that recently communist authorities had to admit that a special report claiming "Zhang Zhi-wen committed suicide by burning herself and her daughter in protest of the government's crack-down on Falun Gong"—a report reprinted by many Chinese newspapers—was a 100% fabrication. The following is a report by a journalist from Voice of America.]

Hai Tao, of Voice of America, reported from Los Angeles: Since the Chinese government started to crack down on Falun Gong in July 1999, all state-run media agencies have started to attack Falun Gong, its founder, and its key members. On November 28, a special report authored by Li Xin-gang was published in the newspaper Xi-an Worker. The article "reported" that Zhi-wen Zhang, who was a lady living in the Wei-nan region of Shan-xi Province, burned her six month-old daughter and then committed suicide by setting herself on fire, protesting the government's crackdown on Falun Gong. This report made a stir in throughout country and it has been reprinted by many newspapers in Shen-zhen, Harbin, Shanghai and other places. Recently, the Hong Kong Information Center for Human Rights and Democratic Movements conducted an investigation and found out that the report was a total fabrication. The center said, by quoting Chinese officials, that the people, location, time and the story in that report were all fabricated. An official in the Wei-nan Communist Political and Law Committee of Shan-xi Province named Wu testified that there was absolutely no fire-suicide event and, moreover, there did not exist a lady named Zhi-wen Zhang at all. In addition, many news agencies in China called them for verification and got the same answer.

John Li, a Falun Gong practitioner at Caltech University, has explained that in China, a lot of alleged "news" about Falun Gong is in fact fabricated. When some Chinese Falun Gong practitioners asked the author of the Xi-an Worker article why he fabricated the "news," the author's reply was: "I was writing fiction."

Senior journalist Mr. Wei-guo Zhang commented, "Since the Chinese news agencies are 'pens' for the Communist Party, they must speak for the party and the government. So it loses its journalistic function as a pub-

lic monitor. Therefore, they are full of corruption, paid news, and fabricated news. It is very serious."

A commentator of current events in the US, Mr. Chang-qin Cao, who was a former journalist in China, thought that it was not strange to have this type of news appear in China. The Chinese news media follows "one country, two polices." Different news is published in party newspapers and small newspapers. Small newspapers accept free submissions. Because of the shortage of manpower, they have no way—nor do they want—to verify the authenticity of news. Meanwhile, in order to gain market and expand their circulation, small newspapers resort to all possible means to please the public with claptrap. Their first priority is to attract more readers, with no respect for facts and authenticity of news.

The problem here, however, is that newspapers such as Xi-an Worker and Harbin Metro Newspaper that published the article about "murdering a daughter and committing suicide," are not typical small newspapers. Mr. Chang-qin Cao said: "This phenomenon indicates another problem. There are two kinds of news that the media dare not fabricate: first, they dare not fabricate articles with opinions differing from those of the government, nor dare they fabricate big economical or financial news. Otherwise, they would be punished by the government. Second, for those famous figures such as writers and high ranking officials, they dare not fabricate news about them because they would be sued."

"Under these circumstances," said Mr. Cao, "there is only one type of news that they dare to fabricate, namely, news about those figures disliked by the government, such as exiled dissidents or political criminals in jail. Obviously, the government will not find trouble with them if they do that."

In addition, recently, somebody has posted on the Internet an article in the name of the founder of Falun Gong, saying that he would return to China to argue with the government, even at the risk of being jailed. John Li, a Ph.D. candidate at Caltech, testified that this is another piece of false news.



## A2. The Truth Behind One of the 1,400 Cases

**E**ditor's note: [The death of Ma Jinxiu, according to the Chinese Government, is one of the "1,400 cases of death due to Falun Gong." Her death "due to Falun Gong" has been publicized widely on China's state-run television. Her daughter, Jin Youming, wrote an article to explain the truth behind her mother's death. The following is an excerpt from her article.]

In 1981, when I went to middle school, my mother came down with diabetes. She got four "+"s in every medical checkup, indicating its severity. At the same time, my mother also was bothered by frequent heart palpitations. Believing that she might die very soon, she entrusted me to Aunt Hua, asking her to take care of my brother, my sister, and especially me, as I would be so young after she died.

For more than ten years my mother was plagued by her diseases. Although she took more than 30 prescription pills daily, her health became worse and worse. In 1994 and 1995, she suffered apoplexy twice each year, bringing about hemiplegia to her face. Her eyebrows were extremely uneven. Her eyes did not shine and her face looked dark. Her mouth corners were skewed, too. The second time she suffered apoplexy, the doctor said that it would be very difficult for her face to recover. He also indicated that should she suffer apoplexy one more time, she might lose her life. My mother was on the verge of death.

