Transnational repression, China and Falun Gong

Presentation prepared for an event at the House of Lords, London, UK, 15 July, 2025

by David Matas

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	2
A perceived opposition force	3
The escalation of repression	10
a) Less mention	14
b) Ambiguous media	16
1) Conflicts of interest not disclosed	29
2) CCP propaganda against Falun Gong repeated	31
3) Lack of balance	33
c) Targeting the founder of Falun Gong	35
d) Lawfare	36
e) Targeting Falun Gong media	37
What happened to the New York Times?	38
Transnational repression	43
a) The need for a coherent approach	44
b) Bookings	47
c) Reform	50

Introduction

Artistry with a political dimension is almost impossible within the countries of repressive regimes. This artistry is viable only in foreign lands.

Yet, repression by autocratic regimes can take transnational forms. Foreign theatres, cinemas, art galleries, book stores, artists, and diaspora communities who host or produce or support artistic expression with a political dimension critical of a repressive regime all become targets of the regime.

Transnational repression takes the form of death bomb threats, drive by shootings, repression of family members back home, harassment, intimidation, misinformation and disinformation. Repressive regimes shower benefits on the artistic community abroad and then threaten to withdraw these benefits if the beneficiaries provide any venue for artistic expression with a political dimension critical of the regime. What is the artistic community to do?

The presentation attempts to answer this question through a case study, the repression in China of practitioners of the spiritually based set of exercises Falun Gong. Protests about this abuse have taken, outside of China, a number of artistic forms. This artistry has generated widespread and systematic transnational repression efforts by the Government of China.

The presentation itemizes this Chinese repression and suggests various ways of addressing it. The general conclusion is that transnational repression of artistry with a political dimension can be countered. To do so requires awareness of the seriousness of the problem and a willingness to do something about it.

A perceived opposition force

The specific case focus is a dance company, the Shen Yun Performing Arts, and transnational repression directed against it by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Government of China. Now it may seem strange that the CCP would care about a dance company.

Shen Yun was started in 2006 by Falun Gong practitioners. It may seem even stranger that the CCP would care about a set of exercises. Falun Gong is, roughly, a Chinese equivalent of Yoga. Chinese President and General Secretary of the CCP Xi Jin Ping has called Falun Gong practitioners "the CCP's most prominent opposition force".

The governing party of India is the Bharatiya Janata Party or the BJP. The Indian equivalent to what Xi Jinping has said about Falun Gong would be a labelling by Indian Prime Minister Narinder Modi of yoga as "the BJP's most prominent opposition force". The labelling sounds absurd.

Yet, about this labelling of the practitioners of the exercises Falun Gong, Xi Jinping is not necessarily wrong. How Xi Jinping got to that conclusion takes some explaining.

Falun Gong is a set of exercises with a spiritual foundation. Anyone can do the exercises as they wish, anywhere, any time. The spiritual materials are accessible without charge on the internet. The spiritual materials have no political content. The spiritual element is a blending of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. The exercises are a form of qigong, the most well-known of which is Taichi.

Though there is a spate of entities founded by practitioners of Falun Gong, there is no overarching Falun Gong organization. There is nothing to join, no membership, no fees,

nothing to sign.

It hard to think of anything less threatening to the rule of the Chinese Communist Party over China than Falun Gong. Yet, Falun Gong has become, as CCP chief Xi Jinping has said, "the CCP's most prominent opposition force". How was that possible? How did Falun Gong become that?

There are two answers to those questions. One is Jiang Zemin. The paramount leader of China in June 1989 at the time of the Tiananmen square massacre of democracy activists was Deng Xiaoping. Jiang Zemin was then general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party.

The practice of Falun Gong started in 1992 and grew quickly, partly because of its connections to Chinese exercise and spiritual traditions, and partly because of its accessibility, being free and not requiring membership in anything. The CCP initially encouraged Falun Gong because those who practised its exercise regime made less demands on the health system, cutting down on health system costs.

Power struggles in China are unlike power struggles in democratic countries. In democratic countries, political leaders are chosen by the public in elections. In order to appeal to the public, those seeking public office have to appeal to the public interest. Generally for the public, what matters most is the economy, although other issues may intervene.

In China, political leaders are chosen by the Chinese Communist Party. In order to achieve political office, those seeking office have to appeal to the Party interest. What matters most to the Party is maintenance of Party rule over China.

There is accordingly within China a sequence of internal debates within the Party about how

best to maintain Party rule over China. Those seeking promotion within the Party seek to identify potential threats to Party rule and how to counter them.

The growth of Falun Gong got caught up in this internal Party debate. Some within the Party saw the growth of Falun Gong as a threat to Party rule because Falun Gong practitioners were spiritual and the Party was atheist, because Falun Gong beliefs and exercises echoed Chinese traditions and the Party saw itself as modern, because Falun Gong beliefs, albeit not political, had nothing to do with Communism, and because Falun Gong practitioner numbers were large. Others within the Party saw Falun Gong as innocent, harmless, no threat to the Party at all.

The Chinese Communist Party, in April 1999, published an article in the magazine Science and Technology for Youth, which criticised the practice of Falun Gong. A large number of Falun Gong adherents demonstrated against the contents of the piece outside the Tianjin editor's office. Arrests and police beatings resulted.

To petition the Government Petition Office in Beijing about these arrests, on April 25th, 1999, 10,000 to 15,000 Falun Gong practitioners gathered from dawn until late at night outside the Party headquarters at Zhongnanhai next to Beijing's Forbidden City. The gathering was silent and without posters.

The April 25th event was the largest gathering in Beijing since the Tiananmen square massacre. Many of the leadership in the Party, including Jiang Zemin who was by then President, had no advance warning of this event and were startled.

The Falun Gong community were not then the democracy movement or anything close. If they had been left alone, they would have left the Party alone.

If Jiang Zemin had done nothing but release those arrested, nothing would have happened. But when you are a hammer, everything looks like a nail. Jiang remembered the Tiananmen Square demonstrations, saw another large crowd in central Beijing and panicked.

Jiang Zemin wrote his letter to the Politbureau the very same day:

> "Without being noticed by humans or ghosts, more than 10,000 people gathered around the gate of the centre of the Party and State Power Centre, for a whole day. ... However, our relevant departments had found nothing at all beforehand, even though from the Internet one can quickly find the local contacts of the Falun Gong organization. ... This incident has had the most participants of all since the 1989 incident. I have repeatedly stressed the need to prevent the small from becoming large and to report all major events to us. Since 1992, Falun Gong became involved in the activities of a considerable number of social groups of party members and cadres, intellectuals, servicemen, workers and peasants. Yet it has not aroused our vigilance. I am deeply ashamed."

The Government of China set up a dedicated bureaucracy which was assigned the task of repressing the Falun Gong. This bureaucracy had representatives throughout China. Because it was established on the tenth day of the six month of 1999, it was called, in shorthand, the 610 office. The 610 office had representatives in every province, city, county, university, government department and government-owned business in China.

Former president Jiang's mandate to the 610 office was to "eradicate" Falun Gong. Here are quotes from a directive he issued June 7, 1999, three days before the establishment of the 610 office:

> "The central committee has already agreed to let comrade Li Lanqing be responsible for establishing a leadership group that will deal with problems of 'FALUN GONG' specifically. Comrade Li Lanqing will be the director and comrades Ding Guangen and

> Luo Gan will be vice directors, comrades in charge of related departments will be the members of the group. [The group] will study the steps, methods and measures for solving the problem of "FALUN GONG" in a unified way. All CCP [Chinese Communist Party] central departments, administrative organs, all ministries, commissions, all provinces, self-governing districts, all cities directly under central government must cooperate with the group very closely. [...] After the leading group dealing with "FALUN GONG" problems has established at CCCCP [Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party], it should immediately organize forces, find out the organization system nationwide of "FALUN GONG" ASAP, constitute the battling strategies, get fully prepared for the work of disintegrating [FALUN GONG], [we] should never launch a warfare without preparations. [...] The major responsible comrades in all areas, all departments must solidly take the responsibilities, carry out the tasks [of crushing Falun Gong] according to the CCCCP's requirements with the area's or department's actual situations taken into consideration."[1]

On July 19, 1999, the Central Committee issued a notice stating that Party members are not allowed to practise Falun Gong.[2] On July 30, the Ministry of Public Security issued an arrest warrant for Falun Gong founder Mr. Li Hong Zhi.[3] On July 22, the Ministry of Public Security stated that hanging, posting banners, posters, badges or other logos that advocate Falun Dafa (Falun Gong) was prohibited.[4]

This Party prohibition of the practice caused within the Falun Gong community a great deal of confusion because the Party had up to that point, albeit with some dissident voices, been

---

[1] http://beijingspring.com/bj2/2001/60/2003727210907.htm

[2] http://www.zhengqing.net.cn/2001-12/03/content_262406.htm

[3] http://www.pladaily.com.cn/item/flg/wjgd/13.htm

[4] http://www.people.com.cn/GB/channel1/10/20000706/132280.html

encouraging the practice. Many practitioners concluded that there had been some colossal misunderstanding within the Party of what Falun Gong was. The announcement of prohibition accordingly led to a sequence of Falun Gong practitioner demonstrations against the prohibition with naive signs stating "Falun Gong is good" as if the Party had somehow made a mistake, thinking in error that Falun Gong was bad.

