



The Disabilities Treaty: Opening the World to Americans with Disabilities

"This is about projecting U.S. leadership. It's about helping our veterans, promoting our values and our companies. This treaty doesn't change America. It's about America changing the world."

- Secretary of State John Kerry

Ratification of the Disabilities Treaty will:

- Open the world for the millions of disabled Americans wanting to serve, study, work, and travel abroad
- Promote American businesses, and
- Reinforce American leadership on disabilities rights

Twenty-three years ago, the United States became the first country in the world to adopt national civil rights legislation banning discrimination against disabled people. Since that time, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has had a profound impact both at home and abroad. Here in the United States, the ADA, in tandem with other disability legislation, has led to the inclusion of disabled people in all areas of life. Internationally, the ADA has long been regarded as the gold standard for disability rights. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ("Disabilities Treaty") embodies, at the international level, the ADA principle of non-discrimination, equality of opportunity, accessibility and inclusion.



Over 130 countries have joined the Disabilities Treaty, which is now the primary mechanism through which countries are working to ensure that disabled people have full access to their communities, and that the deplorable abuses threatening the lives of disabled adults and children are addressed.

The challenge now is to ensure effective implementation and enforcement of the Treaty for the benefit of the world's *one billion disabled people*. This includes over 50 million Americans with disabilities, of which approximately 5.5 million are American veterans with disabilities, who wish to serve, study, work and travel overseas.

In meeting this challenge, the United States will continue its long-standing engagement with other countries through bilateral diplomacy and foreign assistance. However, this is no longer enough. The center of gravity for disability rights at the international level has shifted to the Disabilities Treaty. Americans with disabilities deserve to have their government fully engaged in advancing their rights. That can only happen if the United States joins the Treaty.

Bookmark this page and check back for regular updates.

TWENTY SIX YEARS OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: THE LIVES, FACES AND STORIES BEHIND THE ADA

July 26, 2016

Courtesy of Vanita Gupta, head of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division

Twenty six years ago today, when President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law, he called it "powerful in its simplicity" and explained, "It will ensure that people with disabilities are given the basic guarantees for which they have worked so long and so hard: independence, freedom of choice, control of their lives, the opportunity to blend fully and equally into the rich mosaic of the American mainstream."

For more than two decades, the Department of Justice has worked tirelessly to enforce the ADA, ensuring that people with disabilities can live their lives with the autonomy, opportunity and dignity they deserve. Around the country, through litigation, technical assistance, guidance and regulatory work, we protect the rights of people with disabilities to vote, live, work and learn in their own communities, free from discrimination.

Today, Zavier no longer earns \$1.70 per hour assembling small company parts. Instead, with employment support, he works at a local YMCA, helping kids complete their homework and resolve their conflicts. The agreement the department and private plaintiffs reached with Oregon last year will impact 7,000 Oregonians with disabilities – Oregonians, like Zavier, who can and want to work in typical community employment settings.



Today, because of reforms mandated by a 2015 Justice Department agreement in Robeson County, North Carolina, Jayla and other children in wheelchairs will soon get the chance to access their local playgrounds, to enjoy their childhood and to play with their siblings and friends, just as all kids deserve.

Today, because of a settlement agreement the department reached with Augusta County, Virginia, last year, voters with mobility or vision impairments can access their polling places, so they can participate in our democracy without facing unlawful, unnecessary barriers to the ballot box. To build on this work, last year we launched a new ADA Voting Initiative – in partnership with our U.S. Attorney colleagues – to ensure that people with disabilities get an equal opportunity to participate in the voting process, including in the 2016 presidential elections. And just last month, we also published technical assistance on polling place accessibility for voters with disabilities.

And today, in part because of our efforts, Joe, who is blind, can make online mortgage payments on Wells Fargo's website and not have to pay a \$25 service fee over the phone. Under the settlement agreement the department reached with Wells Fargo in 2011, people with disabilities – including those who are blind and deaf – won't face unlawful discrimination when trying to pay their bills.

These stories represent just a sample of our success. Despite our impactful efforts over the past 26 years, we recognize that there are many unaddressed challenges and unresolved barriers in our communities. These barriers don't just hurt people with disabilities; they impact all of us. Helping people with disabilities live meaningful, enjoyable and productive lives enables our country to reach its full potential. So we must forge on until growing up with a disability in America no longer leads to discrimination; until we, as a nation, recognize the dignity and value of every person

without question and until – to quote President Bush's powerful words at the ADA signing ceremony – “the shameful wall of exclusion finally come[s] tumbling down.”

Topic(s):

Civil Rights

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Updated July 26, 2016

About 5,000 Taiwanese practice the Falun Gong exercises across from the Presidential Office Building in Taipei on July 18, 2015. In Taiwan, Falun Gong is practiced freely, but in mainland China the ancient spiritual discipline has been severely persecuted since July 20, 1999.

HUMAN RIGHTS

CALLING A DICTATOR TO ACCOUNT

OVER 200,000 CHINESE HAVE FILED LEGAL COMPLAINTS CHARGING JIANG ZEMIN WITH CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

STORY ON A4



NATO

Distrust Escalates Tensions Between NATO and Russia

Each side accuses the other of aggression, while military forces build up

By Joshua Philipp
Epoch Times Staff

NIKOLAY DOYCHINOV/FRIGGETTY IMAGES



U.S. Army soldiers stand in formation during a joint military tactical training exercise with Bulgaria's army at the Novo Selo military ground, Bulgaria, on April 11.

NATO allies held their largest military exercises since the end of the Cold War in Poland.

See Tensions on A7

A July 13 meeting between NATO and Russian ministers to ease these tensions has had little impact.



EPOCH WEEKEND...A2

Landmark Rulings Could Be Boon to Pacific Northwest Salmon

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Citigroup Chief Economist Explains Brexit

Willem Buiter says Brexit could lead to the unraveling of the whole European Union.