My mother's health showed no improvement until she learned Falun Gong in 1996. After she watched Master Li Hongzhi's videotape lectures, she thought that Falun Gong was so good that she wanted to practice cultivation of Falun Gong. Shortly, my mother's health improved miraculously. She stopped taking medicine. She kept practicing the Falun Gong exercises, studying the books, and improving her *xinxing* (heart quality, mind nature, or moral character). Her face recovered quickly. In only two to three months, her eyebrows became almost even. Her eyes became bright for the first time in many years. Her skewed mouth corners also became straight, while her face became white. She could walk much faster than before, whereas before she would feel tired after a tiny bit of work. After she practiced Falun Gong, she felt at ease—even after working for half a day. My mother told everyone she met: "Falun Gong is so good. You see that

my health now is so much better than in the past. I feel very healthy, and I got rid of diabetes." Many of our relatives and friends—and even our neighbors—were very impressed with her.

My mother did not have any negative symptoms until the middle of 1997. My sister and I lived next door at that time. My mother looked very well when she stayed in my room. A minute later, she went to my sister's room, and my sister started to cry that my mother's arms could not move. We took her to the hospital very quickly. When she was in the hospital, the hospital issued a notice that my mother might die shortly. My mother stayed at the hospital for treatment for a few months before she died.

During 17 years when my mother suffered from diabetes, many diabetes patients that my mother knew died. Therefore, my mother said to me several times: "So-and-so and so-and-so all died although they got diabetes later than I. Only I live so long. I'm really lucky to be able to learn Falun Dafa."

Let's think: if my mother had not practiced Falun Dafa, how long would she have survived after having diabetes for 17 years, getting four "+"s in every medical examination, and suffering two apoplexies twice in such a short time period?

When in 1997 she felt discomfort, she was sent to the hospital right away, without delay, and hence received adequate medical treatment. She took medicine, and she was given injections. No problem such as refusing medical treatment existed. And what about the outcome? She still died. We all know that a hospital can treat one's illness, but it cannot save one's life if one is to die.

### A3. Falun Gong is Beyond the Scope of Modern Science

#### An Endorsement by Medical Doctors and Scientists

In October 1998, physicians of China Union Medical University did a large-scale survey among more than 10,000 Falun Gong practitioners in Beijing regarding their health status.(see A6, below) The results showed that 99.1% of Falun Gong practitioners improved their health after practicing Falun Gong. The rate of recovery from diseases for practitioners was 58.5%. The rate of mental health improvement for practitioners was 96.5%. The effects of Falun Gong practice cannot be explained by modern medicine. As medical scientists and practitioners of Falun Gong, we have experienced the profoundness, depth, and extraordinary abilities inherent to Falun Gong practice. As medical scientists, we would like to share our experiences and understanding of the principles of Falun Gong.

#### **a. The Structure of the Human Body**

Modern medicine's understanding of the human body's structure is based on anatomy. Classic gross anatomy dissects the human body with scalpels at the level of the naked eye, and recognizes that the human body consists of organ systems. Microscopic anatomy developed with the invention of the microscope and tissue sectioner. A tissue sectioner recognizes that organs consist of tissues, cells, and sub-cellular structures. With the advent of modern molecular biology, enzymes facilitate the extraction and annealing of genes from the DNA strand allowing man to directly investigate life activities at the molecular level. Modern molecular biology attempts to explain the fundamentals of life phenomenon through research of gene expression and regulation of DNA. Modern molecular biology is limited in its growth. Physics and cosmology has proved that the universe is composed of many dimensions. Furthermore, physics and cosmology has also proven that structures of the human body are connected to some extent to every dimension of the universe.

Modern physics has discovered the existence of microscopic elements smaller than the molecule. It believes that molecules form matter in the physical world, atoms form molecules, atom nuclei and electrons form atoms, protons and neutrons form atom nuclei, and protons contain neutrinos. Modern science illustrates the multi-dimensional feature of the universe in its theory. Then, why does it fail to reveal other dimensions? Mr. Li addresses this point in Zhuan Falun: "It is known that microscopic particles of matter include molecules, atoms, and protons. When investigating further to the end, if you can see the plane of each level instead of a

point and see the plane of molecules, the plane of atoms, the plane of protons, as well as the plane of nuclei, then you will see the form of different dimensions exist. Any matter, including the human bodies, exists simultaneously and is connected with levels of dimensions in the universe. When our modern physics studies particles of matter, it only studies a microscopic particle through analysis and fission. After the nuclear fission, it will study its configuration. If there were such an instrument through which we could see such a level at which all atomic elements or molecule elements can be entirely displayed or if such a scene could be seen, you will reach beyond this dimension and witness the real scenes existing in other dimensions. The human body corresponds to the external dimensions, and they all have such existing forms." After practicing Falun Gong, many practitioners have actually seen these scenes in other dimensions – the beautiful mountains and rivers, the rotating Falun (law wheel) and the real existing forms of the human body in different dimensions.