On November 30, 1999, the 610 office called more than 3,000 officials to the Great Hall of the People in the capital to discuss the campaign against Falun Gong, which was then not going well. Demonstrations were continuing to occur. The head of the 610 office, Li Lanqing, announced the government's new policy on the movement: "defame their reputations, bankrupt them financially and destroy them physically."[5] After that date, the persecution of Falun Gong accelerated, to the point where it led to the mass killing of Falun Gong for their organs.

The second answer to the question how did Falun Gong become, in the words of Xi Jinping, "the CCP's most prominent opposition force" is Falun Gong themselves. Falun Gong has three basic tenets - compassion, tolerance and truthfulness.

Victims of many communities are often content just to escape their victimization. There is a tendency to leave their victimization behind once escaped. Revisiting victimization becomes retraumatization.

The Falun Gong community, despite its absence of a political dimension, is deeply committed to telling the truth, including the truth about their victimization by the CCP. They are not

[5] This information comes from an interview with Li Baigen who attended the meeting. He was then assistant director of the Beijing Municipal Planning office. He is now resident in the United States. The US Department of State Country Report for China for 1999 refers to the meeting, but not the quote.

sidelined by CCP political or economic pressure nor by Party disinformation. On the contrary, the Falun Gong community makes a detailed, sustained, global effort to tell the truth about the CCP.

Even though the CCP could have easily avoided this truth telling if Jiang Zemin had left the movement alone, mass killings are irreversible. That Falun Gong community truth telling is now not going to stop.

The Falun Gong based media have become the primary source of information about what is happening to China, partly because of their commitment to the truth, but also because of their widespread contacts within China. When Xi Jinping states that the CCP's most prominent opposition force is Falun Gong, what he is saying in substance is that the most prominent opposition force to the CCP is the truth.

Well, what has this got to do with a dance company? Shen Yun advertises itself as "China before Communism". Its dance performances are primarily variations on traditional Chinese dancing and music. The music is distinctive because it combines Chinese and Western instrumentation. The content of the performances is constantly changing. Nonetheless, interspersed in each performance with the traditional pieces is one or a couple of numbers depicting in dance the persecution of Falun Gong.

The dance company has become immensely popular. It has evolved from one dance ensemble to eight touring the world. As of May 24, 2025, the company had presented 799 shows in 199 cities in 26 countries in front of over a million people. The company has become a global anti-CCP force.[6]

[6] "Triumphant 2025 Shen Yun Season Concludes", May 24, 2025

https://www.shenyunperformingarts.org/news/view/article/e/x25uvEhgC94/triumphant-

The escalation of repression

This popularity has generated from the CCP a commensurate response. A Falun Dafa Information Centre January 2024 publication titled "Diplomatic Disruptions and Disinformation: Beijing's Global Drive to Stop Shen Yun" states:

> "Primary tactics include threatening theaters and government officials with economic reprisals, spreading disinformation, sabotaging vehicles carrying Shen Yun performers, threatening or imprisoning relatives of performers in China, and organizing protests by pro-Beijing diaspora groups outside performance venues. This is a truly global phenomenon. Everywhere Shen Yun has performed - across North America, South America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East - the CCP's sabotage attempts have followed. This brief documents more than 130 incidents of interference by Chinese officials or their proxies targeting Shen Yun across 38 countries - including the United States- since 2007."[7]

An internal leaked 2017 document from the General Office of the Henan Provincial Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) states:

> "12. Expand the fight against cults abroad.
>
> Strictly control the departure of key cult members in the province according to law, severely crack down on the backbone members in the province who are linked with foreign countries, and cut off the human resources, information sources, and financial sources of foreign cults in the province. Thoroughly investigate the

2025-shen-yun-season-concludes.html

[7] https://faluninfo.net/diplomatic-disruptions-and-disinformation-beijings-global-drive-to-stop-shen-yun/

> backbone members of cults from our province who are abroad, establish an effective control mechanism, strengthen persuasion and education and shout across the ocean, put them on the blacklist, publicly expose their ugly deeds, urge them to restrain themselves abroad, and prevent them from participating in harassing high-level visits. Make full use of the channels of foreign-related sister cities, improve the quality of sister city work, and effectively reduce the space for 'Falun Gong' to operate abroad. Tap into non-governmental resources, cultivate non-governmental forces to fight against 'Falun Gong' and other cults, mobilize China friendly people such as experts, scholars, journalists, and overseas Chinese community leaders who have greater influence in the United States and Western countries to speak for us, and strive to make foreign media more favorable to us. Carry out pre-departure anti-cult education for public officials going abroad, and give full play to the active role of our province's overseas enterprises and other economic entities in the fight against cults abroad."[8]

While this document came only from the General Office of the Henan Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China and there are twenty three provinces in China, it is likely, given the nature of the document that similar documents were sent out from the General Offices of all the provincial offices of the CCP. The reason we can see only one is that only one was leaked.

A second internal, leaked document shows that The Ministry of Public Security of the People's Republic of China on March 30, 2021 appointed Wu Xiuhua, former Director of the Second Division of the Joint Office to Combat Falun Gong, to the Director of the North American Work Division (deputy bureau level). The appointment notice states that Wu Xiuhua,

---

[8] The original Chinese can be found at page 7 of a document posted at https://www.adhrrf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/henan-20170405.pdf

> "has planned and organized many tasks to crack down on Falun Gong practitioners' petitioning, dissemination, practice, and infiltration of party and government agencies in Beijing. He has rich experience in combat methods. During the epidemic in North America, Falun Gong activities became more rampant. According to the resolution of the joint office party committee meeting in March, the North American Office for Combatting Falun Gong was adjusted from the original director level to the deputy bureau level to increase the intensity of combat."[9]

Apparently, increasing the intensity of combat was, for the CCP, not working that well. So, the Party changed its strategy. Yet another leaked report sets out the Chinese Communist Party changed strategy in using the tools of transnational repression against Falun Gong. The leaked report relates what happened at a meeting of the Political and Legal Affairs Commission of the Party which met shortly before the 20th National Party Congress, October 16th to 22nd, 2022. The President of China, Xi Jinping, addressed the Commission meeting.

The report of the meeting has these exchanges between President Xi and members of the Commission:[10]

> "during the Jiang Zemin era and Hu Jintao era, the suppression of Falun Gong abroad was a failure. The crackdown and suppression overseas failed.
>
> So, what did Xi Jinping see as the specific manifestation of this failure?
>
> That Falun Gong was not eliminated, not eradicated by the CCP internationally. Instead, media organisations founded by Falun Gong practitioners and cultural

[9] The Chinese version of this document can be found at https://www.upholdjustice.org/node/530

[10] https://endtransplantabuse.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Professor-Yuan-Statement-Transcript.pdf

groups have become highly active in the international community. Not only in the Chinese-speaking community internationally, but also in the English-speaking community. 'They have developed into the CCP's most prominent opposition force,' these were Xi Jinping's words. ...

Regarding the specific action plan, Xi Jinping gave instructions to have 'one focus, two basic directions'. This 'one focus', according to what this source has disclosed, stated by Xi Jinping refers to targeting the founder of Falun Gong and his family. Xi Jinping thought that before the 18th National Congress, an important reason why the CCP's crackdown on Falun Gong overseas had been ineffective was that they missed the point. This focal point was missed. So according to Xi Jinping's instructions, this 'one focus' of the CCP's tactic was to target the founder of Falun Gong, to have a character assassination on him. To create various forms of character defamation against him, attacks and so on.

What are the 'two basic directions'? One is public opinion warfare and the other is legal warfare.

As for the so-called public opinion warfare, which includes demanding the CCP's official organisations should mention Falun Gong less. The public opinion attacks on Falun Gong should rely mainly on some media and self-media whose viewpoints about the CCP are more ambiguous. They are the ones to launch public opinion attacks on Falun Gong. This would be more effective.

Another important aspect of the public opinion warfare is about messing up the Falun Gong founded media from the inside. ... The key point should be to divide, disintegrate, and mess up the media of Falun Gong. These are the two sides of the public opinion warfare.

What about the lawfare? It's all about exploiting the litigation systems of the United States, Taiwan, and some other countries. To use their judicial systems to launch attacks on Falun Gong through lawfare."

One can see, since this meeting took place, the carrying out of the plan of international Falun Gong suppression that President Xi outlined at the meeting. I will address five components of the plan in turn.

a) CCP's official organisations should mention Falun Gong less,

b) public opinion attacks on Falun Gong should rely mainly on some media and self-media whose viewpoints about the CCP are more ambiguous,

c) target the founder of Falun Gong,

d) use judicial systems to launch attacks on Falun Gong through lawfare, and

e) mess up the Falun Gong founded media from the inside.

a) Less mention

First, I will consider the strategy that CCP's official organisations should mention Falun Gong less. This is something about which I have had personal experience.

The Government of Canada, on December 8, 2024, imposed sanctions on eight Chinese officials for their role in the persecution of Tibetans, Uyghurs and Falun Gong.[11] The Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement which accompanied the sanctions regulation sets out a brief summary of the persecution each group had suffered.