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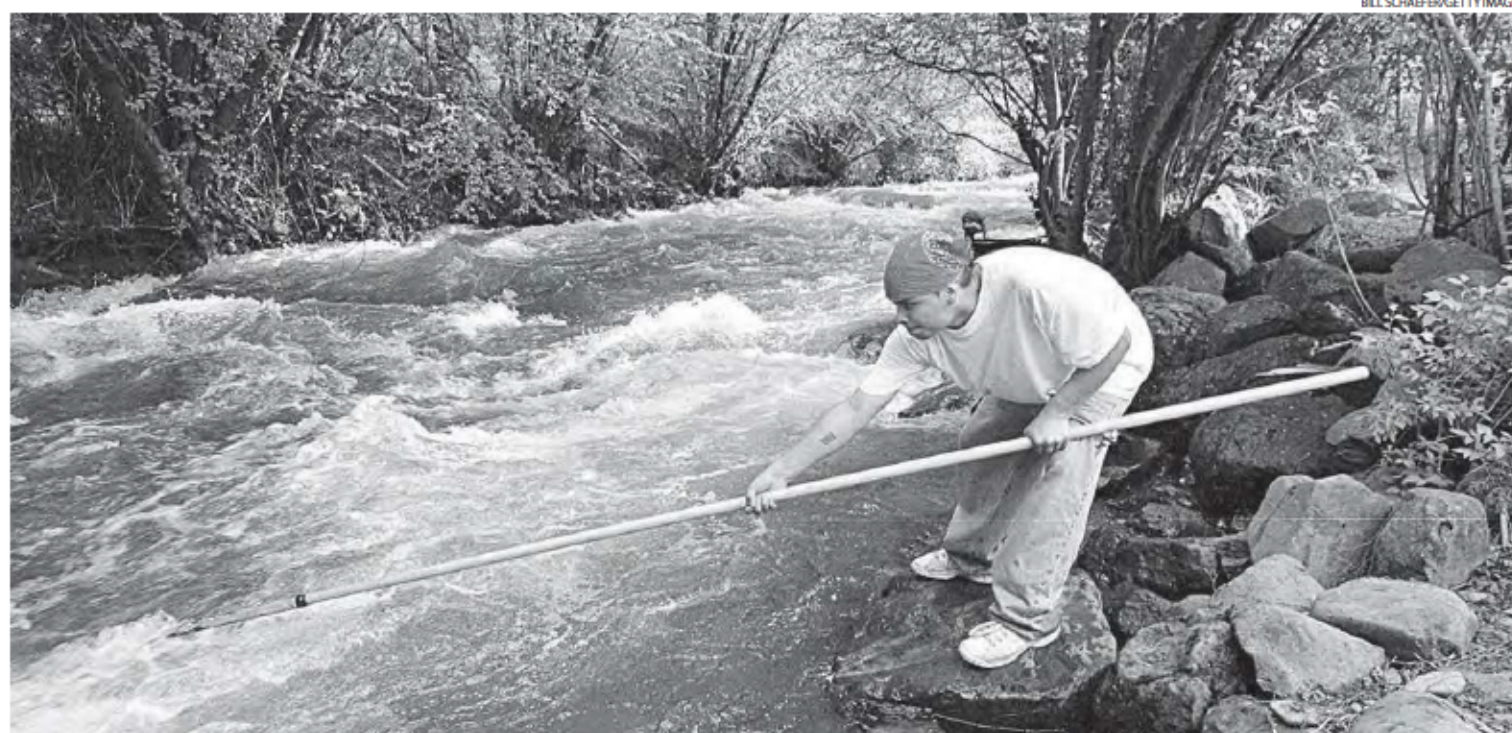
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Brian Pinkham, of Yakima Valley, Wash., fishes for chinook salmon along the Rapid River outside of Riggins, Idaho, in this file photo.

Landmark Rulings Could Be Boon to Pacific Northwest Salmon

By Genevieve Belmaker
Epoch Times Staff

Recent rulings in U.S. federal court could have a significant impact on the population and lifespan of salmon in Northwest rivers. The health and numbers of salmon in the region—which includes Canada, Washington state, Oregon, California, and Idaho—have long presented challenges.

In late June, a federal appeals court ruled that treaties guarantee the rights of Native American tribes to fish for salmon. The court also ruled that the tribes have a right for there to be salmon to catch.

The interests of Native American tribes, who were promised the right to access salmon in treaties signed 150 years ago, have sometimes clashed with interests in the industrial, energy, development, and agricultural sectors. Changes in the natural environment, due to pollution and global warming, have also contributed to the decline in salmon runs over time, according to numerous extensive studies by biologists.

The June ruling upholds a 2013 order that Washington state must replace hundreds of culverts with more salmon-friendly setups, such as bridges. The culverts—underground diversions for streams to flow under roads—are made of large pipes that can block migrating fish.

In May, a federal judge in Oregon ruled that efforts by the federal government to restore salmon habitats in the Northwest have been insufficient. Under that ruling, four large dams on the lower Snake River in Eastern Washington could be removed. The Snake River is a major tributary to the Columbia River, the fourth largest in the country.

The removal of dams to restore the health of salmon runs would not be unprecedented.

In April, the federal government signed agreements with state governments in Oregon and California to remove



The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area in Corbett, Ore., on Sept. 26, 2014.



A chinook salmon leaps through water in the Rapid River in Idaho as it attempts to clear a migration barrier dam in this file photo.

four hydroelectric dams on the Klamath River. Those dams have been blocking salmon runs for 150 years.

Dams can have a devastating impact on the hundreds of thousands of more than a dozen species of salmon that swim upstream every year to spawn and die. They block the fish from migrating to their spawning grounds and degrade the water quality, leading to the spread of fish disease and algae bloom.

Salmon that manage to migrate and spawn also make a vital contribution to the health of forest ecosystems. Their nutrient-rich carcasses decay in the forest, feeding the soil and enriching biodiversity in the area.

Many Native American tribes in the Northwest also consider salmon sacred and use them as a cornerstone of ancient cultural ceremonies. Treaty rights grant those tribes

access to and sufficient supply in their traditional runs of salmon.

As several species of salmon have landed on the endangered or threatened species lists over the years, tribes have been vocal about the problem. Their interests are described as extremely personal.

"Our allocation of fish this year doesn't meet half of our subsistence for our people," said Yurok Tribe Vice Chairman David Gensaw. "This is a threat to our culture, our religion, and the economic survival of our people." The Yurok is California's largest Native American tribe, with about 5,000 members.

Environmental Degradation
According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the federal agency that monitors the oceans and rivers of the United States, salmon face

Dams can have a devastating impact on the hundreds of thousands of more than a dozen species of salmon.

more than the threat of culverts or dams.

"There are a few different categories of threats we talk about—one is habitat," said Michael Milstein, a northwest region NOAA spokesperson. "They need to have healthy river habitat to spawn and for the young to grow. There's been a lot of work to restore habitat because a lot of fish habitat has been affected by logging, mining, dams, grazing, and development."

Milstein added that water levels and temperature can also come into play. Salmon need cold water to thrive. Often streams get diverted to irrigate farms in agricultural regions, so the government is working with farmers to find solutions. That means installing pumps for farmers—instead of diverting cold mountain streams—and providing grant funding for installing sprinklers instead of using the more wasteful method of flood irrigation

to water crops.

Some conditions are beyond the government's control, though.

"Both last year and this year, a lot of the snow that's up in the mountains has melted pretty quickly," said Milstein. "A lot of that water has gone off, which means less water is available."

A particularly strong El Niño has also impacted the ocean water temperature, where adult salmon spend most of their lives. The warmer water temperatures mean fewer nutrients, which mean less robust salmon. The fish need a tremendous amount of strength to swim upstream to return to where they were born before they spawn and die.

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fishing Commission is dedicated to the issue. The commission is composed of four major regional tribes: Yakama, Umatilla, Warm Springs, and Nez Perce. They are looking ahead to deal with a range of threats to salmon, some of which are massive.