Indeed, the human body exists in different forms in different dimensions. Modern medicine only studies the molecules of the flesh body in this dimension. Yet below the level of molecules, there are forms of the body consisting of atoms, electrons, protons, neutrinos, quarks, and more microscopic elements. Different forms of the body consist of different elements existing simultaneously. Our current technology can only study the body at the level of molecules. Therefore, modern medicine only has a partial understanding of the human body structure. Falun Gong reveals the existing forms of the body at all microscopic dimensions.

#### **b. The Etiology of Disease**

Modern medicine believes that diseases are caused by biological factors (virus, bacteria, parasites, etc), physical and chemical factors (mechanics, radiation, toxins, etc.), genetic and psychological factors. These factors disturb the balance between injury and self-healing resulting in pathological changes of the body, such as endocrine and immunity disorders. They also cause mutations and cell death in tissues of this physical dimension that manifests as inflammations, abscesses, spurs, and tumors. In recent years with the development of molecular biology, people think that the etiology of any disease can be found at the molecular level. Scientists search for genes and chromosomes responsible for the expression of diseases. For example, genes have been identified for hypertension, diabetes, osteoporosis, and cancers. Gene regulation and expression at the molecular level has become the frontier of modern biomedical research. Disorder of life activity at the molecular level is thought to be directly related to the disorder of balanced interactions among various factors

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at the molecular level. Do the more microscopic elements below the level of molecules cause diseases as well? This question has not been addressed by modern life science.

In fact, what modern medicine has discovered is only the pathological change of human organs or cells in this physical dimension. Chinese traditional medicine perceives disease as a blockage of *qi* (energy and *mai* (energy channels) or congestion of *qi* and blood. Are there any disease sources at more microscopic levels? The answer is yes! Mr. Li addresses this question in Zhuan Falun, “Why do people get sick? The fundamental cause for one to be sick and to have all of his misfortunes is karma and the karmic field of the black substance. It is something negative and bad.” The roots of the disease are not in the body of this physical dimension, but in the body consisting of more microscopic elements below the molecular level. Insight into these greater microscopic levels is beyond the capability current scientific research technology. (Please refer to Zhuan Falun, the comprehensive cultivation guide written by Mr. Li, regarding the generation of karma and how one can eliminate it when one upgrades his *xinxing* [mind-nature, morality].)

Clinically, medicines for hypertension can maintain normal blood pressure. Nitroglycerin can relieve chest pain in heart attacks. Surgeries and radiation therapies can remove tumor tissue temporarily. Yet, they cannot eradicate the disease. This is because that all medicines are composed of molecules. They can only act on diseases in the body at molecular level, but not the karma in the body at more microscopic levels. Surgeries can only remove tissues in this dimension. Radiation cannot touch karma because of radiation's large size and low energy. Modern science already knows that atoms possess more energy than molecules, protons possess more energy than atoms, and the smaller elements possess even more energy. Karma exists in a more microscopic dimension below the level of molecules; therefore, medicines formed by low-energy-molecules cannot affect karma. Before practicing Falun Gong, we worked in hospitals, pharmacies, and have had access to all kinds of advanced medical technology. We could not cure our own diseases. After practicing Falun Gong, our seemingly incurable diseases have been healed. Today, we are able to experience the happiness of being truly disease-free.

Here are some examples. Shuqing Feng is a physician at China People's Liberation Army Hospital No. 304. Before practicing Falun Gong, she had hypertension, coronary artery disease (CAD), stroke, diabetes, peripheral neuritis, irritable bowel syndrome, duodenal ulcer, neurasthenia and allergic dermatitis. She had been taking medicine for many years. After only half year of practice in 1994, all of her symptoms disappeared and have never

recurred. She is now full of energy.

Jingzhu Zhang is a 60-year-old retired nurse from Tian Tan Hospital. In March 1994, she had Myasthenia gravis with dropping eyelids. She could not see and take care of herself. She saw all the specialists in different hospitals and received therapy for several years. The effect was minimal. Her eyelids could only open a slit. Her suffering was indescribable. In May of 1997, she started to practice Falun Gong. Within a year, her body changed miraculously. Her eyes opened gradually. Not only was the incurable Myasthenia Gravis miraculously cured, but also her chronic hypertension and CAD disappeared.

