



Australian Government
Refugee Review Tribunal

Country Advice

China

China – CHN36882 – Liaoning Province –
Christians – Labour camps – Torture –
Brainwashing
20 July 2010

1. Please describe the conditions for Christians in Liaoning province in 2000 and currently.

The answer to this question will be divided into two sections: Christians in Liaoning and Catholics in Liaoning.

Christians in Liaoning

General Information

Legislation to regulate religious affairs in Liaoning was introduced in 1998.¹ Norway-based Christian advocacy group *Forum 18* reported on the role of provincial legislation on religion in September 2005:

Despite the uniformity in the contents of the provincial-level religious affairs regulations and their correspondence with the central government regulations, it is important not to overlook the enormous powers and responsibilities that have been given to the provincial and sub-provincial authorities in implementing these legal principles.

...Provincial authorities have considerable discretion in enforcing religious affairs regulations and policies.²

This may be of note given that the Communist Party head of Liaoning province, Li Keqiang, who was appointed in 2004, was previously (1998-2004) head of neighbouring Hunan province, where he reportedly “clamped down on the province’s lively underground networks of evangelical Christians”.³

The website of *Amity News Service* (which communicates the news and views of the China Christian Council or CCC) contains province-by-province statistics on the number of Christians in China. It notes that the best statistics it has to date are from 2004, and that “it is extremely difficult to access reliable figures for the number of church members in any given place”.⁴ It gives the figure of 423,130 for the number of Christians in Liaoning

¹ ‘Regulations on Religious Affairs of the Province of Liaoning’ 1998, Standing Committee of the Ninth People’s Congress of the Province of Liaoning, Monitor China website, 11 November http://www.monitorchina.org/english_site/document_details.php?id=94 – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 19

²Hornemann, M. 2005, ‘CHINA: Is central or local government responsible for religious freedom violations?’, *Forum 18 News Service*, Forum 18 website, 1 September http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=641 – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 20

³ Bodeen, C. 2007, ‘China’s new generation of leaders steeped in pragmatism, economic smarts’, *Southeast Missourian*, 14 October <http://www.semissourian.com/story/1284262.html> – Accessed 2 July 2010 – Attachment 21

⁴ ‘Church Statistics’ (undated), *Amity News Service* website <http://www.amitynewsservice.org/page.php?page=1230#liaoning> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 13

province.⁵ *Amity News Service* lists Liaoning as having one CCC/Three Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) office in Shenyang City⁶, one seminary – the Northeast Theological Seminary in Shenyang City⁷, and 24 Churches in a number of different cities.⁸

General information about Christians in Liaoning province is provided in *Research Response CHN34437*, dated 5 March 2009.⁹ The response quotes excerpts from Tony Lambert's book *China's Christian Millions* that describe Christianity in Liaoning:

Liaoning is also in the north-east. Its capital, Shenyang, is the largest city in the area and a centre of industry... In 2002 the TSPM stated that there were 600,000 Protestants meeting in over 1400 registered churches and meeting-points. There are also many unregistered house churches. As there were only 60,000 believers in 1965, on the eve of the Cultural Revolution, the registered church has seen explosive ten-fold growth in under forty years.

I was told in 2000 that the total number of registered believers in Shenyang was 200,000 – compared to only 70,000 in 1996. In 2003 Kanping county reportedly had 10,000 Protestants. The city of Fushun, just east of Shenyang, has seen growth from about eighty people meeting when the first church was reopened in about 1980 to 8,000 Christians meeting in seventy churches and meeting points. However, they have only one authorised pastor. In the area of northern Liaoning there were only about 1,000 believers in 1948. By 1994 they had grown ten fold to 10,000 still mostly worshipping in the Presbyterian tradition which was strong in the north east.