"The threat of fossil fuels and oil trains to the Columbia River system and its fisheries population is a major issue that we are dealing with," said Sara Thompson, a commission spokesperson. "Over the past few years we have seen an increase in water temperatures that is the direct result of climate change. This is something that the region will need to work together to address, and address quickly."

Thompson also said that the tribes in the commission want to start a regional discussion on the "health and management of our floodplains." They will start with a mid-August technical workshop, followed by the Future of Our Salmon Conference in October.

Floods and floodplains play a critical role in the health of rivers, and the commission wants to "develop a unified strategy to address climate change impacts for the benefit of the region's fish, wildlife, and communities."

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

» ABOUT US

Freedom of the press and humanity are fundamental to Epoch Times. In 2000, our media was born to provide truthful news coverage of events in China, where previously only propaganda and censorship existed. After personally witnessing tragedies like the Tiananmen Square massacre and the persecution of the spiritual group Falun Gong, at great risk to themselves and their loved ones, a group of Chinese-Americans started publishing the Chinese-language Epoch Times in the United States. Some reporters in China were jailed, and some suffered severe torture before disappearing altogether—but Epoch Times flourished, attracting a global audience of millions.

We now publish in 35 countries and 21 languages. From our news hub in Manhattan, we provide engaging, quality local news and feature content designed to enrich and inspire our readers' lives.

Epoch Times newspaper and TheEpochTimes.com is your trusted, innovative, and influential media organization. At our core are integrity and truthfulness in reporting—and giving our readers the stories, news, and information that matter most.

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» Award of Excellence, Feature Design Pages

2015 New York Press Association Awards

» Richard L. Stein Award for Overall Design Excellence (2013-2015)

» Photographic Excellence, First Place

» Feature Story, First Place

For reporting on one taxi driver's fight to save his medallion and his family's future

» Best Advertising Campaign, First Place
Uncle Ted's restaurant

Pokemon GO Causing Havoc as Players Trip Over Augmented Reality

By Petr Svab
Epoch Times Staff

The booming success of Pokemon GO might be a relief to parents who want their kids to get outdoors more. But the mobile video game might not be the safest pastime.

Players have been falling over things, falling into things, and falling off of things, as well as trespassing, crashing their cars, and getting robbed.

Police departments from Australia to Virginia are warning players to pay attention and refrain from breaking the law. The game itself contains a warning against risky behaviors.

The problem is, playing a video game can be hard to reconcile with functioning in the real world.

Pokemon GO was developed by Niantic and released on July 6 by The Pokemon Company. The game scatters virtual pocket monsters—called Pokemon—at map locations in the real world. Much like in geocaching, players have to physically reach a certain location as confirmed by their phone's GPS to collect the critters in the game.

Moreover, Pokemon only pop up on the game's map when the player gets close to them, making the players walk around and explore the area to find them.

Local landmarks, like libraries, parks, fountains, and police stations, can be marked as Pokestops and Gyms, where players can collect in-game perks or use their Pokemon to fight other Pokemon.

From anecdotal online reports, the game does make people travel for their Pokemon—which encourages players to exercise, visit local landmarks, and even socialize more, thanks to meeting other Pokemon hunters along the way.

Also, it's massively popular. The game, both for Android and iOS, has been downloaded over 15 million times, USA Today reported, citing estimates of research firm SensorTower on July 13.

At one point, some 21 million people were playing the game simultaneously, making it the biggest mobile video game in U.S. history, according to SurveyMonkey.

Stocks for Nintendo, the co-owner of the Pokemon franchise, have soared nearly 60 percent since the game's release on July 6, adding close to \$10 billion to the company's value, according to CNN Money.

But some say the game is a significant distraction and perhaps more dangerous than any other.

Distracted

While mobile games can be dangerously absorbing to begin with, playing them while walking down the street is difficult, as the real world keeps distracting the player.

Pokemon GO, on the other hand, forces the players to play while walking down the street,

distracted.

Reports have been coming from all over the country of people getting injured while playing.

Mike Schultz, 21, a communications graduate on Long Island, New York, took a spill on his skateboard as he stared at his phone while cruising for Pokemon critters. He cut his hand on the sidewalk after hitting a big crack and blames himself for going too slowly.

"I just wanted to be able to stop quickly if there were any Pokemon nearby to catch," he said.

Kyrie Tompkins, 22, a freelance web designer, fell on the sidewalk and twisted her ankle while wandering in downtown Waterville, Maine.

"It vibrated to let me know there was something nearby and I looked up and just fell into a hole," she said. Her parents had to drive her and her fiancé home.

Similar stories have appeared on Twitter—one player tripped over a cinder block, another fell into a creek, and others got sunburned while chasing the monsters.

There have been more serious cases too. After climbing over a fence to catch a Pokemon, two men fell dozens of feet off a cliff in San Diego and were taken to the hospital, NBC San Diego reported.

A man in New York, while distracted by the game, drove off the road into a tree and totaled his car, FOX 5 reported. He was not seriously injured.

To be sure, similar incidents have happened to people who were texting or calling while walking or driving. But there's a difference: video games are specifically designed to be absorbing.

Attention Drain

Video games can cause a high "cognitive load," according to Dr. Chris Ferguson, assistant psychology professor at Stetson University in Florida and an expert on the psychological effects of video games.

People have a limited amount of attention and concentration, Ferguson explained. A task that requires a lot of brainpower and attention prevents one from focusing on anything else.

The secondary task, like walking or driving, can even be taken over by a part of our brain that controls automated tasks.

That works just fine "as long as nothing bad happens," Ferguson said.

But, "if there's a situation that requires you to shift back into alertness and take deliberate control of the task, then it can be hard, since that area of the brain is already busy playing Pokemon," he said in a phone interview.

Pokemon GO indeed heavily drains attention, according to Paul Tassi, Forbes contributor on video games, technology, and the internet.

"[B]ecause the game essentially forces you to keep the app open and check it constantly, you are really not paying attention to where you are much of



People play Pokemon GO in Los Angeles on July 13.



Spearow, a Pokemon character, appears on a London street while a man plays Pokemon GO on July 15.

Reports have been coming from all over the country of people getting injured while playing.

the time. Add in headphones, and the game can feel downright dangerous because of how much it engrosses you," he wrote in an article for Forbes.

Tassi spent a day playing the game and was almost hit by a bike twice and once by a car. "I really do worry about kids playing this and not paying attention to where they are," he wrote.

Meanwhile, criminals have already found a way to exploit the game.

The game allows players to purchase Pokecoins, which are used to buy in-game perks. For 100 Pokecoins—or about \$1—players can buy a "Lure Module," a feature that attracts Pokemon to a selected Pokestop for 30 minutes. The place will be highlighted on every player's map, likely attracting nearby players to come and also try to collect the extra critters.

The O'Fallon Police Department discovered a gang of four, at least one of them armed, that used the "Lure Module" function to lure players to a parking lot (and possibly other locations) in order to rob them.