Xiuge Li is a 56-year-old physician at university hospital in Beijing University. She had CAD for two years and was hospitalized four times. Every hospitalization took more than one month. She often experienced angina. She could not exert herself and was virtually semi-retired during the two years. Her CAD was cured soon after she practiced Falun Gong. She went back to work and was full of energy. She also had cervical radiculitis and often had dizziness, numbness of her hands, and difficulty elevating her shoulders. Tylenol did not help. All these symptoms disappeared after Falun Gong practice.

Deping Li is 43-year-old nurse in The Metallurgy Hospital. She had multiple sclerosis in 1989. She developed right hemiparalysis after the treatment. A year later, she had severe complications resulting in bilateral femoral head aseptic necrosis and the deformity of her left hip. For three years, long and painful treatments and countless expenses had no effect. “Accidentally, I met Falun Gong. Every word of Mr. Li touched my heart. I want to cultivate.” “The night I read “China Falun Gong”, my body had a strong reaction. By the seventh day, I was healed! By the eighth day, I went to the practice site riding a bicycle. I could not speak fluently before. Now I can read Zhuan Falun aloud. The doctor ordered bed-rest for me, but now I am strong enough to ride my bicycle. My hip pain caused by bilateral femoral head aseptic necrosis has disappeared. The femoral heads become normal after X-ray examination. This condition is incurable no matter how much money one spends.

Yuqin Wang is a 60-year-old female. She was a Radiologist in Beijing Anhua Hospital. She developed incurable radiation-related diseases because of occupational radiation over-dose. Her body was severely damaged and her health was extremely debilitated. “As a physician, I had all kinds of therapy: hospitalization, physical therapy, various medications and herbs, as well as several Qi-gong methods. None of them helped. I was thin like a skeleton and could not straighten my back. My symptoms included whole body weakness, hair loss,

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dyspnea on exertion, vertigo, dizziness, stabbing headache, fever, diarrhea, mucosal bleed, blurred vision with intermittent blindness, frequent fractures, and mouth ulcers. I was like being soaked in bottles of medicines. My suffering was so painful that it cannot be described by words. My health was deteriorating day by day. I was struggling on the death line. In this despaired situation, I fortunately obtained Falun Gong. Falun Gong made me understand what a human being lives for. I required myself to meet the standard of Zhen-Shan-Ren (Truthfulness, Benevolence, Forbearance). I studied the law and practiced the exercise everyday. This changed my body upside down. My face turned pink. My skin became smooth. My hair is getting thicker and turning black. My vision became so sharp that I can read a book clearly. My body is so light it is as if I were being pushed by someone when I walk, ride a bicycle, or climb stairs. I now truly experience the taste of disease-free feeling. Since I practiced Falun Gong, I have not received a single injection or pill. I have been receiving bonus from work for not receiving medical compensation every year. From a nearly disabled person, I turned into a healthy and happy person who is striving to be good and better human being. This is a miracle from modern medicine's point of view!"

Ruifen Tang is a 56-year-old female Internist at Medical Office of Xidan Shopping Center. She had right breast cancer in 1989 and received surgery and chemotherapy. In 1992, bone metastasis was diagnosed at Beijing University Hospital. She was started on a higher dose of chemotherapy. During these four years, she was hospitalized in five different hospitals and spent several thousand Chinese Yuan on medicine that had no effect. In July 1993, she was introduced to Falun Gong and started practice. She was fortunate enough to have her body tuned up by Mr. Li himself. In the next five years, she did not spend a penny on medicine, but has been healthier than ordinary people. She cooks three meals for six people in her family and takes care of her one-year-old grandson.

Examples like these are countless. Many practitioners have reached the disease-free status through cultivating Falun Gong. We have also seen cures of hypertension, CAD, diabetes, and even cancers. When these live facts are presented in front of us, we are forced to face these unprecedented and extraordinary abilities of Falun Gong with a scientific attitude.

#### **c. Why Does Falun Gong Have Such Unique Effects?**

The holistic alleviation of disease can only be obtained by practitioners through their cultivation under the guidance of the superior principles of Falun Gong. Falun Gong revealed the true etiology of disease. The

practice of Falun Gong leads a practitioner to a way of life and being beyond the level of ordinary people.

When one is determined to cultivate, one's Buddha's nature comes out. "When one's Buddha's nature emerges, it will shake the world of ten directions." Whoever sees it will come to help unconditionally. A practitioner wants to cultivate, return to his original true self, upgrade his moral standard to higher levels of Shan (Benevolence). Practitioners of Falun Gong cultivate their xinxing (moral character, mind-nature) according to the characteristics of the universe Zhen-Shan-Ren (Truthfulness, Benevolence, Forbearance). They discard a variety of bad attachments such as jealousy, the competitive mentality, the show-off mentality, and complacency. They become a good person, and drive themselves to become more noble and better people.

