HARRY WU: A STUDENT DIALOGUE

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE MATERIALS

Hongda Harry Wu
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Independence High School
Charlotte, North Carolina
February 23, 2000

Presented by
The Echo Foundation
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Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
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THE ECHO FOUNDATION

AN INTRODUCTION

On March 12, 1997, as the centerpiece of the community-wide, year-long, educational Elie Wiesel Project, internationally revered humanitarian and Noble Laureate for Peace, Elie Wiesel spoke "Against Indifference" to over 23,000 students and adults. He was so inspired by this visit to Charlotte, that, as he left, he challenged the community to continue its focus on the critical issues of human dignity, justice and moral courage. He offered seed money and his wholehearted assistance in obtaining speakers and developing programs to address these issues. Thus The Echo Foundation was born, and with it its mission: ...to sponsor and facilitate those voices that speak of human dignity, justice and moral courage in a way that will lead to positive action for humankind. The mission is implemented by bringing speakers, exhibitions and performances to the Charlotte Region as catalysts for educational programs. For each project we develop school-based curriculum materials that meet North Carolina standards and which we make available free of charge to schoolteachers across the region.

Our goals are:
A. Educating for compassion, justice and moral decision making;
B. Teaching understanding through fostering relationships founded in respect;
C. Facilitating opportunities to act against indifference on these issues.

Our city has demonstrated a need and a desire to address issues of racial diversity, culture and the quality of human relationships. The Echo Foundation brings together people from all corners of Charlotte-Mecklenburg to address these vital goals through student dialogues, teacher workshops, musical programs, art and writing contests and more. The primary focus of all projects is always humanity. The secondary focus is specific to the particular speaker, exhibition or performance. For example, the primary focus of The Elie Wiesel Project was justice and world peace; the secondary focus of the Project was World War II and the Holocaust.

The Echo Foundation projects include: The visit to Charlotte of Charles Fawcett, the production of the play, "The White Rose," the Varian Fry Exhibition Project and Living Together in the Twenty-first Century.

Proposed future speakers include: Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela, President Jimmy Carter, Marian Wright Edleman, Shimon Peres, Harry Wu, Vaclav Havel, Tich Nath Hanh, The Dali Lama, Oscar Arias and Jody Williams.

The Echo Foundation is governed by an International Board of Advisors and a Charlotte Board of Trustees. Mr. Wiesel is an active Honorary Chairperson who continues to meet with ECHO on a regular basis. To date, many outstanding professionals in the community have offered their services to The Foundation pro bono. The corporate, religious and educational communities have generously exhibited their support of ECHO’s mission and projects.

Date of Incorporation: October 20, 1997
Federal Tax Exemption: 501(c)3 received November 10, 1998, EIN: 56-2054137
Administrative Offices: 926 Elizabeth Ave. Suite 403, Charlotte, NC 28204

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Hongda Harry Wu

Executive Director, Laogai Research Foundation
Research Fellow, Hoover Institute at Stanford University

Harry Wu was first arrested as a young student in Beijing for speaking out against the Soviet invasion of Hungary and criticizing the Chinese Communist Party. In 1960 he was sent to the Laogai-China’s Gulag – as a ‘counter-revolutionary rightist.’ During the next 19 years he was imprisoned in 12 different forced labor camps manufacturing chemicals, mining coal, building roads, clearing land, and planting and harvesting crops. He was beaten, tortured, and nearly starved to death. He witnessed the deaths of many other prisoners from brutality, starvation, and suicide.

Released in 1979, Wu finally left China and came to the United States in 1985 as a visiting professor of Geology at the University of California at Berkeley. Later, he began writing about his experiences in the Laogai. He chose to end his academic work and become a human rights activist dedicated to exposing the truth about the Laogai – the largest forced labor camp system in the world today.

He has testified before various United States Congressional committees, as well as the British, German, and Australian Parliaments, the European Parliament, and the United Nations. In 1992 he established the Laogai Research Foundation, a non-profit research and public education organization. The work of the Laogai Research Foundation is recognized as the leading source of information on the human rights situation in China’s forced labor camps.

In the summer of 1995, he was arrested by the Chinese government as he tried to enter China with valid, legal documentation. He was held by the Chinese government for 66 days before he was convicted in a show trial for ‘stealing state secrets.’ He was sentenced to 15 years, but immediately was expelled as a result of an extensive international campaign launched on his behalf. Since his release, he has continued his work in publicizing the fight to condemn the Laogai and to document its atrocities.


He received the Freedom Award from the Hungarian Freedom Fighters’ Federation in 1991. In 1994 he received the first Martin Ennals Human Rights Award from the Swiss Martin Ennals Foundation. In March of 1996, he was awarded the Medal of Freedom, also known as the Beggar’s Medal, from the Dutch World War II Resistance Foundation. He also received honorary degrees from St. Louis University and the American University in Paris during 1996.
BACKGROUND ARTICLES ON HARRY WU

ARTICLES:


5. Laogai Research Foundation Information page

QUESTIONS:

1. What experience caused Harry Wu to become an activist against the Chinese labor camp system (the Laogai)?

2. Why would Wu risk prison again by returning to China? Do you agree or disagree with his actions? Why?

3. Read the excerpts of speeches from the Laogai Foundation conference. Discuss the experiences related in the excerpts. Now reread the questions and your answers to them in #2. Did the experiences in the speeches change your mind about Wu's actions?

--by Robin Tingley
Independence High School
HARRY WU
(New Internationalist - September 1996)

Harry Wu has a reputation for being proud, difficult and head strong. He's also resolutely honest. As a geology student in Beijing in 1960 Wu was asked what he thought about the communist system. His reply? 'Not much.' That comment earned him 19 years inside a Chinese prison labour camp.

I met him in Oxford between two appointments on his hectic tour of Europe, calling for boycotts of goods made by slave labour in Chinese prison camps. He looks his age - 59 - and admits feeling 'very tired'. Nonetheless, he has a powerful presence and determined energy. This is a man not easily crushed or knocked off course.

After nearly two decades of mental and physical torture he could have accepted the quiet life of an exile in the US. But in 1991 Harry Wu returned to China to do an exposé of the laogai or labour-camp system. His film was beamed around the world courtesy of ITV and CBS. Wu made another trip in the summer of 1995 to unearth more dirt on the labour camps. This time the Chinese authorities were waiting for him at the airport.

'They asked me: "Why are you coming back here? You are a big trouble-maker. We have been waiting for you." They talked about wanting to "solve the problem" - their euphemism for wanting to eliminate me.'

Wu was then arrested and observed round-the-clock for 66 days, charged with being a spy and entering the country under false documents. The spy charges he dismisses as nonsense. 'The information I was seeking was for the media, not intelligence service. You must understand that the Chinese Government lies all the time,' he says emphatically. 'It lies to its own people; it lies to other governments. The Government says there are no political prisoners in China; they say the country doesn't export missiles to Pakistan. They lied about me and to me. Communist Party members lie to themselves. Nobody really believes in communism any longer in China.' They just believe in power.'

He was tried and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment. But another sentence was tagged on first: he was to be expelled from China immediately. This face-saving move was in response to mounting pressure from the international community, particularly the US where Wu is now a citizen.

His US-based Laogai Research Foundation estimates that a third of China's tea output is the product of slave labour. But because the laogai system is so intertwined with state control of industry, it is difficult to say for sure which Chinese products are 'clean' and which are not. Instead Wu proposes a boycott of Chinese toys. 'China is too big a market for a total boycott. But we can target toys. Evidence shows that many of these are made in prisons. We have kind thoughts when we give a child a toy. But what if that gift has been made by blood and tears?'

It is not just the exploitation of labour that makes the laogai system inhumane. As he details in his book "Bitter Winds", the treatment of prisoners is cruel and sadistic - crushing souls as well as bodies. 'There are no gas chambers in the laogai. But there are spiritual gas chambers. The laogai turn people into wrecks, spiritually and mentally.'

So what about him? Did being arrested last year bring back all the old fears and horrors?

'I feared nothing. I know these people. I had 19 years of it. Of course I did not want to lose my freedom. But I thought: don't think about it or you will become weak.'

I ask if after his exile he became disillusioned with the West, like former Soviet dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn?

'No. Solzhenitsyn had a strong Slavic and Orthodox Christian identity. My religious education stopped at 11 when the Communist took over. I have prayed only twice. Once when I saw an inmate in prison die; and once under torture.

I took American nationality in June 1994 as a convenience, but I did not feel a part of the US. After the trouble I had in China last summer, I feel differently. People in the US cared about what was
happening to me. When I returned they put up yellow ribbons and that felt very good. They cared about my liberty.'

Now Harry Wu is trying to get a new word into the English dictionary: 'laogai'. People still talk about the Holocaust and the Soviet gulags. It's important to remember these things, but they are in the past. The laogai system is happening in China right now.'

(by Vanessa Baird)

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China jails activist Wu as spy, U.S. urges release

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- ANALYSIS: China's Harry Wu verdict could unlock U.S. ties
- China reveals its side of Harry Wu court case
- China reveals its side of Harry Wu court case

BEIJING (Aug 24, 1995 - 08:36 EDT) - A Chinese court convicted U.S. human rights activist Harry Wu of spying and sentenced him on Thursday to 15 years in prison, and officials said he could be expelled early with good behaviour.

The United States appealed to Beijing to free swiftly the naturalised U.S. citizen who has angered China with a series of allegations about human rights abuses in Chinese prisons. His arrest inflamed already strained Sino-U.S. ties.

"We urge the immediate release of Harry Wu on humanitarian grounds," a White House spokesman said in Washington, adding that no deals had been made for Wu's release.

The Intermediate People's Court in central Wuhan said Wu, 58, was convicted of the capital charge of espionage at a closed trial on Wednesday and sentenced to 15 years in prison and expulsion.

"Using an assumed name he sneaked into China a number of times to illegally obtain state secrets and engage in criminal activities," Xinhua news agency quoted the verdict as saying.

Wu had pleaded guilty and waived his right to appeal, which officials said could earn him leniency.

"There are two possibilities. If his attitude is good and he is well behaved, he could be released early and expelled," a court spokesman said by telephone. "The other possibility is that he will be expelled after serving his 15 years."

One of Wu's two lawyers told Reuters he thought Wu could be deported as early as this month, saying the court had found his attitude to be good, but no final decision had been made.

"He wrote the Chinese government a letter admitting that all the charges against him were factual and expressed his remorse. He himself asked that he be expelled as soon as possible," his lawyer Xu Deyuan said by telephone from Wuhan.

Asked if Wu would have to serve out his 15-year term, the lawyer said: "This problem does not exist.

"He could be expelled before the end of this month," Xu said. "It is not absolute. There are no conditions attached."

Xu said he felt the trial had been fair and that Wu was in good spirits despite wearing the same clothes in which he was formally arrested on July 8. He was detained as he entered western China on June 19.

http://www2.nando.net/newsroom/ntn/world/082495/world170t.html 12/29/1999
State television reported the verdict on its evening news, showing the bespectacled Wu bowing his head and fighting tears and then being led away, shackled hand and foot.

A U.S. consul was among the handful of people shown in the courtroom. The U.S. embassy said the diplomat was not told when Wu might be expelled.

Clinton administration sources quoted by U.S. media said the White House had been informed by China that Wu was to be tried swiftly and expelled to remove a major irritant before Beijing holds the World Conference on Women in September.

First Lady Hillary Clinton is keen to attend the meeting -- which would hand China a diplomatic coup -- but the White House has delayed a decision due to the sensitivity of Wu's case.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Chen Jian declined to say if Wu would have to serve out his term but said the trial was not related to Sino-U.S. relations or the women's conference.

Beijing said this week ties with Washington had plunged to their lowest ebb in 16 years and chastised the U.S. media for vilifying China, according to Xinhua, as a "new evil empire."

China has lashed Washington and Taipei almost daily since the United States allowed a private visit in June by President Lee Teng-hui of Taiwan, Beijing's arch-rival.

Wu angered Beijing with allegations, researched during several visits in recent years, that China's prisons illegally exported goods made by prisoners and sold the organs of executed criminals to transplant recipients.

China has denied his allegations, which Wu detailed in two books and two British Broadcasting Corp documentaries.

Wu, who spent 19 years in Chinese labour camps, was arrested in June when he entered western Xinjiang, apparently to continue his research into Chinese prison conditions.
Wu Vows to Continue His Fight

Aug. 25, 1995

MILPITAS, Calif. (Reuters) - Human rights activist Harry Wu, expelled from China after being convicted of spying, said Friday he would have starved himself to death if Chinese authorities had made him serve a jail sentence.

Wu, expelled Thursday after a Chinese court convicted him of spying and sentenced him to 15 years in jail, said he had decided to go on hunger strike if Chinese authorities made him serve any of the jail term rather than deporting him.

"I decided if they put me in the jail even one month or two months or three months (and were) not going to deport me, I decided to have a hunger strike unto the death," Wu said.

"That's the only choice: freedom or death," Wu told a news conference in the living room of his home in Milpitas, 50 miles south of San Francisco.

Wu, 58, a naturalized American citizen who has angered China by documenting charges of human rights abuses in Chinese labor camps, was arrested after entering China June 19 and spent two months isolated in a small cell.

His expulsion was expected to ease troubled Sino-U.S. relations and opened the way for first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton to attend a U.N. conference on women in China early next month.

The White House announced Friday that Mrs. Clinton will attend the conference. It said her decision was based "upon the recommendation of the president's national security team."

Wu, who sometimes joked and at others appeared close to tears, looked weak and emotionally drained after his imprisonment, which turned into a high-profile irritant to Sino-U.S. relations.

Wu said that when he was reunited with his wife Ching Lee at San Francisco airport Thursday night, he asked her to remarry him. "I confessed to my wife: I didn't think about you a lot because thinking a lot I would go mad."

He said he told himself: "Don't think about it. I don't have a family. I don't have good things outside. I have to prepare for my death." A charge of espionage can carry the death penalty in China.

In an interview with Reuters, Wu was adamant that he would go on with his struggle to end alleged human rights abuses in China's labor camps.

"The fight is continuing. (There is) no way for me to give up or withdraw a single inch," he said.

Wu said he is committed to returning to China one day but declined to say whether he would risk imprisonment by going back. He said Chinese authorities would jail him again if he did return.

http://www.christusrex.org/www1/sdc/rtr0825.html

12/29/1999
"This is the place I was born. This is the place I want to die. Of course I will go back," he said. "I have my blood, my tears in the Chinese soil."

"The government won't welcome me, (but) that doesn't mean the government will last forever," said Wu, who previously spent 19 years in Chinese labor camps.

Wu told reporters he lied in a confession Chinese authorities say he made. "Should I be honest to liars? It is true I lied," he said.
Harry Wu
Welcome address
Executive Director, Laogai Research Foundation
Friday, September 17, 1999

... Once we were called "scum," we were called "stinking latrine pebbles that must be reformed." But we are human beings, survivors of an inferno, witnesses to a system of unprecedented brutality. We have endured unthinkable violence and profound inhumanity and managed to come out with our humanity and our dignity intact. We should be proud to have beaten such impossible odds. We should be proud to be Laogai survivors...

Who is to speak out, if not we? ... We can pardon those who violently abused us, but we cannot tolerate further violence against innocent victims.

Let us join together, crystallize our blood and tears and carve the word Laogai on the monument of history...

Bing Zhang
Testimony, "A Fearless World"
Daughter of a Laogai survivor
Sunday, September 19, 1999

... My father, Zhang Xian Liang, is one of the well known Chinese dissidents from Shanghai...

My childhood was filled with pain and fear that has continued on into my adult life. When I graduated from high school near the top of my class, I was told that I could not receive higher education unless I signed a statement admitting to my father's crimes and renouncing his political opinions. I reluctantly signed under duress. How humiliating it was, for an eighteen-year-old girl being forced to publicly condemn her father...

The Laogai system is by far the most horrible ruling machine that the Communist Party has produced. After spending eight years in the labor camps and the prisons, my father deeply understands what this giant ghost can do to a regular human being...
Wu Fan (Chris Wu)
Testimony
Spent nearly 12 years in the Laogai
Saturday, September 18, 1999

...In October 1970, during the movement to deal blows at counterrevolutionaries and three vices, I was formally arrested. Because I was stubborn and refused to plead guilty at an open-trial rally of one hundred thousand people in Wuhui City, Anhui Province in 1971, I was sentenced to a 20 year imprisonment as a counterrevolutionary on charges of "attempts to turn traitor and go over to the enemy," "extreme reactionary mindedness," and "attacks against the great leader Chairman Mao and the Central Committee of the Cultural Revolution." After the rally, I was paraded through Wuhui City and was humiliated...

In the inhumane prison, in order not to let my brains ossify, I tried to read as much as I could... Only in prison, through reading, did I come to understand the bottom of Chinese society, to see through the essence of the Chinese Communist Party...

Wisdom could not give me physical freedom, but it delivered me from the vortex of agony. It made me independent and open-minded, it helped me watch the infinite universe more confidently and soar above the clouds...

Huang Xiang
Testimony
Poet & Writer, Laogai survivor
Friday, September 17, 1999

...I have never been a beneficiary of Mao Zedong's social system, nor am I a critic within the system. I was born a victim of the system, its rebel and its challenger...

In 1959, out of my poetic nature and my love for freedom, I was dreaming of looking for the fairy mountain, lake, desert, and grassland of my imagination. Alone, I left my work unit and went to Dachadan, Chadam, Qinghai Province. But ZHANG Guang-Zhi, personnel and security cadre of Guiyang Hardware Factory concocted charges against me of "active counterrevolutionary plotting and deliberately avoiding punishment"... I was forced to labor with labor-reform prisoners...

Everyday I was escorted at gunpoint into the Gobi Desert to make bricks. Everyday, we had to dig dirt, carry water, mix mud, and make hundreds of bricks. In the Gobi Desert, the sun rose early and set late. I had to work more than 14 hours a day... Those who

http://www.laogai.org/pcspch.htm

12/29/1999
failed to fulfill the quota endured physical and mental punishments. They were not given supper to eat and while standing on a shaking heap of bricks, they were denounced by fellow prisoners...

Such painful experiences strengthened my rebel consciousness...

NOTE: Some of the poems Huang Xiang wrote of his Laogai experience will be published within our Conference publication.

Tashi Paldon
Testimony
Tibetan woman who spent 15 years in Reform through Labor
Saturday, September 18, 1999

Every day, other women prisoners and I were forced to work 16 to 17 hours a day. We made bricks and carried rocks on our backs during the day, and attended meetings and reform studies from sundown to 11:00 p.m. From 11:00 p.m. until 1:00 a.m. we were forced to make woolen yarn...

Although I have lost my youth and health as a result of many years of hard labor and poor food, I am lucky to be alive and to have this opportunity to speak. Countless numbers of women have lost their lives through torture and execution or silent killing... Thousands are still in prison today going through even more terrible gender specific tortures...

Liu Xinghu
Placed in a juvenile detention center at the age of 14;
Spent 25 Years total in Reeducation-Through-Labor.
Friday, September 17, 1999

In 1959, at the age of 14, I was sent by Shanghai Municipality Public Security Bureau to the Laogai because I was the eldest son in a "counterrevolutionary" family...

I did not undergo any legal procedures, nor was I given any official government documents when I was sent to the Laogai. The government simply said I would be given a job in the Laogai camp where I would remain forever, like my father...
Wu Xuecai
Spent two and a half years in solitary confinement
Sunday, September 19, 1999

...During my incarceration in solitary confinement, I was in a treacherous plight, weighing less than 77 lb., and on the verge of mental breakdown. Fearing I could die in solitary confinement, the authorities had to transfer me to Beijing Prison.

What I went through proves that solitary confinement is extremely inhumane. Such cells do not exist in most civilized countries. But, the China that exercises totalitarian and despotic rule keeps such a cruel system...

October 14, 1999
Laogai Research Foundation
laogai@igc.org

http://www.laogai.org/pcspch.htm
SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

CAN TRADE LIFT OPPRESSION AS WORLD PREPARES TO ACCEPT CHINA, HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION LOOMS

NO: YOU CAN'T BUY RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS FROM A COMMUNIST REGIME

Sunday, November 21, 1999
Section: Perspective
Edition: Morning Final
Page: 1P
BY JANE LII
Memo: U.S.-CHINA TRADE AGREEMENT
RELATED STORY: page 1P

Illustration: Photo

Caption: PHOTO: No: Harry Wu
The Milpitas activist and former Chinese dissident has fought against the United States' establishing relations with China until it has improved human rights.
[991121 PE 1P]

Human rights activists have long opposed trade with China, and among the loudest such voices has been Milpitas resident Harry Wu. Imprisoned in China during the cultural revolution, Wu immigrated to the United States in 1985 and has testified frequently before Congress about China's alleged human rights abuses.

In the early '90s, Wu traveled to China to document conditions in forced-labor camps. He was expelled in 1995. Wu is executive director of the Laogai Research Foundation and a research fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University.
Mercury News staff writer Jane Lii (jlii@sjmercury.com) interviewed Wu about last week's trade deal. Here are excerpts from their conversation:

Q
You have fought for years to stop the American government from giving China any special trade status until the country improves its human rights records. What does this latest trade agreement mean to you?


12/29/1999
A
It sends a strong signal to the Chinese government that you can do with human rights whatever you want, as long as we make money in your country. China is still a communist regime. It does not allow for freedom and democracy. By putting money before democracy and liberty, America is engaging in a policy of appeasement and hypocrisy.

The agreement is inconsistent with the U.S. foreign policy on other tyrannical regimes. . . . We boycotted South Africa. We (opposed) the Soviet Union until the Berlin Wall came down. We cut off Cuba, Burma and North Korea. But when it comes to China, which has shown no respect for human rights, we give them money.

Q
Why should human rights be included as a condition for a trade deal?

A
We don’t want a deal that will sustain the communist regime. We want to tell the government that when you enjoy money and technology from the West, you have to improve your human rights record.

Q
Supporters of the agreement say engagement, including admission to the World Trade Organization, will help China achieve greater freedom and democracy.

A
It’s a double-edged sword. There is no question that the money we put over there will benefit the ordinary Chinese who need it. But the government will benefit the most. The Chinese government is going to use the money to develop weapon systems. What implications would this have for world peace and security? America is trying to change a tyrannical system through money. It thinks prosperity can open the door for democracy and human rights. But I think peace and prosperity can be achieved only through openness, not the other way around.