Dandong is a strategic city on the North Korean border; in 1991 a Christian living there estimated there were 10,000 believers, mostly in house churches, as well as many Roman Catholics. According to the TSPM in 1993 there were at least 10,000 Korean Christians in Liaoning meeting in sixteen churches and over 100 registered meeting points. A year later, another TSPM report estimated 20 per cent of all the Christians in the province (then estimated at 140,000) were Koreans – or about 28,000. In 1993 there were twenty three Korean students at the North East Theological Seminary in Shenyang, of whom eleven were from Liaoning. The province also has about 80,000 Roman Catholics.¹⁰

The May 2007 US Department of State (USDOS) *China Profile of Asylum Claims and Country Conditions* also notes the presence of Christian ethnic Koreans in Liaoning and states that Korean Protestant churches “operate openly in Liaoning province and maintain a seminary... that trains ethnic Korean protestant ministers”.¹¹

⁵ ‘Church Statistics’ (undated), *Amity News Service* website

<http://www.amitynewsservice.org/page.php?page=1230#liaoning> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 13

⁶ China Christian Council/Three-Self Patriotic Movement Offices: Liaoning’ (undated), *Amity News Service* website <http://www.amitynewsservice.org/page.php?page=1231> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 16

⁷ ‘Seminaries and Bible Schools: Liaoning’ (undated), *Amity News Service* website

<http://www.amitynewsservice.org/page.php?page=1232> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 15

⁸ ‘Churches and Meeting Points: Liaoning’ (undated), *Amity News Service* website

<http://www.amitynewsservice.org/page.php?page=1233> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 17

⁹ RRT Research & Information 2009, *Research Response CHN34437*, 5 March – Attachment 1

¹⁰ Lambert, T. 2006, *China's Christian Millions*, OMF Publishing, Monarch Books, London, 2nd edition, pp. 261-2 – Attachment 2

¹¹ US Department of State 2007, *China Profile of Asylum Claims and Country Conditions*, May

http://www.pards.org/paccc/china_may_2007.doc – Accessed 30 June 2010, Chapter 3, Section C. 3 – Attachment 5

Conditions for Christians in Liaoning Province: 2000 and Currently

Very little information was located that refers to the conditions for Christians in Liaoning province in the year 2000. One reference to the arrest of an underground (house) church leader in Liaoning in 2000 was found in the United States International Religious Freedom Report of 2002. The report states:

A group of Protestants in Liaoning continue to contest the November 2000 arrest of local house church leader Li Baozhi, who allegedly continues to be held for association with the banned Full Scope Church. Li reportedly was sentenced to 2 years of reeducation through labor; two other persons were sentenced to 1 year of reeducation through labor for association with the Full Scope Church. Liaoning Christians have visited Li in prison, petitioned local officials for his release, and published their complaints on the Internet. They have stated that Li and his church are not affiliated with the Full Scope Church.¹²

No further information on Li Baozhi's detention was located.

The most recent information referring to Christians in Liaoning province was a 2009 article published on the *Amity News Service* website. It describes the success of a Bible study and literacy class at a Church in Benxi Town, Liaoning province. The article states that "[s]ince the implementation of the Reform and Opening policy, the congregation of Hongtuling Church has been growing steadily". This may indicate that government-registered churches are tolerated and treated with leniency in Liaoning province. The more lenient treatment of state sanctioned churches is further indicated in a May 2007 article published by the *China Aid Association (CAA)*. The article reports that China sent a church delegation to visit Germany, under the invitation of Germany's Evangelical Church. The 12-member delegation included CCC/TSPM representatives from a number of provinces, including Liaoning.¹³

An article published in *The Independent* in November 2009, however, that describes a Hong Kong-based businessman's plans to build China's first Bible theme park, notes the man stating he would "[have] to tread carefully as authorities had made clear that while the development was allowed, promotion of the Christian faith was strictly banned".¹⁴ This indicates that any official leniency towards Christian beliefs in Liaoning has limits, with endorsement of the Christian message frowned on.

Research response *CHN33443*¹⁵ of June 2008 notes information in the United States' Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) 2006 annual report regarding Christianity in Liaoning province. The report refers to an internal Communist Party Study which notes that some Party members in Liaoning province disagreed with the view that high numbers of religious adherents among Party members was a danger. They believed instead that it was time to allow Party members to believe in and practice religion.¹⁶ The

¹² United States Department of State 2002, *United States International Religious Freedom Report: China*, 7 October – Attachment 22

¹³ Tsuei, Hudson 2007, 'Chinese Religious Officials to Visit Germany', *China Aid Association (CAA)*, CAA website, 23 May

http://www.chinaaid.org/qry/page.taf?id=105&function=detail&sbtblct_uid1=196&nc=83290c65f9acf2b6259560fdd12e99fd – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 12

¹⁴ 'Businessmen to build China's first Bible theme park' 2009, *The Independent*, 24 November <http://www.independent.co.uk/incoming/businessmen-to-build-chinas-first-bible-theme-park-1826554.html> – Accessed 2 March 2010 – Attachment 9

¹⁵ RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response CHN33443*, 5 June – Attachment 6

¹⁶ Congressional – Executive Commission on China 2006, *Annual Report*, Washington, US Government Printing Office, 20 September, p.94. <http://www.cecc.gov/pages/annualrpt/annualrpt06/religion.php> – Accessed on 30 June 2010 – Attachment 8

response notes that this could indicate a growing leniency towards Christianity in the province on the part of government officials.