Falun Gong can also purify a person's soul. This has also been manifested amongst practitioners in the medical field. After learning Falun Gong, many medical personals understand that the meaning of life is not to get, but to give. Those who used to dislike their jobs, now enjoy their work. Those who had bad attitudes towards work and patients became responsible, patient, and warm-hearted. Facing some of the immoral trends in medical field, Falun Gong practitioners showed high morality.

For example, during the five years of practicing Falun Gong, ShiYue Chen, the Director of Orthopedics of The Metallurgy Hospital, rejected several thousand dollars of cash from patients, countless invitations for dinners, cigarettes, wine, clothes that were all worth several thousand dollars.

Suxiang Wang, a Neurologist at Tian-Tan Hospital, has been taking fame and benefit lightly since practicing Falun Gong. She rejected cash bonuses of hundreds of dollars several times amongst other things. When facing genuine gifts from patients' family members, she tells them: "I am a Falun Gong practitioner." I only give without asking anything in return. As a doctor, she never uses the names of her relatives to prescribe medicine in order to cheat the insurance companies. When her parents became sick, she paid for the medicine herself. Her parents require nasal-gastric tube and bladder catheters that need to be exchanged every month. Her colleagues told her to take some from the hospital, since this kind of medical equipment is so convenient to get. "I always keep in mind that I am a Falun Gong practitioner. I must judge myself against the standards of a Falun Gong cultivator." Therefore, she insists buying them herself.

Yongwang Yong is a physician at the Surgery clinic in Beijing Worker's Rehabilitation Center. Before practicing Falun Gong, he always thought that a good surgeon only needs to do more operations and knows how to

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operate well, and does not need to pay too much attention to the medical ethics of the patient-doctor relationship. Patients come to seek treatment, and as a result a surgeon can do whatever he wants. After studying Zhuan Falun, he learned that he put himself and his patients in a wrong position. If he is not considerate of his patients, he realized that a doctor could not be a good doctor no matter how good his technique. His Xinxing (mind-nature) upgraded. His view of life changed. No matter what kind of emergency he encounters at work even when he is sworn at by patients, he still serves patients calmly. When there is a shortage of doctors in the office and patients need to have medicine changed during weekends, he works voluntarily without compensation. Every time when patients want to present him with gifts, he refuses. Many people have witnessed his mental and physical change. He was honored as the “Best Member in the Hospital in 1998” and “Super Worker in the Union.”

Chengtao Lin is an Assistant Researcher at Biochemistry Department in Union Medical University. After graduate studies, he worked there for five years since January 1995. He requires himself to follow “Zhen-Shan-Ren” of Falun Gong. He puts his heart into his research project and maintains his contract. Although he is not rich, he does not use this Department as a transit to go abroad. (This is common in China. People use all means to try to go abroad to study and do not care about the benefit of their work place and China.) When people around him could not understand and called him a fool, he said I do not refuse the opportunity to study abroad in the future. But I am a Falun Gong practitioner and I must require myself to meet the standard of “Zhen-Shan-Ren”. I cannot cause any damage to the laboratory and the country by violating the contract.

Huilin Yue, an editor in the People's Health Publishing Co., rejects any extra “cash bonus” when reviewing articles. She is widely praised by the authors. Under her influence, many people started practicing Falun Gong.

Among Falun gong practitioners, good people and examples like these are countless.

Through studying the principles and cultivating xinxing, the moral standards of Falun Gong practitioners are always being raised. “Cultivation depends upon the individual himself while the transformation of Gong is up to the master.” When one wants to cultivate, Master Li will purify a student's body using Gong consisting of high-energy, and clean up karma that causes disease as well as the elements that make bodies unhealthy. The Buddha's School does not attach any condition to providing salvation to man. Practitioners understand the principles, suffer pain to eliminate karma, upgrade their xinxing, take

fame and benefit lightly, maintain compassion and kindness, always consider other people first, and strive to reach the realm of unselfishness. As one upgrades his xinxing and practices, the karma in his body becomes less, his body forms in every dimension become purer and purer, the Gong developed in his body become more and more substantial, and disease leaves the body. All of the investigations in Guangzhou, Dalian, and Changchun concluded the same results as the one in Beijing. These all confirmed Falun Gong's unique effect on physical and mental health.

### **d. Falun Gong is a Practice of Both Mind and Body**

As a practitioner's level of cultivating Falun Gong's principles becomes increasingly greater, the cells in his body will be filled with high-energy matter gradually. As a result, his body will become younger. In the end, the body will be replaced by high-energy matter, and he will stay young forever. More than a 100 million people are practicing Falun Gong worldwide including many elders. Many elderly people have experienced a loss of wrinkles and increased energy. Their white hairs turned black and their skin becomes smooth. Many post-menopausal women have their periods again. All these are indications of a reversal in the aging process.