Q
What kind of human rights improvements must China make?

A
For starters, China should allow Amnesty International to open an office there. It should allow pictures of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to be displayed in Tibetan homes. It should allow the people to worship freely in Roman Catholic churches and the Red Cross to visit the prison work camps they call "vocational training grounds." It should also stop the suppression of people who practice Falun Gong and establish a free press where people can publish materials that are critical of the government.
Q
Do you think this agreement will benefit Americans?

A
Big businesses, yes. But it's not good for the common people. It could destroy the American textile industry and worsen the trade deficit. There will be more businesses going to China for cheap labor.

Q
Can the Chinese government keep its word in upholding the terms of the agreement?

A
If past actions are any indication, the Chinese government would be willing to violate foreign World Trade Organization promises for the sake of political stability.

Q
Any other thoughts?

A
I want the American businessman to tell the truth: "I don't care about democracy and human rights in China. I only care about making money." Please don't say, "Our money is helping to develop human rights in China!"

(box)
About LRF

In 1992, Hongda Harry Wu established The Laogai Research to gather information on the Chinese gulag, known as the Laogai—the most extensive forced labor camp system in the world today—and to disseminate it to as many people as possible.

A former political prisoner who spent 19 years in the Laogai, Mr. Wu is also the Foundation’s executive director. Through his research, the Foundation has identified more than 1,100 Laogai camps, many of which produce products for export to dozens of countries around the world, including the United States. Mr. Wu is the author of Laogai—The Chinese Gulag (1992), Bitter Winds—A Memoir of My Years in China’s Gulag (1994) and Troublemaker—One Man’s Crusade Against China’s Cruelty (1996).

The Foundation publishes an annual Laogai Handbook, a newsletter, special investigative reports, and assists television media in preparing documentary films on the Laogai. Millions of television viewers in Australia, Europe, Asia and North America have seen these films, which have been produced by companies such as the BBC, Yorkshire Television, CBS, NBC, ABC and Germany’s WDR.

In order to fulfill its mission of exposing human rights abuses in the Laogai and elsewhere in China, the Foundation is in need of financial contributions. The Foundation is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization (501 c-3) incorporated in the State of California and contributions to it are tax-deductible (Tax ID 77-0304957). Contributions can be mailed to:

The Laogai Research Foundation
P.O. Box 361375
Milpitas, CA 95036-1375

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http://www.laogai.org/aboutus.htm

12/29/1999
BACKGROUND ARTICLES ON CHINA


East Meets West: China and the U.S. in the 21st Century
Introduction

As we approach the 21st century, the United States, like other nations, is increasingly reliant on the global economy. And perhaps no other nation will play a bigger role in this equation than China.

With the world's largest population — there are nearly five Chinese for every American — China has unmatched potential as a consumer of American goods and as a source of inexpensive labor for U.S. companies whose products and goods are sold in the U.S. and abroad. With China's economy expanding so rapidly (by some estimates China now has the world's third largest economy, after the U.S. and Japan), many American businesses and investors see a chance to ride the wave of economic growth to enormous profits.

For China, the U.S. represents the single largest and richest consumer market for its goods. It looks to U.S. investors to help fuel growth and help the country move from a once-stagnant agrarian system into a state-of-the-art, market-oriented economy.

In short, the two countries have much to gain from working together to achieve increased prosperity and growth. Yet, economies do not operate in a vacuum. The countries' separate histories and ideologies present obstacles to easy cooperation.

While the two countries began to normalize relations in the 1970s, due in large part to the efforts of President Richard Nixon and Communist Leader Deng Xiaoping, much of the goodwill that had begun to accumulate was lost in a matter of days in 1989 when the Chinese government used brutal military force to crack down on pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square. China has tried hard over the last few years to regain the confidence of Western leaders, but it has been a long road back.

Human rights advocates in the U.S. and elsewhere see China as a totalitarian society that suppresses free speech, hunts down dissidents, and imprisons innocent people with little due process. American unions fear cheap labor, particularly in light of the perceived loss of jobs to Mexico since the passage of NAFTA. Some politicians warn of Communist China's aggressive use of force in Tiananmen Square, its oppression of Tibet, and its threats aimed at Taiwan. Christian fundamentalists are angry over oppression toward a Chinese Christian minority. Women's rights advocates are concerned about the stories of forced abortions and sterilizations. And even some economists say the U.S. needs to be tougher economically, since China's trade surplus with the U.S. has grown to the point where it almost rivals Japan's.

The inevitable truth is that despite these issues, China's economy shows no signs of slowing. And if the U.S. does not work with China economically, other nations will.

An important debate in American foreign policy today centers around how the U.S. should deal with China, given these conflicting interests and concerns. Some say we should treat China like an enemy, just as we did the former Soviet Union. Others argue that we should engage, not isolate China. Some U.S. business leaders argue that the free market will bring about democratic influences in China. Work with China, they claim, invest and export goods, and the Chinese will want more of what the West has to offer; their government will have no choice but to give it to them.

This resource unit provides your students with a wide range of facts, ideas, and activities to help them examine the evolving and important relationship between China and the U.S. — nations that cannot ignore each other as they move into a new century.

Learning Objectives

The U.S. News & World Report articles and activities in this unit will help students:

- Compare and contrast China and the U.S. in terms of their distinct ideologies, economies, and people.
- Examine China's expanding economy and the implications it has both internally for China and externally for the U.S. and world economies.
- Analyze China's stance toward Taiwan and Tibet, as well as Western concerns over the future treatment of Hong Kong.
- Evaluate allegations of human rights abuses in China and consider what the U.S. and world response has been, and should be.
- Assess the dilemmas facing American political and business leaders in deciding how to deal with China today and in the years ahead.

General Questions and Activities

1. Here are some general questions to help sharpen students' focus and critical-thinking skills as you use this resource unit. You may wish to use the questions as the basis for class discussion and individual research assignments.

   - What are the root causes of the tension between the U.S. and China? Does it stem from fundamental ideological differences? Or, has tension developed over time? What historical events have played a part in causing tension between the two countries?
   - How does China perceive the U.S.? Does China have grounds for protesting official U.S. positions about trade and human rights? Could China accuse the U.S. of hypocrisy?
   - For American politicians and businesses, what type of moral, ethical, and political dilemmas does China present?
Additional Resources

While the U.S. News & World Report articles in this resource unit will give your students a thorough look at the current issues affecting U.S.-China relations, there are other sources your students can consult in order to broaden their knowledge and better prepare them for some of the activities. Following are just a few suggestions.

Books

*Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vols. I & II (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960). Writings from early China all the way through modern times, including a glimpse at the various philosophies that influenced Chinese civilization.

*The Search for Modern China*, by Jonathan Spence (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990). An exhaustive and thorough history of China from the end of the Ming Dynasty all the way through the crackdown in Tiananmen Square.

*The Opium War*, by Peter Ward Fay (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975). Details the opium trade, but also looks at how the war between England and China led to the English takeover of Hong Kong and brought about the infiltration of westerners and western influences in China, leading to repercussions that endure today.

*Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China*, by Jung Chang (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991). This memoir shows the change in China from a feudal to a communist society, putting a human face on historical events and giving a detailed account of the struggles involved.


*Crisis at Tiananmen: Reform and Reality*, by Yi Mu and Mark V. Thompson (San Francisco: China Books and Periodicals, 1989). Eyewitness accounts of the student movement that led to the crackdown and the effect it had on the whole country.

Websites

http://www.chinatoday.com — a comprehensive information base on today’s China, with government, law, education, entertainment, investment, travel, and culture.

http://www.city.net/countries/china/ — travel and tourism information on China, including today’s weather across the country, plus links to newspapers, colleges and universities, languages of China, and more.

http://China-a2z.com/ — includes China news archives, web directory, periodicals, events calendar, and mailing lists.

http://www-students.unisg.ch/~pgeist/China/china.htm — the Internet travel guide to China, with links to general information, literature, places in China, and more.

http://solar.rtd.utk.edu/~china/tour/china_tour.html — links to a map of China and general information, plus virtual tours of many Chinese cities.


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People’s Republic of China

Total area: 3,696,100 square miles; the world’s third largest nation

Climate: very diverse, with subarctic temperatures to the north and tropical weather to the south

Natural resources: coal, iron ore, crude oil, mercury, tin, uranium, world’s largest hydropower potential

United States of America

Total area: 3,618,770 square miles; fourth largest country in the world

Climate: primarily temperate

Natural resources: coal, copper, lead, uranium, gold, crude oil, natural gas, timber

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Deng Xiaoping played a huge role in transforming China from a primitive, agrarian economy to a powerful “socialist market economy.” He also played a role in the see-saw nature of Sino-U.S. relations over the last 20 years. After reading this article, how would you rate Deng Xiaoping’s effectiveness as a leader? What were his most striking accomplishments? Was he good, or bad, for China? Why?

After declaring to the world in 1949 that China had stood up, Mao Zedong spent his years as the country’s paramount leader grinding it back down, neglecting nation building to launch ruthless battles against opponents and to scuttle policies at odds with his unique brand of socialism. It fell to the People’s Republic of China’s second paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping—the plain-spoken son of a Sichuanese landowner, who died at the end of February 1997 at 92—to clean up what Mao had wrecked.

Ever the pragmatist, Comrade Deng engineered a smooth transition of power by gradually resigning from his leading positions in the Communist Party, government, and military beginning in 1987. He held on to but a single office: chairman of the China Bridge Association. The rest he turned over to a younger crop of leaders too young to have fought in the civil war in which Deng and Mao battled side by side against the Nationalists to bring the Communists to power. The handover of power was completed long before Deng lost his struggle with Parkinson’s disease, respiratory illness, and just plain old age.

At a time when China needs to project an image of economic and political stability to the world, its leadership under President Jiang Zemin swiftly moved to set a business-as-usual tone. China’s stock market recovered from an early plunge to close unchanged. Flags flew at half-staff, but otherwise observance of Deng’s passing was almost ostentatiously muted. “Deng has been out of power for a long time. In that sense, we expect very little change,” said a senior White House official, adding: “People are too busy making money to stop in the streets.”

The consensus among the overwhelming majority of Chinese citizens, academics, and officials is that the “socialist market economy,” the strange hybrid system hatched from Dengist policies of microliberalization and macrocontrol, is here to stay. “Markets are good,” Deng declared, and the results spoke for themselves. China’s gross national product increased 500 percent from 1978 to 1995, raising per capita income from barely measurable to $1,800. Savings deposits grew 14,000 percent; exports went from $10 billion a year to $153 billion. By some estimates, China now has the world’s third-largest economy, after America and Japan.

At the same time, Deng spearheaded China’s return to the international stage, notably with the normalization of ties with the United States at the end of 1978 and his visit to America, with a stop at a down-home Texas rodeo, the next year.

Although Deng was instrumental in leading economic liberalization and reform of civil institutions like the Chinese parliament, the National People’s Congress, he did not relinquish the party’s absolute hold on political power. In his writings, Deng expressed admiration for some aspects of democracy. “Democracy has to be institutionalized and written into law, so as to make sure that institutions and laws don’t change whenever the leadership changes, or whenever the leaders change their views or shift their focus of attention,” Deng told Central Committee members in 1978. But Deng was a party man, a believer in leadership from above exercised by the “dictatorship of the proletariat.” Less than a year after that speech, Deng ordered police to tear down the thousands of posters and handbills on Beijing’s “Democracy Wall” after critiques of China’s socialist system and the party popped up alongside permissible attacks on the discredited Gang of Four. We Jingsheng, a worker who challenged the party to add a fifth modernization, democracy, to its Four Modernizations economic-growth program, was arrested, tried, and imprisoned along with other critics.

“Stop them.” The Tiananmen Square movement that began in 1989 knocked political reform even further off course as Deng and the central leadership began to see the demonstrators—a diverse mass with no unifying agenda but plenty to say about the system’s flaws—as a threat to the stability of the nation and to their own power. After weeks of debate within the party over how to handle the growing “disturbances,” which had spread to other cities, Deng weighed in on the side of the hard-liners. He signed off on the assault against demonstrators in Beijing and appeared on national television to justify the decision five days later. “If some people practice bourgeois liberalization, and create turmoil by demanding bourgeois human rights and democracy,” Deng told members of the Central Committee in a 1990 speech, “we have to stop them.” Stop them he did, with tanks and bullets, then with a relentless witch hunt for remaining movement leaders and followers. Hundreds died, and many more were imprisoned.
The Year of the Hawk?

A growing number of experts say get tough with China

Unlike its old cold war relationship with the Soviet Union, the U.S.'s relationship with China is more subtle and more complicated, marked by episodes of mutual love and hate. Once you have read this article, what would you say is the single most important issue in the relationship between the two nations? How do you think this issue will affect U.S. relations with China in the 21st century?

For more than a century, America's perceptions of China have gone through wild swings. After an alliance between the United States and China during World War II and mutual demonization through most of the Chairman Mao years, Americans reembraced China 25 years ago as a market and as a strategic partner. In the late 1970s, euphoric Americans cheered Deng Xiaoping in a cowboy hat during the Chinese leader's first trip to America. But since the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, the public tone has shifted. Politicians routinely lambaste the "dictators of Beijing," movie stars rally around Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, and union leaders decry the loss of U.S. jobs.

Remarkably, the core of American policy toward China has barely changed. Through the ups and downs of the post Tiananmen Square period, American policy elites and business leaders have steadfastly supported "engagement"—dipломatise for maintaining open trade and security relations. The underlying idea has been that as China's power inevitably grew, economic and political interaction would be the most promising way to avoid showdowns or the emergence of a new cold war.

But now, that consensus is under more intense pressure than it has been in 25 years. Allegations that China attempted to influence the 1996 American elections, whether well founded or not, have strengthened the voice of critics who argue that China has become an adversary. "China identifies us as the enemy, and it's time we recognized it," says Ross Munro, coauthor of a new book, The Coming Conflict With China. The surge in China's trade surplus with the United States—although not as large as Japan's—has added to the tensions. The tone of press and political coverage has recently sharpened. Newspaper columnists widely mocked Vice President Al Gore for seeming too polite to his Chinese hosts during his visit to Beijing in April 1997. Fareed Zakaria, managing editor of the supremely respectable Foreign Affairs magazine, complained that Washington was humiliating a weak Russia while coddling a surging China.

From labor leaders and human rights activists on one end of the political spectrum to traditional anti-Communist hardliners and conservative think tanks on the other, the new hawks say that time is sharpening rather than blunting disagreements between the United States and China. Since China's military, political, and economic goals will vary more and more from America's, in this view, it's time to get tough with China by a variety of punishing moves: expelling diplomats, avoiding high level contacts, withholding technology, or once again firmly linking trade to human rights. Sensing a possible opening for a presidential bid in 2000, House Democratic leader Dick Gephardt is signaling that he may oppose the administration's effort to usher China into the World Trade Organization.

The eruption of this new China debate greatly complicated the Gore mission to Beijing. Making the highest level U.S. governmental visit since Tiananmen, he didn't take a single business executive with him. And it wasn't clear until the last minute whether he would preside over the signing of $2 billion worth of contracts for General Motors Corp. and Boeing Co. Even then, the vice president was trapped in an awkward champagne toast.

Like many shifts in prevailing opinion, this one may be out of sync with reality. At just the moment when influential Americans are calling for a crackdown on China, the outside world's leverage over the Middle Kingdom may be declining. China's population is five times larger than that of the United States. Its military is the largest in the world. It has a steadily growing list of trade partners to choose from. It has foreign-exchange reserves of $100 billion—more than Germany's—and has emerged as a buyer of U.S. Treasury securities. Last year, China attracted $42 billion in direct investment, a third of all such investment in the developing world. The way China manages its economic growth will have more impact on the world environment than will what all of today's rich countries choose to do. In short, China cannot be "contained" because its effect on the world is already so profound.

Major American companies are part of the investment wave and see their presence in China as vital to their global strategy. Their interests have played a much more decisive role in administration policy than has any suspected Chinese political contribution. Take Eastman Kodak whose bright-yellow trademark is one of the most visible foreign brands in Shanghai and other major cities. The company regards its presence in China as an indispensable part of its strategy of ouflanking archival Fuji of Japan. General Motors, having failed to establish a winning position in Japan, will now proceed with a $1.6 billion midsize-sedan joint venture in Shanghai that could give it new competitive clout against its Japanese competitors worldwide. AT&T, Coca-Cola, and Motorola also have placed huge bets on China. Boeing is even helping modernize China's air-traffic-control system to give it an advantage over its European rival Airbus in selling planes.
Reports of China’s emergence as the new Japan are greatly exaggerated

China’s economy is growing at a phenomenal rate. Some in the U.S. are very concerned about it. After reading this article, come up with reasons why you think the U.S. should be concerned about China’s economic prowess. Then come up with the reasons why you think the U.S. shouldn’t worry.

In early 1997, the U.S. government announced that the American gap with a new Asian powerhouse reached $40 billion. This time, it’s China. Although Japan still holds the largest single trade surplus with America, an estimated $50 billion in 1996, that’s down from $59.1 billion the prior year. The cry is already heard: China is the new Japan. China is the problem.

But many factors that are at work behind the numbers make the real story more complex. Many business leaders and trade experts say that Japan is still a far more potent competitor than China and will remain so for some time. The reasons have to do with both statistical glitches in the raw trade figures and with fundamental differences in the economies of the two countries:

Cars vs. toys. A dollar of trade deficit with Japan can have a very different impact on U.S. jobs and job growth than a dollar of trade deficit with China. “The deficits we have with China are large in industries where we don’t make things anymore, with the exception of textiles,” says Clyde Prestowitz, president of the Economic Strategy Institute. China’s top exports to the United States are such things as baby carriages, toys, sporting goods, footwear, and women’s coats.

Japan’s exports, by contrast, strike to the heart of American competitiveness, in industries such as autos, computers, office equipment, and telephone gear.

Structural weaknesses. What the numbers also don’t reveal is that there is a big difference between the sophistication of Japan’s economy and the primitive nature of much of China’s. The economic modernization program launched in 1978 by Deng Xiaoping has benefited only a portion of China’s vast population, mostly in coastal areas and major cities. The World Bank estimates that 350 million Chinese live in poverty—five times the government’s official figure.

Most visible in China’s major cities is an incredible 100 million people who have left their home provinces to become a floating population in search of jobs. Migrants in dusty clothes from Henan cook their meals on the streets of Beijing and haunt open-air—and illegal—job markets seeking employment as laborers. Beneath the rapidly multiplying deluxe office towers of booming Shenzhen, across the border from Hong Kong, a pregnant woman from Anhui province in her 20s with a toddler in tow begs for change or food. A husband-and-wife pair of street cobblers from Zhejiang province offer shoes for about 10 cents.

The challenge of alleviating huge income disparities at the same time that China’s creaky state-owned enterprises are reformed is much tougher than anything Japan faces in coping with an aging population or cleaning up a banking bad-loan mess. “China has got very, very advanced sectors of its economy,” says Beijing American Chamber of Commerce Chairman Jim MacGregor. “It also has people standing in water up to their knees every day doing what they did a thousand years ago in rice fields.”

What that means is that China probably won’t be able to move up the technology ladder to compete head to head against the strongest U.S. industries anytime soon. Ford, for example, sees no Chinese competitors for assembled vehicles emerging on the world stage. After such tough Japanese rivals as Toyota and Honda, Booker says, his company is worried most about scrappy South Korean companies like Hyundai that are building huge export capacity in their country.

It’s this ever more complicated tangle of Asian trading and investment patterns that the second Clinton administration faces. How to deal with China will be at the top of the agenda; the United States has said it wants to help China win admission to the World Trade Organization, and President Clinton has invited Chinese President Jiang Zemin to visit Washington in 1997. But the two countries already are sparring over textiles, and the Chinese could launch a small but symbolic round of retaliation against U.S. exports if talks between the two governments founder.

Some experts such as Prestowitz believe it is still possible to negotiate a government to government and have real impact on the deeply rooted trade imbalances. “I don’t feel like we’ve ever gone in and really banged the table,” says Prestowitz, a former negotiator.

But others such as New Mexico’s Sen. Jeff Bingaman argue that Washington has to do a better job of promoting U.S. exports and getting technology out of federal government hands and into the private sector. In his native state, both Los Alamos and Sandia national energy labs are doing just that, he says.

Many business leaders agree. A group of about two dozen major American companies including TRW, General Electric, General Motors, IBM, and Motorola are calling for a relaxation of controls on the kinds of U.S. technology goods that can be sold to China.

America’s overall trade statistics also lend weight to the notion that its real problem is bigger than any wrangle over textile quotas or other issues likely to be resolved through tough trade negotiations. The U.S. trade deficit with all of Asia is likely to reach $128 billion for 1996, or 75 percent of America’s gap with the world. The tremors from China may merely be tokens of a tectonic shift in world economic power.

These three *U.S. News & World Report* articles — "Speaking Up for Their Rights," "The Test Case that Won't Go Away," and "Two Steps Forward, Three Steps Back" — take a close look at China's record on human rights and how the government handles human expression. Read the articles and make a list of things you do every day that you think might get you into trouble in China.

**Speaking Up for Their Rights**

Seven years after Tiananmen, cautious signs of civil activism in China

Many of the millions of Chinese who took to the streets eight years ago in pro-democracy, anticorruption protests saw such mass demonstrations as the only way to get the government's attention. The country’s Communist rulers ended that dissent when they sent troops to Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989, and hundreds of unarmed civilians were killed. A seldom noted legacy of those events, however, has been the party's quiet effort to give the public new outlets to vent their frustrations with the system.

Laws passed since 1989 allow individuals to sue government departments that violate their rights and to demand monetary compensation for illegal detentions and arrests. Telephone hot lines take citizens' complaints. Criminal procedure law has been reformed.

Iron limits remain: Campaigning against party rule is a clear-cut crime, punishable by a long stint in labor camp. Courts rarely rule in favor of underdog plaintiffs. Last week Amnesty International decried the "scale and brutality of the Chinese repression."

An increasing number of Chinese, however, are willing to accept the long odds. It is too soon to say whether these small liberalizations will defuse frustrations or sow the seeds of new antigovernment actions. But the Chinese profiled below are learning the ropes of social activism.

