

Six: Persecution Of Faith

6: The Crackdown



After the April 25 event, of the seven Politburo standing committee members, other than Jiang Zemin, all were against the persecution campaign. Jiang Zemin figured that everybody had a weakness, and everybody could be bribed.

As long as one was firmly in control of state power, anything could be done. Li Lanqing's son had been cleared of one billion yuan lawsuit by Jiang Zemin, which was used as leverage by Jiang to force Li Lanqing to join his side.



On June 10, 1999, a group or organization headed by Li Lanqing was formed, thus gaining the name 610 Office.

The 610 Office is in every sense of the term “illegal organization”. There are no legal bases for either its formation or its existence. It’s the same as the “CCP Central Committee Leadership Group”, as it was called, that came about during the Cultural Revolution. The only purpose of 610 Office was to bypass the law, bypass the normal examination of approval funds and personnel, and mobilize the entire country’s means of suppression to persecute Falun Gong.



The illegal organization’s head was non-others than Jiang Zemin. All of its orders were given in secret by Jiang, who feared to leave evidence of his doings. When he sent out orders through the office he never signed his name. Orders such as beating Falun Gong followers to death is to be labeled

as suicide, then cremate them without identifying the bodies; destroy their reputation; cut them off financially; eradicate them physically.



On July 19, Jiang gave the order to carry out the suppression. Over ten thousand police with guns fully loaded entered Beijing, while the military stationed outside the city went into red alert. On July 20, Jiang gave orders to carry out arrests throughout the country. All those deemed key Falun Gong members were either arrested or taken from their homes for interrogations by the CCP. On July 29, Jiang even tried to extradite Falun Gong's founder Mr. Li Hongzhi to China through Interpol. The move was denied outright.



Jiang thus ordered the destructions of all Falun Gong books, audios, video materials, and other paraphernalia. He also gave orders that any website that

might carry true stories and information about Falun Gong be blocked. Thus the only information on Falun Gong that people could obtain was from the state-run media which were fully controlled by Jiang.



Newspapers, magazines, broadcast stations and TV channels everywhere were put into high gear carrying a litany of articles and programs that smeared and slandered Falun Gong and its founder Mr. Li Hongzhi. Almost everyone was coerced into following the government and supporting the persecution. And the propaganda was broadcast and printed in every corner of the country. Jiang made use of Hongkong media which had been paid off to malign Falun Gong. For example, Liu Changle CEO of the Hongkong based Phoenix Satellite Television is an undercover agent under the Joint Chief of Staff of the People's Liberation Army.



From early morning on July 20 on, great numbers of Falun Gong practitioners poured into Beijing to voice their grievances, file petitions with government leaders, and assert their legitimate right to practice Falun Gong. Jiang continued to insist that the most severe and extreme measures be used in dealing with those of Falun Gong who petitioned higher authorities, measures including fine, imprisonment, removal from jobs, the punishment of family and implicating one's work unit. In the several months after that, the numbers of Falun Gong practitioners who gathered to petition leaders in various districts of Beijing reached upward of 3 hundred thousand, while around 7 hundred thousand came forward to petition on behalf of Falun Gong in Beijing's suburbs, with many stayed in the area for a prolonged period.



What Jiang had found hard to understand was that the Falun Gong

practitioners, who continue to petition and demonstrate, were not swayed by any of his measures. Jiang just could not fathom that there people in this world who would not give up their believes for material gains and ease. The conviction held by Falun Gong followers also made Jiang envy Falun Gong's founder Mr. Li Hongzhi. This only spurred Jiang's eagerness to suppress Falun Gong.



On the day the persecution in China began, Mr. Li Hongzhi made a public statement calling for support and help of governments around the world, international organizations, and kind-hearted people, asking for help resolving the crisis unfolding in China. He expressed a wish that the Chinese government and its leaders would not consider Falun Gong practitioners as enemies.



Over the next several days, Mr. Li talked with reporters from various countries stating and restating that Falun Gong did not pose a threat to any political regime, and instead could only benefit a government, a country or a people. Mr. Li's words clarified the truth to many people overseas who were confused about Falun Gong.



On October 26, 1999, a dozen plus Falun Gong practitioners had made through layers of police surveillance, and had held a press conference in a hotel in a suburb of Beijing. They told international reporters of their experiences doing Falun Gong, and of the physical and spiritual good, it brought them. They also discussed the reality of brutal suppression they faced in China. Many reporters who were stationed in Beijing attended the press conference and reported accurately.



Jiang was in France at the time. Upon learning the news he screamed: “Tell Luo Gan to resolve this immediately! Round up all of the Falun Gong practitioners who attended the conference and have them killed! I refuse to believe that we can not finish Falun gong! ” In the year that followed, most of those who attended the conference were sentenced to prison, put in forced labor camps, or had gone missing. Two people, Ding Yan, and Cai Mingtao are known to have been killed.



Governments of the free world and human rights organizations responded promptly.

Between July and December of 1999, many statements were made strongly condemning the CCP’s campaign, a campaign that violated human rights and freedom, and calling for the release of the jailed and detained victims. Statements were made by the Canadian government, the World Federation

of the United Nations Association, and the Senate and House of Representatives of both Australia and the United States.



In 2001, Asia Week announced that Mr. Li was the most influential figure in Asia that year. Asia Week stated that even facing the CCP's forced suppression, the influence of Falun Gong continued to steadily increase. Even though Mr. Li Hongzhi made fewer public appearances he was still deeply respected and supported by Falun Gong practitioners. Jiang Zemin's envy and hatred only grew deeper.