Modern medicine believes that the production, proliferation, growth, and death of cells are natural processes. The aging process is irreversible. These are unchangeable laws. Aging theory believes that when the human body is aging, there are disorders in multiple organ systems. Various factors induce genetic mutations that cause genes to express the wrong information and products. This disturbs the normal metabolic process, resulting in a vicious cycle that leads to aging. The phenomenon of the reversed aging process in Falun Gong has gone beyond any modern medical theory. However, it will not be hard to understand when we apply the principles of Falun Gong. Since the universe has different levels of time and dimensions, the universal characteristic Zhen-Shan-Ren has different manifestations at different levels and has developed different laws for each level. Aging is irreversible for ordinary people. When practitioners go beyond the level of ordinary people, they are controlled by the law of their level. Practitioners collect large amounts of high-energy matter from other dimensions through cultivation of the principles of Falun Gong. These high-energy matters become deposited in cells, suppress the aging factors at the molecular level, and delay the aging process. During cultivation, the mutated cells are eliminated, and normal cells are gradually replaced by Gong (high-energy matter), the aging processes are reversed, and practitioners will stay young forever. In Chinese history, many practitioners have left

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their flesh bodies that do not turn rotten for thousands of years. Some lamas in Tibet were able to demonstrate a phenomenon known as vaporization when they completed their Buddhist cultivation practice. During vaporization, their bodies would suddenly turn into a rainbow. This phenomenon has been well documented and widely reported in a variety of media; many medical scientists have investigated it and confirmed its actuality. For those Tibetan lamas who did not cultivate the principles of the universe well enough, they might leave some nails or hair, or their body might shrink into a flesh body of smaller size. This has been observed by many people in Tibet as well. People are always puzzled by it. The reason is actually that the bodies of these lamas were filled completely or mostly by the high-energy matter collected from other dimensions. Master Li Honzhi has discussed this matter at length.

Falun Gong can purify practitioners' bodies to disease-free status and drive practitioners to higher levels of morality. Falun Gong tells us that one's life is meant to go back to his original self, to assimilate with the characteristic of the universe, Zhen-Shan-Ren, and to return to his kind and benevolent nature. Through cultivation of the principles of Falun Gong, practitioners eventually achieve the realm of unselfishness. Only at this time, can they discover the truth of the universe and see the real existence of matters and lives in different dimensions. When one reaches this status through practicing cultivation, he actually becomes an enlightened person. An "enlightened person" is a "Buddha," when translated into ancient Indian language.

Falun Gong practice sites and practitioners provide free teaching. Falun Gong only cultivates people's hearts and has no organization. Falun Gong leads people to cultivate towards benevolence.

As one can see, Falun Gong is an upright cultivation way, a high-morality law, a supernormal science, and a blessing to our country and people. This is absolutely different from those fake qigong methods and evil ways that cheat people or are responsible for superstitions.

As medical scientists and direct people who have directly benefited from Falun Gong, we would like to sincerely tell all the people in the world: There is an upright Fa (Law, Principle, or Way) being propagated in this world! May you treasure this rare opportunity!

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Ruifen Tang, female, 56, retired Internist from the medical office of Beijing Xidan Shopping Center

Yuqin Wang, female, 60, retired Radiologist from Beijing Anhua Hospital

Chengtao Lin, male, 34, Assistant Researcher in China Union Medical University

Yongwang Yang, male, 29, physician at Surgery clinic in Beijing Worker's Rehabilitation Center

Xiao Liu, male, 29, Assistant Professor in China Union Medical University

### PART II CASE REPORTS

### PART III THE TRUE STORY

### A4. Falun Gong Has Great Effects Improving Health Status

#### A Survey of Over 6,000 Practitioners in Dalian

A recent survey of over 6,000 Falun Gong practitioners in Dalian, China reveals significant health improvements. Over 90% of the practitioners with one or more medical conditions reported “total disappearance” or “improvement” of symptoms and conditions, improved mental and physical functions, better quality of life, and a slowing down of the aging process.

In February, 1998, a health status survey was carried out, involving 6478 Falun Gong cultivators from the Dalian area of China. Among the surveyed population, 6192 (95.59%) of them suffered various diseases and medical conditions of the cardiovascular system, nervous system, digestive system, respiratory system, urogenital system, haemic and immune system, musculoskeletal system, etc.

The cultivators have practiced Falun Gong for an average of 1.8 years, about 2 hours a day.