"These suspects are suspected of multiple Armed Robberies both in St. Louis and St. Charles Counties," the police wrote on its Facebook page. "If you use this app (or other similar type apps) or have children that do, we ask you to please use caution when alerting strangers of your future location."

Players have also been robbed in California, Texas, Maryland, and New York, news reports show.

Police officers of Pflugerville, Texas, spotted a man playing the game in a section of a police parking lot where the public isn't allowed. The player had to pass

keep out signs and go over a fence or under a gate to reach the area.

"I'm not sure how he got back there, but it was clear what he was doing," said Assistant Police Chief Jim McLean. "He was playing a Pokemon game with his phone up in the air."

In Utah, Ethan Goodwin, 17, of Tremonton, was slapped with a trespassing ticket that he worries could cost him up to \$200, after he and a couple of friends went on an early morning Pokemon chase at an abandoned grain silo. He managed to catch three critters.

"I wouldn't say it was worth it, but I would say I'm glad I have the Pokemon I have now," he joked. He added: "It's a dumb game, really, really stupid."

A couple in Ohio were arrested July 14 after they jumped a fence at Toledo Zoo to hunt for Pokemon, NBC 4i reported.

Three people were locked in a cemetery in Dunmore, Pennsylvania, on July 12. They were looking for Pokemon and didn't realize the cemetery closed at dusk. They had to be let out by the police, The Times-Tribune reported.

From players' online comments, it seems not uncommon for people to venture out and hunt for Pokemon in the middle of the night. To catch some of the monsters, it may even be encouraged. Players have reported water Pokemon can be found around lakes, fire Pokemon around gas stations, and "ghost" Pokemon at night.

"The poor police here in Colorado, they stopped us last night to ask questions about the game, and remind us the park was closed. There were about 30 of us at midnight, running around a park. I felt like an idiot, because I know better," user Trisha Abney commented on Facebook.

Some players have expressed worries on social media that the game could result in a fearful

property owner pulling a gun. This scenario could fall into a legal gray area in the nearly two dozen states with "stand your ground" laws that allow people wide latitude to use deadly force when they believe they are in danger.

So far, there seems to be no reports of such an incident.

The Pokestop Issue

The game lists as Pokestops and Gyms some places that hardly lend themselves to loitering.

Both the White House and Pentagon have been designated as Gyms in the game, possibly putting players at odds with security.

The Darwin Police Station in Australia has been designated as a Pokestop, prompting police to release a statement reminding users they don't have to enter the station to collect the in-game reward and should look up from their phones when crossing a street.

Multiple police departments have also warned players to pay attention to their surrounding and not trespass while playing.

The game's official website warns of some dangers.

"For safety's sake, never play Pokemon GO when you're on your bike, driving a car, riding a hoverboard, or anything else where you should be paying attention, and of course never wander away from your parents or your group to catch a Pokemon," the website states.

But a multitude of reports show many people have disregarded these warnings.

Part of the reason is that video games or other enjoyable activities can skew a person's risk perception. If someone playing the game sees a Pokemon behind a fence, the emotional buzz in catching it might outweigh their better judgement not to trespass.

"Their perception of the benefits to them, emotionally, are high, their perception of the risks to them are fairly low, so they decide to engage in the behavior, even though they may know more rationally the risks are actually higher than they evaluated them to be," Ferguson said.

He said some of the risks may be reduced over time. For example, the cognitive load is especially high for new tasks, so once players get more used to it, they may be less distracted by the game.

But that only lessens, not solves, the issue.

Meanwhile, the game is about to debut in Asia, the birthplace of Pokemon. It's possible we haven't seen any thing yet.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.



Pokemon GO on a cellphone in this file photo.

Calling a Dictator to Account

Over 200,000 Chinese have filed legal complaints charging Jiang Zemin with crimes against humanity



Former Chinese Communist Party leader Jiang Zemin, who instigated the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China.

By Larry Ong
Epoch Times Staff

Those living in China on July 20, 1999, witnessed a campaign of suppression that seemed to have sprung from an earlier, darker era.

Trucks circled Beijing's streets, their blaring speakers warning citizens not to practice Falun Gong, or Falun Dafa, a popular traditional Chinese spiritual discipline.

State-run television channels featured grave news anchors repeating, nonstop for days, the regime's denunciations of the suddenly "illegal" practice.

Students and teachers were made to engage in "struggle sessions" against Falun Gong, adopting the "correct" attitude towards the "deviant religion"—otherwise they were expelled from classes or dismissed from their jobs.

And practitioners of the peaceful discipline, who petitioned Chinese authorities to cease the eradication of their faith, found themselves arrested and detained in labor camps and jails. There, they were subjected to brainwashing and torture, and in some cases killed for refusing to renounce their beliefs.

It was a political atmosphere engineered to terrify and silence.

"The Chinese Communist Party thought that Falun Gong practitioners wouldn't dare to resist or speak out against them, much less file a lawsuit using their real names," said a defiant Zhu Keming, a millionaire interior designer who began practicing Falun Gong in 1998, in a recent interview.

Of course, that's just what he did.

Zhu, his wife, and her nephew were consumed by the injustice of the persecution, an open attempt to destroy an entire faith, and sought legal recourse from China's own courts. On Aug. 25, 2000, Zhu and his nephew-in-law (the wife's name was removed from the filing at the last minute) became the first Falun Gong practitioners to file a criminal complaint against then-Party leader Jiang Zemin for his role in ordering the persecution.

Their daring resulted in the arrest of Zhu Keming and Wang Jie, his nephew-in-law, followed by their lengthy imprisonment, horrendous abuse in custody, and then finally Wang's death. Wang was released after suffering extreme torture in detention, and succumbed to his injuries six months later. Zhu emerged from jail five years on, gaunt, hairless, and short of nine teeth.

Almost sixteen years later, hundreds of thousands of lawsuits

have been filed against Jiang Zemin in the regime's highest legal bodies. Some of the Falun Gong practitioners and other Chinese citizens who lodged the complaints have faced retaliation from local security forces, but nothing as severe as the treatment meted out to Zhu and Wang in the early 2000s.

The wave of lawsuits against Jiang represents an unprecedented effort to bring a former Chinese dictator to justice. While Falun Gong remains the largest persecuted group in China today, the phenomenon of suing Jiang may provide the current Party leader, Xi Jinping, an acceptable means of solving one of China's most gnawing social and political problems. Xi has an opportunity to end the campaign against Falun Gong, lay it at the feet of the leader who is responsible for it, and reconsider the future of China's political arrangements—if it's a choice he wishes to make.

From Taskmaster to Teetotaler

Chinese energy practices, known as qigong, had become extremely popular in China during the 1980s and 1990s, mainly because of the health benefits that practitioners felt. Despite the spiritual influences embedded in qigong, China's atheist communist rulers supported the so-called "qigong fever," and established research institutes that published serious studies on the phenomenon.

Falun Gong was the star qigong practice of the 1990s. In 1992, Falun Gong founder Mr. Li Hongzhi introduced the exercises to the public, and didn't charge the customary membership fee. Seven years later, an official Chinese Communist Party survey estimated that 70 million people in China from a broad segment of the population—from cooks and cleaners to soldiers and the secretary of an elite Party leader—were practicing Falun Gong.