**The Farmer.** Farmer Tian Chunshan is staying in a windowless basement room in a cheap guest house. From his hard-plastic briefcase he extracts three fat, brownpaper envelopes stuffed with the record of the all-consuming mission that has brought him to Beijing nine times in the last five years: a campaign to get county government in a remote part of China's northeast to return land that Tian and fellow farmers in 11 villages say was illegally confiscated. Through years of backbreaking work, using their own funds, the farmers had reclaimed a huge swath of wasteland for agriculture. When the county took over the land in 1980, it said the reclamation was never officially approved.

When Tian, 46, became his village's party boss in 1991, he resolved to get the land back. He is pinning his hopes on China's top leaders, whom he sees as pure men who are ill served by their subordinates. "The leaders," he insists, "know farmers wouldn't lie."

Three years ago, Tian handed over day-to-day responsibility for the village to his deputies, rented out his plot of farmland and became a full-time activist. Last year he led the 11 villages in filing suit against the county. They lost in the intermediate court but appealed to the superior court, which threw the case back to the intermediate court. There they lost again and lost another appeal at the superior court.

That's when he tried to win influence in high places. An acquaintance managed to slip Tian's appeal to the private secretary of Vice Premier Jiang Chunyun, who oversees agriculture. Tian carries a copy of Jiang's October response, an instruction to the Heilongjiang Province party chief to look into the matter. But nothing has happened yet.

Tian soldiers on, despite his own family's objections. He says they ask him the same question as county officials: "Why are you doing this? You are the party chief of your village. You could live so comfortably."

On his latest trip to Beijing, Tian looked up editors at the *People's Daily*, the party newspaper, and a special investigator in the state prosecutor's office whom he had seen on television. But he misses the fertile black earth of his home village near the border with Russia. "When this is over," he says, "I'm going to go home and properly farm again."

**The City Dweller.** Even with the hot and humid Beijing summer approaching, Liu Guilin, 42, says he doesn't dare open his apartment windows at night. "Do you hear that noise?" he asks, referring to a low background buzz in the room.

Liu blames his loss of peace on the giant air-conditioning units of a McDonald's restaurant just across a narrow lane from his fourth-floor apartment. The noise, as well as wafting smells and blocked sunlight, has especially angered Liu and those of his neighbors whose apartments are closest to the McDonald's in the glitzy New Town Square shopping complex. But in solidarity, when Liu and his neighbors organized their first petition against New Town Square last fall, all but a handful of the occupants of the building's 625 apartments signed. Says Zhang Chunfa, 33, who lives next door to Liu: "They have violated our right to rest."

Snubbed by department-store managers and the store's developers, the
The Test Case that Won't Go Away

China's battle of wills with Harry Wu

For $3,000 in cold cash, an ostensibly private Chinese company last week sold Western television bureaus in Beijing copies of a 13-minute video called “Just See the Lies of Wu Hongda.” Wu Hongda is the Chinese name of Harry Wu, the naturalized American citizen whom China charged July 8, 1995, with espionage. His fate has become a major test in the strained U.S.-China relationship.

The video shows black-and-white footage of Wu squirming in a stuffed armchair, answering the questions of a uniformed interrogator while looking away from the man or at the floor. His face blurry and his voice indistinct on the video, Wu admits that specific scenes in two damning BBC documentaries last year on prison labor exports and the transplanting of organs from executed prisoners, for which he was a source, were not what they purported to be. The BBC stands by its productions.

In one scene from the video, Wu stands over property confiscated when he was apprehended crossing the border into China June 19. But interestingly, its commentary repeats the espionage charge without further elaboration.

With Secretary of State Warren Christopher due to meet Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen at a regional forum in Brunei this week, China may figure that the video and an accompanying Xinhua News Agency report on Wu's admissions will take some of the wind out of Christopher's expected protests to Qian over the Wu affair.

Some analysts think that in seeking to make Wu's case look less compelling, Beijing may also be looking to head off Wu-related protests at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women and the parallel Non-Governmental Organizations Forum on Women, both due to open in Beijing in a month's time.

Fears of unrest. Beijing's paranoia about the conferences is growing. With the Beijing city government in turmoil as a corruption investigation into the city's former party boss widens, and with popular anger at corruption and inflation high, the government fears that the protest tactics typical of NGO Forums—perhaps focused this time on Wu—will provoke visitor outcry and Chinese unrest.

Beijing's ultimate nightmare would be a repeat of the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations, which received a big boost when the world media descended on Beijing to cover the visit of then Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. A far larger gathering of foreign journalists is expected for the women's conferences. Chinese officialdom also fears placard-carrying feminists. "They are afraid that they will march naked on Tiananmen Square," says a Chinese woman journalist. "They worry that the whole population of Beijing will come out to watch, and that it will take them a month to suppress the crowds."

The Final Countdown

Hong Kong, the city too busy to worry about democracy

There was a lot of excitement and apprehension surrounding China's takeover of Hong Kong in July 1997. What do you think will happen to the former British colony under Chinese rule? Will it continue to prosper economically? In terms of free expression? How important are these issues to the people of Hong Kong? What parts of Hong Kong's society do you think care the most about them?

To hear many in Hong Kong talk, it's only a few unpatriotic malcontents—plus the entire Western press corps—that worries about the future of democracy and the rule of law after Beijing takes over the British colony July 1, 1997. The official line from China's handpicked, pro-Beijing, business-friendly chief-executive-designate Tung Chee-hwa is, in short, that the business of Hong Kong is business. He routinely invokes "Chinese values" in defending recent moves that will scrap the current system of direct election of the legislative council and restrict the current freedom of Hong Kong citizens to hold public demonstrations or criticize Beijing. It's just a matter, Tung's spokesman said recently, of striking "a balance between civil liberties and social stability, personal rights and social obligations."

Last week, on the eve of what may be the last Hong Kong demonstration marking the June 4 anniversary of the massacre of pro-democracy activists in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, Tung told reporters: "As a member of the Chinese nation, it's time to put aside the baggage of June 4."

The pro-democracy parties that beat a pro-Beijing slate by 3 to 1 in Hong Kong's 1995 legislative elections still enjoy a 60 percent majority in polls. But from a combination of caution, indifference, and genuine pride in the end of British colonial rule, many Hong Kongers find their passion for politics waning. "Hong Kong people care only about business," averred the manager of a restaurant in a food court a few blocks from the June 4 vigil. "People want a government that can raise their standard of living. There's no way [rallies] can influence the new government."

Much of the establishment—including two major pro-business political parties, the Liberal Party, and the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment of Hong Kong—has smoothly aligned itself behind Tung's plans to disband the elected legislature and replace it with a Beijing-appointed Provisional Legislature. The new body includes many of Beijing's candidates who lost in 1995. All but one member of Tung's Executive Council are businessmen, and many business leaders blandly insist they don't see what all the fuss is about. Indeed, several were quoted by Ian Buruma in the June 12 New York Review of Books airily dismissing one-man, one-vote and other democratic principles as "pandering to public opinion" and a recipe for high taxes, "welfarism," and the end to Hong Kong's economic miracle.

But other business leaders make the opposite point—that protecting Hong Kong's democratic system is vital to its continued economic success. Larry Yung Chikin, chairman of CITIC Pacific, a huge Hong Kong conglomerate 45 percent owned by China, said recently that unnecessary interference by Beijing could "kill Hong Kong." Yung is the well-connected son of a former Chinese vice president, and he and others have indicated that they will work pragmatically, if quietly, to make sure Beijing lives up to its promises.

Unsilent minority. Far less quiet is a sizable minority of students, labor activists, Christians, and other democracy activists who plan a more direct challenge to Beijing. Last week, as night settled on Hong Kong's Victoria Park on the day of the Tiananmen anniversary, some 50,000 people gathered after a busy work day for a candlelight vigil that had been called by the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of the Patriotic Democratic Movement in China. The Alliance, which was founded immediately after the 1989 Tiananmen massacre, has become the territory's most visible practitioner of street-level activism. As young men shot hoops and couples played tennis on courts at the park's edge, participants took seats on the pavement facing a stage and listened to speeches and sang solemn songs for more than two hours, honoring those killed eight years ago.

At a march on the preceding Sunday, a smaller but feistier cross section of Hong Kong's 6 million citizens led chants in support of Wang Dan and other of China's well-known dissidents and prisoners of conscience—men Beijing labels "criminals" and threats to state security. The hundreds of marchers who set out for the New China News Agency building, Beijing's representative office in the territory, swelled to thousands. Police kept traffic flowing while controlling the orderly crowd with minimal muscle.

Hong Kong's huge 1989 Tiananmen protest, which brought a million people to the streets, launched the territory's pro-democracy movement and is still a salient rallying point for those who fear what is to come. "I know the Chinese government always wants the public to forget," said Esther, a 34-year-old clinical psychologist who joined the march and sat patiently in front of the New China News offices to hear more speeches. "I just want them to know we won't forget June 4." An old man striding earnestly forward, when asked why he was marching, answered simply: "We're afraid of the Communist Party."
A Political Test of When
Guns Matter

China’s good-cop, bad-cop approach
to Taiwan

Taiwan has always been a sore point for China. It also presents a deli-
crate problem for the U.S. As you will see, the U.S. wants to make clear
that it will not tolerate China’s aggression and yet it wants to keep the
rhetoric from escalating to the levels seen during the height of the
cold war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Do you understand
the Chinese government’s point of view regarding Taiwan? Is the U.S.
interfering?

From his stuffed-leather chair in a
conference room in Beijing’s
Diaooyutai State Guest House, Gen.
Zhang Wannian minced no words.
If Taiwan declares independence, or if
foreign forces intervene to prevent the
island’s reunification with mainland
China, “we definitely will use force,”
said the general—one of China’s most
powerful military men. That is China’s
bad-cop line on Taiwan, which Beijing
considers a renegade province and a key
test of its national sovereignty.

China has a good-cop line too: Ten
days before heading for New York and a
summit with Bill Clinton, Chinese
President Jiang Zemin told U.S. News
that he would welcome a meeting with
Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui, either in
Beijing or Taipei. “We can discuss any-
thing except Taiwan independence, or
two Chinas, or one China—one Taiwan,”
Jiang said. That renewal of an earlier
offer was the first inductive-free refer-
ce to Lee since he enraged China by
talking up Taiwan’s separateness during
a June 1995 visit to the United States.

Jiang’s conciliatory line could have
been timed to his session with Clinton:
Their third formal meeting comes amid
a tentative thaw in Sino-U.S. relations.
Beijing’s good-cop, bad-cop routine
highlights China’s current dilemma of
how to put Taiwan’s separatist talk back
into a box without further aggravating
relations with the rest of the world.

Crucial support. No matter how it is
phrased, China’s bottom line on Taiwan
remains unchanged: It wants reunifica-
tion; it will accept the status quo; it will
never tolerate Taiwanese independence.
But this determination does not exclude
subtle differences between the general
and president over Taiwan—and the
United States. In the long run, such sub-
tleties could matter, because for any
Chinese leader, the support of the
People’s Liberation Army remains cru-
ial. That is particularly true for Jiang,
who has no military pedigree of his own
and who may have to defend his job
against challengers after the death of his
mentor, senior leader Deng Xiaoping.

The military’s central role in today’s
China is rooted in the country’s commu-
nist revolution. China’s communists
were a guerrilla Army that in 1949
became a government. Mao Zedong and
Deng Xiaoping were former military
leaders, as were most other top officials
well into the 1980s.

The military’s 3 million men and
women—the largest standing Army in
the world—are the ultimate guarantors
of the government’s authority, as the 1989
Tiananmen crackdown showed. And
through its extensive network of busi-
nesses, the military is an increasingly
important actor in the Chinese economy.

Loyalist. There is no open evidence
of a rift between Jiang and the military.
They share a desire to warn Washington
away from the mainland China-Taiwan
equation and to influence Taiwanese
voters to reject separatist candidates in
upcoming elections. And General Zhang
has personal reasons to be loyal to
Jiang: The president promoted him to
Army chief of staff in 1992, and Zhang
recently was made vice chairman of the
Central Military Commission, which
Jiang has headed since 1989.

To some extent, contrasts in Jiang’s
and Zhang’s approaches to Taiwan reflect
their personalities. In his inter-
view with U.S. News, Jiang talked about
Taiwan in human terms: Chinese versus
Chinese, us versus us. He recalled
receiving a Taiwanese delegation in
1990 and recognizing the delegation’s
deputy leader as an old schoolmate,
from the days before Chiang Kai-shek’s
defeated Nationalist Army and its sup-
porters took up residence on Taiwan in
the late 1940s. “He sat in front of me in
the third year of junior high school,”
Jiang remembered.

“Even after 50 years, I could call out
his name.” Jiang’s conclusion from that
experience: “The problem between China
and Taiwan is not that complicated.”

General Zhang, 67, a respected, no-
nonsense professional soldier, talks
about Taiwan in more removed terms:
us versus them. Taiwan’s independence
activists, he says simply, are “traitors.”

Zhang blames current tensions
between the Chinese mainland and
Taiwan “solely” on America. “Because
the Taiwan authorities believe they have
the support of the United States,” the
general charges, “they have gone further
and further down the road of splitting
China.” He asserts that “some people”
in the United States “always hope to see
China in chaos and collapse.”

Such stinging language, coming after
two rounds of missile tests near Taiwan in
July and August 1995, does not mean that
China is raring to attack Taiwan. Practical
considerations weigh heavily against mili-

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America's China Syndrome

Mortimer B. Zuckerman makes the case in this editorial that free trade and good, open diplomacy are the keys to improving U.S.-China relations and the general well-being of the Chinese people. Do you agree with him? Why or why not? Do you think the U.S. needs to take a tougher approach? Once you have read the editorial, write your own essay in which you convey your thoughts about how the U.S. should deal with China.

Whoever transformed China's economic policies deserves the Nobel Prize in economics. Whoever rights the Sino-American relationship would deserve the prize in politics if they were awarded one. What the Chinese have done to their economy is phenomenal. In 15 years, China has come from a poverty-stricken nowhere to the economic forefront. Real income has quadrupled, putting it on course to become the world's largest economy—larger than America's—in the next century. In the process, China is certain to have a growing and profound influence on global business, finance, and politics—perhaps greater than any other nation. That is why the Sino-American relationship will be the most important as we move into the 21st century. And managing it is only part of the challenge: We also have to do what we can to ensure that the relationships among the countries in the region—Japan, South Korea, China, India, and Russia—are stable as well.

The avoidance of a new cold war is the minimum requirement. China's cooperation is critical on a wide range of issues—environmental protection, drug trafficking, terrorism, immigration, nuclear proliferation, and the transfer of dangerous military technologies to renegade states.

We begin from a better base than the 1950s, when so much went wrong. Today, China is neither a strategic nor an ideological adversary. The only party slogan heeded in China is: "To get rich is glorious." But we have shown a talent in the past for mishandling critical, strategic relationships in response to partisan tensions at home. There are plenty of areas for friction in our "sweet and sour" relationship with China—human rights and weapons proliferation for starters. Now, we must see our differences in the context of broader geopolitical and economic goals. We must develop a sense of proportion and try to see things from China's point of view.

Many Americans still view China as an outlaw state because of human rights abuses by what is clearly a nondemocratic, authoritarian, and occasionally repressive government. But from the perspective of China's leaders, the country's worst political catastrophes have arisen from the breakdown of order. (Remember the Soviet Union?) For China, authoritarian rule has brought stability and peace and, in the last 15 years, an expansion of personal freedom greater than anything that occurred in the preceding 3,000 years. No longer are the Chinese as restricted in where they can live, work or travel; they can read more of what they want and can benefit financially from their property and labor. Politically, 4 million village officials, who affect so much of daily life in rural areas, are elected by the people.

This year U.S.-Sino relations have lurched from one minicrisis to another. (Remember Harry Wu?) But it was the visit of Taiwan's president to America that nearly brought us to meltdown. His political speech at his Cornell University reunion was seen in China as de facto recognition of Taiwan's sovereignty and as such a violation of the one-China policy supported by six U.S. presidents. Suddenly, the Chinese feared that the United States was set to threaten their regime and their sovereignty by pushing democracy and human rights and by trying to separate Taiwan and Tibet from China.

The Chinese need America. We are their largest market, their main supplier of know-how to produce marketable products for a global economy. Their concern is that their regime depends on an improving economy for its legitimacy and is thus hostage to foreign direct investment and exports. China's president, Jiang Zemin, recognizes that our interests correspond. In a remarkable U.S. News interview earlier this month he revealed himself as an erudite and sophisticated man, a tough-minded politician prepared to react powerfully to a political challenge, especially from Taiwan. He is clearly able to lead China.

He also has a stake in making the U.S.-China relationship work. And we have too many interests at stake to do otherwise. We should engage him and China in a continuing dialogue, based on long-term strategic interests, that reflects the dignity of China and its emerging great power status. That is how we will persuade China to accept international norms on trade and security matters, as well as to modify its hard-line approach to human rights. And that is how we will maximize the prospects for peace and stability in the next century.

Article by Mortimer B. Zuckerman.
"China"


"China is a giant screen upon which outsiders project their hopes and fears. Expectations of economic gain coexist with worries about financial crisis; shrill alarms about Chinese power with dire forecasts of collapse; visions of democratic change with caricatures of current reality. It is time to step back and look at where China is today, where it might be going, and what consequences that direction will hold for the rest of the world." (13)

David M. Lampton, the George and Sadie Hyman professor of Chinese studies at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, examined some of the most common misconceptions and assumptions about modern China in this article. Summarized below are the statements and his rebuttals/explanations.

1. China is a Rogue State with Hegemonic Ambitions.
Lampton refutes this assumption by pointing out that not only does China's behavior in the past twenty years not support it, but that it is not in China's interest to be a rogue state. However, by other nations treating it as such it will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Lampton sees recent Chinese actions as a "generally constructive stance" in terms of international involvement and contributions, for example, their work in the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (14). Although there have been several unsettling incidents, such as military moves in the Taiwan Strait, most of China's international efforts have been to improve relations.

2. China is Undertaking a Huge Military Buildup.
Lampton flatly denies this statement, despite a "dramatic rise in official spending from 1988 to 1996" and that the actual amount spent is actually four to five times the official amount (15). However, comparing the amount spent to other countries gives a more realistic perspective - China spent the equivalent of $40 billion US in 1996, while Japan spent $45 billion. Lampton cautions, "While it would be foolish to dismiss China's increasing ability to project force beyond its borders and to affect US and other interests, it would be even more foolish to allow exaggerated perceptions of Chinese strength to shape US policy..." (16).

3. A Peaceful Resolution of Taiwan's Status is Only a Matter of Time.
The People's Republic of China has repeatedly said that Taiwan (the island which became home to the Nationalist party government after their defeat by the Communists in the civil war) should be reunited with mainland China. 1995-1996 saw an increase in tensions during the Taiwan Strait missile crisis. Lampton believes China will focus increasing attention on Taiwan since Hong Kong and Macao have both been reunited with the mainland. (In fact, this summer during the visit of China's leader to the US, it was again stated that China sees Taiwan as an integral part of their nation).
4. China Will Be the Next Asian Economic Domino to Fall.
Although China has suffered financial decline since the 1997 Northeast and Southeast Asian financial crisis, and shares some of the same problems that weakened other Asian systems, there are differences that may help the Chinese economy, including hard currency reserves and a high domestic savings rate.

5. China's Large, Fast-Growing Exports Come Principally at the Expense of Jobs in the West.
Lampton argues that Chinese exports to the US in toys, footwear, textiles, etc. only increased after those same industries had already left for Asian nations. He cites a study from economist Marcus Noland which "calculated that from 1988 to 1994, almost 90 percent of the increase in the Chinese share of US consumption had merely displaced imports from other countries" (21).

6. China Has Been a Bust for US Firms.
From 1990 to 1996, China was the fastest-growing export market for the US; however, the US also has a rising trade deficit with China.

Although pirating of music, software and movies is a major problem in China, Lampton argues that the biggest losses to American companies come from Europe, Japan and Americans themselves, making the problem a global, not just Chinese, one.

8. China is a Totalitarian State.
Although China was a totalitarian state during the reign of Mao Zedong, controlling or attempting to "...control nearly all aspects of human behavior, thought and communication", today China "...is freer than it has been at any time in the last five decades" (23).

9. China Is Wrecking Hong Kong.
Hong Kong has not been filled with PRC troops, continues to hold political demonstrations and still enjoys some journalistic freedoms. Democratic participation, however, is being reduced. Lampton thinks future treatment depends upon "...China's own reforms, regional economic stability, and whether Hong Kong's own people stay out of the business of promoting political change in the PRC" (25).

Absolutely not, according to Lampton. While Taiwan has fourteen law firms under contract in Washington, DC, the PRC has only one. China does not even rank in the top ten nations lobbying in this country.
11. China is an Environmental Accident Waiting to Happen.
There is no "waiting" to happen - it has already happened. Air and water pollution are rampant in China and long-term health effects are showing already. China has a death rate five times higher than the US from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Lampton quotes Charles Johnson of the East-West Center as saying, "If China follows the pattern of wealth first, cleanup later like its neighbors Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, even its most affluent coastal provinces probably will not start seriously tackling air pollution for 10 or 20 more years" (27).

Additional Resources on China listed by Lampton:


Http://www. foreignpolicy.com (Contains links to relevant web sites as well as related articles)

--by Robin Tingley

Independence High School
China – Geography

A few terms in Chinese that will help your map studies:
Dong – east
xi – west
nan – south
bei – north
jiang – wide river
he – river
hu – lake
hai – sea
shan – mountain

The full name of China (Zhong Guo, which means The Central Empire in ancient times) is The People’s Republic of China.

The land area of China is about 9.6 million square kilometers (almost as big as the entire Europe), ranking third among all countries in the world after Russia and Canada.

China should have five time zones; in reality, however, the whole country uses Beijing Time only except in Xinjiang (in the northwest).

The western part of the country is much higher than the eastern part. From Tibetan Plateau to the east coast it descends more than 10,000 feet. Therefore, all rivers in China (about 1,500 major ones) flow from the west to the east/south east. The two most important rivers in China are The Yellow River and The Yangtze River (the third longest river in the world).

China is surrounded by mountains and deserts in all three sides with one opening to the sea in the east/south east. China has more than 18,000 kilometers of coastline and more than 5,000 islands. Among the largest islands one finds Taiwan, which is a Chinese province. China has four Municipalities: Beijing (the capital), Shanghai, Tianjin, and Chongqing, as well as 29 Provinces and Autonomous Regions. A province is like a state in the US and an autonomous region is a province where one finds more minorities; thus, the central government grants them more local authorities/decision-making power although in reality that has not been the case.