For Falun Gong, the Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement stated:

> "Chinese authorities initiated a campaign in 1999 to eliminate the spiritual practice of Falun Gong in the PRC. This was a multifaceted propaganda campaign, a program of enforced ideological conversion and re-education, and included a variety of extra-legal coercive measures such as arbitrary arrests, forced labour and physical torture, sometimes resulting in death. Many of the repression tools employed against Falun

[11] https://gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p2/2024/2024-12-18/html/sor-dors253-eng.html

> Gong practitioners in the late 1990s and early-mid 2000s were adapted for use against ethnic and religious minorities in the TAR [Tibetan Autonomous Region] and XUAR [Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region]. The persecution of Falun Gong continues to this day. In June 2021, UN human rights experts expressed alarm about reports of alleged organ harvesting targeting minorities in the PRC, including Falun Gong practitioners. In October 2023, the Falun Dafa Association released a report detailing transnational repression by the PRC actions against Falun Gong practitioners in Canada."

The Government of China imposed counter measure sanctions on December 21, 2024 on two organizations and twenty individuals.[12] I was one of the twenty. The two organizations were Uyghur Human Rights Advocacy Project and the Canadian Tibet Committee. I was sanctioned because I was (and still am) a member of the advisory board of Uyghur Human Rights Advocacy Project and not because of my involvement in the issue of the mass killing Falun Gong for their organs.

The reason given by a Chinese academic commentator for the sanctions was that those sanctioned "ignore facts" about China and were "spreading misinformation" about China.[13] A Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokespersons justified the sanctions on the ground that those sanctioned were interfering in Chinese internal affairs under the guise of human rights advocacy.[14]

---

[12] https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/wjbxw_new/202412/t20241222_11514801.shtml

[13] https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202412/1325545.shtml

[14] https://www.linkedin.com/posts/turkishtradecompliacnce_ttcsn-t%C3%BCrkiyetradecompliance-exportcontrol-activity-7282327629641265152-b05d

It is unlikely that the Government of China did not sanction any Falun Gong related organization and any individual who was advocating against the victimization of Falun Gong in China because the Government wanted to acknowledge that the information produced on the victimization of Falun Gong was factually correct. It is also unlikely that the Government considered Falun Gong human rights advocacy work as not to be interference in Chinese internal affairs under the guise of human rights advocacy.

The Chinese government silence about Falun Gong was likely the result of following an element of the strategic plan President Xi Jinping laid out in October 2022 to the CCP's Political and Legal Affairs Commission. President Xi told the Commission "mention Falun Gong less". So, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did so.

b) Ambiguous media

The second strategy set out by President Xi in his 2022 meeting with the CCP Political and Legal Commission was reliance mainly on media whose viewpoints about the CCP are ambiguous when engaging in public opinion attacks on Falun Gong. One can see that strategy carried out with a series of articles by The New York Times on the Shen Yun Performing Arts.

Shen Yun Performing Arts is a dance company established by Falun Gong practitioners. Its dance performances are primarily variations on traditional Chinese dancing and music. The music is distinctive because it combines Chinese and Western instrumentation. The content of the performances is constantly changing. Nonetheless, interspersed in each performance with the traditional pieces is one or a couple of numbers depicting in dance the persecution of Falun Gong.

The company has become hugely successful. There are now several touring dance

ensembles of the company. Consequently, it has become a primary target of CCP transnational repression.

The New York Times has become the primary vehicle for the ambiguous media strategy of the CCP. In the last year, the Times has published at least eleven articles and one podcast critical of Shen Yun. The eleven articles and the podcast are:

1) Hong, Nicole; Rothfeld, Michael, 16 August 2024, "Behind the Pageantry of Shen Yun, Untreated Injuries and Emotional Abuse"[15]

2) Hong, Nicole; Rothfeld, Michael 16 August 2024, "5 Takeaways from The Times's Investigation into Shen Yun"[16]

3) James Barron, "The Dark Side of Shen Yun", August 19, 2024,[17]

4) Nicole Hong, "Lifting the Curtain of Shen Yun to Reveal a Dark Side", August 23, 2024 [18]

5) Rothfeld, Michael; Hong, Nicole, 17 November 2024 "Shen Yun's Longstanding Labor Practices Attract Regulators' Scrutiny"[19]

---

[15] https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/15/nyregion/shen-yun-dance-abuse.html

[16] https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/16/nyregion/shen-yun-nyt-investigation.html

[17] https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/19/nyregion/the-dark-side-of-shen-yun.html

[18] https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/23/insider/shen-yun-investigation.html

[19]

6) Nicole Hong and Michael Rothfeld, November 25, 2024 "Ex-Dancer Accuses Shen Yun of Forced Labor and Trafficking in Lawsuit"[20]

7) Hong, Nicole; Rothfeld, Michael, "How Shen Yun Tapped Religious Fervor to Make $266 Million", 29 December 2024[21]

8) Hong, Nicole; Rothfeld, Michael, 30 December 2024, "Shen Yun Needed Publicity. The Epoch Times Wrote 17,000 Articles"[22]

9) Hong, Nicole; Rothfeld, Michael, "5 Takeaways from The Times's Coverage of Shen Yun", December 30, 2024[23]

10) Rothfeld, Michael; Hong, Nicole, 6 February 2025 "Shen Yun Is Said to Be Under Federal Investigation Over Possible Visa Fraud"[24]

---

https://www.nytimes.com/2024/11/17/nyregion/shen-yun-child-labor-regulator.html

20 https://www.nytimes.com/2024/11/25/nyregion/shen-yun-lawsuit-trafficking-labor.html

21 https://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/29/nyregion/shen-yun-money-falun-gong.html

22 https://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/30/nyregion/shen-yun-epoch-times-falun-gong.html

23 https://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/30/nyregion/shen-yun-nyt-falun-gong.html

24 https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/06/nyregion/shen-yun-federal-investigation.html

11) Nicole Hong, "Shen Yun: The Dark Side of a Dance Troupe" April 2, 2025, (a podcast)[25]

12) Michael Rothfeld, April 18, 2025. "An 'Army of Child Laborers' Enriches Shen Yun, Ex-Dancers Say in Suit"[26]

What makes this sequence of articles and the podcast particularly troubling is the silence of the New York Times on the mass killing of prisoners of conscience for their organs. The victims have been primarily, but not only, practitioners of Falun Gong. Uyghurs also have been victims in large numbers. In smaller numbers, the victims have been also House Christians and Tibetans.

Shen Yun Performing Arts released a statement on December 30, 2024 about the then series of New York Times articles on their company under the title "New York Times Confirms Shen Yun's Success - But Gets Much Else About the Company Wrong".[27] The statement from Shen Yun may be completely right and the New York Times, with the exceptions pointed out in the Shen Yun statement, may be completely wrong. However, let us suppose the opposite.

Suppose the portions of the Shen Yun statement contradicting the New York Times articles

---

25 https://www.google.com/search?q=shen+yun+criticizes+the+new+york+times&oq=shen+yun+criticizes+the+new+york+times&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbWUyCwgAEEUYChg5GKABMgkIARAhGAoYoAEyCQgCECEYChigATIJCAMQIRgKGKAB0gEKMTUyODNqMGoxNagCCLACAfEFFy3o_2up3NY&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

26 https://www.nytimes.com/2025/04/18/nyregion/shen-yun-abuse-lawsuit.html

27 https://www.shenyun.org/news/view/article/e/W56bKQgylpo/new-york-times-confirms-shen-yun%E2%80%99s-success

are completely wrong and the New York Times articles are completely right. Even if that is so, there is a striking contrast between the mammoth critical attention by the New York Times to a dance company established by a movement which the Chinese Communist Party considers, as noted above, its "most prominent opposition force", and saying virtually nothing about the mass killing by the Party of this perceived most prominent opposition force for their organs.

The New York Times did not publish stories about any of these events:

1) David Kilgour and I, in July 2006, released at a press conference in Ottawa a report on the mass killing of Falun Gong for their organs[28], a second version in January 2007[29] and a third version in book form under the title "Bloody Harvest: The Killing of Falun Gong for Their Organs" in 2009.[30]

2) The United Nations Rapporteur on Torture Manfred Nowak and the United Nations Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance Asma Jahangir noted in their 2007 and 2008 reports that there were many more transplants in China than identifiable sources, that waiting times for transplants were short, and that the rise in transplant numbers coincided and correlated with the persecution of Falun Gong.[31]

---

[28] https://cja.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/Kilgour-Matas-organ-harvesting-rpt-July6-eng.pdf

[29] https://organharvestinvestigation.net/report0701/report20070131-eng.pdf

[30] https://endtransplantabuse.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/BloodyHarvest.WEB_.pdf

[31] Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, Addendum, Manfred Nowak UN Document A/HRC/4/33/Add.1, 20 March 2007, paragraph 40; UN Document, A/HRC/7/3/Add.1, 19 February 2008, paragraph 36; Report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief Addendum, Asma Jahangir, UN Document A/HRC/4/21/Add.1, 8 March 2007 paragraphs 107 to 111,

3) Ethan Gutmann released the book "The Slaughter: Mass Killings, Organ Harvesting, and China's Secret Solution to Its Dissident Problem" in 2014.[32]

4) David Kilgour, Ethan Gutmann and I produced a joint update on our separate works in 2016.[33]

5) The House of Representatives of the United States Congress on June 13, 2016 adopted a resolution expressing concern regarding persistent and credible reports of systematic, state-sanctioned organ harvesting from non-consenting prisoners of conscience in the People's Republic of China, including from large numbers of Falun Gong practitioners and members of other religious and ethnic minority groups.[34]

6) A people's tribunal, The China Tribunal, concluded in 2020 that the mass killing of Falun Gong for their organs was happening with certainty, beyond reasonable doubt.[35]

7) Twelve United Nations human rights experts in 2021 jointly expressed their utmost concern and extreme alarm about the evidence of forced organ harvesting of Falun Gong

---

Addendum, Asma Jahangir, UN Document A/HRC/7/10/Add.1, 28 February 2008, paragraph 40 and 41.

