

# Hearings on Religious Persecution in China: Harry Wu Oral Testimony

March 16, 2000

(Note: These are unedited and uncorrected transcripts)

MR.

WU: Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Chairman, in 1949, the same year the Communist took over power in China, I was baptized as a Roman Catholic. I was only able to freely practice as a Roman Catholic for three years before the Communist Party's initiation of the Three-Self-movement. This so-called Three-Self patriotic movement, the policy result in the destruction of the tens and thousands Christian churches in China. In the first three decades under the Mao ruling, there's no religious movement in China, and there's no kind of church exist in China. This total -- is totally eliminated. And later Maoism becomes China's only legal religion, and the Mao's Little Red Book becomes the People's Bible. And fortunately, 30 years later the Maoism doesn't work out. The people today are seeking their own religions. But remember 1954 in Chinese Constitution they are offered, they are guaranteed the citizens' freedom of religions.

When Deng Xiaoping came to power in 1978, I think many people remember, as the very famous dissertation. He said, "It doesn't matter if the cat is black or white, as long as it still catches the mice. So I still serve as a cat. Maybe I changed my color, but I still catching the mice." That means, "I'm still doing something I want to do." So in fact the only real goal was to strengthen the Communist and to solidify their control.

In this manner, Deng Xiaoping introduced elements of capitalism to increase technology investment, to bring economic development, therefore, increasing the legitimacy to the Communist ruling in China. So Deng Xiaoping policy on religion's an area there is no fundamental difference from Mao.

We also have to understand for any policy that comes from the Chinese Communist Party or central government, including the policy of so-called freedom of religious belief, local governments must pass law to implement and carry out

those policies. So today I want to introduce a law was passed by the local government, and I will suggest that this document, in your records -- this come from the Tong Xiang County, is only 75 miles south of China in Shanghai in Zhejiang province.

We have to know, today religion is really thriving in this country. All the time Chinese reading the red book; now today we read the yellow book, the Falun Gong Dafa. Falun Gong Dafa become the number two largest publication in China, just next to the red book. This is very critical. That's why they want to put it down. But if you carefully read the Falun Gong, there is nothing talking about freedom, not nothing talking about democracy. Falun Dafa only wants to improve spiritually, mentally, physically their own body; but it's not going to tolerate the dictator in China.

So let me introduce this document, and we have onsite investigation. We interview the patriotic church leader and we also interview the underground church.

In China there are two public Christian organizations that exist in China and so-called the Christian Council. This is a document we obtained from China, so-called secret document. And this document divides, planning six months to destroy the local underground church. And this guy, the name is Li Ang Xi, he said after 1980, the religious freedom policy, he came back, served as a clerk in this church, and he's paid by the government. And also he recognizes his deputy chief of the religious council, Christian Council of the government.

And he said, this is a registration. In China, if you don't have a registration, it means that it's not been approved by the government. That means it is illegal. So that's why there's nothing talking about religious freedom or suppression of the religions. We're talking about legal and illegal. There is all of these certificates.

In 1979 only 26 people in this so-called patriotic church. Today they have 1,120. So they are reviewing some new church, and the money has come from the Lianghui. So-called Lianghui is Three-Self patriotic church and Christian council, this government association. And he's saying, "Well, in Tongxiang County there is a number of churches, believers, who refuse to join with the Lianghui." They reject merging their church with the two bodies, and then the government and CCP told these people, "If you're not approved by the government, you cannot operate." According to law, they are illegal.

And in this country, there's 16 illegal church, and around 1,200 believers in their churches. Because so many people belong to them, the government has no way to stop them right now. Presently the government has developed a new plan to try to solve the problem. As he said and Mr. Lu continued going on, is that the struggle between the patriotic church and this illegal church is quite serious.

Because they told our believers, told the patriotic church, "If you join with the Three-Self, you will not -- you will not be saved by God." So many people separated from the patriotic church, go to the underground church. So many people, you know, go over there; but because the government declared that they are illegal, so some people from their churches are coming back to our church. And also tell us two weeks ago that Lianghui set up a new service center and all the money and even disciple is paid by the government. This is the struggle between so-called patriotic church and underground church.

According to the plan from the government, the first two months they set up patriotic church to attract the common people from the illegal church, and then later they are going to arrest the leader of these illegal church and charge them as criminals.

And now we also visit underground church. One of these is the Tonxiang Church. As you can see, we pretend to be interested in studying about church architecture, and we found several women were there who were very sensitive and alert. They asked us again, again, where we come from and why are we asking those questions, because this is one of the church on the list to be destroyed. This is the church right now, and the money totally comes from the government.

The total square is 600 square feet. And this is the woman from the underground church. They are very sensitive. And we asked, "Do you believe in Jesus?" And one of them answered, "Yes, I believe in Jesus." And then we asked, "Do you believe this Three-Self?" And two of the women answered angrily, "Don't ask us. You have to go ask the government." And we asked, "How many believers come to your church?" And two women answered, "We don't know because we never count." And we asked, "We heard that your clerk was arrested by the government. How come you're continuing to conduct your services?" And two women answered said, "Our brother, sister pray for him."

And we asked, "How did you build your church? Did the government help you?" And all the women joined together in giving the answer, "No. No. No. The government never give us any help. Our

brother and sisters donate money. Some of them save money from their own daily food. Some people don't have cash, so they offer their rice, offer their cooking oil or vegetables from their own garden. And many people come over there to work to build the church without the pay. We did everything by ourselves."

And we ask, "We heard that if the church is illegal that it will be torn down." One of the women said, "We will not allow that to happen. We will stay here forever."

Two, three years, last year, we operate another investigation. We find out the 16 churches listed on their policy were dismissed. The Chinese government has been very successful, destroyed 16 church in the small county. On the one hand, as we recognize the true suppressive agenda of the CCP policy on religion, we must also on the other hand recognize the situation that as this amounts to believers in Chinese government-registered churches.

Most of the people truly wish to practice their religion. In their churches, they are taught to be good citizens and good believers, to love their country, to love their party and their religion and to obey the Communist law. It is not these leaders who are working against religious freedom in China, and they should not become target of any group working against suppression of religious freedom.

Most of them are seeking the truth and we should care about them and their believers. But we should firmly and publically condemn the Chinese Communist Three-Self church systems because it is a tool of the suppressionist scheme of Chinese Communist Party. And you heard the Cardinal Kung passed away on March 12, a couple days ago. And you know that Cardinal Kung stayed in the prison camps for 30 years; but you have to know, if you accept the situation from the government, working with the government, working in the Three-Self patriotic church, he would not stay in the church for over 30 years, if today you recognize that Chinese Communist patriotic church is betraying this great man and betray your own principle.

Thank you.