Two former colonies are also added to the Chinese territory recently. Hong Kong was handed back to China by Britain in July 1997. Macao was turned over to China in December 1999 by Portugal. Both former foreign colonies are now Special Administrative Regions, which means they are under the control of the communist government in Beijing but allowed to keep things as they were before. The next thing to watch is Taiwan’s future. Taiwan, which is under the rule of the former government that ruled mainland China before 1949, will have its presidential election in March 2000, and the Chinese communist government in Beijing really wants Taiwan to be reunited with China.
China is the world’s most populous country with 1.3 billion people, which means through the whole world one in every five people is Chinese. Yet two thirds of China is mountainous (major mountains include Himalaya, Kunlun, Tianshan, Altai, Great Khingan Range, etc.). Only 10% of the land is plain flat. Among the world’s total arable land, China only has 7%. Both food and water shortages in the future raise many people’s concerns. In the past two decades China has the world’s fastest growing economy. Along with this huge success, pollution and environmental damage have become new worries by more and more people. How does China maintain a growing economy to curb unemployment and pollution is a serious global challenge.

China is also an earthquake and volcano rich country. In 1556 an earthquake killed more than 800,000 people. In 1976 another earthquake killed more than 240,000 people. There are about 600 known volcanoes in China. The last eruption was in 1951 in Xinjiang.

Both the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean affect China’s weather in summer and cause rainfall from May to September along the eastern part of the country. Then cold fronts come down from Siberia and temperature drops sharply from October to February. This weather pattern along with dense population in the east coast makes China a strong agricultural country.

China is rich with natural resources. Yet deforestation, desertation, land loss, strip mining, solid wastes, over fishing, etc., all become challenging issues for the Chinese.

- each year 5 billion tons of surface soil is washed away;
- each year desert expands 1,000 square kilometers;
- in northeast China deforestation has taken 70% of trees since 1940’s;
- about 25% to 30% of rivers are polluted;

This list is growing longer each year.

-- by Youming Che
Charlotte Latin School
CHINA – DYNASTIC ERAS

Xia: 2100 B.C. to 1700 B.C.
- First cohesive state, Xia, founded by Yu the Great

Shang: 1700 B.C. to 1100 B.C.
- Bronze culture (from 17th Century B.C.)
- Oracle Bones (c. 1300 B.C.)
- Belief of human sacrifice

Zhou: 1100 B.C. to 211 B.C.
- Beginning of accurately dated history (841 B.C.)

---Western Zhou: 1100 B.C. to 711 B.C.
- First recorded revolution, peasants of the Zhou vassal rose against the Shang
- Zi, Lord Cultivator, founder
- Introduction of a new type of millet
- Improved agricultural techniques

---Eastern Zhou: 770 B.C. to 256 B.C.
- Quan Rong, a tribal leader, killed the King of Zhou and established a new Zhou Dynasty

---Spring and Autumn Period: 772 B.C. to 482 B.C.
- Laozi, philosopher (6th Century B.C.)
- Confucius, philosopher (551-479 B.C.)
- Iron first mentioned (513 B.C.)

---Warring States Period: 403 B.C. to 221 B.C.
- Mozi, philosopher (470-391 B.C.)
- Mencius, philosopher (372-289 B.C.)
- Shang Yang, statesman, dies (330 B.C.)
- The introduction of Cavalry (c. 300 B.C.)
- Zhuangzi, philosopher, dies (c. 300 B.C.)
- Xunzi, philosopher (c. 300-237 B.C.)
- Han Fei Zi, philosopher, dies (233 B.C.)

Qin: 221 B.C. to 206 B.C.
- Quin Shi Huang Di, founder
- The Great Wall completed
Han: 206 B.C. to A.D. 220
- Gao Zu, emperor, reigns (206 B.C. – A.D. 195)
- Steel manufacture begins (2nd Century B.C.)
- Dong Zhungshu, scholar (179-105 B.C.)
- Sima Qian, historian (c. 145-85 B.C.)
- Wu Di, emperor, reigns (141-87 B.C.)
- Zhang Qian’s first expedition to the West (139-126 B.C.)
- Nan Yue in south China conquered (111 B.C.)
- Capital moved from Changan to Luoyang (23-221)
- Invention of paper (A.D. 105)
- Rebellion of the Yellow Turban (184)
- Buddhist teachings from India were welcomed

The Three Kingdoms: 220 to 280
- Three Kingdoms: Wei, Shu-Han, and Wu
- A period of stability and peace, a romantic and exciting time

Jin: 265 to 420
- Tao Yuanming, scholar (365-427)
- Pilgrimage of the Buddhist monk Faxian to India (339-414)

Southern and Northern Dynasties: 420 to 580
- Trade and commerce grew the decline of the self-sufficient economy
- Rise of mercenary armies
- Growth of cities, Yangzi and Canton, due to foreign merchants

Sui: 581 to 618
- China reunited
- Changan rebuilt as Sui capital and developed under Tang dynasty
- Building of the Grand Canal from Huanghe to Yangzi

Tang: 618 to 907
- Li Taibo, Du Fu, Han Yu, and Bo Zhui, poets
- Golden Age of Chines literature and art
- Gao Zu, emperor, reigns (618-625)
- Tai Zong, emperor, reigns (626-649)
- Gao Zong, emperor, reigns (649-683)
- Block Printing began (680)
- Wu, empress, reigns (683-704)
- Xuan Zong, emperor, reigns (712-756)
- Rebellion of An Lushan (755)
- Changan, capital, sacked (881)
- Major Persecution of Buddhism (841-45)
Five Dynasties: 907 to 960
- Li Cheng, artist (940-67)

Song: 960 to 1270
- Wang Anshui, statesman and reformer (1020-1086)
- Paper money issued by the state (1024)
- Song Gao Zhong, emperor, reigns (1021-1086)
- Genghis Khan, Mongol (1167-1227)

Yuan: 1206 to 1368
- Peking captured by Mongols (1215)
- Mongols set up the Yuan Dynasty after all China was conquered
- Kublai Khan, Great Khan, sets up Imperial Library in Peking, becomes Emperor of China
- Mongol control weakened by floods and rebellion
- Marco Polo served under Kublai Khan (1275-92)

Ming: 1368 to 1644
- Reconquest of China by the Ming completed (1387)
- Chinese occupy Vietnam (1406-27)
- Construction of the Imperial City begins (1421)
- Japan pirate raids on the coast (1550)

Qing: 1644 to 1911
- Qing suppresses the Revolt of the Three Feudatories in South China (1681)
- Christianity named as heterodox (1724)
- Increase in tea trade with Europe (1760-70)
- Opium War (1839-42)
- Treaty of Nanjing (1842)
- Anglo-French War (1856-60)
- Nien Rebellion (1853-68)
- Muslim Rebellion (1868-73)
- Tientsin Massacre (1870)
- Sino-Japanese War (1894-95)
- Boxer Rebellion (1898-1900)
- Russo-Japanese War in Manchuria (1904-05)
- Sun Yat-Sen, “Father of the Republic” (1866-1925)

--by Youming Che
Charlotte Latin School
MODERN CHINESE POETRY

1. “Assembly Line” by Shu Ting, 1980
2. “Bracelet” by Feng Qing, 1980
3. “Dedication” by Shu Ting
4. “Flowers No Longer Fly in Our City” by Rong Zi, 1965
5. “Mundane World” by Xi Murong, 1979
6. “Remembrance” by Xiong Hong
SHU TING
(b. 1952)

A native of Fujian, Shu Ting was relocated to the countryside before she finished junior high school. She published her first poem in 1979 and is a major Misty poet.

ASSEMBLY LINE

On the assembly line of time
night is nestled with night
we retreat from the assembly line in the factory
and file home
above our heads
an assembly line of stars stretches across the firmament
beside us
dazed young trees stand in a row
the stars must be tired
millennia have passed
their itinerary has never changed
the young trees are sick
smoke and monotony take
their lines and colors
I can feel them
in the rhythm we have in common
what is strange, though
is that I cannot feel
my own being
any more than the trees and the stars
perhaps out of habit
perhaps out of sadness
I no longer have the strength to care
about he fixed position I am in

January-February 1980
FENG QING  
(b. 1949)

Feng Qing is the pen name of Feng Jingu. She was born in Ji'nan and grew up in Taiwan, where she received her B. A. in history from the Chinese Culture University. Feng started publishing poetry in 1978.

BRACELET

Things of the world  
Are far less translucent  
Than the bracelet on your wrist.  
You said the color of the bracelet has intensified,  
So has autumn.  
It has sucked the blood of life  
While your beautiful self  
In your frequent gaze  
Sneaked into  
The deepest recess of the mirror.

1980
DEDICATION
by Shu Ting

I sympathize with you
By the prow where moonlight floats
On the road where the rain drizzles down
With bent shoulders and hands tucked in your sleeves
As if braving the cold
You hide your thoughts
You do not sense
How my steps slow down
If you were fire
I would be charcoal
I want to comfort you this way
Although I dare not

I salute you
Salute the midnight lamp glowing through your windowpane
Salute you bent over the bookcase
When you tell me about awakening
About how the river overruns
Its banks in spring
You do not ask
How I feel each night
When I walk by your window
If you were a tree
I would be the earth
I want to remind you this way
Although I dare not
RONG ZI  
(b. 1928)

Born into a Christian family in Jiangsu Province, Rong Zi received her education in China and moved to Taiwan in 1949. She started writing poetry in the late 1940s and published her first volume, Blue Bird, in 1953—the first book of poems by a woman published in postwar Taiwan. Rong is a founding member of the Blue Star Poetry Club.

FLOWERS NO LONGER FLY IN OUR CITY

Flowers no longer fly in our city in March  
Monstrous buildings squat everywhere—  
Sphinxes in the desert, squinting at you in mockery  
And a pack of urban tigers howl  
From morning to night

From morning to night  
The downpour of pitch-black smoke, the thunder of the city  
Squabbles between cogwheels  
Conflicts between machines  
Time broken into pieces, life fading away by the moment

At night our city is like a poisonous spider  
Extending its web  
To snare pedestrians

1965
XI MURONG
(b. 1947)

Of Mongolian descent, Xi Murong was born in Sichuan and grew up in Taiwan. She received her B. A. in art from the National Normal University and studied oil painting at the Royal Academy of Art in Brussels. In 1981 she published her first volume of poetry and subsequently became the best-selling poet in the history of modern Chinese poetry. Currently, she teaches painting in Taiwan.

MUNDANE WORLD

I cannot be
The Buddha sitting on the lotus blossom
   I am mundane
My life is in this world of rolling dust
   All that belongs to it I covet
Such as happiness and sorrow
The burdens that are mine I shall carry
   Though I know that some day
All joys and sorrow will leave me
   I will still do my best to collect
Those beautiful, entangling
Memories for which I once lived

September 13, 1979
XIONG HONG
(b. 1960)

Xiong Hong, a native of Taidong, graduated from the National Normal University and has since been teaching at high schools. She attended the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa in 1974 and has published three volumes of poetry.

REMEMBRANCE

1
if you
if you have said to me
one or many
words of truth
when I wake up in the morning
I would remember them
youthful years
simple things
if you have said
one or many
easy or deep
cloud-flying, snow-falling words...

2
caring is asking
but sometimes
caring
is not asking
if there is no news at all
like a calm sea after a ship
has sunk, that, too,
is a quiet remembrance

3
if at summer’s end
or in early autumn
I have once or twice written
some oblique words
suggesting a certain incident
like an unexpected shower
that, too, is remembrance
ARTICLES ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE LAOGAI SYSTEM


Universal Declaration of Human Rights

On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the full text of which appears in the following pages. Following this historic act the Assembly called upon all Member countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and “to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories.”

PREAMBLE

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, Therefore,

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

proclaims
**THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS** as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

**Article 1.**

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

**Article 2.**

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

**Article 3.**

Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.

**Article 4.**

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

**Article 5.**

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

**Article 6.**

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

**Article 7.**

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

**Article 8.**

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.
Article 9.

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile.

Article 10.

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11.

(1) Everyone charged with a penal offense has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offense on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offense, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offense was committed.

Article 12.

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13.

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14.

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15.

(1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.
Article 16.

(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17.

(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18.

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance.

Article 19.

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20.

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21.

(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.
Article 22.

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social, and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23.

(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24.

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25.

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26.

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.
Article 27.

(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28.

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29.

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30.

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.
Hundreds, possibly thousands, of activists and suspected opponents of the government were detained during the year. Thousands of political prisoners jailed in previous years remained imprisoned, many of them prisoners of conscience. Some had been sentenced after unfair trials, others were still held without charge or trial. Political trials continued to fall short of international fair trial standards. Torture and ill-treatment remained endemic, in some cases resulting in death. The death penalty continued to be used extensively.

In March Zhu Rongji was appointed Prime Minister by the National People's Congress (NPC), China's parliament. Economic reforms intensified, resulting in increased unemployment, labour disputes and repression of worker rights activists.

The report on the 1997 visit to China by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, published in March, recommended changes to national security legislation in line with international standards. Two landmark visits to China by the US President, Bill Clinton, and by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, highlighted the authorities' growing but limited willingness to discuss human rights, as well as continuing violations. In October China signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Despite such moves, repression of dissent continued, culminating in December in the trial of high profile dissidents. New regulations on the registration of "social groups" and on publishing were introduced in October and December, increasing restrictions on freedom of expression and association.

A crackdown on suspected Uighur nationalists and independent Muslim religious leaders continued in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUR) see Amnesty International Report
While violent clashes between small groups of Uighur nationalists and the security forces were reported, hundreds of people were arbitrarily detained merely for their suspected nationalist sympathies or for engaging in peaceful religious activities. Thousands of political prisoners were reportedly imprisoned in the region; many were tortured. At least 14 Uighur political prisoners accused of having used violence were executed.

Arbitrary arrests continued across the xuar, particularly in the city of Gulja (Yining) and surrounding villages, where ethnic protests took place in 1997 (see Amnesty International Report 1998). Abdet Pettar, a medical surgeon at Gulja's military hospital, was reportedly arrested in early July and accused of having treated "nationalist separatists". He was still held without charge in a military prison at the end of the year. Three other Uighurs _ Tursun Mehmert and Alimjan, both teachers, and Abdushukur, a local government official _ were arrested later in July in Gulja for allegedly helping "separatists". They were still held without charge at the end of the year.

A crack-down on Tibetan nationalists and Buddhists continued in the Tibet Autonomous Region. At least 10 prisoners were reported to have died _ one was reportedly shot dead _ following a protest at Drapchi prison in early May at the time European Union representatives visited the prison. Many prisoners who had taken part in the protest were beaten and placed in solitary confinement. Ngawang Sungarb, a monk from Drepung monastery, and Gyaltsete Choephele, a layman from Lhasa, were beaten so severely that they needed hospital treatment. The authorities later admitted that "minor disturbances" had occurred at the prison in early May, but denied that any prisoners had died as a result. On 7 June four imprisoned nuns, Choekyi Wangmo, Tashi Lhamo, Dekyi Yangzom and Khedron Yonten, who had been placed in solitary confinement in May, reportedly died in Drapchi prison. Prison officials said they had committed suicide, but did not explain how they had all done so on the same day while held in solitary confinement.

Hundreds of other people were detained for political reasons, many of them prisoners of conscience. Four poets, Wu Ruohai, Ma Zhe, Ma Qiang and Xiong Jingren, were detained in January in Guiyang, Guizhou province, as they were planning to launch an independent literary magazine. Ma Qiang and Wu Ruohai were released after a few weeks, but the other two remained in secret detention. In November Ma Zhe was reportedly sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for "subversion". Li Yi, a businessman from Guiyang and friend of the poets, and Wu Ruojie, a rock singer and brother of one of the poets, were also detained and accused of "divulging state secrets" for reporting the arrests of the poets to foreign journalists and people outside China. They were sentenced without charge or trial to three years of "re-education through labour". Neither was a known dissident.

Worker rights activists were arbitrarily detained in the context of growing labour unrest. Some arrests followed demonstrations by workers, notably in Sichuan province. Others were of people who had called for reforms. Li Qingxi, a laid-off worker from the Datong coal mine in Shanxi province, was arrested in January when he posted publicly a statement calling for independent trade unions. He was sentenced in March without charge or trial to one year of "re-education through labour", reportedly to be served "at home". Zhang Shanguang, a labour rights activist from Hunan province,
was detained in July after trying to set up a group to help laid-off workers. He was sentenced in December to 10 years' imprisonment, accused of having "illegally provided information to overseas hostile organizations and individuals", reportedly for speaking about farmers' protests in his province in a Radio Free Asia interview.

Widespread arrests were made during politically sensitive periods. Many people were detained in February and March before and during the annual session of the NPC, particularly those who addressed open letters to the NPC calling for reforms. A further wave of arrests took place in May in the weeks leading up to the ninth anniversary of the 4 June 1989 crack-down on pro-democracy activists.

In July, 10 pro-democracy activists were detained in Hangzhou city, Zhejiang province, after trying to register the Chinese Democratic Party (CDP). This was the first known attempt to register an alternative political party in China since 1949. Most of the 10 were released within hours or placed under house arrest. Wang Youcai, a founder of the CDP, was held for several weeks before being released. He was rearrested in late November during a new crack-down on people associated with the CDP, which led to the detention or arrest of at least 30 people.

Wang Youcai and two other high profile dissidents, Qin Yongmin and Xu Wenli, were tried in December in different cities and sentenced to prison terms of 11, 12 and 13 years respectively on charges of "plotting to subvert the state power". Other dissidents who had been detained earlier in the year were also sentenced to terms of imprisonment or "re-education through labour".

Detention, ill-treatment and harassment of members of unapproved Christian groups continued. Most of some 200 Roman Catholics who were detained in late 1997 in Linchuan city, Jiangxi province, were held for between one and three months and released only after paying a fine. The arrests were apparently aimed at stopping them celebrating mass outside officially recognized churches. Detention of Roman Catholics continued in other provinces. For example, Julius Jia Zhiguo, Bishop of Zhengding, Hebei province, was detained in June, having been warned he would be "taken away" during President Clinton's visit to China.

In August information came to light about the detention of 16 leaders of a Christian group in Xingyang county, Henan province, who earlier in the year had been given terms of two or three years' detention in a labour camp and were reportedly beaten repeatedly in detention. In October, 11 house church leaders were detained in Wugang county, Henan province, and reportedly tortured at Fangcheng prison. Arrests of house church members subsequently continued in the province with those detained being made to pay heavy fines to secure release.

Thousands of political prisoners detained without trial or convicted after unfair trials in previous years remained in jail, including many prisoners of conscience. At least 2,000 convicted political prisoners were serving sentences for "counter-revolutionary" offences. The government made no move to review these cases, even though such offences had been abolished in law
in 1997 (see *Amnesty International Report 1998*). More than 200,000 people continued to be administratively detained without charge or trial in labour camps for "re-education through labour".

A few prisoners of conscience were released on parole, although some continued to be subjected to police surveillance and harassment, and others were forced into exile. Wang Dan, for example, a student activist imprisoned twice since 1989, was released on medical parole in March but sent into effective exile in the USA.

Political trials continued to fall far short of international fair trial standards, with verdicts and sentences usually decided by the authorities before trial, and appeal hearings usually a formality. Turgun Tay, a Uighur businessman from Gulja, was reportedly sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment in April for involvement in "illegal" religious activities. His trial, by the Yining Intermediate People's Court, was reportedly held in secret, with no relatives or lawyer present. A series of unfair trials of pro-democracy activists took place in various provinces. Defendants were denied adequate time and facilities to defend themselves. In October, for example, Chen Zengxiang, a bookseller and veteran pro-democracy activist from Qingdao, Shandong province, was reportedly tried in secret and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for "seeking to subvert the State power". Detained since May for investigation of his links to exiled dissidents, he was reportedly denied access to a lawyer on the grounds that his case involved "national security".

Torture and ill-treatment of detainees and prisoners held in detention centres, prisons and labour camps remained widespread, sometimes resulting in death. Prison conditions were often harsh, with inadequate food and medical care, and many prisoners suffered serious illness as a result.

Many cases of torture were reported by unofficial sources. Three men, Zhou Guiyi, Xiao Beizhou and Yu Li, were beaten to death by police in Hubei's Xinzhou county between April 1997 and February 1998. The families of the three men received compensation, but no action was taken to bring those responsible to justice. Abdul Heili, a Uighur detained in the xuar for leading a demonstration in Gulja in February 1997, was reportedly tortured after arrest to force him to confess to "crimes" and denounce friends. In mid-1998, he was reportedly held in the prison of the 4th Division of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, a military-run institution, where he continued to be ill-treated. Zhu Shengwen, the Vice-Mayor of Harbin, Heilongjiang province, alleged he was tortured to force him to confess to corruption. He said he was punched, had his arms twisted and wrenched, and was repeatedly given electric shocks with an electric baton. In April he was sentenced to life imprisonment. No investigation into his allegation of torture was known to have been carried out. In October Li Jiayong, a member of the New Testament Church in Shandong province, reportedly died in police custody. The police reportedly claimed he had committed suicide by jumping out of a window, but private sources believed he had died as a result of torture. He had been detained and badly beaten twice before. There was no independent inquiry into his death.

Local media also reported cases of torture and ill-treatment. In March a newspaper revealed that police in Guangdong province
had kept a farmer chained inside a two-square-metre iron cage for five years as punishment for attacking an officer. The day after the newspaper report, the man was set free. The Guangdong authorities subsequently set up a commission to investigate the incident. In June, for the first time in China, an official publication published figures for the number of people who had been tortured to death in custody in previous years: 126 people had died in such circumstances in 1993 and 115 in 1994.

The death penalty continued to be used extensively. The Criminal Law, revised in 1997 (see Amnesty International Report 1998), integrated offences made liable to the death penalty under regulations adopted since the 1980s, such as fraud and tax evasion, bringing the number of offences punishable by death to about 60. In September the Supreme People's Court announced that there had been a large reduction in the number of executions because of the 1997 legal revisions, but the government failed to publish statistics to prove this. The limited records available to Amnesty International at the end of the year showed that at least 1,657 people were sentenced to death and 1,067 executed in 1998; the true figures were believed to be far higher.

In January, 89 people were executed in Beijing alone, purportedly to ensure "law and order" during the Lunar New Year. Others sentenced to death included Ma Yulan, a woman convicted in November of "organizing prostitution" - a capital crime since 1991.