[32] https://www.prometheusbooks.com/9781616149406/the-slaughter/

[33] https://endtransplantabuse.org/an-update/

[34] Resolution 343

https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-resolution/343/text

[35] https://chinatribunal.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/ChinaTribunal_JUDGMENT_1stMarch_2020.pdf

practitioners, Uyghurs, Tibetans, Muslims and Christians.[36]

8) The International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation (ISHLT) 2022 policy issued a statement

> "Given the body of evidence that the government of the People's Republic of China stands alone in continuing to systematically support the procurement of organs or tissue from executed prisoners, submissions related to transplantation and involving either organs or tissue from human donors in the People's Republic of China will not be accepted by ISHLT for presentation or publication."[37]

9) The European Parliament passed a resolution in 2022 expressing "its serious concerns about the reports of persistent, systematic, inhumane and state-sanctioned organ harvesting from prisoners in the People's Republic of China, and, more specifically, from Falun Gong practitioners and other minorities such as Uyghurs, condemning organ transplant abuses in China".[38]

10) In Washington DC in August 2024, a Falun Gong survivor of Chinese forced organ harvesting, Cheng Pei Ming, gave a press conference about his experience.[39]

---

[36] https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownLoadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=26382

https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2021/06/china-un-human-rights-experts-alarmed-organ-harvesting-allegations

[37] https://www.ishlt.org/docs/default-source/uploadedfiles/documents/ishlt-statement-transplant-ethics-2022.pdf?sfvrsn=a562245_0

[38] https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0200_EN.pdf

[39] https://thediplomat.com/2024/08/first-known-survivor-of-chinas-forced-organ-harvesting-s

11) Professor Yuan Hongbin, in February 2025, released his report, excerpted above, of the October 2022 meeting of the Political and Legal Affairs Commission of the CCP which President of China, Xi Jinping, addressed.

12) The Falun Gong Protection Act, which would impose sanctions and immigration inadmissibility on those involved in forced organ harvesting in China, passed the House of Representatives May 5th, 2025.[40]

Any one of these events would have justified, far more, a New York Times news article than the onslaught of articles about Shen Yun. Yet, the New York Times reported none of them.

There has been a number of books published on forced organ harvesting in China with prisoner conscience victims. The New York Times has a weekly "Book Review" supplement to its Sunday edition. None of these books has been reviewed in the supplement.

1) David Kilgour and David Matas, "Bloody Harvest: The Killing of Falun Gong for Their Organs" Seraphim Editions 2009, mentioned earlier.

2) "State Organs: Transplant Abuse in China", edited by David Matas and Torsten Trey, Seraphim Editions, 2012.[41]

---

peaks-out/

[40] https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/1540/text

[41] https://www.abebooks.com/9781927079119/State-Organs-Transplant-Abuse-China-192707911X/plp

3) Ethan Gutmann "The Slaughter: Mass Killings, Organ Harvesting, and China's Secret Solution to Its Dissident Problem", Prometheus, 2014, also mentioned earlier.

4) "An Unprecedented Evil Persecution", edited by Theresa Chu and Torsten Trey, Clear Insight Publishing, 2016.[42]

The New York Times has a daily "Arts" section. In that section, film reviews appear. There has been a number of documentary films made about the mass killing of Falun Gong for their organs. The New York Times has reviewed none of these films.

1) Masha Savitz, "Red Reign", US, 2013.[43]

2) Leon Lee "Human Harvest", Canada, 2014.[44]

3) Ken Stone/ Irene Silber/ Kay Rubacek "Hard to Believe", US, 2016.[45]

4) "The dark side of transplant tourism in China: killing to live" written by Shin Duho, directed by Kim Hyeoncheol and Kim Yungyeom, South Korea, 2017[46]

---

[42] https://www.abebooks.com/servlet/SearchResults?an=theresa%20chu%20torsten%20trey&cm_sp=det-_-plp-_-author

[43] https://web.archive.org/web/20141218203707/http://redreignfilm.com/watch-now/

[44] https://www.humanharvestmovie.com/

[45] https://www.swoopfilms.com/hard-to-believe-movie

[46] https://petition.falungong.org.uk/south-korean-tv-documentary-confirms-organ-harvesting-still-occurring-in-china-v2/

5) Cindy Song "State Organs", Canada, 2023.[47]

The Times did have, at one time, a China based news reporter who wrote a number of articles on Chinese organ transplant abuse, Didi Kirsten Tatlow. Articles she wrote were these:

1) "Organ Transplants Suffer Amid China's Transportation Delays"
headlined November 12, 2015.[48]

2) "China Bends Vow, Using Prisoners' Organs for Transplants" November 16, 2015.[49]

3) "Fresh Doubt Over China's Pledge to Amend Transplant Policy" November 18, 2015.[50]

4) "Transplant Chief in China Denies Breaking Vow to Ban Prisoners' Organs" November 25, 2015.[51]

---

[47] https://www.imdb.com/title/tt33395194/

[48] https://archive.nytimes.com/sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/11/12/china-organ-transplants/

[49] https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/17/world/asia/china-bends-vow-using-prisoners-organs-for-transplants.html

[50] https://archive.nytimes.com/sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/11/18/fresh-doubt-over-chinas-pledge-to-amend-transplant-policy/

[51] https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/26/world/asia/china-organ-transplants-prisoner-donations-huang-jiefu.html

5) "Signing Up Organ Donors in China Can Be an Uphill Battle", April 6, 2016.[52]

6) "Doctor's Plan for Full-Body Transplants Raises Doubts Even in Daring China" June 11, 2016.[53]

7) "Debate Flares on China's Use of Prisoners' Organs as Experts Meet in Hong Kong" August 17, 2016.[54]

8) "Choice of Hong Kong for Organ Transplant Meeting Defended" August 18, 2016.[55]

9) "Chinese Claim That World Accepts Its Organ Transplant System Is Rebutted" August 19, 2016.[56]

10) "Angry Claims and Furious Denials Over Organ Transplants in China" August 24, 2016.[57]

Didi Kirsten Tatlow provided a written submission to the China Tribunal. Part of that

---

[52] https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/07/world/asia/china-organ-donor.html

[53] https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/12/world/asia/china-body-transplant.html

[54] https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/18/world/asia/debate-flares-on-chinas-use-of-prisoners-organs-as-experts-meet-in-hong-kong.html

[55] https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/19/world/asia/china-hong-kong-organ-transplants.html

[56] https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/20/world/asia/china-hong-kong-organ-transplants.html

[57] https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/25/world/asia/china-organ-transplants.html

submission addressed organ transplant abuse in China. Part of it also addressed the New York Times.

What Didi Kirsten Tatlow wrote about the New York Times was this:

> "it was my impression the New York Times, my employer at the time, was not pleased that I was pursuing these stories, and after initially tolerating my efforts made it impossible for me to continue. The newspaper made a hash of the edit of my story of Nov. 16th 2015, substantially changing its sense through an unfortunate cut at the end, and a senior colleague in Beijing attempted to pin the blame on me. The subsequent correction, which was not delayed due to needing to check anything (as it says) but simply due to inattention or overwork on the part of editors, shows that there were two editing errors only, not reporting errors. More broadly, I conducted several conversations in person or by email with senior editors but essentially my requests to continue this line of investigation - for which I'd need time - were ignored. Editors appeared to believe the organ donation issue in China had been solved by the state's admission that they had used prisoner organs and its promise of Dec. 14 they no longer were doing so. I was told there was 'nothing new' to the story. Another editor commented, when I tried to broaden the investigation from death row prisoners to prisoners of conscience, based on my conversation with Dr. Chen and Dr. Tong described above, that people who believed that prisoner of conscience organs were being used were on 'the outer fringes of advocacy' - that is, not rational. The usual arguments were presented, for example that Falungong are irrational and unreliable, and so on. It was clear to me the issue was unwelcome. I cannot be sure, but I suspect that this series of articles contributed to a decision by headquarters in February 2017 not to promote me, against the advice of regional editors. I left the paper in June 2017."[58]

58

https://chinatribunal.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/DidiKirstenTatlow_Submission.pdf

What Didi Kirsten Tatlow wrote earlier in her submission about conversation with Dr. Chen and Dr. Tong was this:

> "In early April 2016 I attended a Red Cross Society of China event at Beijing Hospital, where senior state health officials spoke about organ donation in China and commemorated organ donors. April 5th is Qing Ming, China's Day of the dead. Following the morning event I went to lunch with Dr. Chen Jingyu, a lung transplant surgeon from the Wuxi People's Hospital whom I had written about previously. Dr. Chen brought along a friend of his from Beijing Hospital, a lung surgeon called Dr. Tong (Dr. Tong said he had previously conducted lung transplants but was not doing so at that time as his hospital had stopped doing the procedure.) Also present were a Chinese journalist from Global Times and a postgraduate student at Tsinghua University who said he was the head of a student organization there, researching medical issues. We were a party of 5. During the lunch Dr. Chen accused me of causing him a lot of trouble with my reporting. Recently organizers at a major heart and lung transplant conference in Washington D.C. had rejected a poster of his after initially accepting it, on the grounds that the research was based on death row prisoners. Dr. Chen did not deny this but said it was my fault for having caused him 'trouble' with my articles. I said, I had nothing to do with the poster, and if it was rejected due to involuntary donors such as death-row prisoners then that was his responsibility, not mine. Dr. Chen asked, 'But what are we supposed to do?' I replied, 'Don't submit findings gathered from before you said you stopped using involuntary donors' (i.e. Dec. 2014.) He looked at me as if to say, 'that's impossible,' but said nothing further to me on the topic. During this conversation Dr. Tong was listening carefully. He turned to Dr. Chen and the following is a verbatim record of their brief conversation, from memory, which I wrote down immediately afterwards [in Chinese. The doctors appeared unaware that the reporter knew Mandarin.] (The lunch was not a reporting event.) Dr. Tong: 'Prisoners can't be used?" Dr. Chen: 'No (we)

> cannot use (them).' Dr. Tong: 'What about prisoners of conscience?' Dr. Chen: 'Can't use any of them.' Dr. Tong looked down at the table and said nothing further. Dr. Chen also fell silent."

So, for the New York Times, according to a reporter who worked for the Times, the mass killing of Falun Gong for their organs was an issue that "was unwelcome". This lack of welcome was not just something she suspected. This lack of welcome was to her, as an insider, clear.

Even if we view the New York Times reporting in isolation, without reference to the Times silence on the mass killing of prisoners of conscience for their organs, there are troubling aspects to this reporting.

1) Conflicts of interest not disclosed

Conflicts of interest those interviewed had were not disclosed. The Falun Dafa Information Centre posted on August 26, 2024, and updated on January 2, 2025 wrote:

> "At least three of the six former Shen Yun performers photographed and quoted multiple times in the Times' first article published in August 2024 have undisclosed ties to the Beijing Dance Academy (BDA). BDA is a Chinese state-funded organization and the only major global competitor to Shen Yun and its affiliated schools. According to BDA's own Chinese-language website, the CCP is deeply embedded in the academy, with the institute's leadership consisting almost entirely of CCP members (10 out of 11 individuals on the leadership team) and several school leaders being in charge of propaganda and the United Front Work Department.
>
> Three of the Times' six main interviewees have traveled to China to work with BDA, while one of the interviewees runs a Taiwan-based dance studio that collaborates with a BDA teacher. Publicly accessible Facebook posts of the studio mention that

> the performer 'studied under teachers of the Classical Dance Department of Beijing Dance Academy,' has collaborated with a BDA teacher, and sent students to the academy. According to parents of dance students at the performer's studio, in March 2024 students from families who practice Falun Gong were asked to leave the studio and given refunds. None of these conflicting interests were noted in the article about Shen Yun.
>
> Furthermore, that same interviewee had, for more than a year after leaving Shen Yun, maintained positive communication with Fei Tian College and even sought to return to the company, only to adopt a diametrically opposite narrative after developing ties with BDA. .... The Times' reporters were warned of these possible conflicts of interest. Many months before the articles were published, the Times' reporters were also informed that Shen Yun possessed communications in which more than one of their interview subjects expressed wholly positive perspectives of Shen Yun after leaving the company that ran counter to the narratives they were now sharing with the paper."[59]

The Epoch Times, in an article dated 12/4/2024 and updated on 7/5/2025 wrote:

> "The company [Shen Yun] pointed out that the woman [one of those interviewed by the New York Times] has dramatically changed her story about Shen Yun over the years.
>
> 'In the two years after she left the company, she wrote about how she loved her time at Shen Yun. During this same period, she also made several requests to return to the company or teach at a school that trained many Shen Yun artists,' the statement from Shen Yun said.
>
> 'Furthermore, she said she wanted to open her own dance studio, indicating she

---

59

https://web.archive.org/web/20250104130335/https://faluninfo.net/key-things-to-know-about-the-new-york-times-investigation-of-shen-yun-falun-gong/#p2

would help other aspiring young dancers join Shen Yun. All of this obviously contradicts what she now alleges in both her media interviews and legal complaint.'

However, in recent years her dance studio in Taiwan opened a collaboration with a teacher at the Beijing Dance Academy (BDA), a CCP-run dance school that views Shen Yun as a main competitor, according to a report by the Falun Dafa Information Center (FDIC), a nonprofit monitoring the persecution of Falun Gong.

In the past two years, the woman has also given interviews to two YouTube channels that produce virulently anti-Falun Gong content. Two internal CCP whistleblowers revealed earlier this year to the FDIC that the regime was feeding information to and sought to use the individuals behind the YouTube channels as vehicles for spreading anti-Falun Gong propaganda.

The Shen Yun statement questioned whether 'the radical and sudden change' in the woman's attitude toward Shen Yun was the result of these factors.'

'What is certain is that her new narrative serves as the basis for her legal complaint, and parrots a broader, sinister campaign to cancel Shen Yun,' it said. ...

The company criticized the articles for relying on 'a mere handful of former Shen Yun performers - several of whom have public connections with the Chinese regime and/or were let go by Shen Yun for violating company rules." It said certain media outlets had used the disgruntled performers' claims "to make broad assertions about a company that has worked with hundreds of performers."[60]

2) CCP propaganda against Falun Gong repeated

The Times, in their article "5 Takeaways From The Times's Investigation Into Shen Yun"

---

[60] Petr Svab "Shen Yun Alleges Lawsuit 'Undoubtedly' Part of CCP Attack Campaign" The Epoch Times

https://www.theepochtimes.com/us/shen-yun-alleges-lawsuit-undoubtedly-part-of-ccp-attack-campaign-5770463

published 16 August 2024" wrote:

> "Mr. Li [Li Hongzhi] has said that true believers in his teachings can expel illnesses from their bodies without medical treatment. For this reason, many Falun Gong practitioners try to avoid going to the doctor when they are sick."[61]

The article does not quote or cite or refer to anything Li Hongzhi said or wrote to that effect. Frank Tian Xie, Ph.D. and Tracey Zhu, M.D in a 2004 article titled "Ancient Wisdom for Modern Predicaments: The Truth, Deceit, and Issues Surrounding Falun Gong" wrote:

> "Never has he [Li Hongzhi] ever said that a practitioner should not take medicine. In fact, he has said the direct opposite. 'Some people want to damage [Falun] Dafa, and say things about not taking medicine like, 'We aren't allowed to take medicine once we start practicing this.' Actually, it's not that I don't allow you to take medicine... Nor have I said that the person absolutely can't cultivate once he takes medicine' (Li 1997b). 'We have not said that you should not take medicine when you are not feeling well. We have not.' (Li 1997a). When being asked what to do in the situation of food poisoning, Mr. Li said, 'If you really have food poisoning, you really have to go to a hospital'(Li 1994a)."[62]

What the Times attributes to Li Hongzhi, though not something he said, is standard CCP propaganda against Falun Gong. The just quoted article also states:

> "Since July 22, 1999, the state-controlled media in China first claimed that 700 people died as a result of practicing Falun Gong, and in the next week the number mysteriously became 1,400 and then this number was increased to 1,700. For cases

---

[61] https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/16/nyregion/shen-yun-nyt-investigation.html

[62] International Cultic Studies Association, Cultic Studies Review, Volume 3, Number 1 (2004) https://articles1.icsahome.com/articles/ancient-wisdom-for-modern-predicaments-the-truth--deceit--and-issues-surrounding-falun-gong

> that Falun Gong practitioners were able to verify, none of them were caused by practicing Falun Gong."

3) Lack of balance

The New York Times articles manifest a lack of balance between conflicting narratives. For instance, the first article in the series, "Behind the Pageantry of Shen Yun, Untreated Injuries and Emotional Abuse" 16 August 2024 was over 5,000 words in length. Within those over 5,000 words there was less than 150 words or .03% of the article devoted to the reaction of Shen Yun. In those less than 150 words, only the conclusions of the statement of Shen Yun were stated. There is nothing comparable to the massive assemblage of material supporting the opposite point of view.

This imbalance is noteworthy not only in isolation, but also in contrast to the reporting of Didi Kirsten Tatlow, a former reporter of the Times, who was stationed in China for seven years, between 2010 and 2017, and knew a lot more about what was going on there than the team which reported on Shen Yun. She wrote an article, cited above, about conflicting narratives on sourcing organs from prisoners sentenced to death in China, titled "Debate Flares on China's Use of Prisoners' Organs as Experts Meet in Hong Kong" August 17, 2016. Of the 870 words of the article, 170 words were devoted to the CCP/ Government of China position, or about 20% of the article.