Information from the 2009 CECC report, however, regarding treatment of unregistered Catholics (see section on Catholics in Liaoning below), indicates that any leniency towards Christian religious beliefs likely applies only to government-sanctioned religious organisations.

Research Response *CHN33443* lists nine incidents of detention, arrest, and ill-treatment of Christians in Liaoning province between September 2002 and March 2003. One of the reports states that “the city government issued a secret document ordering crackdown on religious believers”.¹⁷

Two reports of harassment of Christians in Liaoning in 2002 were found in a report published by *Human Rights in China* (HRIC), an international human rights advocacy organisation.¹⁸ In a report titled *Collateral Damage* published in 2004, HRIC reports that the home of a female member of Christian group Three Classes of Servants was ransacked by police. The woman was detained for 15 days on “cult” charges and told that her child would be refused admission to college because of her record.¹⁹ The report also records a police raid on a private home in Yuanbo District where two Christian evangelists were preaching. One evangelist was detained for 63 days on “cult charges”, then released on a one year parole during which she was confined to Dandong City.²⁰

Catholics in Liaoning

No information was located on the conditions for Catholics in Liaoning province in the year 2000.

Two previous research responses, *CHN34047* of 14 November 2008²¹ and *CHN33047* of 12 March 2008²², provide information on the official and unofficial Catholic Church in Shenyang, the capital of Liaoning province.

A number of sources located indicate that registered Catholics in Liaoning are able to practice their religion with relative freedom. The Union of Catholic Asian News (UCAN) website contains a profile of the Liaoning Diocese. The profile notes that the current Bishop of the diocese is Bishop Paul Pei Junmin and that he received papal approval in 2006.²³ UCAN also states that the Diocesan of Liaoning has 80 Chinese priests, 180 Chinese religious brothers and sisters, 48 churches/parishes and one major seminary, the Shenyang Catholic Seminary.²⁴

¹⁷ RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response CHN33443*, 5 June – Attachment 6

¹⁸ Mosher, S. 2004, *Collateral Damage*, Human Rights in China (HRIC), HRIC website <http://hrichina.org/public/PDFs/CRF.4.2004/CollateralDamage4.2004.pdf> – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 23

¹⁹ Mosher, S. 2004, *Collateral Damage*, Human Rights in China (HRIC), HRIC website <http://hrichina.org/public/PDFs/CRF.4.2004/CollateralDamage4.2004.pdf> – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 23

²⁰ Mosher, S. 2004, *Collateral Damage*, Human Rights in China (HRIC), HRIC website <http://hrichina.org/public/PDFs/CRF.4.2004/CollateralDamage4.2004.pdf> – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 23

²¹ RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response CHN34047*, 14 November – Attachment 3

²² RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response CHN33047*, 12 March – Attachment 4

²³ ‘Diocese of Liaoning’ 2009, Union of Catholic Asian News (UCAN) Diocesan Profiles Series, UCAN website, 24 July http://www.ucanews.com/dps/html/dps-ch_liaoning.php – Accessed 28 June 2010 – Attachment 10

²⁴ ‘Diocese of Liaoning’ 2009, Union of Catholic Asian News (UCAN) Diocesan Profiles Series, UCAN website, 24 July http://www.ucanews.com/dps/html/dps-ch_liaoning.php – Accessed 28 June 2010 – Attachment 10

A conference paper on the growth of the Catholic Church in Liaoning by Sister Fabian Han Fengxia, published on the United States Catholic China Bureau website in 2005, states that the Church “has enjoyed a period of renewal and growth since the reforms of 1979” and has now entered into provision of social services such as clinics, homes for the elderly, and AIDS/HIV programs.²⁵ This indicates that the official Catholic Church in Liaoning is being permitted to grow and undertake a visible role in the social life of its diocese.