On several occasions Amnesty International presented its human rights concerns to government representatives during meetings in various countries.

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (hksar)

Elections for a new legislature (Legco) to replace the Provisional Legislative Council (plc) proceeded as planned in May, although on the basis of a greatly reduced franchise and curtailed powers for legislators (see Amnesty International Report 1998). Controversy over interpretation of key articles of Hong Kong's post-1997 Constitution, the Basic Law, continued throughout the year, raising questions about the extent of Hong Kong's autonomy. Controversial legal amendments passed by the plc included an interpretive amendment whereby all ordinances which previously did not bind the "Crown" will not bind the "State", with the "State" now defined to include subordinate organs of central government such as the Xinhua News Agency. The amendment was widely criticized for undermining the new constitutional order expressed in Article 22 of the Basic Law and for providing potential immunity from Hong Kong laws for a range of official organizations whose precise role in Hong Kong remained unclear.

In December Hong Kong citizens Cheung Tze-keung, Chin Hon-
sau and Chan Chi-hou were executed and 13 others were
imprisoned in Guangdong, mainland China, for cross-border crimes
and crimes committed in Hong Kong, even though Hong Kong law
does not provide for the death penalty. The handling of the case
appeared to undermine Hong Kong’s judicial autonomy under the
“one country two systems” principle. The hksar government and
the Guangdong court cited the Chinese criminal code under which
crimes “plotted, planned and prepared” on the mainland can be
tried there even if committed elsewhere. However, little reliable
evidence was reportedly presented at the trial to prove the crimes
were planned on the mainland. Heavily criticized for
misinterpreting the Basic Law and failing to assert jurisdiction over
the case, the hksar government argued that it did not press for the
defendants to be returned to Hong Kong because it did not have
enough evidence to prosecute in Hong Kong and had no formal
agreement with the rest of China on the return of criminal suspects.
It promised to negotiate urgently such an agreement.

In November the International Labour Organisation (ilo)
Committee on Freedom of Association determined that the plc’s
repeal of amendments to labour laws, passed shortly before the
handover, was a breach of ilo Convention No. 87 and a step
backwards in implementing Convention No. 98 on freedom of
association (see Amnesty International Report 1997).

The Secretary for Justice announced in June that it was not
necessary to enact legislation on national security offences, as
required under Article 23 of the Basic Law, during the first two-year
session of Legco.

Peaceful demonstrations continued throughout the year. In May
Lee Kin-yun and Ng Kung-siu were conditionally released after
being convicted of desecrating two miniature national and regional
flags in January in an incident that posed no threat to public order.
It was the first conviction under post-handover laws which place
restrictions on non-violent expression of protest. In June, in relation
to a separate incident, the Independent Police Complaints Council
upheld a demonstrator’s complaint, ruling that the police abused
their power when they played loud music to drown out protesters’
speeches in July 1997.

In May, four police officers were sentenced to between four and
six months’ imprisonment for torturing a suspect. The four were
accused of attempting to force Yu So-man to admit to possessing
heroin by stuffing a shoe in his mouth, pouring water into his nose
and ears until he fainted, and threatening to throw him off a
balcony.

In August a police officer with a history of mental health
problems was convicted of manslaughter for shooting and killing
detainee Chan Kwok-keung in Aberdeen police station in 1997 (see
Amnesty International Report 1998). Police pledged to enhance
measures to identify unfit officers. Legislators argued that the
implementation of long-delayed safeguards for detainees might
have prevented the incident.

Several prison officers and 21 prisoners were injured during a
brawl between prisoners in Ma Poping prison on 27 July. More than
70 prisoners complained about violence used by officers during the
disturbance when two Justices of the Peace (jps) made an
unannounced visit to the prison. Assault charges brought against several officers were still outstanding. During the year the government began a review of the prison inspection system and the Ombudsman criticized prison officers' overuse of their powers to isolate prisoners indefinitely.

In January the HK SAR government announced that it would abolish the "port of first asylum policy" for Vietnamese nationals so that all such people who arrive without proper documentation would in future face repatriation in the same way as other undocumented arrivals. At the end of the year nearly 1,000 refugees remained in Hong Kong with little prospect of resettlement overseas. Of these, 278 who had initially fled Vietnam to China before seeking asylum in Hong Kong continued a court challenge to the government's plans to remove them to mainland China. A further 500 ethnic Chinese from Vietnam who had been refused refugee status remained in limbo as the Vietnamese government refuse to accept them for repatriation.

In April Amnesty International submitted comments on the government's draft outline report on implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In June Amnesty International published a report, Hong Kong: No Room For Complacency, describing developments since the handover in July 1997. In October and in December Amnesty International made urgent representations on the case of Cheung Tze-keung and others, seeking a review of the case and commutation of the death sentences.

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"Amnesty International Annual Report 1999: China"


2. What is a "prisoner of conscience"? Why would a country imprison people for their beliefs? What laws attempt to protect Americans from being jailed for ideals? Are they always effective?

3. Compare the Chinese Criminal Law regarding death penalty offenses to U.S. state laws on the same. What similarities and differences do you find?

4. Are there any signs of improvement in Chinese human rights, according to the report? In your opinion, will the situation improve or deteriorate in 2000?

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"Teenager jailed for putting up a poster criticising the Chinese Communist Party...two prominent members of an outlawed opposition party go on trial for subversion...four leaders of the Falun Gong spiritual movement outlawed by the Chinese government last summer given prison sentences...Jiang Zemin says human rights is an internal affair." Some of the headline stories from China in the last three months that raise issues about human rights.

Human rights watchers say the Chinese government fails to provide Chinese with human rights. The government says otherwise. Who is correct? You need to judge based on the facts and arguments about human rights. Are there universal human rights? Should they be applied to China? If so, how? Let's examine two general arguments.

Arguments for a Universal Human Rights

What are human rights? They are rights that one has simply because one is human, no matter who you are or where you live. Thus, rights are held equally by everyone and they are inalienable. This does not mean humans have the right to do what ever they want. But it does mean everyone has a certain entitlement to a list of rights we call "human" including the most basic--a life of dignity. Ultimately, human rights are moral rights to be provided by governments and appropriate institutions such as the United Nations.

Which rights? The list is long! (See Ian Brownlie, Basic Documents on Human Rights, third edition, 1992). The United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The document contains 20-some Articles each with more specific types of rights including the "right to life, liberty and security of person." Since 1948 the United Nations has adopted a number of Conventions on human rights ranging from genocide to torture, slavery, status of refugees, women, and freedom of religion or belief. Most important are the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and the International covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966. These covenants (binding agreements on the Parties who signed them) set out more specific "benchmarks" of rights in these various areas that governments must provide to their citizens. Note that not every country has signed these documents, so "technically" they are not bound by the documents' requirements. But China recently agreed to sign both of them. Does this make China liable to comply with the documents? Yes, once the People's Congress ratifies them.

Source of human rights? Let's admit it, the notion of human rights is Western. While ancient Greek thinkers raised the issue, it is really thinkers like John Locke and later Immanuel Kant who began to work out the "who, what, why, when and how" of human rights. Some argue that since human rights thinking comes from the West, then it cannot be applied to the rest of the world. Agree?
An international human rights? Human rights advocates argue that we live in an "international community," not just in countries with governments that have jurisdiction over their people, and that rights, if they are to mean anything, must be universal, unless we want to argue that some are more deserving of rights than others. Advocates say that while countries have different cultures and are at different levels of development, they must, nevertheless, strive to provide basic human rights, especially political rights--right to organize, vote, protection against arbitrary abuse by the State, etc. To the argument that a society is "not ready" for western human rights, advocates charge that governments purposely deny such rights as a way of maintaining power and control over their citizens. People want human rights if they know about them and can have them without great cost to their lives. Furthermore, human rights advocates argue, people SHOULD have such rights whether governments or some people disagree.

Arguments Against a Universal Human Rights

Critics make two general kinds of arguments against a notion of universal human rights and more importantly of trying to apply such a notion to all countries. First, the "cultural relativist" argument. Critics argue that histories, cultural legacies, morality, economic conditions and notions of human rights differ from culture to culture. So one cannot apply a "universal" set of rights to everyone. Critics note that in developing countries like China, emphasis is placed on "economic and social rights" over "political" ones. Human rights are a "Western" creation and cannot be applied to another country where the culture has yet to demand such rights.

A second argument rests on a legal fiction--each country's government has its own sovereignty (not subject to a higher power such like the United Nations or other powerful state). After all, a key principle in the United Nations Charter is sovereignty and its correlate--non-intervention in a country's affairs. This means that a country like the United States cannot impose its view of human rights on another country and certainly not pursue policies that intervene in the domestic affairs of a country. An American may not like the arrest and detention of democracy advocates trying to form an alternative political party in China, but there is little he/she can do since this is the concern of the Chinese government say the critics of universal human rights.

In particular, China makes several arguments countering the push for human rights in China (see the article "Western Views on Human Rights Opposed"). One, the U.S. has come by many human rights very late e.g. that African-Americans can vote freely, and offers a poor record itself on some human rights. Second, the principle of "non-interference" must take precedent over universal human rights. Third, China, like other developing countries, is more concerned with the right to develop, of citizens having food and housing, than with the right to freely vote. What do you think?

QUESTIONS
1. Do you think there are a set of universal human rights that should be applied to every society? Why?

2. Should we as Americans be less demanding about applying human rights to developing and non-democratic countries such as China? Why?

3. Do you think that the United States should apply a universal human rights "benchmark" to China? If yes, what specific policies would you recommend? Economic sanctions? Boycott of Chinese goods? End certain kinds of diplomatic relations, for example military exchanges? Condemn China in the United Nations? Increase support for Taiwan? Others? What effects and repercussions would your policies have if implemented? How difficult would these policies be to implement?

4. Some experts argue that China's human rights record has already greatly improved and will continue to do so with economic development. Agree? What are the policy implications of this argument if true?

5. Would you agree with the Chinese accusation that the United States does not have a perfect record on human rights and thus should not be telling other countries how to behave?

6. What "small steps" can we as Americans take to improve human rights here and abroad?
Differences between developing and some Western countries over human rights remain as the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights were being held in Vienna on June 14-25.

Foreign ministers and senior officials from 183 UN member countries as well as representatives of UN organizations and other international organizations attended this conference.

Speaking of the conference goals, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said that the meeting would review progress made in human rights since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. The implementation of human rights and obstacles to be overcome were also on the agenda.

Poor Record in the West

Differences over the concept and understanding of human rights triggered off heated debates.

Delegates from the West showed their dissatisfaction with the "human rights record" in developing countries and called on these countries to improve. They also proposed the establishment of an international tribunal to "judge human rights abuses" in individual nations.

In the face of these accusations, which they regard as unjustified, many developing countries cited human rights violations in the West.

Referring to the Western call for "full democracy and full realization of human rights" in developing countries, Singapore's Foreign Minister Wong Kan Seng said the United States gained independence in 1776, but only those who paid poll tax or property tax had the right to vote at the time. He said US women obtained the right to vote only in 1920, 144 years after the nation's independence.

"It is only since 1965 that the African-American can vote freely, after the Voting Rights Act suspended literacy tests and other voter qualification devices which kept them out," he noted.

It took the United States, Britain and France 200 years or more to evolve into "full democracy," he said. "Can we therefore expect the citizens of the many newly independent countries of this century to acquire the same rights as those enjoyed by the developed nations when they lack the economic, educational and social conditions to exercise such rights fully?"

Wong said Singaporeans, and people in many other parts of the world, do not agree that pornography is an acceptable manifestation of free expression or that homosexual relationships are just a matter of lifestyle choice.

Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Gonzales said in a press interview that while Western countries often accuse developing countries of violating human rights, few Westerners mention the child prostitution, drug abuse and racial discrimination in their own countries. He also referred to "those who were killed in Los Angeles."

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad-Javad Zarif said that the political dominance of a group of countries in international relations cannot provide "a license for the imposition of a set of guidelines and norms for the behavior of the entire international community."

Representatives from many Arab countries accused the United States and some other Western countries of encouraging Israel to commit human rights violations in the occupied territories.

On State Sovereignty

Representatives from developing countries and Western countries have offered differing views on the relationship between human rights and internal affairs. Representatives of Western countries claimed that the question of human rights goes beyond international boundaries, and that the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations is not applicable to it.

Representatives from third world countries responded by saying that state sovereignty is
the basis for the realization of human rights, and that if a state is not safeguarded, the human rights of its citizens cannot be protected. Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Aalas said that a basic condition for international cooperation is respect for the sovereign equality of states and the national identity of peoples. "No country or group of countries should arrogate unto itself the role of judge, jury and executioner over other countries on this critical and sensitive issue of common concern to the entire international community," he said.

Ghazi Mohamed al-Gosaibi, head of the Bahrain delegation, said the human rights situation is circumscribed by the historical, social, economic and cultural conditions of widely differing nations, and involves a process of historical development. "All countries, large or small, strong or weak, are entitled to freely choose their political system and an economic structure suitable to their own national conditions," he said.

Soubhanh Srithirath, deputy foreign minister of Laos, said that human rights issues had been used to achieve political gains and that "such practices should be abolished." He said the implementation of human rights standards must be based on principles of non-selectivity, objectivity and impartiality. He also stressed that it was not acceptable for any country to impose its values and standards on another.

The Right to Development

Representatives from developing countries urged the elimination of the widening economic gap between the poor South and rich North, calling it the biggest obstacle to the protection of the right to development. Increasingly, the policies of the North are constraining the developmental objectives of the South and seriously undermining their economic growth. Malaysian Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi said, "Human rights and democracy are meaningless in an environment of political instability, poverty and deprivation."

At present, over 1 billion people in the developing countries live below the poverty line, among whom 633 million are in Asia and 204 million in Africa. Among the world's poorest countries, 32 percent are in Africa.

Mary Grant, a Ghanian representative, said that the economic disparity between the North and the South made the enjoyment of human rights by the vast majority of the world's population a distant dream.

Kenyan Foreign Minister Stephen Mysyoka said, "On the economic front, Africa is faced with a major challenge, the challenge which daily demean our dignity and our integrity as nations — the challenge of poverty." Between 1980 and 1992 sub-Saharan Africa's debt more than tripled to US$180 billion.

Senegalese Foreign Minister Moustapha Niass said that the plight of millions of children living in poverty and suffering from the lack of basic services deserves attention.

The unfavorable international economic environment is detrimental to the enjoyment of human rights in developing countries, said Emmerson Mnangagwa, minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs of Zimbabwe. "However, almost all their resources were used to service enormous external debts, at the cost of the advance of human rights," he added.

Human rights means nothing to those who are homeless or hungry, said Yemenian Foreign Minister Mohamed Salem Baysundar. International assistance to developing countries must in no way be subjected to preconditions, he said, because the economic, political and social transformations of each country must take place according to its own objectives.

International cooperation in the field of human rights, representatives from developing countries said, should be conducted under the purposes and the principles of the UN Charter and in a spirit of seeking common ground while reserving differences.
The crackdown on the Falungong group is the latest demonstration that the Chinese authorities’ level of tolerance remains minimal, and that they have no intention of allowing the development of a pluralistic society. JAMES D. SEYMOUR looks at some aspects of the group and the virulent campaign against it.

Should the human rights community rush to the defense of China’s newly visible sect Falungong? After all, there is much that is unattractive about this phenomenon. Although the creed of the group is part Buddhism, part Taoism, part physical training in the qigong tradition (breathing exercises which move the practitioner’s non-physical energy or qi), there are some other, rather troubling, features of the belief system. Falungong materials preach medical practices which most would consider bogus, thus in effect tending to deny sick people proper medical attention. It is also a rather narrow, inward-looking philosophy. Members are expected to adhere rigorously to the teachings of their bible, the Falun Dafa, and may be ostracized if they violate “the principle of practicing only one way of cultivation.” Other belief systems are seen as promoting immorality, excessive material and sexual desire, and homosexual behavior. For all their talk of “tolerance,” the Falungong leaders’ homophobia is disturbing.

Should we be concerned about these people, who seem a bit insensitive to the rights of others? Indeed we should. Human rights protections do not depend on whether people are right or wrong. It is precisely when people are “wrong” that our human rights principles are put to the test, and it is we human rights activists who are being tested.

For one thing, it is not because of what has been actually said or done that the Chinese authorities are campaigning against Falungong. Rather, they are cracking down because of fears of where they imagine the movement might be heading. According to People’s Daily, Falungong is “political in essence” and “a force contending with our party and government.” Such assessments become almost self-fulfilling, as the ban is more likely to drive the movement underground, resulting in it becoming a sort of secret society, than to eliminate it. Nationalism- and mysticism-driven secret societies have a long, politically destabilizing history in China. Now, an organization hitherto concerned with mysticism and martial arts has been politicized as a result of the authorities’ decision to “completely smash it.”

The “smashing” began on July 22, when the Ministry of Civil Affairs (an agency some naïve foreigners think is helping to pluralize Chinese society) declared the group outlawed. Indeed, Chinese law does require that all organizations register and be sponsored and overseen by official agencies; Falungong had not met these requirements. But on this basis the government not only outlawed Falungong but forbade its practice even in private. Notices have gone up in the parks in Beijing declaring that no practice of Falungong is permitted; the capital’s police will undoubtedly be having to get up extra early in the mornings to make sure that the mostly middle-aged and elderly crowds of exercisers are not doing the forbidden movements or meditations.

Actually, the crackdown is widely seen as having little basis in law at all. When Beijing asked Interpol to aid in the apprehension of New York-based leader Li Hongzhi, the international police agency scoffed at the request. “The General Secretariat has informed the National Central Bureau of Interpol in China it cannot use Interpol channels to ask member states to locate and arrest Li Hongzhi, in the absence of any information about ordinary-law crime he would have committed.” And it is clear that the victims of the crackdown within China will not enjoy their legal rights. The Ministry of Justice issued a notice to all PRC lawyers that any attorney representing Falungong people would have to obtain the government’s approval, and then must interpret the law in a manner consistent with the spirit of the government’s decrees.

**Rationale for Suppression**

The government has made two general accusations against Falungong. First, it accuses it of “advocating superstition, spreading fallacies and hoodwinking people.” Second, it is accused of “inciting and creating disturbances, and jeopardizing social stability.” Are such charges justified?

Regarding the first charge, it must be acknowledged that
Falun practitioners do make some bizarre claims such as miracle cures and defying death. The faithful are promised salvation and supernatural powers, including levitation (gravity supposedly being controlled by the deities). Everything depends on the “wheel of law,” which practitioners are meant to visualize in their abdomens. (Falungong means “Wheel of Law Practice.”) Li Hongzhi and his disciples insist that they have “supernormal capabilities to cure diseases.” Li says that “many patients with cancer or other terminal diseases are still living because of this practice.” Practitioners are not encouraged to enter Chinese hospitals (which often are institutions most would want to avoid anyway). But in general he and his colleagues try not to let such claims get out of hand or dominate the movement’s ethos. They have sometimes not objected when the authorities crack down on quackery carried out in the name of qigong. “The government has always been trying to ban a small number of fake qigong practices that conduct superstitions, deceive and harm people to get money,” observes the Falun website (http://www.falundafa.org). “This is right and absolutely necessary.” It should be noted that in the 1950s qigong was very popular among, and promoted by, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) itself, as well as by Chinese scientists. More recently, during the reform era, qigong, and investigation of its scientific validity, have been promoted by many high-ranking officials in the Party and the Army. Now, however, it is officially dismissed as quackery.

The authorities appear to be making far too much of the quackery issue. They prevailed upon Gao Qingyin, who had been deputy chief of the Falungong General Instruction Station in Anhui, to admit that after a Falun practitioner suffered a brain hemorrhage in 1994, “We called on the Falun Dafa Research Society four times and asked for the help of Li Hongzhi.” However, complains the Xinhua News Agency, “Li, the founder of Falungong, did nothing,” and the man died. The authorities cite rather few concrete cases of quackery, and this one fails on its face. Li did nothing to harm the man; rather, the government is attempting to deny the rights of Falungong followers.

What of the government’s second charge, that Falungong jeopardized social stability? The Falungong website insists the group isapolitical, and only preaches healthy living and the three moral values of truthfulness, benevolence and forbearance. “We are not against the government and we do not get involved in politics,” it says. But the government fears otherwise, and, with little substantiation, accuses Falungong of “using illegal organizations to engage in political activities.”

The main sin of the organization is the same as that of the Tiananmen demonstrators of 1989: they are popular. But is that a legitimate reason to outlaw them? We see these people as simply exercising their civil rights. After all, as with the students who occupied Tiananmen, it is not the activities that produced social instability, but rather the government’s reaction to them.

**The Authorities’ Dilemma**

It must be very difficult for the Chinese authorities to “get a handle” on this movement. During the student protests in 1989, they knew with whom they were dealing. The same is true when workers and peasants become restive. But Falungong blends pretty seamlessly into a broad spectrum of Chinese society, and until recently one could easily overlook it. Even government, police and military people have become involved. This summer the government sent more than a thousand cadres to a camp outside Shijiazhuang for anti-Falungong deprogramming. In the People’s Liberation Army (PLA), Falungong gained adherents at the highest levels, most have now been pressed into recanting. By July 23, the top brass could declare: “The PLA has given its firm support to the CCP Central Committee’s decision to outlaw Falungong.” Lieutenant General Li Qihua, a participant in the Long March who held very sensitive positions in the PLA before reportedly becoming Falungong’s top officer in Beijing, quickly fell into line: “The party’s decision is very wise, very correct, and very timely.”
The whole movement was little noticed until April 25 of this year, when, surprising everyone, more than 10,000 members turned out for a day-long vigil around Zhongnanhai, the compound where many of China’s top leaders live and work. The demonstration was apparently prompted by an anti-Falungong article. This had been written by the notorious leftist (in other words, conservative) scientist He Zuoqiu, who, in the 1980s, had campaigned against people like dissident astrophysicist Fang Lizhi. The article was published in Tianjin, and apparently the outraged Falungong people hoped for some support from the central authorities. Although the vigil they staged in Beijing was silent, the authorities found it eerie and alarming. Of course, they must have thought, we communists sometimes condone and encourage demonstrations, even utterly lawless ones involving damage to foreign embassies, but whatever gave these people, who are not following the Party line, the right of assembly? If we communists cannot control this religious group, how safe will our grip on the other religions be? And if the Party cannot control the religions, which are relatively docile, what can it control? (China has five legal religions: Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism and Protestantism. Spokespersons for all of the officially-recognized groups which “represent” these five have been trotted out to attack Falungong.)