Samira Bouaou and Alex Wu of The Epoch Times reported in the August 23, 2024 issue that

> "The [Times] report does not include the experiences of performers currently with Shen Yun, and some former performers said the NY Times omitted their responses that pushed back against the claims."[63]

---

[63] https://www.theepochtimes.com/china/overseas-chinese-journalists-criticize-new-york-times-attack-on-shen-yun-5711493

That is to say that the Times reported the answers of those who said something which fit in with their narrative and did not report the answers of those whose answers contradicted their narrative.

In addition to the litany of information the Times did not report about the mass killing of prisoner of conscience for their organs, the Times did not report any information contrary to their narrative about Shen Yun. Shen Yun held a press conference at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in mid-town New York, March 26 2025. The press conference, released the results of a petition criticizing CCP transnational repression against Shen Yun and its weaponization of the New York Times for that purpose.

The petition collected 1,557 signatures, including those of 624 Shen Yun dancers, musicians, and production staff; 142 former dancers and musicians; and 791 of their family members, mostly parents.[64] The Times did not carry a news report on the press conference.

To get back to the Xi strategy of reliance mainly on media whose viewpoints about the CCP are ambiguous when engaging in public opinion attacks on Falun Gong, to call the New York Times a medium whose viewpoints about the CCP are ambiguous is overly kind to the Times. All one can say on the other side of the ledger was that they once had Didi Kirsten Tatlow on staff. However, that was long before President Xi launched his new strategy. By the time he did, the Times was a medium ripe for the picking.

c) Targeting the founder of Falun Gong

[64] "Over 1,500 Shen Yun Performers and Family Members Call for Investigation of CCP Influence Targeting the Art Group" NTD Television https://www.ntd.com/over-1500-shen-yun-performers-and-family-members-call-for-investigation-of-ccp-influence-targeting-the-art-group_1056689.html

The third strategy President Xi endorsed at the October 2022 meeting of Political and Legal Commission of the CCP was targeting the founder of Falun Gong, Li Hong Zhi. One of the articles of the New York Times cited above goes into elaborate detail about how Li Hong Zhi is supposedly profiting financially from the earnings of the dance company. The Shen Yun Performing Arts issued a press release also cited above which goes into equally elaborate detail presenting refutations of all the accusations made against Li Hongzhi by the New York Times.

Those interested in sorting out this dispute are welcome to read the charges and responses. Here there are two observations to be made. One is that the accusations published by the New York Times against Li Hong Zhi come right out of the Xi Jinping playbook. The other is that they have nothing to do with the killing of Falun Gong for their organs.

d) Lawfare

The fourth strategy Xi Jinping set out was using judicial systems to launch attacks on Falun Gong through lawfare. There is an example drawn here too from Shen Yun. There are two pending lawsuits against Shen Yun by former dancers complaining about working conditions, pay and the age at which they working.

One former dancer, Chang Chun-Ko, commenced a lawsuit against Shen Yun on November 24, 2024. An article by the New York Times, cited above, about the lawsuit was published the next day.

The New York Times, in its article of April 18, 2025 cited above, reports that two former dancers, Sun Zan and Cheng Qingling, commenced a lawsuit that very day. The former dancers or someone on their behalf presumably contacted the New York Times shortly after these lawsuits were commenced.

Shen Yun on December 2nd, 2024 posted a reaction to the first lawsuit with considerable background information.[65] The Falun Dafa Information Centre has written that "A lawyer specializing in challenging frivolous legal complaints said that adding such attention-grabbing accusations" as labour rights violations and even human trafficking "is typical of 'lawfare' tactics where the legal complaint is as much about generating headlines as it is about making a legal argument."[66] Whatever the merits of the individual lawsuits, the complainants represent a small minority of the dancers.

Another example of lawfare strategy comes from Gan Jing World. Gan Jing World is an online platform and video sharing service founded, like Shen Yun and NTD, by Falun Gong practitioners. YouTube filed a court complaint dated December 18, 2024 against Gan Jing World for copyright infringement.[67]

The court complaint against Gan Jing World describes Gan Jing world as "a non-profit organization aligned with the Falun Gong 'cult'." Calling a set of exercises a cult is linguistically meaningless. The diverse, dispersed millions of Falun Gong practitioners have none of the characteristics of members of a cult.

---

[65] "The Disquieting Backstory of the Civil Complaint Targeting Shen Yun" https://www.shenyunperformingarts.org/news/view/article/e/P5tXMoOGM_c/disquieting-backstory-of-civil-complaint-targeting-shen-yun.html?utm_source=Adwords_Search_Grant&utm_campaign=v2208_EN-SYpa-MaxCnv$_DSAsypa&utm_adgroup=dsa-EN-sypa.org&device=c&keyword=&gclid=Cj0KCQjw1JjDBhDjARIsABlM2Ss2jtA5qLCwu8AD3BtZAjjNK0SdVGCXrE9MsfmO9XLteYWFDk0RL7YaAotQEALw_wcB&campaignId=17668440370&adgroupId=147004776668&network=g&gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=17668440370&gbraid=0AAAADpEWSyWEf1WB3KCuf0t2YeFxRazB

[66] https://web.archive.org/web/20250104130335/https://faluninfo.net/key-things-to-know-about-the-new-york-times-investigation-of-shen-yun-falun-gong/#p2

[67] https://variety.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/YouTube-v.-Ganjingworld.pdf

Calling Falun Gong a cult tells us nothing about Falun Gong; but it tells us a lot about the caller. Calling Falun Gong a cult is a hallmark of CCP propaganda against Falun Gong.

e) Targeting Falun Gong media

The fifth strategy Xi Jinping set out was messing up the Falun Gong founded media from the inside. One can see that strategy playing out as well.

Though Shen Yun, as a dance company, is not a traditional medium of communication, it does have in every performance, as noted, at least one dance number depicting the persecution of Falun Gong. Shen Yun has even been depicted, choreographically, forced organ harvesting. This sort of messaging is something that would have triggered the CCP transnational repression strategy of messing up the Falun Gong founded media from the inside.

As well, what happened to Shen Yun with the New York Times articles fit the CCP criterion "from the inside". Those the New York Times interviewed who were critical of Shen Yun were former dancers and not current dancers. Yet, for the CPP that would have been inside enough, since they were once inside and were communicating what they claimed happened to them and what they claimed they saw and heard while they were inside.

What happened to the New York Times?

Why is the New York Times so obtuse when it comes to the CCP and Falun Gong? Regretfully, their current behaviour follows a pattern. Historically, when it comes mass atrocities, the Times has a poor historical record.

The Stalinist forced starvation in Ukraine in 1932 and 1933, the Holodomor, led to an

estimated 3.9 million deaths.[68] The New York Times reporter on the events at the time, Walter Duranty, consistently, according to the Times itself in 2003,[69] underestimated Stalinist brutality. The Times observed in 2003 that the Times in the 1930s was "taking Soviet propaganda at face value" and that this was "completely misleading." The Times acknowledged in 2003 that the Times in the 1930s "dismissed more diligent writers reports that people were starving."

There is a similar story about the Holocaust. In a 2005 book review, in the New York Times, of the book "Buried by the Times: The Holocaust and America's Most Important Newspaper" by Laurel Leff, the reviewer excoriates the "neglectful coverage of the Holocaust" by the Times. The reviewer notes that the book catalogues "how little attention the Holocaust received in The Times and how, when it was covered, the stories were generally buried in back pages."[70]

Yesterday the Times was taking Soviet propaganda at face value. Today it is taking CCP propaganda at face value.

Ashley Rindsberg, in his 2021 book "The Gray Lady Winked" sets out a whole series of other historical tragedies, besides the Holodomor and the Holocaust, where the New York Times misreported, distorted or fabricated news. He has chapters on communism in Cuba, the

---

68 https://cla.umn.edu/chgs/holocaust-genocide-education/resource-guides/holodomor

69 https://www.nytco.com/company/prizes-awards/new-york-times-statement-about-1932-pulitzer-prize-awarded-to-walter-duranty/

70 https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/15/books/review/buried-by-the-times-horror-story.html

US nuclear bombing of Japan, and the second intifida, amongst others.[71]

The New York Times has forgotten its history. And it is now, with the mass killing of prisoners of conscience for their organs in China, paying the price, repeating that history.

A review of the Rindsberg book by Jeffrey Langan in Taylor and Francis Online states:

> "Rindsberg's examples cut across time and the political spectrum to show us how the paper of record has systematically misinformed readers, and how there are no serious indications that it has stopped doing so. The paper's account of events, perhaps like any source, ... is in need of verification before one acts on the information or story it provides."[72]

It may well be that the Times, seventy years from now, will acknowledge, as it did seventy years after the Holodomor, that its articles about Shen Yun and absence of articles of forced organ harvesting of prisoners of conscience in China were taking Chinese Communist propaganda at face value, that this was completely misleading and that they dismissed in error reports about what was actually happening. Yet, we should not have to wait seventy years. That acknowledgement should happen now.

In any case, the National Arts Centre and Place des Arts should have learned from the experience of others in mistaken reliance on the New York Times and engaged in verification before they refused dates in 2026. It is not too late for them to engage in verification now and reverse their booking decisions. When and if the National Arts Centre and Place des Arts do engage in verification, they will find everything that is set out in this paper.