An article published on the *Catholic News Service* website in April 2007 states that the Liaoning Diocese officially has 120 000 registered Catholics, but that it also has unregistered Catholics.²⁶ The article indicates that in Liaoning, the divide between registered and unregistered Catholics can be quite sharp:

More than one church source said that, until one old underground priest died, unregistered Catholics would not attend the open Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Shenyang, the provincial capital, but would attend Mass the old priest celebrated in a small chapel within the church compound. One source reported that on Sundays, some families would arrive for Mass together, then split, with some family members going to the chapel and others going to the cathedral.²⁷

The most recent annual report by the United States Congressional Executive Commission on China (CECC) of 2009, notes that “[i]n 2008 and 2009, Party and government authorities continued to characterise unregistered Catholics as a threat to “social stability,” and in some cases, called for security officials to “strike against” and “transform” unregistered communities”.²⁸ The report goes on to note that in April 2009 Dalian Medical University posted a notice from the Liaoning provincial United Front Work Department (UFWD) calling for authorities to “aggressively launch transformation through re-education of underground Catholic forces.”²⁹ This further confirms that official tolerance of Catholicism in the province is limited to registered churches, with unregistered groups singled out by authorities for “aggressive” “transformation”.³⁰

2. Please provide information on the treatment of Christians in labour camps. In particular, is brainwashing and torture a common feature of this experience?

The answer to this question will be divided into two sections: Labour camps, treatment of Christians and Torture; and Brainwashing.

²⁵ Han, Sister F. F. 2005, ‘Growth of Christianity in China: Perspective of a Woman Religious of the Liaoning Diocese’, United States Catholic China Bureau website, 16 June http://www.usccb.net/conference/conference21/Paper_FabianHan16Jun05.pdf – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 18

²⁶ Fraze, B. 2007, ‘Catholic Church in China: ‘Two faces’ expressing one faith’, *Catholic News Service* website, 5 April <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0701898.htm> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 14

²⁷ Fraze, B. 2007, ‘Catholic Church in China: ‘Two faces’ expressing one faith’, *Catholic News Service* website, 5 April <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0701898.htm> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 14

²⁸ Congressional Executive Commission on China 2009, *Annual Report 2009*, 11 October <http://www.cecc.gov/pages/annualRpt/annualRpt09/CECCannRpt2009.pdf> – Accessed 30 June 2010 – Attachment 7

²⁹ Congressional Executive Commission on China 2009, *Annual Report 2009*, 11 October <http://www.cecc.gov/pages/annualRpt/annualRpt09/CECCannRpt2009.pdf> – Accessed 30 June 2010 – Attachment 7

³⁰ Congressional Executive Commission on China 2009, *Annual Report 2009*, 11 October <http://www.cecc.gov/pages/annualRpt/annualRpt09/CECCannRpt2009.pdf> – Accessed 30 June 2010 – Attachment 7

Labour camps, treatment of Christians and torture

A number of reports were located that refer to the detainment of Christians in labour camps for the purposes of re-education through labour. Several sources also detail a variety of torture methods employed at labour camp facilities.

In May 2010 an article published by Christian publication *The Epoch Times* reported the views of Bob Fu, head of the China Aid Association (CAA). Fu raised the case of four house church leaders from Linfen House Church group in Shanxi Province who were sentenced to two to seven years in re-education through labor [RTL] camps.³¹ This indicates that re-education through labour is a current form of punishment for Christians detained for their religious practices. The continuing use of RTL camps is further confirmed by the Chinese government's rejection in February 2009 of proposals by the U.N. Human Rights Council to end labour camp sentences, abolish the death penalty and guarantee freedom of religion.³² *Associated Press* reports that China also dismissed recommendations by member nations that they end the use of torture and allow independent experts to investigate human rights abuses.³³

The US Department of State (USDoS) Human Rights Report on China in 2009 notes that the Chinese government continues to commit "serious human rights abuses includ[ing] extrajudicial killings, executions without due process, **torture and coerced confessions of prisoners, and the use of forced labor, including prison labour**".³⁴ USDoS states that while Chinese law "prohibits the physical abuse of detainees and forbids prison guards from extracting confessions by torture, insulting prisoners' dignity, and beating or encouraging others to beat prisoners", in 2009 "there were reports that officials used electric shocks, beatings, shackles, and other forms of abuse".³⁵