**paper tiger?**

In all of this, the communist leadership ends up looking like a bunch of “control freaks.” It is hard for us to see what “massive threat to society” Falungong could possibly have posed, unless of course one equates “society” with communist control of all aspects of culture. The seven-year-old movement just does not seem all that awesome. Its presumed founder, Li Hongzhi, is a former provincial grain bureau clerk who now does not even live in China. He told the *New York Times* on August 8 that his own role has been exaggerated. “Were the [real] cultivators of Falungong to know that I was ranked among the influential people in the world, they would most likely laugh... My masters are all practicing in the mountains. If they don’t want to be seen, even I couldn’t find them. I ‘came out’ only because they said that I should.”

Since Li’s “coming out,” Falungong has become an international movement, but a rather amorphous one. It has had serious growing pains. Some of Li’s earliest disciples have now turned against the organization. There have been charges of financial improprieties. On the other hand, Falungong is big; it is not known just how big. On the low end of estimates, we have the Chinese authorities’ assertion that there are only two million members. On the high end, Li has implied that he has more than a hundred million followers worldwide. Even if there are only half that many in China, that would make the movement roughly the size of the CCP, but it probably is not that large.

In July, when demonstrations by sect members occurred in more than 30 Chinese cities, the CCP’s leaders seemed to have become paranoid. They felt that they were under “siege.” (By their count, 307 “sieges” took place between April 25 and early August.) They were particularly keen to put a stop to the movement in the capital. The police have demanded that the out-of-town demonstrators leave immediately; otherwise “the nature of the incident will even change.” (One cannot help but recall how, on June 4, 1989, the CCP “changed the nature” of another incident.)

According to U.S.-based Falungong disciples, police throughout China have ransacked homes of practitioners, confiscating books, video tapes and posters. It is said that 1.5 million of the movement’s publications have been destroyed by crushing or shredding, certainly an act worthy of Mao Zedong and the first emperor Qin Shi Huangdi at their worst. Every effort has been made to block members’ access to the Falungong site on the Internet, which had been a crucial means of communication within the movement, providing Falungong with an amazing ability to turn out its “troops” in highly disciplined demonstrations everywhere from Harbin to Shenzhen. Only the CCP can duplicate that feat and turn out “the masses” from one end of the country to the other.

But the authorities’ over-reaction in April was counterproductive, and the protests only intensified. Seventy Falungong members were reportedly detained on July 20, including movement leaders around the country. Those arrested included Li Chang, who had represented the group in negotiations with the government in April. Altogether, according to one police estimate, about 50,000 members of the group were detained in the Beijing area alone; most were released before the end of the 15 days, when according to the law they would have to be formally charged. But the leaders remain in prison and are likely to be put on trial soon. Large rewards have been promised for information leading to the arrest of others (presumably financed by the heavy fines being extracted from the underlings).

**role of the media**

The crackdown on Falungong demonstrates how important is the right of freedom of information. This summer the media throughout the country was mobilized to attack the movement. The government has published and heavily promoted a new book, *Exposing the True Face of Falungong*. In Shandong, the scientific magazine *Kej Forum* declared that the sect was superstitious and based on continued on page 49
Government ignores human rights in crackdown on Falungong

Human Rights in China (HRIC) strongly condemns the current crackdown on Falungong 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 moves against the spiritual group are the latest in a series of actions to restrict the efforts of Chinese people to organize independently of the Party-state, demonstrating a pattern of systematic violations of the freedoms of association, assembly and expression by the Chinese government. Immediately following China's signature of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in late 1998, government authorities intensified their ongoing campaign of persecution against individuals associated with unofficial Christian groups, independent labor organizing and the human rights and democracy movement. In October 1998, the Chinese government also enacted a series of regulations that further curtailed the already-limited right of association available to people in China.

These regulations, which require that all non-profit entities be sponsored and managed by government agencies and mandate no association without registration, were cited in the banning order on Falungong issued yesterday by the Ministry of Civil Affairs. The order labeled the Falungong group "an illegal organization." The Ministry of Public Security followed with a decree prohibiting the posting and distribution of Falungong materials, as well as gatherings of its members, whether for spiritual practice or demonstrations, threatening those who disobey with criminal penalties. The Ministry of Public Security's decree also bars Falungong supporters from exercising their constitutional right to petition against the actions of the authorities, and bans all opposition to the government's crackdown.

The Chinese government has routinely employed the pretext of criminal charges to dissolve religious and spiritual groups and to punish their leading members. Over the last 20 years, among the harshest sentences for "counterrevolutionary crimes" have been imposed on those accused of "organizing and using reactionary sects or secret societies for counterrevolutionary purposes." To our knowledge, almost all of the "counterrevolutionaries" sentenced to death in this period have been in this category. Although the revisions to China's criminal code enacted in 1997 abolished counterrevolutionary crimes, the government's attitude toward such issues evidently has not changed. Involvement in so-called "secret societies and heretical religious organizations" is now categorized under "Crimes of Disturbing Social Order." Serious offenses carry sentences of seven years or above.

In addition, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has launched a nationwide "education" campaign amongst Party members, who are required to cease all practice of Falungong exercises, as well as cutting themselves off from the organization. If they fail to do so, a Party notice issued on the same day as the ban said, they would be expelled from the CCP.

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 Falungong 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.

We also urge the Chinese government to take note of the Special Rapporteur's recommendations following his visit. As well as asking the Chinese government to eliminate the categorization of certain types of spiritual practices as "abnormal"—a category which is completely arbitrary and undefined, and which now certainly includes Falungong—and thus proscribed, the Special Rapporteur encouraged the government to show more tolerance toward practice of religion by Party members. His report (E/CN.4/1995/91) said that he recommended "the adoption of a text recognizing the right to freedom of belief and freedom to manifest one's belief for all, including members of the Communist Party and other socio-political organizations." He reminded the government that according to international law, freedom to manifest one's religion or belief may only be subject to such limitations as "are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others."

July 23, 1999
“sham science.” The Beijing media on July 22 accused the sect of spreading “superstitious, evil thinking” and undermining social stability. “The Falungong Research Society conducted illegal activities, spread superstitious, evil thinking to blind people, all to stir up trouble and sabotage social stability.”

Whether or not such charges have any merit, Falungong deserves more even-handed treatment in the media. And, more importantly, the general public have a right to objective and balanced reporting on this and all other subjects, a right that they rarely enjoy in China. Indeed, it was precisely the authorities’ abuse of their monopoly control of the media that outraged the Falungong followers. In its campaign against the movement, People’s Daily has emphasized the need for “promoting education in Marxist materialism and atheism, and the basic principles and guidelines of the Chinese Communist Party.” Small wonder that the Falun people might want to retaliate. As the paper described their actions, “practitioners... besieged the newspaper office.... Some of them played ‘Falungong’ music day and night outside the media establishments.... Some wormed their way into the offices en masse to entangle the editors and journalists on duty; some continually made nuisance calls on editors’ and journalists’ phones and pagers, and even forced editors to change their phone numbers.” But had Falungong not been subjected to prejudiced reporting, they would not have undertaken their demonstrations in the first place.

the group’s appeal

It is worth noting that Falungong seems to be attracting precisely those who have been the main victims of past human rights abuses: the middle-aged and elderly (both age groups having suffered through the Cultural Revolution), and women (toward whom the communists fell far short of delivering on revolutionary promises). Now, Chinese “law” again fails such people. Chinese media have attributed the involvement of the elderly to a lack of “healthy” activities being provided for retired people, at the same time berating elderly Falungong adherents for engaging in such irresponsible and anti-social behavior. But interviews with some older members of the group by international media have highlighted the fact that many began their practice precisely because they were ill and could not afford escalating medical fees, so were attempting to help themselves.

The authorities were clearly worried that so many women had joined the movement. “With the deepening struggle against Falungong,” stated an ostensibly reassuring Xinhua News Agency dispatch, “more women now have a clear understanding of the true purpose of this illegal organization, and have broken away from it.... The Falungong incidents make us realize that it is an important duty of women’s organizations to help women improve their overall quality and establish a right viewpoint, which is also a long-term task for the women’s movement. Women should arm their minds with scientific theories and knowledge, and play key roles in advocating science and fighting against superstition.... Women’s fate is always closely connected with that of their country.... The two decades since China’s opening to the outside world proves that women emancipated themselves only by having confidence in the leadership of the Communist Party, Marxism, and science.... It is the ultimate role of women to uphold science and break away from superstition, and also their glorious mission.” Apparently, recent decades have not taught women that there is much glory in following the CCP, and thus many have now turned to religion.

Indeed, so the many intellectuals. Thus, the government has mobilized its “experts” to attack Falungong. The Chinese Academy of Social Science held a much-publicized seminar. One research fellow, Li Chengfu, said that behind Li Hongzhi’s desire to convert people was a political goal and ambition to establish a kingdom ruled by himself. “To reach this goal, he dreamed up Falun Dafa... to deceive and brainwash Falungong practitioners. Li Hongzhi has also set up a tightly-run organization with political motives and an agenda that has been involved in numerous illegal activities.” Other scholars urged that the country should make every effort to get rid of the social causes of Falungong and leave no room for other cults. The professional press has echoed these concerns. Science and Technology Daily warned: “We should remain highly vigilant against a few international forces that are trying to push power politics.” Note how foreigners are to blame for all of the authorities’ problems; they themselves are, of course, blameless.

But in reality, the official media’s “scientific” judgments have nothing to do with science. What the Falungong movement really shows is that many Chinese are very frustrated about their plight. Sometimes the authorities can channel this frustration into such activities as attacking American diplomatic venues. But sooner or later people will realize that a more appropriate target is a leadership which behaves lawlessly and denies citizens their human rights.

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Fall 1999

CHINA RIGHTS FORUM 49
China and the Falungong
Dr. Loren Fauchier
Queens College, Charlotte, NC

(Please first read "The Wheel of Law and the Rule of Law" by James Seymour included in this packet).

In late December, 1999, four members of the Falungong spiritual movement outlawed by the Chinese government were given prison sentences ranging up to 18 years. It was a one-day trial. Prominently announced on Chinese television as a warning to others, citizens were reminded that the Chinese government outlawed it as an "evil cult" that held unauthorized demonstrations, and propagated a medicinal philosophy that led to the death of over 1400 people. Besides being charged with "organizing to undermine the implementation of laws," and "causing human deaths," they were also charged with "illegally obtaining state secrets." Officials say more than 150 Falungong members have been formally charged with crimes so far. And, unknown hundreds of followers have been sent without trial to labor camps for "re-education." Even a warrant is out for the arrest of Li Hongzhi, now residing in New York. The arrest of Falungong members and recent sentencing of "key leaders" raises important human rights issues. After reading the article and this, think and discuss the following questions.

1. The Falungong appears to be more of a "cult" than a religion. Does the Chinese government have the right to crackdown on such a group whose practices and beliefs are in part sustained by superstition and draw into question public health concerns?

2. The United Nation's "Declaration on the Elimination of all forms of Intolerance and of discrimination Based on Religion or Belief" states that "everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience or religion" and that "no one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have a religion or belief of his choice." Do you think that Falungong falls under the protection of such religious rights?

3. Is the Chinese government correct in arguing that movements like Falungong are a "massive threat to society?" Would you say the same for the Branch Davidians that squared off against the U.S. government in Waco, Texas?

4. Pounded by the media, most Chinese inside mainland China (and some outside China) agree with the government's line on Falungong. Should we "respect" their view and not push for the human rights of Falungong believers?

5. What if Falungong became popular in the United States. Would you advocate limiting their right of association and the propagation of their message? Why?
AMNESTY APPEALS

TIANANMEN
10 YEARS ON "FORGOTTEN PRISONERS"
APRIL 1999 SUMMARY: INDEX: ASA 17/09/99

The 4th June 1999 marks the tenth anniversary of the massacre of hundreds of unarmed civilians in Beijing and subsequent arrest of tens of thousands of demonstrators in major cities and provinces around China. Amnesty International has records of 241 people who are still imprisoned or on medical parole serving long sentences for their activities in connection with the 1989 protests. The attached list of names is a mere fraction of the real number of people throughout China who were convicted, unfairly tried and sentenced for their involvement in the protests.

Ten years on the government has still not officially accounted for those killed, injured or arrested. The refusal of the government to instigate any form of inquiry into the 1989 crackdown goes against the government's apparent willingness to improve its human rights record through dialogue with other governments, the recent signing of two key human rights conventions and the early release on medical parole of several key dissidents.

Amnesty International has over the years made several recommendations to the government in the light of those still imprisoned, killed and unaccounted for following the 1989 massacre. It is hoping that the tenth anniversary will provide an opportunity for the government to show its sincerity and commitment to improve human rights by implementing a review of the 1989 crackdown, to re-examine the convictions of those still imprisoned and offer compensation to the families of those killed.
"Amnesty Appeals: Tiananmen: Ten Years on 'Forgotten Prisoners"

1. Research the Tiananmen Square demonstration of 1989 - causes, events, government and world reaction. Discuss your findings as a class.

2. "Ten years on, the government has still not officially accounted for those killed, injured or arrested." Why do you think the Chinese government has not done this? Compare this to demonstrations in this country. What accounts for the difference in government actions?

--by Robin Tingley
Independence High School
A PRIMER ON THE LAOGAI ECONOMY

"Laogai production serves as a means for reforming prisoners and bears the political obligation of punishing and reforming prisoners, [it also] serves as an economic unit producing goods for society and bears the economic obligation set by guidelines of the state. These dual obligations and dual accomplishments (the reforming of prisoners into new men and the production of material goods) must be advanced and practiced throughout the entire process of Laogai production."

Laogai Jingji Xue (Laogai Economics)
Gu Jianguo

The communist government of the People's Republic of China maintains that the human being is the "most fundamental productive force" in society. Through the near half-century rule of the Chinese Communist Party, various types of 'enemies' have been identified and targeted by the leadership. These 'enemies' were either eliminated, namely killed, or removed from society. Due to social, political or criminal behavior deemed threatening by the Party, millions of Chinese were sent to the communists' forced labor camps - The Laogai.

The Laogai forces its prisoners to plant, harvest, engineer, manufacture and process all types of products for sale in the domestic and international markets. Earnings from the sale of Laogai products become income for the state. The theory behind the Laogai is clear:

"Except for those who must be exterminated physically due to political considerations, human beings must be utilized as a productive force with submissiveness as the prerequisite. Laogai units force prisoners to labor. The Laogai's fundamental policy is 'Forced labor is the means, while thought reform is the basic aim.'"

Regardless of superficial attempts by the Chinese communists or their apologists to redefine the forced labor camps as Western-style 'prisons,' the Laogai still exists today in China.

The practices of the Laogai are directed by what the Chinese communist theorists call "reform-through-labor legal studies." The Chinese dictatorship's central Laogai policy is clearly defined by one theorist:

"The fundamental task of our Laogai facilities is punishing and reforming criminals. To define their function concretely, they fulfill tasks in the following three ways: (1) Punishing criminals and putting them under surveillance; (2) Reforming criminals; (3) organizing criminals in labor and production, thus creating wealth for society. Our Laogai units are both facilities of the dictatorship and special enterprises."

Criminal Reform Handbook
P.R.C. Ministry of Justice Laogai Bureau
Shaanxi People's Publishers, 1988, p.3.


12/29/1999
One subsection of this state-run slavery and ‘thought reform’ system is known as "Laogai economics." The Laogai remains an integral sector of the Chinese economy. It has adapted to the times of the "socialist market economy with Chinese characteristics." The Chinese government publishes entire books on Laogai economics to train officials at all levels of the system on the efficient use of forced labor and improvements in production and management. Laogai officials must manage the reform of criminals according to the reform-through-labor guidelines of the central government and manage the commercial activities of the Laogai.

The scope of the "Laogai economy" as a component of the overall Chinese economy is difficult to quantify using open sources. As the Laogai became a major issue in world condemnation of the Chinese dictatorship’s disregard for basic human rights, documentation of the Laogai became scarce. The Chinese government considers information relating to the camps "state secrets."

The Chinese government refuses access to the Laogai by the International Committee of the Red Cross to inspect conditions of political prisoners. The Chinese government refuses access to the Laogai by the United States Customs Service, despite a binding bilateral agreement to allow visits to the Laogai to assure that the Chinese government is not exporting forced labor products to the American market. The Chinese government rebuffs any attempts by foreign organizations or governments to independently inspect or study the dual political and economic role of the Laogai.

This Special Report of the Laogai Research Foundation presents new evidence of the Laogai and its economic scope. Yet, this new evidence still only presents a partial picture of the "Laogai economy". But it is the most thorough to date due to the of the source of information. The Foundation continues to gather evidence. This Special Report only contains some of the materials collected on the production of the Laogai.

Definition of the Laogai
The Laogai Research Foundation gathers new evidence on the main components of the Laogai as defined by Chinese communist law, policies and practices. The Chinese legal definition of the Laogai comprises six main components: prisons (jianyu), reform-through-labor detachments (laogai or laodong guzuo dui), reeducation-through-labor facilities (laojiao or laodong jiaoyang suo), detention centers (kanshou suo), juvenile offender facilities (shaoguan suo) and the practice of forced-job-placement personnel (liuchang jiu ye renyuan). In general, prisons and laogai detachments house "convicts" or prisoners who have received formal sentencing by the courts in China (due process and judicial independence in China notwithstanding.) Reeducation-through-labor, or laojiao, facilities house prisoners who receive "administrative discipline" and sentencing for up to three years by the Chinese police with no formal hearing in a court. Detention centers are for "convicts" sentenced to short-term (usually less than two years) imprisonment by a court. Juvenile offender facilities are for adolescent "convicts" or reeducation-through-labor detainees. Forced-job-placement personnel are subject to indefinite assigned labor at forced labor facilities as directed by the courts or the Laogai Department following the completion of sentence.* They are not free. They are forced to remain in the Laogai, albeit with some more privileges than ordinary prisoners do. The Chinese often cover up their status by calling them "civilian workers." While no one knows the exact number of these prisoners, they are estimated to number in the millions.

In part, the true connotation of Laogai is lost in translation. Human Rights Watch Asia holds that the Laogai is the "Chinese Gulag." The Laogai Research Foundation uses this term for comparative practices as well. But the Laogai has as many similarities as differences with the Gulag. Laogai is the
Chinese communists' forced labor and thought reform camp system. In the everyday language of the Chinese person, the term "Laogai" denotes the larger forced labor camp system as a whole and the one component of reform-through-labor. To Chinese who saw someone disappear into the Laogai, there is little discussion of semantics.

In carrying out the dual political and economic functions as directed by Chinese communist forced labor theory, individual Laogai facilities operate under distinct names for each of its identities. Laogai facilities may operate under multiple enterprise names in order to publicize its production and interact in the commercial arena, as well as to avoid detection by international observers. Furthermore, Laogai facilities may operate under multiple internal names as designated by the Judiciary Department in the course of implementing "reform" of prisoners and central government edicts. For example, the Laogai that held Wei Jingsheng prior to his exile in 1997 is commercially known as the Nanpu New Life Salt Farm or Hebei Nanbao Salt Works (as found in the Directory of Key Manufacturing Companies in P.R China 1995/96). The same facility's internal name is the Hebei Province No. 1 Laogai Detachment or Jile No. 1 Prison.

**Chinese Government Policies Direct Laogai Economy**
The millions in the Chinese Laogai constitute the world's largest forced labor population. Those in the Laogai face political indoctrination and physical and mental depravation as part of the "reform" regiment. They are simultaneously forced to labor and face production quotas in their "labor" evaluation. The common slogan in the Laogai is: "Reform First, Production Second."

The Laogai enterprises historically garnered their operating funds from central and local government outlays. The move away from the rigid, central-planned economy has caused the Laogai enterprises to search for methods to adjust to the new environment. The Chinese government is constantly looking to improve the management of forced labor enterprises and increase production output, sales and profits to relieve the government burden.

The Chinese authorities carefully monitor labor production in the Laogai system to reward the most productive facilities and "correct" the poor performance of the less productive facilities. Laogai enterprises participate in national evaluations to confirm that forced labor production has reached certain standards. When the Laogai achieves production levels that are comparable to international standards, their products are pushed beyond the domestic market. As stated in a 1991 Asia Watch report titled In China, "the use of forced labor is a central government policy, not one developed on an ad-hoc basis by labor reform units in the coastal provinces where a large portion of the goods are produced."

One major text which outlines the implementation of forced labor economic theory and provides clear evidence of the economic role of the Laogai in China is titled Laogai jingjixue (Laogai Economics). Published in 1990, this book states in its introduction:

"This volume takes Marxist theory as its foundation and integrates the special characteristics of our country's Laogai work; it adheres to the fundamental principle of our country's Laogai work of 'Reform First, Production Second' and systematically addresses the objectives, features, content and obligations of Laogai economics, as well as the form and development of the Laogai economy.... This book is written for study by Laogai Department and related higher education specialists."**

This book contains numerous essays written by national or provincial level officials regarding Laogai...
The opening essay, "On the Present Conditions of Laogai Economics," lays out the integration of the Laogai as one segment of the central government's economic program:

"In our country, Laogai economy is a branch of the economy of specific nature. Laogai economics has the dual characteristics of management of economic administration and the study of reform through labor. In viewing the socialist ownership of means production under the control of whole people, it is a component of the socialist national economy....****

"....Among Laogai products, some are indispensable goods in the national plan and the peoples' lives; some are used in national defense industries; some special products which are made with Laogai characteristics are welcomed by society; some have already been named as national or provincial superior products; Land] some have reached world-class, advanced levels. Some of the products are even exported to various parts of the world, not only earning large amounts of foreign currency, but also winning praise for the state."*****

The Laogai administrators must adhere to the traditional emphasis on reform of prisoners in order to mold them into "new socialist persons" while reaching certain productivity and profit levels. The reform policies are implicit in any component of the Laogai, but the production needs may be specific to individual Laogai enterprises. The Laogai created offices to handle the management of prisoners according to such production demands of the enterprise.

