

Chinese Communist Party Propaganda & Violence on New York Streets

In 2008, the Congressional-Executive Commission on China documented the role of the Chinese Anti-Cult Association in China. The association, under the control of Communist Party officials, acts as a key channel for propaganda and a participant in the torture of Falun Gong practitioners, in collaboration with Chinese secret police.

At present, this organization has established a branch in New York with an almost identical mission statement.

For the past three years, members of the affiliated Chinese Anti-Cult World Alliance have been disseminating Communist Party propaganda on the streets of Flushing, resulting in a pattern of harassment, vandalism, and even physical assault against individuals in the community who practice Falun Gong.

As Americans, we should not allow such hate incitement, with potentially violent implications, to continue on our city streets.

Background: Chinese official harassment of Falun Gong in the United States

Over the past ten years, scores of physical assaults, verbal attacks and death threats against Falun Gong adherents by Chinese government-linked individuals have been recorded in the United States, Europe, Latin America, Africa and elsewhere. According to testimony given to the U.S. Congress in July 2005 by Chen Yonglin, a former diplomat from the Chinese Consulate-General in Sydney, Australia, such attacks are part of a far-reaching campaign by the Chinese Communist Party to malign and suppress Falun Gong in every country where the Chinese government has a diplomatic presence, with a particular emphasis on democratic countries where human rights workers regularly and publicly highlight the Chinese authorities' crimes against Falun Gong.

In October 2003, the U.S. Congress passed House Concurrent Resolution 304 specifically addressing interference by the Chinese Consulate on U.S. soil as part of the persecution of Falun Gong. Congress called on the Chinese government to "immediately stop interfering in the exercise of religious and political freedoms within the United States."

Mob attacks in Flushing

Since 2008, the Chinese Communist Party's attempts to suppress Falun Gong in the United States and to spread misinformation and hatred of the group have intensified. In May that year, a pro-Communist mob of more than 100 people gathered on Main Street in Flushing, New York, assailing Falun Gong practitioners. Several adherents of Falun Gong, including U.S. citizens, were physically assaulted by the pro-communist crowds, with others receiving threats to their lives. Several Falun Gong adherents reported being pelted with bottles, eggs, and stones, and being spit on by the assembled masses. Over the following weeks, a climate was created in the area where nearly anyone who self-identified as a Falun Gong adherent risked being surrounded, heckled, and sometimes threatened with violence by ethnic Chinese mobs.

"The campaign of public vilification of Falun Gong in the official Chinese press has created a climate of hatred against Falun Gong practitioners in China which may be encouraging acts of violence against them."

- Amnesty International

Propaganda table, overseas branch established

Several individuals who had helped organize the crowds soon setup "information tables" in Flushing, distributing anti-Falun Gong propaganda to passers-by, and continuing to incite members of the community to attack Falun Gong. Several subsequent incidents of small groups and individuals berating Falun Gong adherents in Flushing with obscenities and/or physically assaulting them have been reported.

In September 2008, the anti-Falun Gong actions were formalized when three pro-communist organizers believed to have helped coordinate the mobs in May established a non-profit organization called the Chinese Anti-Cult World Alliance (CACWA), Inc. The organization's bylaws specifically state the target of their activities as Falun Gong and repeat Communist Party propaganda.

"[The Chinese Anti-Cult Association] claims to be a 'non-profit, social welfare organization'... the [Chinese] government's hand, however, can be clearly discerned in the publications and activities of anti-cult associations."

- Congressional-Executive Commission on China, 2008 Annual Report

Assault and discrimination in Flushing

Since 2008, at least 12 individuals associated with the table or organization have been arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, assault in the 3rd degree, and resisting arrest. In August 2010, the U.S. Department of Justice filed a consent decree acknowledging that a Chinese restaurant in Flushing had acted inappropriately when refusing to serve Falun Gong practitioners in 2008.

Official ties

The newly registered group appears to be an extension of an organization originally established in Mainland China on November 13, 2000 as the Chinese Anti-Cult Association (CACA). Although it carries a non-governmental organization title, the CACA is a government agency, specifically a unit of the official China Society and Technology Association (CSTA). The Secretary General and Vice-Secretary General in charge of CACA's operations are full-time government employees, and all CACA branches have their offices inside government buildings.

According to the U.S. Congressional-Executive Commission on China's (CECC's) 2008 Annual Report, the CACA "claims to be a 'non-profit, social welfare organization'... the [Chinese] government's hand, however, can be clearly discerned in the publications and activities of anti-cult associations."

The CECC's report also says of the CACA that it "works in concert with the 6-10 Office (an extra-legal Chinese [Communist Party] agency in charge of 'eradicating' Falun Gong) to undermine Chinese citizens' right to believe in and practice Falun Gong...Local anti-cult associations can be found at the provincial, county, municipal, and neighborhood level. Such associations have emerged as a prominent information channel for the government's campaign against Falun Gong."

The primary activities of the CACA in China have been found to go beyond the development and implementation of propaganda against Falun Gong. CACA staff also oversee and participate in “brainwashing sessions” held in prisons and detention centers throughout China that use a combination of fierce propaganda and brutal torture techniques to “transform” Falun Gong adherents. In 2004, seven human rights lawyers in Geneva filed a criminal complaint for torture against the organization’s vice president, who was attending a United Nations event at the time. He fled the country before the procuratorate could make a decision to arrest him on the charges.

Chinese Anti-Cult Association staff also oversee and participate in ‘brainwashing sessions’ held in prisons and detention centers throughout China.

Beyond the CACA’s links to the Chinese government and Communist Party, evidence has emerged of Chinese diplomatic personnel directing or otherwise endorsing the attacks on Falun Gong. Shortly after the anti-Falun Gong mobs first appeared in Flushing in 2008, it emerged that the mobs were not a spontaneous reaction to Falun Gong by local residents, but rather a sophisticated means for the Party to suppress the group, and particularly adherents’ rights awareness raising activities, beyond China’s borders. On May 22, the Falun Dafa Information Center obtained a recorded phone conversation with New York City’s Chinese Consul General, Mr. Peng Keyu, in which he confirmed his role in encouraging the mob of several-hundred Chinese immigrants to assail Falun Gong practitioners. “They [mob organizers] came over after they fought with Falun Gong [in Flushing] and I shook hands with them one by one and thanked them,” Peng said during the [recorded phone conversation](#).

Concerns for the future trajectory

In 2007, Amnesty International voiced concerns over the relationship between Chinese Communist Party propaganda and assaults on Falun Gong practitioners inside China, stating: “Amnesty International has raised concerns that the campaign of public vilification of Falun Gong in the official Chinese press has created a climate of hatred against Falun Gong practitioners in China which may be encouraging acts of violence against them.”

Given past experience, recent cases of abuse, and the role that propaganda plays in fueling violence and discrimination in China, the Falun Dafa Information Center is concerned that, should the activities of the CACWA be allowed to continue, the acts of violence against practitioners and their families in New York will increase. Meanwhile, the same channels of influence may be used to target other individuals and communities in the United States that fall out of favor of the Chinese Communist Party.

As Americans, we should not tolerate the Chinese Communist Party’s efforts to spread hatred, violence, and repression onto our city streets. The Chinese Anti-Cult World Alliance and its propaganda table should not be allowed to continue operating and making a mockery of the freedoms of speech and association we hold dear.