The CAA's annual report for 2009 on the persecution of Christians in China reports that during the year it recorded 77 new cases of "persecution"; 23 of imprisonment; and nine of abuse (beating, torture and psychological abuse).³⁶

The Laogai Research Foundation (LRF), a non-government human rights organisation established to gather information on and raise public awareness of the Laogai—the forced-labor prison camps – publishes a biennial *Laogai Handbook*. The current edition includes information compiled through September 2008, and, estimates that there are 1,402 RTL camps inside China.³⁷ The *Handbook* states that in China, prisons and Laogai detachments generally contain prisoners who have received formal sentencing by the courts, while RTL facilities house prisoners who receive "administrative discipline" and have received sentences of up to three years by police or the courts with no formal trial.³⁸

³¹ Feuerberg, G. 2010, 'Doubts Greet U.S. – China Human Rights Dialogue', *Epoch Times*, 11 May <http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/content/view/35247/> – Accessed 9 July 2010 – Attachment 37

³² Jordans, F. 2009, 'China rejects human rights criticism at UN', *Associated Press*, The Free Library website, 11 February <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/China+rejects+human+rights+criticism+at+UN-a01611292508> – Accessed 9 July 2010 – Attachment 38

³³ Jordans, F. 2009, 'China rejects human rights criticism at UN', *Associated Press*, The Free Library website, 11 February <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/China+rejects+human+rights+criticism+at+UN-a01611292508> – Accessed 9 July 2010 – Attachment 38

³⁴ US Department of State 2010, *2009 Human Rights Report: China*, 11 March – Attachment 48

³⁵ US Department of State 2010, *2009 Human Rights Report: China*, 11 March, s. 1. c. – Attachment 48

³⁶ China Aid Association 2010, *Annual Report of Persecution by the Government on Christian House Churches within Mainland China: January 2009–December 2009*, CAA website, January, p. 9 http://www.chinaaid.org/downloads/sb_chinaaid/31FinalENGLISH2009PersecutionReport-1.pdf – Accessed 8 July 2010 – Attachment 31

³⁷ The Laogai Foundation 2008, *The Laogai Handbook*, the Laogai Foundation website, September <http://laogai.org/system/files/u1/handbook2008-all.pdf> – Accessed 9 July 2010 – Attachment 44

³⁸ The Laogai Foundation 2008, *The Laogai Handbook*, the Laogai Foundation website, September, p.15 <http://laogai.org/system/files/u1/handbook2008-all.pdf> – Accessed 9 July 2010 – Attachment 44

Further, it is noted that while conditions differ between camps and from year to year, key commonalities can be identified:

All prisoners undergo thought reform and are forced to labor in appalling conditions. LRF researchers have confirmed sites where prisoners mine asbestos and other toxic chemicals with no protective gear, work with batteries and battery acid with no protection for their hands, tan hides while standing naked in vats filled three feet deep with chemicals used for softening animal skins, and work in improperly run mining facilities where explosions and other accidents are a common occurrence.

Political prisoners are commonly housed together with other prisoners, although there are numerous reports of these prisoners being put in solitary confinement. **Reports of torture are widespread** and include beatings with fists and cattle prods, exposure to extreme cold and extreme heat, sleep deprivation, shackling and starvation. Members of China's Uighur minority and Falun Gong practitioners are frequent victims of torture in Chinese prisons.

The USDoS reported similarly that:

Conditions in administrative detention facilities, such as RTL camps, were similar to those in prisons. Beating deaths occurred in administrative detention and RTL facilities. According to NGO reports, conditions in these facilities were similar to those in prisons, with detainees reporting beatings, sexual assaults, lack of proper food, and no access to medical care.³⁹

Christian advocacy group *The Voice of the Martyrs Canada* reports the following regarding the treatment of Christians in labour camps and notes the use of torture by Chinese authorities:

Through a system of "re-education through labour," the Chinese government detains hundreds of thousands each year in work camps without even a court hearing. **There are more Christians in prison in China than any other country in the world.** The only legal churches are those strictly controlled by the government of China. Those who do not wish to follow government policies on religious practice and beliefs must meet in homes and risk being labelled as "evil cults." Such a designation can result in closing down the church, confiscation of property, and charges against the leadership, often resulting in torture, imprisonment and death.⁴⁰