Duan Wei, the wife of Zhu Keming, said she picked up Falun Gong after witnessing its healing efficacy with her own eyes.

At a park in Beijing, Duan ran into a practitioner who had been diagnosed with stage 4 liver cancer but looked perfectly healthy. "As a doctor, I know if someone has liver, heart, or kidney problems by looking at a patient's face. But his complexion didn't match the medical diagnosis," said Duan, a well-regarded doctor who counted among her patients high-ranking Party generals and senior government officials in Southeast Asia. She spoke in Taiwan in an interview with New Tang Dynasty Television, an independent Chinese broadcast network that, along with this newspaper, is part of the Epoch

It's like insisting it's night when it's day—so many people practiced Falun Gong and became better people with improved health, yet Falun Gong was being cast as 'bad' and 'evil.'

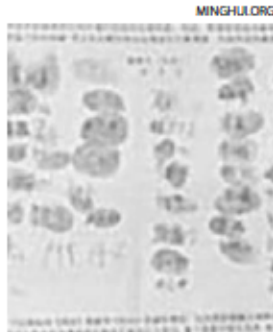
Zhu Keming, first Falun Gong practitioner to file a criminal complaint against then-Party leader Jiang Zemin



Wang Jie, who died in custody after being subjected to torture for practicing Falun Gong.



Hong Kong businessman Zhu Keming, who filed a criminal complaint against then-Party leader Jiang Zemin in 2000, says the Chinese Communist Party is the most despicable political group.



Over 3,000 residents from Jianli County in Hubei Province signed a joint criminal complaint against Jiang Zemin. To date, over 209,000 Chinese people have filed criminal complaints against Jiang.



Over 10,000 Falun Gong practitioners march in the World Falun Dafa Day parade in New York on May 13.



Falun Gong practitioners exercise in Beijing before the persecution began in 1999.

Media Group based in New York.

Duan introduced Falun Gong to Zhu Keming after they started dating in 1998. For Zhu, who had for years been occupied by making his fortune, the main draw of Falun Gong was the aspect of self-cultivation—the improvement of the self through adhering to the principles of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance.

Zhu's workers were fascinated at the changes in their boss's behavior and habits: Zhu the tough taskmaster became more understanding and courteous, and he went from drinking a dozen bottles of strong Chinese rice wine and beer each night to being a teetotaler.

Wang Jie, then 36 years old, was one of Zhu's workers and a Falun Gong practitioner. He had told his aunt Duan that her suitor wasn't an easy person to get along with, but revised his assessment after realizing that Zhu was constantly improving his character in accordance with Falun Gong's teachings. Zhu and Duan later got married.

Day Is Night

After reigning Party leader Jiang Zemin suddenly took notice of Falun Gong, he hastily determined that it ought to be "eradicated"—a bid to entrench his own dominance in the Party while he was at it, according to analysts of Communist Party politics.

"Can it be that we Communist Party members, armed with Marxism, materialism, and atheism, cannot defeat the Falun Gong stuff?" Jiang wrote in a letter to top Party members after 10,000 Falun Gong practitioners staged a protest outside Zhongnanhai on April 25, to petition the authorities for an end to illegal harassment following the arrest of some practitioners in Tianjin. The situation appeared to be resolved amicably by Premier Zhu Rongji.

But on July 20, 1999, Jiang launched the persecution of Falun Gong.

"When I saw the China Central Television's slanderous propaganda against Falun Gong ... I cried right on the spot," Zhu Keming told NTD. "It's like insisting it's night when it's day—so many people practiced Falun Gong and became better people with improved health, yet Falun Gong was being cast as 'bad' and 'evil.'"

Worse, practitioners everywhere were being rounded up by the regime's security apparatus for arrest, then sent to detention centers, psychiatric wards, and labor camps to be worked and tortured to death.

Zhu, Duan Wei, and Wang Jie first sent letters to Party leader Jiang explaining Falun Gong and requesting a halt to the persecution, but never received a response. They then sent thousands of similar letters to other regime officials, and to the media in the mainland and abroad.

Their pleas fell on deaf ears. Soon, accounts of practitioners being tortured to death started appearing on Minghui.org, a clearinghouse for firsthand information about the persecution.

The persecution deaths convinced them to do the unthinkable—bring a lawsuit against a ruling Chinese leader for crimes against humanity.

Zhu, Duan, and Wang buried themselves in books on Chinese constitutional, criminal, and criminal procedure law. They found that Jiang had violated several articles of Chinese law because he hadn't legally banned Falun Gong, not to mention he had unleashed a campaign of state-led, organized torture. They concluded the best way to seek legal recourse was through the submission of a written criminal complaint to the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the regime's

highest prosecuting body.

The original complaint against Party leader Jiang Zemin, security chief Luo Gan, and then-head of the Party Organization Department, Zeng Qinghong, featured the signatures of Zhu Keming, Duan Wei, and Wang Jie. Expecting a fierce reprisal, Zhu and Wang later removed Duan's name, and mailed the amended version in August 2000.

Chosen by History

The next attempt by a Falun Gong practitioner to bring Jiang Zemin to justice in mainland China had to wait till May 15, 2015.

Zhang Zhaosen, a Falun Gong practitioner from the province of Hubei, handed a criminal complaint against Jiang to a representative from the state prosecutor in the middle of his trial (for "disseminating information about Falun Gong on the Web") in Hubei's Xiangyang Intermediate Court.

The court received the documents and Zhang went home unharmed.

Inspired by Zhang's success, Falun Gong practitioners across the country sent their own legal complaints to the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate. These complaints include accounts of persecution that individual practitioners or their kin had suffered; a list of crimes that Jiang had perpetrated; and the specific Chinese constitutional and criminal laws that Jiang had violated while executing his persecution campaign.

To date, over 209,000 Falun Gong practitioners and Chinese citizens have lodged complaints against Jiang with the regime's highest legal authorities, according to incomplete data compiled by Minghui.

The courts appear to be accepting the lawsuits, under a legal reform passed in May 2015 that requires the regime's top legal

Distrust Escalates Tensions Between NATO and Russia

Each side accuses the other of aggression, while military forces build up

Tensions continued from A1

The tensions between NATO and Russia are reaching a crisis point, and a July 13 meeting between NATO and Russian ministers to ease these tensions has had little impact.

Each side accuses the other of “aggression” and “warmongering,” and each side is trying to one-up the other as they increase military presence and deterrents along the Russian border.

Reclaiming Empire

The main hot spot of conflict between Russia and NATO is Ukraine—with potential conflicts in the Baltics on the horizon.

Naveed Jamali, author of “How to Catch a Russian Spy” and a senior national security fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute, has a broad view of Russian spy operations. He said there has been almost no change in Russian intelligence operations from the Soviet era to today.