Of the surveyed population, 92% reported total disappearance of symptoms, 9.74% observed moderate improvement, and only 0.14% saw no obvious improvement. The disease recovery rate shows no major difference among cultivators with multiple illness or single illness, which are 89.73% and 88.83% respectively.

The study also noticed the recovery rate increases with the duration of practicing. The recovery rate for practitioners of 2, 3, 4 years are 91.24%, 92.45%, 95.96% respectively, which may suggest that the longer one practices, the better the result.

It is very interesting to note that those who achieved the best results did not use any medical treatment—even alternative medicine, and neither did they take vitamin/mineral supplements or other natural health products. The practitioners regarded those as superfluous and a potential cause for disturbance to their systematic health improvement process.

Falun Gong practice can claim huge savings for practitioners and the government by dramatically reducing health-care utilization. According to the survey, the annual medical expense per person has dropped 2,408.83 yuan after practicing. When taking into account the factor that 62.1% of the population is at the age (from 50 to 71) when multiple diseases are prevalent, the potential saving figure could be much higher.

The majority of the practitioners reported obvious improvements in their overall physical and mental well being: increased physical vitality and mobility, less fatigue after physical activities, better memory, improved vision and hearing function, better appetite and sleep quality, higher self-perceived health, and virtually no signs of stress, anxiety or depression.

### A5. Falun Gong Health Effects Survey of Ten Thousand in Beijing

**S**ummary: To determine the health effects of Falun Gong, a group of professionals and researchers conducted a survey among some Falun Gong practitioner in five districts in Beijing, with 12,731 valid questionnaires.

According to the survey, out of 12,731 participants, 93.4% had ill conditions, and 49.8% had suffered from at least three diseases before they began practicing Falun Gong. Through learning and practicing Falun Gong, practitioners' health conditions have improved in various degrees. The total effective cases reached 99.1%, among which the complete recovery rate was 58.5%. Comparing the changes of bodily conditions before and after Falun Gong practice, 80.3% of the participants improved their health. Among these people, the fraction of “very energetic” people increased to 55.3% after practicing from 3.5% before practicing. The facts demonstrate that Falun Gong is remarkably effective in curing diseases and improving health conditions. According to modern medical science, being healthy includes two aspects: a healthy body and a healthy mind. The survey shows that 12,287 people became psychologically healthier after practicing Falun Gong, and this accounts for 96.5% of the total participants in the survey.

The survey was conducted in October, 1998 by the following researchers:

Lin Dan, China Union Medical University, Basic Science College, Assistant Prof.  
RiYang Pu, China Union Medical University Hospital, Post Doc. researcher  
FuJun Li, China Union Medical University Hospital, Post Doc. researcher  
NaiYuan Li, Beijing Medical University, (Oral-Maxillary Hospital), Attending Physician  
Qi Wang, The Chinese People's Police General Hospital, Attending Physician  
Ying Lu, Beijing No.2 Hospital, Attending Physician  
CaiXi Li, Chinese Traditional Medicine Research Institute, Xiyun Hospital, Researcher  
ZhiYun Liu, Chinese Traditional Medicine Research Institute, Xiyun Hospital, Associate Researcher  
ShuQing Feng, The Chinese People's Military General No. 304 Hospital, Assistant Physician  
ChengTao Lin, China Union Medical University, Basic Science College, Assistant Researcher  
Xiao Liu, China Union Medical University, Basic Science College, Practical Researcher

For details of this survey, please refer to <http://minghui.ca/eng.html>.

## A6. A Plainclothes Policeman's Thoughts After Approaching Falun Gong

**D**ear President Jiang,

I am a public security cadre. After the April 25 event, we were asked to carry out an all-out investigation into Falun Gong and take some restrictive measures against it. Here, I am presenting you some facts we have acquired for your decision making.

Just as the practitioners told us, Falun Gong has no formal organization. They do not charge any money. The teachings are absolutely free. There is no superior-subordinate relationship among the practitioners. Once there did exist such titles as Fuzeren (person who is responsible) or Fudaoyuan (person who offers assistance). However, these titles almost mean nothing. They don't have any privileges but to voluntarily coordinate the practitioners to come together to study the books of Falun Gong and do group practice. They are merely enthusiasts who volunteer to provide service to others. All practitioners start the practice or quit it at their own will. No one forces them to do anything.

At the beginning of our investigation, I originally thought that they were strictly organized and had stringent guidelines. I had a hard time comprehending their ways of organization. However, after some days of further investigation, it turned out that things were not as we thought and I realized that I had that initial conclusion only because of lack of knowledge. It's our pre-acquired knowledge that led to our wrong conclusion. We just couldn't believe that there exists such a big group of people who pursue neither money nor fame and always consider others' interests above their own. In dealing with people, they are always strict with themselves and generous to others. They guide their conduct with very high moral standards, which gives them a remarkable force of adherence. To a certain extent, they constitute a positive factor in stabilizing the society and developing socialist spiritual civilization.