---

[71] https://www.abebooks.com/9781736703311/Gray-Lady-Winked-New-York-1736703315/plp

[72] https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23753234.2023.2166857

Ultimately what gets published in a newspaper is the decision of the editors. Whatever role those interviewed or those who reported had in what was published, the decision to publish lay with the editors. The editors said, when it came to stories about the killing of Falun Gong for their organs, no. The editors said, when it came to stories that cast a bad light on Shen Yun, yes.

We have a clue to Times behaviour from what the Times editors said to their then reporter Didi Kirsten Tatlow. To repeat, she wrote:

> "Editors appeared to believe the organ donation issue in China had been solved by the state's admission that they had used prisoner organs and its promise of Dec. 14 they no longer were doing so. I was told there was 'nothing new' to the story. Another editor commented, when I tried to broaden the investigation from death row prisoners to prisoners of conscience, based on my conversation with Dr. Chen and Dr. Tong described above, that people who believed that prisoner of conscience organs were being used were on 'the outer fringes of advocacy' - that is, not rational. The usual arguments were presented, for example that Falungong are irrational and unreliable, and so on. It was clear to me the issue was unwelcome."

The Falun Gong community is huge. Before the 1999 CCP crackdown, the number of practitioners in China was 70 million people, according to the estimates of the Government of China, and 100 million people, according to practitioner estimates.[73] Since that time, because of the crackdown the number of practitioners has decreased within China. But the number of practitioners has increased outside of China.

---

[73] Seth Faison, "In Beijing: A Roar of Silent Protesters" New York Times, April 27, 1999 https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/world/asia/042799china-protest.html

What the global population today is of Falun Gong practitioners is difficult to say because, as noted, there are no memberships, no lists, no requirement for a practitioner to tell anyone that he/ she is engaged in the practice. Yet, since we are starting from a base of 100 million practitioners, one can say with confidence today there is an awful lot of practitioners.

With such a huge population, we can expect to see the full range of humanity. Because there is no overarching organization of this mass of practitioners, there is no spokesperson for the movement. The various entities founded and populated by Falun Gong practitioners speak each for their particular entity and not for the global Falun Gong community as a whole.

To target all members of such a large group with negative stereotypes, which is what the New York Times editorial staff did when stopping Didi Kirsten Tatlow from working on the forced organ harvesting story, is prejudice, bigotry. That is another explanation for both the New York Times reporting on Shen Yun and its lack of reporting on forced organ harvesting.

Yet, another explanation is just straight ignorance. The New York Times editors seemed to be unaware that the information, research, judgments and conclusions about mass killings of Falun Gong practitioners for their organs did not, with a few exceptions, come from within the Falun Gong community. The work came, almost entirely, from persons who were not Falun Gong practitioners. Even if one were to accept the farfetched hypothesis that every single person in the tens of millions of Falun Gong practitioners around the world were irrational, that would not be a justification for discrediting the conclusion of independent research on the mass killing of Falun Gong for their organs.

The ignorance of the New York Times is not just lack of knowledge of the Falun Gong movement. It is also lack of knowledge of the CCP. The statement that "Editors

appeared to believe the organ donation issue in China had been solved by the state's admission that they had used prisoner organs and its promise of Dec. 14 they no longer were doing so" is a statement that what the CCP says can be taken at face value.

The ignorance of the New York Times extends beyond forced organ harvesting to the CCP generally. There is nothing in the Times reporting not just about Shen Yun but about the CCP generally which addresses CCP transnational repression. The notion that the dancers they interviewed or some of them were possibly vehicles for the transnational repression strategy of the CCP, that dancers interviewed or some of them might have had conflicts of interest may well have not crossed the minds of either the reporters or the editors.

The New York Times to this day has on its masthead the statement "All the news that's fit to print." To the New York Times, apparently, anything that contradicts the narrative of the Chinese Communist Party on forced organ harvesting is not fit to print. The contrary, as we can see from the Shen Yun stories, is that anything that supports the narrative of the Chinese Communist Party on Falun Gong is more than just fit to print. It deserves detailed, elaborate attention.

There are more mundane considerations as well. It is easy enough for a reporter to interview members of a dance company who claim abuse. It is impossible to interview someone killed for their organs. Shen Yun operates outside of China where access by reporters is easy. The mass killings of prisoners of conscience occurs within China, in prisons, detention centres and hospitals, where access is impossible, except for pre-arranged, Potemkin village, visits.

The story of the mass killing of prisoners of conscience in China for their organs, with a few exceptions, has been, by the media generally, poorly told. However, only the New York Times is on record as actively preventing and sidelining a reporter who wanted to report on

it. Only the New York Times has gone to such elaborate lengths to present news which dovetails with the CCP transnational repression strategy.

Transnational repression

The topic I am addressing here is transnational repression. Not every element of the Xi Jinping strategy set out above amounts to transnational repression.

The silence about Falun Gong in the Chinese government sanction announcement of two NGOs and 20 Canadians does not amount to transnational repression. Better the CCP should say nothing about Falun Gong than continue their defamatory mantra against the practice. Nonetheless, the silence is an indicator that the strategy Xi announced in October 22nd is playing out in real time, whether it makes any sense or not, not just the silence component of the strategy, but the whole strategy.

The CCP silence should not be our silence. Their pretending Falun Gong does not exist should not lead us to act as if the human rights violations against Falun Gong do not exist.

a) The need for a coherent approach

The official Chinese justification for the sanctions imposed, that the 20 of us and the two NGOs sanctioned were guilty of foreign interference, is also worth noting. Foreign interference and transnational repressions have to be viewed from a double perspective. On the one hand, foreign repressive governments reach out beyond their borders to recruit, direct, harass, threaten and intimidate their diaspora. On the other hand, these same governments criticize, as we can see, human rights advocates for interfering in internal affairs under the guise of human rights advocacy.

We need to unify these two perspectives so that we have a coherent approach to foreign interference and transnational repression which works in both contexts. The way to do that is through a focus on democracy. It is impossible to address a question about how best to protect and promote democracies without the answer being democratic values themselves.

Human rights advocacy abroad is unnecessary if human rights advocacy at home is possible. Although I would not say it is improper, the need for outsiders to criticize human rights violations of a democratic government is far less than the need for outsiders to criticize human rights violations of a non-democratic government.

In a non-democratic state, if you are a human rights advocate, you become a human rights victim. Transnational repression and foreign interference target not just nationals abroad. They also target human rights advocates abroad. Yet, the risk is far less for human rights advocates abroad from repressive governments than it is for human rights advocates advocating for respect for human rights within their own countries.

I have been the object of

1) an attempted bombing by Iran at Villepinte near Paris because of my support for a democratic opposition to the clerical regime,

2) court judgments against me in Russia for writing extremist literature,

3) a drive-by shooting of the office of an NGO hosting a talk I was to give in Australia on forced organ harvesting in China,

4) a telephone death threat from the Chinese police and, as noted,

5) Chinese sanctions.

Yet, those incidents, as alarming as they are, are nothing compared to what locals face when advocating respect for human rights in repressive countries.

Take the case of Gao Zhisheng, an international human rights lawyer much like myself, except for the fact that he was based in China and not abroad. An NGO in May 2006 asked David Kilgour and me, as independent experts, to investigate and write a report on the allegations into organ harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners in China. Our initial inclination, to do this investigation, was to seek to go to China.

To go to China, we needed visas. Generally, an application for a visa is more likely to succeed when the application is accompanied by an invitation from someone in the country from which the visa is sought. We cast about in several directions for an invitation from China to do this work. The person who responded was Gao Zhisheng.

In his invitation letter, Gao wrote:

> "As all my [land] telephones and networks have been cut off, I can only communicate [by cell phone] through reporters and the media."

And that is indeed how we got our invitation letter, through the media. Gao phoned in our invitation to a reporter. The reporter in turn phoned one of our interpreters to pass on the invitation. The reporter then filed the invitation with her newspaper, the Epoch Times, which printed it in their issue of June 11, 2006.

We felt uneasy about what Gao had done, because he was putting himself at risk by inviting us in this manner. He anticipated and answered this concern in his letter, writing:

> "You may be worried that my support and invitation to you may endanger me. But the danger I am facing is not because of my support and invite to you, it is because we face an evil dictatorship system. Therefore, the danger already exists. The source of danger lies in this evil inhuman system, not what we choose to do."

David Kilgour and I asked for a meeting with the Chinese embassy in Canada to discuss terms of entry. Our request for a meeting was accepted. But the person who met with

David Kilgour was interested only in denying the allegations and not in arranging for our visit. So we never made a formal visa application and never submitted Gao's invitation to the Chinese embassy.

Shortly after his invitation to us, on August 15, 2006 Gao was arrested, tortured, prosecuted for inciting subversion, convicted on December 12, and sentenced on December 22 to three years suspended for five years. Though the jail sentence was suspended, he went into house arrest. The Government closed down the office of Gao and he was disbarred. His family fled to the US in 2009 and are now refugees there.

From 2006 to 2017, Gao disappeared into arbitrary detention, reappeared into house arrest, and then disappeared a couple of times. His last disappearance was August 2017. When in house arrest, he continued to protest the persecution of Falun Gong and human rights violations generally, through smuggled out publications.

Gao was badly treated before he stood up against the persecution of Falun Gong. But he was much worse treated after. His wife and children believe he is now dead, murdered by the regime and have asked the regime for his ashes. The Chinese authorities since August 2017 have said nothing about his whereabouts or even if he is alive or dead.