He spent four years as a double agent working for the FBI against Russia’s largest foreign intelligence agency, the Main Intelligence Agency (GRU). Also, his parents provided the FBI intelligence on Russian spy efforts for 20 years, while Jamali was growing up.

“The point is, they never changed,” Jamali said, noting they kept the “same mission, same objective, same manner, same temperament.”

A key point to understand, he said, is that Russia was always “hugely interested in military intelligence.”

“It wasn’t like the Chinese where they’re trying to steal an engine so they could reverse engineer it,” he said. “It was more trying to understand our military capabilities so that they can counter them, which is more traditional military versus military.”

Of course, for most nations, the goal of intelligence operations is to obtain information on how other countries operate—from the processes of military and diplomatic response, down to times when rush hour is the worst in specific cities. They refer to this as “tactics, techniques, and procedures,” (TTP), and the goal is to understand and predict how an adversary will react to a specific incident.

“When you talk about the rumblings of military aggression, it doesn’t surprise me because I saw them trying to collect that [intelligence on how the West would respond] for 20 years,” Jamali said.

“They’ve always viewed us [the United States] as the main enemy. The Russians I’ve dealt with viewed themselves as behind enemy lines when they were here,” he said, noting that with recent tensions, “I see this as a natural progression of what has been going on for a very long time.”

“Russia sees a vacuum and



CHRISTOF STACHE/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The European Union is no longer formidable to Russia’s ambitions, as it once was.

Mason Gaffney, economist

(Left) A soldier secures an area during an exercise in Grafenwöhr, Germany, on May 11.

(Bottom left) Polish troops land with parachutes at the military compound near Torun, Poland, on June 7, as part of a NATO military exercise.

(Bottom right) Russia’s President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin in Moscow on July 14.



JANEK SKARZYNSKI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



KRILL KUDRYAVTSEV/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

they’ve always wanted to reclaim the Soviet empire, so why not? With NATO on the ropes and EU on the ropes, who is going to say a thing? It’s a very smart, calculated move, honestly.”

‘Living History’

James W. Carden, a contributing writer at The Nation and the executive editor for the American Committee for East-West Accord’s EastWestAccord.com, argues that tensions between NATO and Russia can’t be viewed as a one-sided issue.

“This whole thing is based on a misconception. This whole ratcheting up is based on a misconception of what is going on,” he said.

With the Ukrainian Civil War, Carden said, “I don’t want to make it sound like Russia has played a very helpful role in all of this,” noting that Russia did take the war as an opportunity for its annexation of Crimea in 2014, but he also questioned, “Have we been helpful?”

Russia has aided pro-Russian forces in Eastern Ukraine, with about one Russian adviser for every three Ukrainian troops, Carden said. But while this fact

has been cited heavily to make Russia the aggressor in the conflict, he noted that NATO has been training troops on the other side of the conflict.

He said the conflict itself can’t be viewed outside of its historical context. Ukraine has a long history of being part of Russia, and Carden said Western and Eastern Ukraine are very different. The West has been, at various stages, part of the Austria-Hungary empire, and the East has leaned more heavily towards Russia.

During his own reporting on the conflict, while in Ukraine, Carden said he does not believe Russia wants Eastern Ukraine in the long term.

He holds a similar view of rumors that Russia wants to take the Baltics. Carden said Russia’s leaders understand the countries are part of NATO and invading them would risk a nuclear war.

From the Russian standpoint, he said, they are being surrounded by NATO forces, and Russia is reacting by placing its own defenses along its own borders.

“There is a severe lack of empathy here,” Carden said, and

questioned how most Americans would feel if they were under a similar situation—where a rival coalition of states was placing battalions of troops along its borders.

For Russia, “there is a very real fear,” he said. For the United States, World War II is seen as a distant memory, but in Russia, “it’s living history.”

He said Russia has been doing business with China economically, “but they’re terrified that one day the Chinese will take the Far East,” and they also fear NATO and the United States in the West.

Economic Distress

Troubled economies in Russia and the West may have made heightened tensions attractive to both parties.

In 1990, just prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union, economists Fred Harrison and Mason Gaffney were part of a delegation that spent the next 10 years lobbying Russia’s leaders to create a new model of taxation for a free economy.

Harrison, author of “Rent Unmasked,” said their hope was to build a new economic model

for Russia, “not just for prosperity, but for peace—because the two are intertwined.” If history had played differently, Harrison said he believes Russia would have “built a free economy that could have been the best in the world.”

But economic reform failed, leaving Russia with “a lopsided society and economy, with a vast upper class and large underclass,” Harrison said.

Harrison believes that Russia’s failed economy has led its leaders to search for a distraction. “Putin has got this problem. He has got to somehow keep social stability on something other than the prosperity of the people of Russia.”

“When things get out of hand at home, then you start going for foreign ventures.”

Gaffney, who lobbied Russia alongside Harrison, said that failing economies in Europe have also led to a decline in military strength, which encourages confrontation.

“The European Union is weakening drastically, as symbolized by the Brexit—not to mention the rebellious attitude of the so-called pig [Portugal,

Italy, Greece] states—and that of course is part of what encourages Putin to flex his muscles,” Gaffney said.

“The European Union is no longer formidable to Russia’s ambitions, as it once was.”

Harrison also believes this isn’t a one-sided issue, and said that NATO is facing similar issues and may share some blame of its own.

“The Italian banks are utterly bankrupt. Greece is a hostage to this ideology of austerity. So what do you do?” he said. “You say there is a threat on the other side of the border, we better start having NATO exercises, we’d better start equipping our army and get the factories going again.”

“Europe relies on gas from Russia. We should be friends with Russia, but here we are rattling sabres.”

The military build-up on both sides of the Russian border is a “lethal cocktail,” Harrison said. “It will take one mistake from one idiot” to put the whole region at risk, he said, similar to the “shot heard round the world” that sparked World War I.

The Best Cities for Female Entrepreneurs

By Emel Akan
Epoch Times Staff

Dell Inc. has revealed its top 25 cities in the world for female entrepreneurs, with New York, the San Francisco Bay Area, London, Stockholm, and Singapore topping the list based on their ability to “attract and foster growth in firms founded by women.”

“Innovation and job creation by women entrepreneurs is critical for a thriving global economy,” said Karen Quintos, senior vice president and chief marketing officer at Dell.

“Yet our research shows some cities and countries are doing far more than others to encourage and support this important subset of the startup community.”

Dell partnered with insight and analytics provider IHS to launch the Women Entrepreneur Cities Index (WE Cities), which is the first global gender-specific index. They identified five important pillars for cities: capital, technology, talent, culture, and markets. These pillars were organized into two groups—operating environment and enabling environment.

New York City ranks No. 1 overall for its ability to attract

Innovation and job creation by women entrepreneurs is critical for a thriving global economy.

Karen Quintos, chief marketing officer, Dell

and support women entrepreneurs with a top-ranked operating environment, according to the research. New York City ranks No. 1 for markets and capital, No. 2 for culture, and No. 4 for talent.