"The duties of prisoner assignment departments include the reasonable deployment of criminals from the province who require detention in prisons or Laogai facilities in accordance to the prisoner’s age, profession prior to arrest, skill, duration of term, type of crime committed, etc.; [and] the reasonable transfer of criminals between prisons and Laogai facilities in accordance to the requirements for production (prisons and Laogai facilities may at any time request the provincial prisoner assignment department for the deployment of various categories of prisoners)."°

The removal of direct government support for the Laogai pushes the drive for increased production and income for the individual enterprise. This causes, however, a contradiction between the traditional role of the Laogai as centers of reform and the necessary role of the Laogai as producer in the "socialist market economy with Chinese characteristics."

"Due to our national condition and strength, the country cannot provide to the Laogai Departments all the financing it requires. Because of this, it is extremely necessary that Laogai Departments, while not simultaneously influencing the reform of criminals, strengthen production and management administration, and mobilize and expand the enthusiasm of prisoners to labor and produce, thus creating more wealth for the state through reform through labor....°°

"....Looking at the major sources of the state’s financial revenue, the various taxes paid to the state by the Laogai Departments are also contributions to the state and have become a major section of the state’s earnings. According to the teachings of Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong thought, the prison is a
component of the state mechanism and falls under the category of superstructure. The state in all circumstances guarantees the proper operations of prisons and is responsible for all administrative and business expenses of prisons; thus, the part of expense that the prisons derive from commercial income is in fact also a contribution to the state.

The end result of the emphasis on production is for the Laogai enterprise to look for the greatest source of income available in the marketplace. For those Laogai enterprises that have the highest quality production, the move is then on to the international market through exports. Despite denials by Chinese government officials, Laogai products have time and time again been found to be available in the international market. In reality, the Chinese government constantly encourages the export of Laogai goods.

"...To vigorously develop foreign-oriented economies whenever it is possible and permissible is an important path to further strengthening the Laogai economy, to accelerate technological progress, to arm the Laogai management detachments, to fully utilize the initiative and creativity of cadre guards, employees and technical personnel, and to improve qualifications of all categories of personnel to enhance the impact and role of the Laogai economy. "Laogai units which develop foreign-oriented economies not only create large amounts of foreign currency for the state and increase state revenues, they Laogai units themselves develop."

"...Laogai units which develop foreign-oriented economies push their products into the international market [where they] not only win praise for the state, but also increase the foreign currency revenue of the state and accelerate the economic construction of the state. Because of this, the development of Laogai units’ foreign-oriented economies, for either the development of the Laogai economy itself or the development of the national economy as a whole, is absolutely essential."

The Laogai is a dynamic institution in China. The Chinese authorities see the Laogai as a source of endless cheap labor and are continuously studying the application of forced labor in increasing productivity and profits. The use of forced labor in China is simply seen as another input into the economic equation as calculated by the Chinese government. The deliberate application of forced labor by the Chinese government has spawned an entirely new field: the economics of slavery.

*Asia Watch refers to Chinese Laogai theoretical articles which "confirm that it is common practice in China for labor reform camp prisoners to be forcibly and indefinitely retained as workers after they have completed their sentences so that export-oriented productivity will not be diminished by their departure from the system. As one contributor to the confidential labor reform journal notes in the April 1989 issue (p. 11): "Time-served prisoners retained for in-camp employment... cannot join labor unions, do not enjoy retirement benefits when they become old and their wages and living standards are low. But the policy of ‘forcible retention of time-served prisoners for in-camp employment’ (chui xingman shifang renyuans de qiangzhixing linchang juye) is most commonly applied against those inmates who have allegedly ‘remained unrepentant’ during the period of their imprisonment and its main purpose is to remove such people from society at large." Prison Labor in China, News from Asia Watch report April 19, 1991, p2.


***Laogai Jingjixue (Laogai Economics), Gu Jianguo, China Railways Publishers, April 1990.

****Ibid., p.1.

"A Primer on the Laogai Economy"

1. How does the Chinese Ministry of Justice define the purpose of the Laogai camps? In what three ways do the Laogai fulfill this purpose?

2. Create a chart showing the six main divisions of the Laogai system and the function of each.

3. Discuss the dual emphasis of the Laogai system - the "reform of prisoners" and the production needs. How could these aims cause conflict in the system?

4. "The use of forced labor in China is simply seen as another input into the economic equation as calculated by the Chinese government". Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?

--by Robin Tingley
Independence High School
Assembly Bill 2457

The bill below makes it a state policy to not buy goods made by slave laborers. The bill passed in the Assembly by a vote of 62-2 on Friday, August 30 and was signed into law by Governor Wilson on Wednesday, October 2.

(updated October 2, 1996)

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE 1995-96 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL No. 2457

Introduced by Assembly Member Figueroa

February 20, 1996

An act to add Section 10299 to the Public Contract Code, relating to state procurement.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL's DIGEST

AB 2457, as introduced, Figueroa. State procurement:forced, convict, and indentured labor.

Existing law requires contracts for the hiring or purchase of equipment, supplies, and materials by state agencies to be approved by the Department of General Services.

This bill would require those contracts to contain a statement by the contractor, attesting that no foreign-made equipment, materials, or supplies furnished to the state pursuant to the contract are produced by forced labor, as defined, convict labor, or indentured labor under penal sanction.


State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature hereby finds and declares as follows:

(a) The people of California do not support any forced, convict, or indentured labor system anywhere in the world, not only because it is a cruel suppression of the human right of free labor and employment practices, but also because it creates an unfair trade advantage for the forced, convict, or indentured labor country.

(b) The federal Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930, while prohibiting the importation of any goods produced in whole or in part by forced, convict, or indentured labor,

does not require importers to provide certificates of origin at the time of importation to affirm and guarantee no forced, convict, or indentured labor content.

(c) The federal Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930 also does not require the United States Customs Service to have an active, self-initiated foreign surveillance program of detecting forced, convict, or indentured labor-made goods and preventing their entry into the United States, but relies primarily upon complaints made by the public or other interested groups.

(d) Widespread forced, convict, and indentured labor systems still remain active in mainland China, with about 20 million inmates in the Laogai facilities, and in countries constituting parts of the former Soviet Union, with millions of inmates in the gulag facilities. Because the United States has increased trade with those countries, there is a greater chance of forced, convict, or indentured-labor-made imports coming into this country.

(e) The State of California wholeheartedly supports the prohibition on imports produced in whole or in part by forced, convict, or indentured labor and shall not knowingly acquire any of those goods.

SEC. 2. Section 10299 is added to the Public Contract Code, to read:

10299. (a) Every contract entered into by any state agency for the purpose specified in subdivision (a) of Section 10295 shall contain a statement in which the contractor attests that no foreign-made equipment, materials, or supplies furnished to the state pursuant to the contract have been produced in whole or in part by forced labor, convict labor, or indentured labor underpenal sanction.

(b) For purposes of this section, the term "forced labor" shall have the same meaning as in Section 1307 of Title 19 of the United States Code.

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Assembly Bill 2457

1. Read the California Assembly Bill No. 2457. What is the purpose of this law? What action is required by those who contract with the state of California?

2. Many people believe that economic policy can change social or political realities. The California legislature obviously thinks Bill No. 2457 can have an effect. The Human Rights Watch organization also does - on Dec. 21, 1999 it "... called on the Prime Minister of Finland, Mr. Paavo Lipponen, and the President of the European Commission, Mr. Romano Prodi, to ensure that the development of economic relations is matched by consistent pressure on China to comply with its international human rights obligations" (http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/china-99/china-june99.htm).

Compare these views with that of Mr. Harry Wu in the San Jose Mercury News interview of Nov. 21, 1999. What is Mr. Wu's view on the relationship of human rights and economic policy?

--by Robin Tingley
Independence High School
CHINA: HUMAN RIGHTS AT FIFTY YEARS (Press Release, September 1999)

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH


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CHINA: HUMAN RIGHTS AT FIFTY YEARS

(New York, October 1, 1999) -- Human Rights Watch today urged the People's Republic of China to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of its founding by releasing all prisoners and detainees held for the peaceful expression of their views.

"China's history over the last half-century has been marked by the designation of new 'enemies of the people' and the rehabilitation of old ones. This anniversary should be an occasion to declare a general amnesty for all and to start the next half-century—and the next millennium—on a sound human rights footing."

Sidney Jones
Asia Director of Human Rights Watch

"China's history over the last half-century has been marked by the designation of new 'enemies of the people' and the rehabilitation of old ones," said Sidney Jones, Asia director of Human Rights Watch. "This anniversary should be an occasion to declare a general amnesty for all and to start the next half-century—and the next millennium—on a sound human rights footing."

To do this, China would need to do the following:

- Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, signed in October 1998, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, signed in October 1997, and move rapidly to reform China's laws to bring them into full conformity with these two U.N. treaties.

- Overturn the official verdict on the 1989 pro-democracy movement; release those still detained for their peaceful involvement in it; and "rehabilitate" all those convicted of nonviolent offenses related to the 1989 demonstration, including those forced into exile abroad.

- Institute a mechanism by which all prisoners and detainees convicted of "counterrevolutionary" crimes or crimes against the state can have their cases reviewed by an impartial board, with a view toward releasing and rehabilitating all those sentenced for peaceful political and religious activity.

- Abolish the practice of reeducation through labor which enables individuals to be administratively detained in labor camps for periods of up to three years.


12/29/1999
• Open all court proceedings to the Chinese public and to international observers, and add to the Criminal Procedure Law a provision explicitly guaranteeing presumption of innocence until proven guilty as recommended by the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. The Working Group visited China in 1997.

• Allow independent monitoring of the Chinese prison system by international humanitarian organizations.

• Proceed with efforts to make the judiciary more independent and free from political control.

Some of the ups and downs of China's human rights performance since 1949: Over the last fifty years, the People's Republic of China has undergone at least four major policy shifts as officials tried to define a path toward strength and prosperity. Each of these shifts—in 1957, 1961, 1966 and 1978—has had major human rights consequences. Each has been accompanied by cycles of political thaws and chills, as internal divisions or external pressure came into play. Each has created new political victims, and each led to new arguments on rights.

From 1949 to 1957, party policy was defined by class struggle, and class background shaped one's relationship to the state. Mass campaigns such as the "three anti" and "five anti" were directed against corrupt officials and the "bourgeois" classes. Peasants saw some social and economic rights enhanced, particularly with the implementation of land reform, but political rights for all remained tightly restricted. During the short-lived Hundred Flowers Campaign, the government encouraged intellectuals to criticize the party, but the campaign was followed by the mass purge in 1957 of people who had been courageous enough to speak out. An estimated 100,000 alleged "rightists" were arrested by public security forces and sent to labor camps. Rehabilitation came, in some cases, only after twenty years.

The period from 1957 through 1960 marked a shift to radical politics, when Mao Zedong moved away from the Soviet model of industrial revolution and embarked on the Great Leap Forward. Government-sponsored mass campaigns whipped up popular enthusiasm for commmunalized agriculture and the creation of back-yard steel furnaces, and fear instilled by the 1957 purges muted any form of criticism. Local officials who witnessed the disastrous effects of these policies were afraid to report to their superiors for the same reason, and millions of people are estimated to have died of starvation as a result. This was one case, as economist Amartya Sen has pointed out, where lack of freedom of expression led directly to widespread famine.

Politics turned again more moderate in 1961 when even Mao accepted the Great Leap's failure. Pragmatic leaders such as Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping tried to improve the foundations of "socialist law" and downplayed class struggle. But the onset of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) spelled disaster for human rights. Liu Shaoqi, once president, was left to die in a house far from Beijing after being tortured. People with "bad" class backgrounds were jailed in makeshift lockups called "cowsheds" and now shared their fate with high officials who had fallen from grace. The number of people killed or driven to suicide during this period exceeds one million by most estimates, and an estimated 16
million were forced into the countryside in the largest forced internal exile in history.

The latest major policy shift took place in 1978 when Deng Xiaoping replaced the destructive concept of "class struggle" with a new policy of economic reform. That policy shift has brought tangible human rights benefits: improvements in living standards, greater freedom of movement, some reform of the legal system and a move toward less arbitrary application of the law. It has also led to greater political participation at the local level with village-level elections, although how significant those elections are is a matter of ongoing debate.

But it has also been marked by at least four cycles of opening and repression, around the Democracy Wall movement, 1979-81, the 1985-86 intellectual thaw, the 1989 democracy movement, and the "Beijing Spring" of 1997-98. China is now in the throes of the repressive phase of that cycle as officials are quick to crush any signs of political dissent or frontal challenges to party control. By arresting members of groups seen as posing such challenges, such as the China Democracy Party and the Falung Gong; by increasing controls on Internet access and other communications; by intensifying security in Tibet, Xinjiang, and Inner Mongolia; and by cracking down on migrant workers, China is starting off its second half-century simply continuing the pattern of the past.

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HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH
"China: Human Rights at Fifty Years"

1. What does Sidney Jones, Asia Director of Human Rights Watch, mean by "China's history over the last half-century has been marked by the designation of new 'enemies of the people' and the rehabilitation of old ones" (1). Do you agree with this assessment?

2. Discuss the list of actions Human Rights Watch believes China needs to take in order to achieve human rights. Which of these seem most important to you? Why? Rate each one as likely, unlikely or possible to happen in the year 2000. Discuss with your classmates and try to reach a consensus on each.

3. Summarize the four major human rights policy shifts in the People's Republic of China since 1949. What four 'cycles' have occurred in the last shift since 1978?

--by Robin Tingley
Independence High School
HUMAN RIGHTS & LABOR CAMPS IN OTHER PLACES, OTHER TIMES

ARTICLES:


QUESTIONS:

1. Compare types of forced camps in different countries and regions of the world. What purpose(s) did they serve?

2. What similarities and differences can be seen between human rights in Cuba and China in 1999 according to Amnesty International? (refer to the Amnesty International report on China elsewhere in this booklet)

3. The Soviet Gulag system and the Chinese Laogai system both occurred under communist governments. How did the Gulag system change as democracy advanced in Russia at the end of the Soviet state? Do you see the same changes occurring in China?

--by Robin Tingley
Independence High School
Concentration Camp, a place where selected groups of people are confined, usually for political reasons and under inhumane conditions. Men, women, and children are confined without normal judicial trials for an indeterminate period of confinement. Camp authorities usually exercise unlimited, arbitrary power. Although many kinds of facilities have served as concentration camps, they usually consist of barracks, huts, or tents, surrounded by watchtowers and barbed wire. Concentration camps are also known by various other names such as corrective labor camps, relocation centers, and reception centers. In World War II more than 4 million died in German concentration camps, but there have been other camps throughout history.

Western Camps

Modern concentration camps appeared at the end of the 19th century. The Spaniards used them in Cuba during the Spanish-American War (1898), and the British established them for thousands of women and children during the Boer War (1899-1902) in South Africa. In the West camps have been created several times during periods of war and national emergency. In France the government committed Spanish Republican refugees to reception centers in 1938 and added Jewish and other anti-Nazi refugees the following year. In Great Britain the government used Defense Regulation 18B in 1939 to send potentially disloyal citizens and refugees from enemy countries to internment camps. In the U.S., Executive Orders 9066 and 9102, later upheld by the Supreme Court, empowered the military to transport 70,000 U.S. citizens of Japanese descent and 42,000 Japanese resident aliens from the West Coast to relocation centers in the interior.

Soviet Camps

In Russia the Bolsheviks established concentration camps for suspected counterrevolutionaries in 1918. During the 1920s, "class enemies" and criminals were confined in the Northern Special Purpose Camps on the Solovetskiye Islands in the White Sea and near Arkhangel'sk on the mainland. In the 1930s and '40s, a system of corrective labor camps covered most of the Soviet Union and received millions of prisoners in successive waves of mass arrests: independent farmers (kulaks); victims of the great purges; populations deported from the Polish and Baltic territories annexed in 1939; groups such as the Volga Germans considered potentially disloyal during World War II; Axis prisoners of war; and Russians returning from German captivity. After the death of Joseph Stalin (1953), when many inmates received amnesty and were released, the camps continued on a smaller scale.

In 1919 the Russian secret police, then known as the Cheka and later under successive other names (see KGB), was empowered to arrest "class enemies." Commitment to a camp usually followed a hearing by the Judicial Collegium of the secret police, using elastic paragraphs of the criminal code to sentence defendants who had neither the right to be present nor to defend themselves. During the 1920s the camps were administered by various agencies, including the People's Commissariat of Justice. In 1930 control over all camps was assumed by the Chief Administration of Camps (Glavnoye uptavlenie lagetov, or GULAG) in the People's Commissariat of the Interior (Narodny komissariat vnutrennikh dyel, or NKVD).

Millions of camp inmates worked as forced laborers on numerous projects essential to the Soviet economy. Some of these, such as the White Sea-Baltic Canal and the Moscow-Volga Canal, claimed innumerable lives. Other projects—such as the coal mines and oil wells near Vorkuta and the gold mines on the Kolyma River—exploited the mineral wealth in the Soviet Arctic. Eventually, five major camp systems existed: (1) the Yagry near Arkhangelsk; (2) the Pechora, including Kotlas and Vorkuta; (3) the Karaganda in Kazakhstan; (4) the Tayshet-Komsomol'sk-na-Amure in the Lake Baikal-Amur River region; and (5) the Dalstroy in the Magadan-Kolyma region.

Nazi Camps

In Germany, the Nazis established concentration camps almost immediately after assuming power on January 30, 1933. A decree in February removed the constitutional protection against arbitrary arrest. The security police had the authority to arrest anyone and to commit that person to a camp for an indefinite period. The political police, known as the Gestapo, imposed "protective custody" on a wide variety of political opponents: Communists, socialists, religious dissenters, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Jews. The criminal police, known as the Kripo, imposed "preventive arrest" on professional criminals and numerous groups of so-called asocials: Gypsies, homosexuals, and prostitutes. The SS (Schutzstaffel, or protective units) operated the camps with brutal military discipline. During the 1930s six major camps were established: Dachau, Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald, Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, and, for women, Ravensbrück. In 1939 these camps held about 25,000 prisoners.

During World War II the camps increased in size and number. Important new ones included Auschwitz-Birkenau, Natzweiler, Neuengamme, Gross Rosen, Stutthof, Lublin-Maidanek, Hinzert, Vught, Dora, and Bergen-Belsen. Millions of prisoners entered these camps from every occupied country of Europe: Jews, partisans, Soviet prisoners of war, and impressed foreign laborers. Early in 1942 the SS Central Office for Economy and Administration (Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt, or WVHA) assumed operational control of the concentration camps, and inmates were exploited as forced laborers in industrial production. In addition to the central camps, the WVHA operated hundreds of subsidiary camps, and local offices of the security police in the occupied territories maintained large numbers of forced labor camps. Inmates were worked to death in industries such as the I. G. Farben chemical works and the V-2 rocket factories. Those no longer able to work were killed by gassing, shooting, or fatal injections. Inmates were also used for "medical experiments." Early in 1945 the camp population exceeded 700,000.

During World War II the Nazis also established extermination centers to kill entire populations. There the SS systematically gassed millions of Jews and thousands of Gypsies and Soviet prisoners of war. Two extermination centers operated in concentration camps under the authority of the WVHA: Auschwitz-Birkenau and Lublin-Maidanek. Five operated in camps established by regional SS and police leaders: Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka in eastern Poland; Kulmhof (Chelmno) in
western Poland; and Semlin outside Belgrade, in Serbia. More than 6 million persons, the majority of whom were Jews, perished in the Nazi camps. (Millions of Jews were also exterminated outside the camps.)

Other Camps

Since World War II numerous repressive regimes have established concentration camps. Thus, Communist regimes in Asia have used reeducation camps to detain vast numbers of men, women, and children. In the 1950s the British established emergency detention camps in Kenya; in the 1960s the government of Indonesia placed opponents in island camps; and in the 1970s the military regime in Argentina operated secret detention camps.

Contributed by:

Henry Friedlander

http://www.candles-museum.com/camps.htm
The GULAG

The Soviet system of forced labor camps was first established in 1919 under the Cheka, but it was not until the early 1930s that the camp population reached significant numbers. By 1934 the GULAG, or Main Directorate for Corrective Labor Camps, then under the Cheka's successor organization the NKVD, had several million inmates. Prisoners included murderers, thieves, and other common criminals—along with political and religious dissenters. The GULAG, whose camps were located mainly in remote regions of Siberia and the Far North, made significant contributions to the Soviet economy in the period of Joseph Stalin. GULAG prisoners constructed the White Sea-Baltic Canal, the Moscow-Volga Canal, the Baikal-Amur main railroad line, numerous hydroelectric stations, and strategic roads and industrial enterprises in remote regions. GULAG manpower was also used for much of the country's lumbering and for the mining of coal, copper, and gold.

Stalin constantly increased the number of projects assigned to the NKVD, which led to an increasing reliance on its labor. The GULAG also served as a source of workers for economic projects independent of the NKVD, which contracted its prisoners out to various economic enterprises.

Conditions in the camps were extremely harsh. Prisoners received inadequate food rations and insufficient clothing, which made it difficult to endure the severe weather and the long working hours; sometimes the inmates were physically abused by camp guards. As a result, the death rate from exhaustion and disease in the camps was high. After Stalin died in 1953, the GULAG population was reduced significantly, and conditions for inmates somewhat improved. Forced labor camps continued to exist, although on a small scale, into the Gorbachev period, and the government even opened some camps to scrutiny by journalists and human rights activists. With the advance of democratization, political prisoners and prisoners of conscience all but disappeared from the camps.

Letter from the camps 1926 translation
Letter from the camps 1926 facsimile

At least 150 political prisoners, including 30 prisoners of conscience, were released, many on condition that they leave the country. At least 350 others remained imprisoned, including some 100 prisoners of conscience. Many political dissidents were detained for short periods or harassed. There were frequent reports of ill-treatment. Prison conditions sometimes constituted cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. At least 10 unarmed civilians were shot dead by law enforcement officials who used lethal force unjustifiably. There were at least five executions. New death sentences were passed and several men remained under sentence of death at the end of the year.

In April Cuba escaped censure at the UN Commission on Human Rights for the first time in seven years, when a US-sponsored resolution was defeated. In October the UN General Assembly overwhelmingly demanded an end to the US embargo against Cuba for the seventh year running.

In August the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination considered Cuba's 10th, 11th and 12th periodic reports. It recognized that "Cuba had experienced serious economic difficulties as a result of the embargo." It also expressed appreciation of Cuba's commitment to "eliminate all manifestations of racial discrimination" and recommended that particular attention be paid to "the training of law enforcement officials in the protection of human rights."