It may be of note, given the presence of North Korean missionaries in Liaoning province noted above under Question 1, that *Amnesty International* reported in August 2009 that "North Koreans suspected of practising religion or meeting with Christian missionaries in China are subject to harsher punishments in prison camps and detention facilities than other border crossers".⁴¹

Compass Direct reported in April 2009 that a Christian human rights activist, Gao Zhisheng, was released after being kidnapped by state security agents in February that year. In early 2009 Gao had authorised the CAA to release a written account of 50 days of torture by state-sponsored forces in September and October of 2007. Gao had written the

³⁹ US Department of State 2010, *2009 Human Rights Report: China*, 11 March, s. 1. c. – Attachment 48

⁴⁰ 'Providing Information and Support for Persecuted Christians', undated, *The Voice of the Martyrs Canada: China*, <http://www.persecution.net/china.htm#> – Accessed 5 July 2010 – Attachment 30

⁴¹ Amnesty International 2009, *Freedom of movement, opinion and expression*, 2 August – Attachment 32

account in November 2007 after prolonged beatings and electric shocks on his mouth and genitals.⁴² He also reported that authorities used toothpicks to pierce his genitals.⁴³

An article published in *The Huffington Post* in April 2008 reports on the escalation of official targeting of Chinese Christians in the lead up to the 2008 Olympic Games, which involved “religious repression, torture, sexual abuse and arbitrary detention of many religious individuals, particularly Chinese Christians”.⁴⁴ The article also refers to the release of photos smuggled out of China of Chinese policemen, hoping for a promotion, who allowed themselves to be photographed torturing Christians. Torture methods employed by the policemen include forcing detainees to kneel on bricks, electrocution with cattle prods, and waterboarding.⁴⁵ The photos were published by civil liberties non-government organisation (NGO) *The Rutherford Group*.⁴⁶

It may be of note that a number of reports were found of forced labour camps and torture of detainees in Liaoning Province; most, however, refer to the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners.

In 2008 the *Falun Dafa Information Centre* reported that Masanjia labour camp in Liaoning is “known as one of the most brutal forced labour camps in the country where detainees are regularly tortured with electric batons, beaten and raped”.⁴⁷ It includes accounts of detainees being subjected to forms of sexual abuse and being forced to squat in iron cages for three months.⁴⁸ Chinese human rights blog *Status of Chinese People* posted an article on Masanjia Labour Camp in August 2007 which notes that the camp “is notorious for its heinous crimes against Falun Gong practitioners and known worldwide for its forced-brainwashing techniques”.⁴⁹ The blog lists 20 of the “the most commonly used” torture methods it claims are employed at the Masanjia camp to force Falun Gong practitioners to renounce their beliefs.⁵⁰

Monitor China reported on the conditions in the Dalian city labour camp (in Liaoning) for Falun Gong practitioners in 2007. It reports beatings, hard labour and torture methods

⁴² Compass Direct 2009, ‘Christian Rights Activist Gao Zhisheng Released’, Compass Direct News website 9 April <http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/china/17296/> – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 33

⁴³ Chan, C. 2009, ‘Tortured Lawyer ‘a good man betrayed by his beloved country China’’, *Epoch Times*, 2 March, Epoch Times website <http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/content/view/12971/> – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 36

⁴⁴ Whitehead, J. W. 2008, ‘Chinese Christians Are Paying a High Price for the Olympics’, *The Huffington Post*, Huffington Post website, 17 April http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-w-whitehead/chinese-christians-are-pa_b_96562.html – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 34

⁴⁵ Whitehead, J. W. 2008, ‘Chinese Christians Are Paying a High Price for the Olympics’, *The Huffington Post*, Huffington Post website, 17 April http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-w-whitehead/chinese-christians-are-pa_b_96562.html – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 34

⁴⁶ ‘Torture Photos’ (undated), The Rutherford Institute website <http://www.rutherford.org/images/torture.asp> – Accessed 7 July 2010 – Attachment 35

⁴⁷ ‘Urgent Appeal: Torture Survivors at Risk of Abuse, Death after Daring Escape from Labour Camp’ 2008, *Falun Dafa Information Centre*, Falun Dafa Infonet website, 26 September <http://faluninfo.net/article/823/> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 41

⁴⁸ ‘Urgent Appeal: Torture Survivors at Risk of Abuse, Death after Daring Escape from Labour Camp’ 2008, *Falun Dafa Information Centre*, Falun Dafa Infonet website, 26 September <http://faluninfo.net/article/823/> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 41