The moral standards of Falun Gong practitioners are very high. They perform their daily tasks guided by moral principles, at work and at home, and have received good feedback from the society. They are, without a doubt, making irreplaceable contributions to improving social security and developing both spiritual and material civilizations in the society.

I am very happy that I have this chance to communicate directly with Falun Gong practitioners other than out of work needs. I am surprised as well as moved to find out that in a society where money and self-interest is upheld above all, there still exist so many good people. They are so kind and patient. Even in the face of our all types of picky requirements, they look within themselves to find reasons for problems, "We may have done something not good enough. Sorry for the inconvenience that has been caused." Their attitude shows their incredible open-mindedness and selflessness. Can you believe that there exist such good people in the world? Even facing unfair treatments, they look at themselves to find the problem. What high moral character they must have in order to do that!!

One point is for sure: in our society, when people encounter problems or trouble, they always look outside and try to find fault with others. They depict themselves as flawless flowers and can never see any problems with themselves. On the contrary, Falun Gong practitioners always look inside when they encounter problems. They try to find reasons on their side and do better next time. This is what we public security people admire most.

On the one hand, executing orders from our superiors is our duty. On the other hand, we have also done many things that have hurt Falun Gong practitioners in the process. Now I am more and more reluctant to approach them in this capacity. They are so good, so perfect. Anything that's not good or not good enough in me exposes its weaknesses before them. Compared with them, most people in modern society are so much behind in morality. They are truly the spiritual pioneers into the next century.

They do not gamble, smoke, drink, bribe, fight or curse. They take money and fame lightly. They are modest and willing to help. They are kind-hearted and law abiding. They are responsible to others and the society. They can never be seen in such violent places as nightclubs, pubs, or Karaoke bars.

In the morning, they get up early to do the exercises. In the evening, they come together in twos, threes, or a dozen to study the book "Zhuan Falun". They discuss together as they read on to find out where they fall behind others. Some practitioners are sad or even shed tears because of a sentence that was not properly worded or a thing that was not properly done. If I had not seen that in person, I could not even believe it. What magic does the book "Zhuan Falun" possess to transform a person with degraded morality to a person of high moral principles in a short period of time? With such a question in mind, I read through the book myself. I have to admit



## PART III THE TRUE STORY: A Practitioner's Perspective

that it is a very good book, a book that teaches how to become good people. No wonder there are so many people learning it. In a short span of a few years, it has become known all over the world, and the number of practitioners has exceeded 100 million. Imagine what will happen if everyone in the world studies “Zhuan Falun”. How beautiful the world will become—no wars, no cheating, and no selfishness. Everybody is taken care of by others and everybody takes care of others. Such a society is wonderful—a paradise in human society. As head of our country, what do you care about? Isn't it that everybody lives a happy life?

Nowadays, the Chinese legal system is in the process of being completed and all kinds of laws are being formulated and promulgated. Nevertheless, crimes are not effectively curbed and crime rates keep climbing every year. Why? Because laws cannot bind people's heart. When not seen, people still do wrong. Even if policemen keep watch on people on a one-to-one basis, they still perform misconduct. Not to say that some policemen are of very low quality and do wrong themselves. In order to change all this, you have to change their hearts first. Just as Master Li said, “Falun Gong possesses such extraordinary powers. It can correct people's hearts.”

I cannot face them any more. Their hearts are so decent and noble while mine is so dirty in comparison. All of our thoughts, conduct, and measures against them are so pale and weak. What we have been doing is irrational, full of sin, unforgivable and against the wishes of the people. Although at this moment I cannot practice Falun Gong because of different kinds of pressures, I will learn it some day, because I also want to be a good person, a person with a high moral standard.

I am aware that I am running a risk in writing this letter, because I am familiar with the long history and the persistent way in which our nation handles things. In the not remote past, the Cultural Revolution testifies to my point. That's why I am not handwriting this, I am not leaving my signature or even any traces. But what I am writing is fact and absolutely free of fallacies. I hope that you can take some time out of your busy schedule and get to understand Falun Gong with an objective attitude, an attitude that is responsible to the people and to the society. This way our unique national culture that's embedded in Falun Gong can be promoted all over the world and benefit all of mankind. This is the wish of the whole society and all the people.

An ordinary public security cadre

June 3, 1999

**PART III**  
**THE TRUE STORY**

**PART II**  
**CASE REPORTS**

**PART I**  
**SUMMARY**