

## THE ILLEGAL ARREST AND TRIAL OF GAO ZHISHENG

In *Profiles in Courage*, President John F. Kennedy told the stories of men who acted on principle and in the national interest, even though it put their political careers at risk. Each of these men displayed a rare form of courage, sacrificing his future and that of his family to do what he believed was right for his country. While these men gave up status, fame, and comfort to do the right thing, other men have sacrificed their lives or suffered long imprisonments in their non-violent struggles against slavery, racism, grave injustice, and the like. Figures like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King are remembered by millions of people around the world for serving a higher purpose: the greater good of the community of man.

In this historical saga of sacrifice and courage, there is a man, known to many as “the conscience of China,” who dared to openly state the truth about China’s persecution of underground Christians and practitioners of Falun Gong. In spite of the likelihood that he would be subjected to unlawful arrest and detention, severe and brutal torture, and illegal criminal sanctions, Gao Zhisheng has repeatedly urged China to extend the rights guaranteed by the Chinese Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to all Chinese citizens, including underground Christians and practitioners of Falun Gong.

Zhisheng has been arrested illegally and tortured for his refusal to keep silent about a parade of horrors that include the brutal persecution of Chinese citizens who refuse to relinquish their right to follow their conscience and uphold the law. This ill treatment was inflicted by Chinese Communist Party authorities, which, as Zhisheng most aptly observes in his recent letter to the United States Congress and Senate, “have developed a twisted but fragile mentality and a freakish obsession with maintaining stability and ensuring . . . control at any cost.”

Zhisheng follows the philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King, who, in his “Letter From a Birmingham Jail,” wrote, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” As Zhisheng notes, the Chinese Communist Party inverts King’s logic; for the Party, “Justice anywhere is a threat to injustice everywhere.”

Given the backward logic of the Chinese Communist Party, it should come as no surprise that Zhisheng himself has been arrested again because he refused to change his behavior after his initial arrest and persecution. As a lawyer, Zhisheng continued to interface between the victims of persecution and the channels of redress. As a statesman, he continued to speak out against human rights abuses in China through his letters to the highest ranking officials and governing bodies in China. Most recently, Zhisheng told the truth to the United States Congress and Senate about the ongoing campaign of persecution and torture waged in his homeland against Chinese citizens based upon their religious beliefs, professional integrity, and compassion..

In so doing, Zhisheng has exposed the truth about the international crimes perpetrated by Communist Party officials Jiang Zemin, Lou Gan, Zhou Yongkang, and Liu Jing. He has provided lawyers and law-abiding people everywhere with evidence to prove these officials' guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. As Zhisheng notes:

Judging by the definition of crimes [against] humanity and genocide given in the international laws, a large number of CCP officials meet all the criteria for both crimes, including Jiang Zemin, Luo Gan, Zhou Yongkang and Liu Jing. As for evidences, they are nothing but ample. So after all it's a question of whether the mainstream society around the world has the sense of responsibility and courage to honestly face these evidences. The evidences include,

- a. For each of the over 3000 confirmed cases [of persons] who were persecuted to death (the number is still growing thanks to our inaction), we have:
  1. their full name, date of birth, ID and addresses
  2. detailed account[s] of how they were tortured to death
  3. documents to prove their deaths
  4. their corpse, ashes and tombs
  5. testimony from their living families or friends
  6. evidence for their arrests in most cases
  7. for those whose organs were removed, the sewing stitched on the body and the telephone conversation record with involved hospitals
  8. large number of photos of the dead bodies
  9. the people responsible for the killing are still alive and can be investigated.
- b. Many Falun Gong practitioners were never heard from since their arrest. Their families can testify.
- c. Over 100 thousand survivors who can testify [to] the tortures they suffered, such as electric shock, torture by [specially] made tools, and prick[ing] by sharp bamboo sticks.
- d. Tens of thousands of surviving Falun Gong practitioners who were detained in labor camps.
- e. Those who are still jailed in labor camps.
- f. Millions who used to be detained in the brainwashing camps.
- g. Those who are still detained in the brainwashing camps.
- h. A large but unidentified number of children who were expelled from school and left homeless.

i. Tens of millions who lost their jobs and financial sources, who were confined ... and denied leaving China.

j. People of conscience within the [Chinese Communist Party] system.

As lawyers ourselves, we, the staff of the Human Rights Law Foundation (HRLF), add our voices to Zhisheng's and ask the good people in the United States Senate and Congress to urge China to extend the rights guaranteed by the Chinese Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights not only to Zhisheng, but also to all Chinese citizens, including underground Christians, practitioners of Falun Gong, and all other good persons who are persecuted in China based solely on the fact that they have the courage to follow the dictates of their conscience and the rule of law.

As Zhisheng reminds us, "Jesus said, 'Love others as well as you love yourself.' Those struggling in the [Chinese Communist Party] prisons, those crying under the [Chinese Communist Party]'s tortures, those roaming around to avoid mistreatment need your help. When you light a candle, when you dress up, holding your cocktail or drink, I wish you will think of those suffering people."

Finally, in closing, we would like to say that Jiang Zemin, Lou Gan, and all others implicated in the illegal arrest, trial, and sentence of Gao Zhisheng and other innocent Chinese citizens are subject to criminal prosecution for their crimes under international law, Chinese law, and the laws of most democratic nations around the world. HRLF has issued a global alert to locate these officials and to have them extradited to stand trial for their crimes.

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