⁴⁹ ‘Most Wicked Labour Camps in China (1) – Liaoning Masanjia’ 2007, *Status of Chinese People* blog, 21 August <http://chinaview.wordpress.com/2007/08/21/most-wicked-labor-camps-in-china-1-liaoning-masanjia/> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 42

⁵⁰ ‘Most Wicked Labour Camps in China (1) – Liaoning Masanjia’ 2007, *Status of Chinese People* blog, 21 August <http://chinaview.wordpress.com/2007/08/21/most-wicked-labor-camps-in-china-1-liaoning-masanjia/> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 42. See also Photo: China Modern Torture Methods (2) – Electric Chock’ 2006, *Status of Chinese People* blog, 27 December <http://chinaview.wordpress.com/2006/12/27/photo-china-modern-torture-methods-2-electric-shock/> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 43

including electric shocks, suffocation, solitary confinement, and force-feeding.⁵¹ The *Epoch Times* has also reported on the harvesting of the organs of Falun Gong practitioners at the Liaoning Provincial Thrombosis Hospital of Integrated Chinese and Western Medicine. The report claims that prisoners from Dabei Prison, Masanjia Labour Camp and other prisons in Shenyang are bought to the Hospital for the purposes of live organ removal.⁵²

While the articles noted above generally refer to the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners in labour camps in Liaoning, Falun Gong practitioners and members of unregistered Christian groups are both detained in RTL camps where the torture detailed above is said to occur. This may indicate that Christian detainees face similar conditions and treatment when given sentences at RTL camps.

A number of previous research responses contain information about the treatment of detainees in Chinese labour camps. A brief outline of relevant responses follows:

- *Research Response CHN33071* of March 2008 provides information on the Masanjiazi (Masanjia) Labour Reform Camp in Shenyang, Liaoning province; reports largely refer to the treatment of Falun Dafa/Falun Gong practitioners, however. One report notes that the camp was associated with some of the most notorious reports of police abuse, although the reports were not independently confirmed.⁵³
- Question 4 of *Research Response CHN33398* of June 2008 outlines the use of forced labour as punishment by Chinese authorities.⁵⁴
- *Research Response CHN33720* of September 2008 provides information on a facility or facilities variously referred to as the Longshan Brainwashing Center, Longshan Reeducation Center, Longshan Reeducation Through Labor Camp and Longshan Forced Labor Camp in Shenyang. All reports of detention and brainwashing, however, refer to individuals accused for practicing Falun Gong.⁵⁵
- Question 3 of *Research Response CHN34037* of November 2008 provides general information about labour camps, re-education through labour and release procedures from labour camps.⁵⁶
- Question 4 of *Research Response CHN34225* of December 2008 provides information about the treatment of detainees in labour camps and on torture methods reportedly employed by Chinese authorities.⁵⁷

Thought Reform or Brainwashing

The most recent information located on the use of brainwashing or thought reform in Chinese labour camps was the Laogai Research Foundation's most recent *Laogai Handbook* published in 2008. The Foundation reports that thought reform (*sixiang gaizao*) is an intrinsic part of the

⁵¹ The Crimes at Dalian City Forced Labor Camp in Liaoning Province' 2007, *Monitor China* website http://www.monitorchina.org/english_site/document_details.php?id=4083 – Accessed 1 July 2010 – Attachment 39

⁵² Da, J. 2006, 'New Witness Confirms Existence of Chinese Concentration Camp, Says Organs Removed from Live Victims', *Epoch Times* website, 17 March <http://en.epochtimes.com/news/6-3-17/39405.html> – Accessed 29 June 2010 – Attachment 40

⁵³ RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response CHN33071*, 13 March – Attachment 24

⁵⁴ RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response CHN33398*, 18 June – Attachment 25

⁵⁵ RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response CHN33720*, 1 September – Attachment 26

⁵⁶ RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response CHN34037*, 12 November – Attachment 27

⁵⁷ RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response CHN34225*, 23 December – Attachment 28

Laogai (labour camp) system.⁵⁸ The process of thought reform is described in the following passage:

Prisoners are forced to confess their crimes and the Chinese legal system still presumes guilt and not innocence. **All prisoners must renounce any political and religious beliefs that the state considers subversive. Democracy activists, Christian and Falun Gong followers alike all must confess their “crimes” against the nation, recant their beliefs, and undergo special reeducation classes, which according to reports may involve torture.** Peer pressure and humiliation is also a well-known tenet of Laogai thought reform. Prisoners are turned against one another and are forced to criticize and sometimes even physically beat one another in struggle sessions. This reinforces the prisoner’s isolation and the feeling that they will not become part of the group until they allow themselves to be “reeducated.” Even more common in contemporary China, however, is the melding of reform and labor to produce the desired results.⁵⁹

Other reports were located that refer to the use of ‘brainwashing’ as punishment of labour camp detainees; most refer, however, to the experience of Falun Gong practitioners.

An article published on the *Epoch Times* website in April 2009 describes the experiences woman who was detained in China for practicing Falun Gong.⁶⁰ The woman claimed that she had been forced to watch videos of Communist Party propaganda, and that at least one person would be by her side 24 hours a day, attempting to persuade her to renounce her beliefs. She also claimed to have been pressured, often through use of physical torture, to sign documents agreeing to renounce her faith. Additionally, the woman was tortured both by labour camp guards and other prisoners, and forced to make goods for export.⁶¹

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported in October 2004 on the experience of a Chinese woman who was detained for practicing Falun Gong.⁶² She was held in a “state gulag” disguised as a law school from the outside, in which she and other inmates were put through “an intensive program of mental and physical torture that included beatings, prolonged interrogations, sleep deprivation and continuous exposure to video and audio propaganda”.⁶³ The *Epoch Times* also reported in October 2004 on “a huge brainwashing movement targeting Falun Gong practitioners”.⁶⁴ Further corroborating the *Herald* article, the *Epoch Times* reports that re-education centres are often called “Law Education Centres”, “Law Education

⁵⁸ The Laogai Foundation 2008, *The Laogai Handbook*, the Laogai Foundation website, September, p.11 <http://laogai.org/system/files/u1/handbook2008-all.pdf> – Accessed 9 July 2010 – Attachment 44

⁵⁹ The Laogai Foundation 2008, *The Laogai Handbook*, the Laogai Foundation website, September, p.12 <http://laogai.org/system/files/u1/handbook2008-all.pdf> – Accessed 9 July 2010 – Attachment 44

⁶⁰ Philipp, J. 2009, ‘Recounting Years of Chinese Brainwashing and Torture’, *Epoch Times*, Epoch Times website, 30 April <http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/content/view/15833/> – Accessed 12 July 2010 – Attachment 47

⁶¹ Philipp, J. 2009, ‘Recounting Years of Chinese Brainwashing and Torture’, *Epoch Times*, Epoch Times website, 30 April <http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/content/view/15833/> – Accessed 12 July 2010 – Attachment 47

⁶² McDonald, H. 2004, ‘Inside China’s brainwashing gulag’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 October <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/10/15/1097784050386.html> – Accessed 12 July 2010 – Attachment 45

⁶³ McDonald, H. 2004, ‘Inside China’s brainwashing gulag’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 October <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/10/15/1097784050386.html> – Accessed 12 July 2010 – Attachment 45

⁶⁴ Yang, Z. 2004, ‘Report Details Degree of Brainwashing in China’, *Epoch Times*, Epoch Times website, 31 October <http://www.theepochtimes.com/news/4-10-31/24091.html> – Accessed 12 July 2010 – Attachment 46

School” or a similar name.⁶⁵ The article describes the practice of “soft brainwashing” or “caring transformation, in which the “educators” create a false appearance of “caring” for the person they are transforming. This method uses the detainees’ family members and friends to persuade, force and threaten. If this approach is unsuccessful, “forced brainwashing” is used, including “beating, threats, long periods of isolation and sleep deprivation”.⁶⁶

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⁶⁵ Yang, Z. 2004, ‘Report Details Degree of Brainwashing in China’, *Epoch Times*, Epoch Times website, 31 October <http://www.theepochtimes.com/news/4-10-31/24091.html> – Accessed 12 July 2010 – Attachment 46

⁶⁶ Yang, Z. 2004, ‘Report Details Degree of Brainwashing in China’, *Epoch Times*, Epoch Times website, 31 October <http://www.theepochtimes.com/news/4-10-31/24091.html> – Accessed 12 July 2010 – Attachment 46

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