So, the Government of China now accuses me and my colleagues of interfering in the internal affairs under the guise of human rights advocacy. I have a very simple answer to that. Release Gao Zhisheng, if he is still alive, and leave alone all his colleagues who engage in human rights advocacy within China; then my own work on China related human rights advocacy can stop.

b) Bookings

Shen Yun had performances booked for Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, Place des Arts in Montreal, Quebec, Canada from March 11 to 15, 2026. On May 12th this year, the management of Place des Arts cancelled the booking without explanation. The dance company had been given bookings and performed at the venue in the past. The National Arts Centre in Ottawa, Ontario Canada refused on June 28th after much dithering to offer Shen Yun a booking for 2026, also despite having booked Shen Yun in the past. The National Arts Centre too gave no reasons.

Is this transnational repression? Despite the absence of reasons, the only significant difference between the earlier bookings and the present refusal to book was the New York Times articles. Those articles are likely the reason or, at least, the excuse.

There are other motivating factors for the denial of bookings. The constant threats to venues from the CCP and its friends mean that venues have to take security precautions for Shen Yun performances. Cancelling or not booking a Shen Yun event means that these security precautions and their accompanying costs can be avoided.

The CCP and the Government of China offer a bed of nails to its critics. To those who keep on good terms with the CCP/ Government of China, it is the opposite, the red carpet treatment.

For instance, in August 21, 2024, Chinese Ambassador to Canada Wang Di paid a courtesy call to Christopher Deacon, President of the National Arts Centre of Canada (NAC). According to the Chinese embassy website, Ambassador Wang said that China has cooperated with NAC in organizing Chinese New Year concerts for many times and that China is willing to deepen cooperation with NAC and organize activities diverse in formats and rich in content.[74]

[74] http://ca.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/sgxw/202502/t20250228_11565466.htm

The National Arts Centre hosted a Shen Yun Performance in 2011 and the National Arts Centre Orchestra toured China in 2013. Yet, in light of the more recent heightened CCP transnational repression of Falun Gong in general and Shen Yun in particular, that sequence is unlikely to be repeated today.

The same can be said about CCP/ Chinese Government associated productions hosted by these theatres. For instance, in January 2020, China's Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra performed at the National Arts Centre. Prior to the performance, the Chinese Ambassador to Canada hosted a reception at the Centre.[75] Events like this one too are likely not to be repeated if the National Arts Centre continues to provide a venue for Shen Yun.

An Ontario Human Rights Tribunal found in 2006 that the exclusion of a woman from the Ottawa Chinese Seniors Association on the basis that she was a Falun Gong practitioner was a violation of the Ontario Human Rights Code. The Code provides that "Every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods and facilities, without discrimination because of ... creed .... The Tribunal found that the spiritual beliefs of Falun Gong practitioners should be considered to be a creed protected by the Code.[76]

---

[75] China-Canada Relations, Embassy News, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Canada http://ca.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/sgxw/202004/t20200428_4614524.htm

[76] *Huang v. 1233065 Ontario*, 2011 HRTO 825 Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, April 27, 2011
The press release:
http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/tribunal-finds-falun-gong-protected-creed-under-ontarios-human-rights-code

The backgrounder:
http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/backgrounder-tribunal-finds-falun-gong-protected-creed-under-ontarios-human-rights-code

The judgment;
http://www.canlii.org/en/on/onhrt/doc/2011/2011hrto825/2011hrto825.html?searchUrlHa

At the Tribunal hearing, the Seniors Association tried to argue that Falun Gong was bad for the health of its practitioners, much as the New York Times has done. This was a particularly strange criticism since, as noted earlier, the CCP from 1992, when the practice began to 1999, when the Party decided to suppress the practice, the Party had encouraged the practice as beneficial to health, cutting down on health system costs.

The Tribunal, in any case, rejected these and other claims against the practice, stating "It is not for the Tribunal to determine whether or not a belief system is reasonable, whether it would withstand scientific scrutiny, or whether it espouses beliefs that are consistent with Charter [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms] values."[77]

One can presume, or at least hope, that neither the National Arts Centre nor the Place des Arts would deny a venue to Shen Yun simply because of the cost of security arrangements or because of the incentive of benefits from cooperation with the CCP/ Government of China. However, these factors become other reasons for what was done once the New York Times articles become a convenient cover for them.

Are the New York Times articles the playing out of the Xi Jinping strategy of transnational repression? Shen Yun and the Falun Dafa Information Centre, in the material quoted and cited above, have provided some evidence to that effect.

If one puts together the Times report on Falun Gong over the years both what was reported and what was not reported, the history has a decidedly pro-CCP, anti-Falun Gong bent. Ultimately, the problem here is not only what the New York Times wrote or did not write

---

sh=AAAAAQAVbWF0YXMgZ3JleSBmYWx1biBnb25nAAAAAAE&resultIndex=1

[77] Paragraph 34

but also the behaviour of the two Canadian venues in not offering bookings based, to all appearances, on these Times' articles about Shen Yun. The cancellation in Montreal and the refusal to book in Ottawa were ignorant, ill informed. The two performance venues look to have become the vehicles, via the New York Times, of Chinese Communist Party transnational repression as well as, arguably, discrimination under Canadian human rights law.

c) Reform

The G7 is a group of democratic countries that meet annually to coordinate common response to transnational issues. Its members are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. This year the meeting was held in Canada in June.

The International Coalition to End Transplant Abuse in China (ETAC), an NGO of which I am a co-founder and a member of the International Advisory Board, and Doctors Against Forced Organ Harvesting (DAFOH) initiated a petition asking members of the G7 at their June meeting to issue a joint declaration condemning Communist China's practice of forced organ harvesting, calling for its immediate end and adopting of an intergovernmental action plan to:

> inform citizens and protect them from being complicit in forced organ harvesting by obtaining a transplanted organ in the People's Republic of China (PRC) by aiding and abetting forced organ harvesting through medical practice, research or training.
>
> halt any exchange in transplant-related practice, research or training with the PRC until it offers proof that forced organ harvesting of prisoners of conscience has ceased, verified by independent, unannounced inspections.
>
> initiate annual parliamentary hearings regarding the PRC's forced organ harvesting and provide annual reports that include witness and expert testimonies.

> begin investigations to determine accountability for any acts contrary to the provisions of the Genocide Convention committed against Falun Gong practitioners, Uyghurs and others in the PRC.[78]

Despite the petition, the G7 did not adopt such a plan. However, it did adopt a statement on transnational repression. The statement condemned, amongst other practices "direct or implicit threats against family members". The statement recognized "the important role played by all partners, including civil society, academia and the private sector, in countering this threat."[79]

In terms of substance, the statement recommended the promotion of accountability to increase the costs for those who engage in acts of transnational repression. The G7 proposed to do that by these measures:

1) reporting on transnational repression as an important vector of foreign interference in G7 Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) public reports,
2) developing a Transnational Repression Resilience and Response Framework that includes a compendium of best practices,
3) launching a Digital Transnational Repression Detection Academy to build collective capacity to detect transnational repression online, and
4) supporting those who may be targets of transnational repression as well as members of civil society who are actively working to counter the threat.

All these initiatives are welcome. The fact remains that right now there is more or less nothing anywhere directed specifically against transnational repression.

---

[78] https://fohpetition.org/

[79] https://g7.canada.ca/en/news-and-media/news/g7-leaders-statement-on-transnational-repression/

There is legislation or proposed legislation in several countries requiring registration of foreign agents. There is such legislation in Canada enacted June 20, 2024,[80] but inexplicably not operationalized more than a year after its enactment.

When and if the legislation takes effect, it would require registration of any person who carries out, under the direction of or in association with a foreign principal, specific listed activities in relation to a political or governmental process in Canada. Insofar as the cancellation of the booking of Shen Yun at Place des Arts in Montreal or the refusal to book the dance company at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa fall within the scope of transnational repression, they would not also fall within this legislation, because the booking of these venues is not a political or governmental process in Canada.

The Canadian Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference in Federal Electoral Processes and Democratic Institutions at which I, with other counsel, represented the Human Rights Coalition, a collection of diaspora communities, including Falun Gong, issued its final report in January 2025. Our Coalition submitted a lot of evidence and, in submissions, made a lot of recommendations about how to address transnational repression. The Inquiry Commissioner, in her final report, stated:

> "The Commission's work has also shown that transnational repression is a genuine scourge. I did not examine this phenomenon in depth since this form of foreign interference goes well beyond the democratic processes and institutions my mandate tasked me with examining. But what I have learned about it is sufficient for me to sound the alarm that the government must take this seriously and consider ways to address it."[81]

---

[80] Foreign Influence Transparency and Accountability Act, S.C. 2024, c. 16, s. 113

[81] https://foreigninterferencecommission.ca/fileadmin/report_volume_1.pdf

There are some laws which do not mention specifically transnational repression, such as the prohibition against threats, but which can be used to combat particular forms of repression. Yet when it comes to addressing transnational repression head on, the laws say nothing.

This is a long text. But it has a short and simple message. Transnational repression is a problem, a big problem; we need to do something about it.

.....

David Matas is an international human rights lawyer based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.