The Bay Area, which includes the San Francisco and San Jose metro areas, comes second overall, ranking No. 1 for talent, and No. 2 for markets and capital.

London ranks No. 3 overall and is third for markets, capital, and operating environment.

Stockholm and Singapore round out the top five in the overall ranking. Stockholm has the top-ranked enabling environment. Singapore has high

scores in talent, culture, and technology.

“Extensive data and analysis say that when impediments to female entrepreneurship are removed, there is a dramatic uplift in a city’s economic prospects,” Dell stated in its press release.

Access to capital is still the most important challenge that women entrepreneurs face, based on the findings of the research.

Creating a networking environment with incubators, accelerators, and mentors is also vital for female entrepreneurs’ growth, whereas cultural norms

and their policy implications can put serious binds on them.

“Women entrepreneurs are our country’s best bet for economic growth,” said Elizabeth Gore, entrepreneur-in-residence for Dell.

“It’s time for women to be politically engaged to ensure the right ecosystems are in place for them to scale.”

Dell has launched a platform called Union together with 1776, a global incubator and seed fund, to provide entrepreneurs anywhere in the world the ability to reach the people, resources, and education they need to take their ideas from seed to scale.

Citigroup Chief Economist Explains Brexit

By Valentin Schmid
Epoch Times Staff

The chief economist of Citigroup is not your average economist. Yes, Willem Buiter studied plenty of economic theory at Yale and Cambridge, but then he says funny things like the New York State Driving Test was his "greatest educational achievement."

He is also very outspoken for someone who works for one of the biggest banks in the world. He thinks Citigroup "must have decided that it was better to have somebody who tells the truth occasionally than to have somebody who tells what people want to hear."

Epoch Times spoke to Mr. Buiter about Brexit and its consequences, bankrupt banks in Europe, and how bailouts should be done without getting the taxpayer involved.

Epoch Times: Why is Brexit responsible for the share price decline in European banks and volatility in financial markets?
Willem Buiter: The European banking sector, with some exceptions, but across the board, is undercapitalized right now. This can be hidden, suppressed in an extend and pretend, delay and pray manner as long as market conditions are orderly.

People forget about the risk posed by massive leverage ratios and by risk-weighted capital ratios that are probably overstating the amount of capital you have because the risk weights are highly dodgy but also likely to evaporate when the risk actually goes up.

So Brexit was a reminder of the fragility of the European Union (EU), including the eurozone. If Brexit can happen then Brexit could happen. That immediately affects the cross-border banks, the banks that have had significant exposure in different parts of the euro area. They could be suddenly subject to wild currency fluctuations as new currencies are created out of nothing.

It hits the European banks just as the fragility of the U.K. and its risk of breaking up hits the British banks first and foremost.

Epoch Times: What will happen to Britain?

Mr. Buiter: Well, for the pound you know the consequences, right? It was trading in the mid \$1.40s when they started, and it is now at \$1.30 and will probably go down further.

So no doubt this is a big blow, a big recessionary, contractionary blow to economic activity in Britain simply because of the uncertainty about what is next.

What is the new relationship with the European Union, the new trading relationship with the rest of the world outside the EU, what is going to happen to the U.K.?

Capital expenditure will tank; saving rates will go up in the face of the increasing uncertainty. The most affected sector is likely to be London. If London is not the beneficiary of passporting into the EU, then the British banks will be at a significant competitive disadvantage.

If the EU-27 will try again to restrict the ability of London to trade euro derivatives and euro instruments internally, that will be a blow for London.

To a certain extent you can compensate for that. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has already announced a plan to cut corporate tax rates to almost Irish levels.



A European Union flag in front of the Elizabeth Tower, which houses the Big Ben bell in the Palace of Westminster, in London on July 2.



I think there still is a distinct 'too big to fail' issue in the United States.

Willem Buiter

Citigroup Chief Economist Willem Buiter in New York on July 6.

The key is that they can start the regulation war with the EU offering terms and conditions for banking and financial institutions that will make it attractive to be there.

So these things have consequences too. If you become a deregulated paradise, you will become financially fragile. We have seen that before. So I think there really is no hiding place. This is thoroughly bad news for the U.K., for London.

The institutional investors, the wholesale investors, will take a hit and that is right. That is what the Lord made them for.

Willem Buiter

Especially if it spreads and if there is a risk of it spreading a further unraveling of the EU, it is going to be bad news for the rest of the EU. The same uncertainty will take hold.

Investments will be subdued, saving rates will go up, and the willingness to take risks will be diminished. So this is thoroughly bad news. There is no good side to it.

Epoch Times: Why are European banks so vulnerable?

Mr. Buiter: There has been no adequate recapitalization of the euro area banking system. There are still huge capital holes which are being covered with the mantle of love and discretion. The extend and pretend game gets challenged periodically and this is one of these times.

The Italian banks are at risk now. There is worry about the German banks. Unless this problem is finally tackled and the banks are properly recap-

italized, there will be bank consolidation. There are fewer banks but more cross-border banking through the integrated European banking sector.

Unless we have that, [European banks] will be a drag on growth and a source of systemic financial instability not just in Europe but worldwide for years to come.

Epoch Times: How could European banks end up in this position of having very little capital against a lot of potentially bad assets?

Mr. Buiter: National regulatory supervisors apparently are not up to the job. There has been large-scale regulatory capture of banking regulators by the entities who they are supposed to supervise.

The European Central Bank (ECB) has now taken over the supervision of the 128 larger banks. It will take a while before it gets captured. This is the time to really implement reforms. I am somewhat hopeful there is an opening now that national interests can no longer automatically stop the necessary consolidation, recapitalization, and indeed closing down of banks because there are too many banks in Europe.

There is a chance now that the necessary amount of capital will be injected, but where the capital is coming from is the key question.

The banks will be very happy to recapitalize if the taxpayer puts the money in. If it has to come out of the pockets of the unsecured creditors [that is, holders of the banks' bonds], then, of course, the banks don't want to know about it because it means, technically, that they are in a situation of insolvency. Even though that need not last long and could be resolved over a weekend, the willingness to address the capital inadequacy by making those who should be paying for it—unsecured creditors rather than taxpayers—pay, that is still a war being fought very ferociously in Europe.

The right solution from an incentive perspective is clearly to

bail-in the unsecured creditors whoever they may be. The institutional investors, the wholesale investors, will take a hit and that is right. That is what the Lord made them for.

When you are willing to take the high yield, you know you have to take the risk and you can't have one without the other, at least it shouldn't be one without the other.

In Europe, the banks have been used for decades to have the de facto backing of the sovereign, which has allowed them to take risks that they shouldn't have taken—in the full knowledge and certainty both of their creditors and the banks themselves that they will be bailed out. It is time to kill that culture.

Epoch Times: What about U.S. banks?

Mr. Buiter: I think there, too, if banks are not adequately capitalized to the extent of the shocks that they are facing, then the first recourse should be the unsecured creditors. But there has to be a mechanism in place that you can do that without destroying banking. You should be able to collect the dues from the bank's creditors, from the bank's shareholders, without destroying the intermediation provided by the banks.