A visit to Cuba by Pope John Paul II in January was followed by the release of nearly 300 prisoners, including more than 100 political prisoners, 19 of whom were prisoners of conscience. Thirteen prisoners of conscience were unconditionally released in February, including Héctor Palacio Ruiz (see Amnesty International Report 1998). The other six prisoners of conscience were released in April and May on condition that they went into exile in Canada. Following the Pope’s visit, suppression of political dissent continued, but was generally less severe than the previous year. In November, two prisoners of conscience charged with "enemy propaganda" - Jesús Chamber Ramirez (see Amnesty
International Report 1994), imprisoned since 1992, and Dr Desi Mendoza Rivero (see Amnesty International Report 1998), imprisoned since 1997 were released from prison “for humanitarian reasons” because of ill health, on condition that they leave the country.

Radamés García de la Vega, Vice-President of Jóvenes por la Democracia, Young People for Democracy, who was serving an 18-month sentence of “correctional work with internment” for “disrespect”, was released in February, eight months before his sentence expired. Nestor Rodríguez Lobaina, President of Jóvenes por la Democracia, was released in October after completing an 18-month sentence for “disrespect” and “resisting authority” (see Amnesty International Reports 1997 and 1998). However, Nestor Rodriguez was detained again for a week in December after protesting at the government’s refusal to let him leave the country to attend a conference in France marking the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. On his release, he was ordered to go to Baracoa, Guantánamo province, and forbidden from going to Havana, the capital.

Six members of the unofficial Partido Pro Derechos Humanos en Cuba (ppdhc), Party for Human Rights in Cuba, arrested in Santa Clara in October 1997 (see Amnesty International Report 1998) remained in detention at the end of the year. They had been detained after starting a fast in protest at the arrest of fellow ppdhc member Daula Carpio Mata. Four of those remaining in detention were serving sentences varying from 16 to 18 months' imprisonment or “correctional work with internment”. The other two _Lilian Meneses Martínez and Ileana Peñalver Duque_ were being held in Guanajay Women's Prison, despite the fact that they had been sentenced to 18 months' “correctional work without internment”.

It was estimated that at least 350 political prisoners who had been convicted of state security offences, many after unfair trials, remained imprisoned at the end of the year, including at least 60 prisoners of conscience and possible prisoners of conscience. However, the exact figure was not known because of the absence of official data and the continuing severe restrictions on human rights monitoring.

Several members of unofficial groups working in the field of civil and political rights, journalists working for independent press agencies, and human rights activists, were detained for short periods; most were released without charge. Many were subjected to other forms of intimidation, including being refused permission to leave the country with the right to return, and actos de repudio (acts of repudiation) organized by government officials, which involved being verbally abused and sometimes physically assaulted by government supporters. For example, following the arrest of Manuel Antonio González Castellanos, a reporter for the independent press agency Cuba Press, in Holguín in October, his family wrote anti-government slogans on the walls and doors of their home. The next day their home was reportedly surrounded by several hundred people who were shouting threats and abuse. Government agents then forced open the door and beat two members of the family _Yoani and Leonardo Varona González_ and a visitor, Roberto Rodríguez Rodríguez. Yoani Varona and
Roberto Rodríguez were released, but Manuel González and Leonardo Varona remained detained at the end of the year. All four were reportedly charged with "disrespect".

In September at least eight dissidents were arrested in a crackdown on anti-government activism. Most had taken part in a demonstration outside the court where the trial of Reinaldo Alfaro García (see below) was taking place. All were released without charge within a few days. Two of the detainees _ Dr Oscar Elías Biscet and Rolando Muñoz Yllobre, President and Vice-President respectively of the Fundación Lawton de Derechos Humanos, Lawton Human Rights Foundation _ were detained several times during the year.

Lázaro Constantín Durán, one of those detained for demonstrating on the day of Reinaldo Alfaro's trial, was arrested again on 10 December and beaten. On 17 December he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for "dangerousness". On the eve and day of Lázaro Constantín's trial about a dozen people were detained, possibly to prevent them from attending the trial. All were released within a couple of days.

In November several people were detained outside the court where the trial of Mario Julio Viera González, Director of the independent press agency Cuba Verdad (Cuba Truth), was to take place. He was accused of "slandering" to the head of the legal department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs because of an article he wrote implying that the government was hypocritical in stating that the proposed international criminal court should be independent and impartial. All the detainees were released without charge, but the trial of Mario Julio Viera González had not taken place by the end of the year.

At least 30 political prisoners, including prisoners of conscience, were brought to trial; most had been detained in previous years. Prisoner of conscience Cecilio Monteagudo Sánchez, a member of the unofficial Partido Solidaridad Democrática, Democratic Solidarity Party, who was detained in September 1997, was convicted of "enemy propaganda" and sentenced to four years' imprisonment in February. The charges related to a leaflet he had written, which was never printed, calling on people not to vote in the October 1997 local elections. Journalist Juan Carlos Recio Martínez, who was tried in the same case, was convicted of "other acts against state security" and sentenced to one year's "correctional work without internment". He was convicted on the grounds that he knew of the existence of Cecilio Monteagudo's leaflet, but did not inform the authorities.

In April Julio Cesar Coizeau Rizo, who had been detained in October 1997, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for "disrespect", reportedly because he had written anti-government graffiti on public walls.

In August Reinaldo Alfaro García, a political activist detained in May 1997, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for "spreading false news against international peace". The charge reportedly related to a statement he had made in 1995 to a US-based radio station in which he reported that a military officer had gone missing and later died and that a woman had told him that...
gone missing and later died and that a woman had told him that she had been tortured. At Reinaldo Alfaro's trial, which took place at the Havana People's Provincial Court, the alleged torture victim and the mother of the military officer both appeared as witnesses and denied the allegations. However, there were reports that the alleged torture victim who appeared in court was not the same woman who had made the torture allegation to Reinaldo Alfaro. In addition, several witnesses were not allowed to testify.

In September, four members of a dissident study group arrested in July 1997 after criticizing a document disseminated for the Fifth Congress of the Partido Comunista de Cuba, Cuban Communist Party (see Amnesty International Report 1998), were formally charged with "other acts against state security" in relation to the crime of "sedition". Their trial had not taken place by the end of the year.

Trials in political cases again fell far short of international standards of fairness. Defendants in cases heard by municipal courts, often only hours or days after arrest, sometimes had no legal representation. Detainees held under investigation on state security charges often had very limited access to lawyers while in pre-trial detention at police stations or at State Security headquarters and were sometimes subjected to psychological pressure, such as solitary confinement, long intense interrogations, threats and insults.

Several prisoners were beaten by police at the time of arrest or by prison guards in detention centres. In April prisoner of conscience Bernardo Arévalo Padron was beaten in Cienfuegos Provincial Prison, Ariza, reportedly because it was mistakenly believed that he had distributed anti-government propaganda within the prison. According to reports, he was badly bruised and suffered memory loss as a result of the beatings.

Prison conditions continued to be poor and in some cases constituted cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. There were allegations that prisoners were subjected to threats, discrimination on political grounds and verbal abuse. During the year, two prisoners - Jesus Chamber Ramirez and Jorge Luis Garcia Perez (known as "Antunez") (see Amnesty International Reports 1994 and 1998) - were held in isolation cells where the lighting, ventilation and hygiene were said to be very poor. Some prisons were said to have a high incidence of disease as a result of poor sanitation and nutrition and a scarcity of water. The effects of the US embargo on the availability of medicines and equipment contributed to the problem. However, there were reports that medical attention and food were often deliberately withheld as a punishment.

At least 10 unarmed people died after being shot by the police who used lethal force unjustifiably. In May Yusel Ochoterena Lopez died in Havana, reportedly after police officers entered his home and shot him, mistaking him for a fugitive who was apparently in the area. A police investigation was reportedly held but no one was brought to justice.

At least five people were executed during the year. Among them were Emilio Betancourt Bonne and Jorge Luis Sanchez Guilarte,
who were executed in May. An appeal by Humberto Real Suárez (see Amnesty International Reports 1997 and 1998), who had been sentenced to death in 1996, was still pending before the People’s Supreme Court at the end of the year. Several new death sentences were issued and several men remained on death row at the end of the year.

Throughout the year Amnesty International appealed for the release of all prisoners of conscience and urged that those facing trial for politically motivated offences be granted full judicial guarantees in accordance with international standards. Appeals were also sent on behalf of prisoners in need of medical attention. The organization called for all prisoners to be provided with nutrition, medical care and sanitation in keeping with the standards of the general population and for independent and impartial investigations into allegations of ill-treatment. No replies were received from the authorities.

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LESSON PLANS

I. Group activity on human rights

II. "Live from China"

III. Mock Senate Debate

IV. Discussion questions for modern Chinese poetry

V. Investigation into societal problems in China
GROUP ACTIVITY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

1. Read the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Select what you consider to be the five most important rights. Write these five rights on a sheet of paper and list five reasons for each one you have chosen.

2. Get into a group of 3-5 students and compare your list with theirs. Each group should come to a consensus and select the three most important rights. Then make a list of five reasons to support each right.

3. Present the findings to the class as a whole.

4. The class should then come to a consensus on which right they deem the most important and state the reasons why.

--by Betty Ballard
Independence High School
Live from China!

- This lesson was designed to take 3 class periods.

I. Objectives
   At the end of this lesson students will be able to...
   A. Review major events that occurred in China's history
   B. Have a more in-depth understanding of the events
   C. Understand the importance of first hand reporting

II. Materials
   A. List of Events
   B. Hat
   C. Textbooks
   D. Notes

III. Techniques/Activities
   A. Anticipatory Set
      1. Write a list of names on the board. Ask students: What do these people have in common? Other than giving the news from the anchor desk what other aspects do their jobs entail?
         Diane Sawyer
         Tom Brokaw
         Jane Pauly
         Dan Rather

   B. Activity
      1. Your assignment is to act as a news casting team affiliated with a broadcasting network. You are to go on location in China and cover the story of the year. As a group you are to research your story. Then assign each member of the group a role in the broadcast. Each member of the group is required to participate in the newscast. Each broadcast should be 3-5 minutes in length. Each student is required to hand in a written copy of a news broadcast on their topic.
      2. Have students get into groups of four. Have one member from the group pick a topic from the hat.
      3. Once groups have their topic hand out specific directions for each group.
      4. Students have two class periods to work on their newscast.
      5. Students will present the newscast exactly one week from the first day it was assigned. Presentations will be videotaped and watched at a later date.

IV. Assessment
   A. Students will be assessed on their written newscast.
   B. Students will also be assessed on their presentation.
**Schools of Thought**

After about 700 BC the Zhou dynasty had little control over powerful lords who set up their own independent states. Some of China’s greatest thinkers lived during those centuries of chaos and uncertainty. They developed three philosophies, or schools of thought: Confucianism, Taoism, and Legalism.

Fox news is sending you to China to investigate these philosophers or you might be able to gather them all together for a round table discussion. Find out their philosophies. Why are they different? Which one or ones seem to have taken root? **GOOD LUCK!**

**Deng Economics**

It’s 1978 and Deng Xiaoping has emerged as China’s new leader. Deng has made changes in China’s economic system to help China achieve wealth and power.

CNN is sending you to China to find out what these new policies are and if they are successful. Be sure to refer back to Mao’s economic policies so your audience knows why Deng has taken China in a new direction. **GOOD LUCK!**

**Opium War**

It’s 1839 and war just broke out in China. NBC is sending you to China to find out what happened. How did this war start (give me the background) and what is the outcome? **Good Luck**, and try not to get shot in the crossfire.

**Boxer Rebellion**

It looks like there is a rebellion going on in China. C-SPAN needs you to go to China and get the scoop. Who’s rebelling? Who are they rebelling against? How is it being handled? And what’s the end result? **Good luck**, and look out for rebels!

**Long March**

Apparently, some people are getting chased around China. I know it’s going to be tough, but, CBS needs you to go there. Find out who’s on the run and why? Where did this thing start and where is it going to end? **Good luck**, and if I were you I’d take a pair of comfortable shoes!

**Tiananmen Square**

Students are gathering in Tiananmen Square. I’m not sure but I think something is going to happen. ABC needs their top broadcasting team to cover the story. Find out why the students are there. What is the conflict? How is China going to solve the problem? And what are the results? **Good luck!**

**Schools of Thought – FOX**  
**Opium War – NBC**  
**Deng Economics – CNN**  
**Boxer Rebellion – C-SPAN**  
**Long March – CBS**  
**Tiananmen Square - ABC**
THE FEATURE ARTICLE

THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF A NEWS FEATURE. A NEWS FEATURE IS BASED ON A CURRENT NEWS STORY AND OFTEN PROVIDES RELATED BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

ANY FEATURE STORY IS MEANT TO ENTERTAIN AND INFORM. IT OFTEN COVERS AN INTERESTING ANGLE OF A STRAIGHT NEWS STORY.

Brits Thankful for U.S. Help

By David Gervase

We’ve heard the scream of air raid sirens and the thunder of exploding bombs over London. American news reporter Edward R. Murrow has brought that into our homes and made the war not so distant to Americans across the seas.

Still now, in the fall of 1940, we hope to stay out of the war in Europe. Many thousands of Americans have responded to our British friends with food, clothing, and money to help. The Brits are very grateful for our help. Yet one still wonders how long the Londoners can survive the intense nightly bombs pouring down from English skies by the Nazi war machine.

America’s Lend Lease program has seemed to help Winston Churchill and his armed forces. Under this program, the United States sends supplies across the Atlantic on British merchant ships. To make sure the supplies reach their destination, President Roosevelt sends American warships to accompany British ships as far as Iceland. For this, the British are also very thankful. But this reporter truly believes that what would make the British extremely appreciative is if the American forces would join the struggle against the Axis powers.
Live From China!
Evaluation

Name __________________________

5 = excellent, outstanding
4 = very good
3 = satisfactory, meets requirements
2 = this area needs improvement
1 = this area is unsatisfactory

Presentation

1. Stage presence (diction, volume, eye contact) _____

2. Amount of historical content _____

3. Creativity _____

News Story

1. Adequately researched _____/_____

2. Provided related background information _____/_____

3. Uses proper news story/feature format _____

4. Use of grammar and sentence structure _____

5. Mechanics (capitals, punctuation, spelling) _____

Total Points _____

Grade _____

--by Erika Flanagan
Independence High School
Mock Senate Debate

Should the U.S. Grant China MFN Status?

In this activity, you and your classmates will discuss, debate and vote on whether you think the U.S. should give China most-favored-nation status, thereby granting China favorable trade terms reserved for selected trading partners.

For this activity, the class should divide into three groups:

1. U.S. Senators (preferably an even number of students), who will hear testimony from two lobbying groups before debating and then voting.
2. Several pro-China lobbyists, who will argue in favor of granting China MFN status.
3. Several anti-China lobbyists, who will take the opposite positions of the pro-China lobbyists.

Lobbyists: Your job is to present your position to the rest of the class, with the intention of persuading the Senate to vote in your favor. As you prepare your case, consider these issues in the context of the MFN debate: economics/trade, foreign policy, defense and human rights. You may wish to assign one or two lobbyists to research and develop your team's position on each separate issue.

Senators: Keep in mind that you must weigh your own concerns as well as those of your constituents before voting. For instance, what might be the impact of granting, or not granting, MFN status to China for large corporations in your home state that may depend on doing business with China in order to stay competitive? Will unions at home have concerns that American jobs are being lost to cheaper foreign labor?

Procedure

To prepare for the debate and vote, read the following U.S. News & World Report articles:

- "The Very Last Emperor"
- "The Year of the Hawk?"
- "Speaking Up for Their Rights"
- "The Test Case that Won't Go Away"
- "Two Steps Forward, Three Steps Back"
- "A Political Test of When Guns Matter"

You also may want to research other sources in your school library and on the Internet to prepare your case.

During the debate each side should be given an equal length of time to present its arguments. Senators may ask lobbyists questions after each side has made its presentation. Use the grid below to keep notes of the various pros and cons surrounding the issues. Once the testimony has been completed, the Senate should discuss the issues and then vote. Make the results of the vote public. Discuss the results and answer the questions below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAVORABLE</th>
<th>UNFAVORABLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economics/Trade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Policy</td>
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<td>Defense</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFN Status</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Follow-Up Questions

1. Do you agree with the results of the Senate vote? Why or why not?
2. Senators, what influenced your vote more—what you personally thought or what you thought your voters wanted?
3. Lobbyists, did arguing a certain position change your own feelings on the topic?
4. What new realizations did you have by participating in this process?
5. What do you think the results of the vote would mean for future relations between the two countries?
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR MODERN CHINESE POETRY

“FLOWERS NO LONGER FLY IN OUR CITY”

1. What mood is established in reading the title of this poem?
2. What images do you find within the poem that support this mood?
3. Explain the author’s implied meaning in the last three lines of this poem.

“REMEMBRANCE”

1. To whom do you think the speaker of this poem is directing this poem?
2. What is meant by the lines “caring is asking but sometimes caring is not asking”? How can this be possible?

“BRACELET”

1. What is the theme of this poem?
2. What evidence can you find to support your chosen theme?

“DEDICATION”

1. Describe the author’s tone within this poem.
2. Give two examples to help support your description.

“ASSEMBLY LINE”

1. What is the author implying with the line “on the assembly line of time”?
2. How does the speaker feel about his/her life? What evidence is there within this poem to support your opinion?
3. After reading this poem, what do you think the author’s purpose was in writing it?

--by Caroline Hopkins
Independence High School
LESSON PLAN
INVESTIGATION INTO SOCIETAL PROBLEMS IN CHINA

GOAL: To investigate and analyze several areas of societal problems in modern China.

OBJECTIVES: To understand what some of the societal problems are in modern China.
To compare these problems with societal problems in the U.S. today.
To consider possible solutions to the problems.

1. Divide the class into six groups working on the following topics:
   a. Environmental concerns
   b. Population
   c. Poverty
   d. Crime
   e. Human rights
   f. Gender issues

2. Have each group investigate the topic, assigning different sub-topics to each participant.

3. Have each group present their findings to the class as a whole. Each group participant must speak to the class.

4. Have the class compare and contrast the topics as they relate to the U.S.

5. Have the class brainstorm about possible solutions to the problems.

--by Aja Moody
Independence High School
BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FILMOGRAPHY
Reading List: Contemporary China
Dr. Loren Fauchier
Queens College, Charlotte, NC

1. Dr. Suzanne Ogden (author, editor), China, eighth edition, 1999, Dushkin/McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 0-07-024969-5. Good introduction and overview of China's past and present (along with Taiwan and Hong Kong). Contains a number of articles from the press on a range of topics, useful web sites and bibliography.


3. A current topical discussion of China can be found in the journal, Current History, September, 1999, issue. Experts (with the expectation that readers already know something about China) write about political, economic, social and other issues.

4. Still a relevant, incisive and wonderful overview of contemporary China is the book by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, China Wakes, 1995, Vintage Books. Two top-rate journalists examine historical, political, economic, social, cultural, and foreign policy issues.

5. For those who want to delve into China's more recent history see Jonathan Spence, The Search for Modern China, 1990, W.W. Norton.


7. For a good book that discusses China's importance in the world and problems with America's foreign policy toward China see Daniel Burstein and Arne de Keijzer, Big Dragon, 1998, Simon and Schuster.

8. Students should keep abreast of major current events in China by reading:
   a. The Economist
   c. South China Morning Post (www.scmp.com)
   d. China Daily and other English-language newspapers about China (see www.thechinacafe.com/newspaper)
   e. New York Times (on-line)
   f. Washington Post (on-line)
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Brown, Dr. Cheryl L., http://libweb.uncc.edu/ref-socsci/pols/brown/china.htm


--by Aja Moody

Independence High School
Filmography on China*  
Dr. Loren Fauchier  
Queens College, Charlotte, NC

"A Great Wall." 1985. (American film, directed and starred by Peter Wang). Story about an overseas Chinese family's visit to their native Beijing and their contacts with relatives there. Shows spectrum of different cultural values and generational conflicts.

"Farewell my Concubine." 1993. Director: Chen Kaige. Epic that chronicles China's turbulent history from the 1920s to the 1970s.

"Girl From Hunan." 1986. Director: Xie Fei. Story about a traumatic experience of a girl who grew up as a teenage wife to a baby husband, was then seduced, became pregnant and deserted by a young man after her husband's death. The love affair is discovered the girl is drowned. Good presentation of China's traditional clan society and patriarchal view of marriage and adultery.

"Iron and Silk." (American film) about a young college graduate who goes to China to teach English and show off his "martial arts" skills. Learns how different Communist China is and finds a real martial arts teacher to teach him. Great film to show cross-cultural differences, especially about freedom and love.

"Ju Dou." 1990. Director: Zhang Yimou. Spicy story set in traditional China about a young wife abused by her sterile husband. She secretly falls in love with a worker who helps with their cloth-dyeing business and makes her pregnant. All meet their deadly fate in the end. Great cinematography.


"Red Sorghum," 1987 Director: Zhang Yimou. Story set in northern China during the anti-Japanese War (1937-45). Young bride is married off to a sickly old man in another village well-known for its production of sorghum wine. A sedan chair bearer falls in love with her and helps murder the husband and take over the wine-making business. The village is engulfed in the anti-Japanese struggle.

"Shanghai Triad." 1996. Director: Zhang Yimou. Story about the ruthless politics of gang warfare and social life in Shanghai before the Communists came to power.

"The Story of Qiuju." 1992. Director: Zhang Yimou. Story about a peasant woman in a small village seeking legal justice for the abuse of her husband by the local Communist party headman. Despite her "ignorance" and that she is a "woman," she continues her struggle until justice is found, but at a cost. Good introduction to rule-urban differences, power of the local communist party, and the legal system of rural China.

*These videos are available in most local video stores.
CHINESE FILMS

"The Blue Kite"

"China, My Sorrow"

"China Wakes"

"Chinese Revolution 1911-1976"

"Chunking Express"

"The Day the Sun Turned Cold"

"Eat, Drink, Man, Woman"

"Ermo"

"Farewell, My Concubine"

"Girl from Hunan"

"Ju Dou"

"The Killer"

"Life on a String"

"Raise the Red Lantern"

"Red Firecracker, Green Firecracker"

"Red Sorghum"

"Shanghai Triad"

"The Story of Qiu Ju"

"The Story of Xinghua"

"To Live"

"Wooden Man’s Bride"

"Yellow Earth"

--by Youming Che
Charlotte Latin School

Please preview for age suitability.
THE HARRY WU PROJECT
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