I doubt whether this could be done in practice yet. I think there still is a distinct "too big to fail" issue in the United States, in Europe, and not just for the banks but in many other financial institutions as well.

Remember it was insurance companies, it was government-owned entities like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in the United States that turned out to be too big to fail, and they were bailed out by the taxpayers. It really is time to stop this from a fairness perspective and from an efficiency perspective because it misaligns risk. And no rewards for those who are willing to take a free ride at the cost of the taxpayer.

Follow Valentin Schmid on Twitter: @vxschmid

» BRINGING PEACEFUL CHANGE TO CHINA

In November 2004 Epoch Times published the award-winning editorial series "Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party." The book provides an uncensored history documenting the lies and violence the Chinese Communist Party has used to gain and hold power. This publication has sparked the most significant grass-roots campaign China has ever seen. So far over 240 million Chinese have come forward, eager to dissociate themselves from a regime that has destroyed so many lives. Volunteers working for the Global Service Center for Quitting the Chinese Communist Party assist Chinese people in submitting statements in person, by mail, fax, phone, or email renouncing their association with the CCP and its affiliated organizations, the Chinese Youth League and Young Pioneers. Over 700 million Chinese are estimated to have been members of at least one of these organizations at some time. By renouncing the CCP, Chinese are aiming at peacefully transforming their troubled nation. Below, we provide a serialized excerpt from the "Nine Commentaries."

» A FREE CHINA

244,312,132 Chinese people have quit their association with the Chinese Communist Party and related organizations.

NineCommentaries.com

Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party

Commentary Five (cont.)

The Collusion of Jiang Zemin and the CCP to Persecute Falun Gong

It is not clear yet how much of the state's economic resources and the earnings from people's sweat and toil the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has employed to persecute Falun Gong. However, it is not hard to see that it would be an enormous figure.

In 2001, information from inside the Party's Public Security Department showed that, at Tiananmen Square alone, the expense of arresting Falun Gong practitioners was 1.7 to 2.5 million yuan per day (approximately US\$249,000 to US\$366,000 at current exchange rates), which amounts to 620 to 910 million yuan per year (approximately US\$90 million to US\$133 million).

In the whole country, from cities to remote rural areas, from the police in police stations and public security departments to the personnel at all branches of the 610 Office, Jiang Zemin employed at least a few million people to persecute Falun Gong. The cost in wages alone may exceed 100 billion yuan per year (approximately US\$14 billion).

Moreover, Jiang Zemin spent huge amounts to expand forced labor camps to detain Falun Gong practitioners and build brainwashing centers and bases. For example, in December 2001, Jiang Zemin expended 4.2 billion yuan (approximately US\$615 million) to build brainwashing centers and bases to "transform" Falun Gong practitioners.

Jiang Zemin also used monetary incentives to stimulate and encourage greater numbers of people to participate in persecuting Falun Gong. In many areas, the prize for arresting a Falun Gong practitioner was several thousand or even 10,000 yuan.

Jiang Zemin launched a punitive movement against a social force most beneficial and least harmful to the country and society.

The Masanjia Forced Labor Camp in Liaoning Province is one of the most evil places in the persecution of Falun Gong. The Party once awarded Camp Director Su 50,000 yuan and Deputy Director Shao 30,000 yuan.

Jiang Zemin, the former general secretary of the CCP, is not only the person who launched the persecution of Falun Gong but also the person who plotted and commanded it. He utilized the mechanisms of the CCP to launch the persecution of Falun Gong. He bears inescapable responsibility for this historic crime.

However, if there were no CCP with its mechanism of violence formed through many political movements, Jiang Zemin would have had no way to launch and carry out the evil persecution.

Jiang Zemin and the Party make use of each other. They risk everyone's condemnation to oppose truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance for the interests of a person and a party. Their collusion is the real reason why such a tragic and absurd crime was able to occur.

V. Bringing Down the CCP from the Inside

Motivated by his personal interests, Jiang Zemin utilized the inherent evil of the CCP to launch the immense persecution aimed at innocent people who follow truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance. He launched a punitive movement against a social force most beneficial and least harmful to the nation and society. This persecution not only drags the nation and people down into crime and disaster, but also defeats the Party at its very foundation.

Jiang Zemin utilized the Party to employ relentlessly all manner of evil means all over the world to eradicate Falun Gong. Law, morality, and humanity all suffered great harm, which destroys at the root the regime's legitimacy.

Jiang's regime employed all available financial, material, and human resources to persecute Falun Gong, which has caused an enormous burden for the nation and society and huge pressure on the financial system. The Party has no way to sustain the doomed persecution for an extended period of time. It can only use ordinary people's savings, issue national bonds, and entice foreign investment to keep the persecution going.

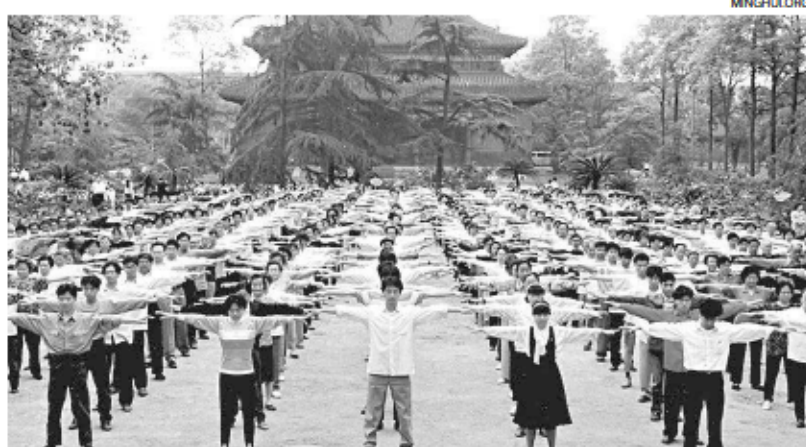
See next week's edition for the next installment.



The "Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party" book.



BENJAMIN CHASTEEN/EPOCH TIMES



MINGHUI.ORG

Falun Gong practitioners exercise in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, before the persecution began in 1999.



AP PHOTO/CHEN-MIN CHUNG

Plainclothes police detain a Falun Gong practitioner in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, on Oct. 1, 2000.

What Is Falun Gong?

On May 13, 1992, Mr. Li Hongzhi introduced Falun Gong, an ancient Chinese cultivation practice, to hundreds at the No. 5 Middle School in the city of Changchun in the northeastern Jilin Province.

Mr. Li taught the lecture attendees Falun Gong's five sets of exercises—four standing stances and a sitting meditation—and stressed the importance of adhering to the practice's moral teachings of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance.

From 1992 to 1994, Mr. Li would hold 54 lecture seminars, each held

over 10 days and attended by large crowds. Mr. Li then stopped giving lectures, and made Falun Gong free to learn and practice.

The health and moral benefits of Falun Gong quickly spread by word of mouth, and by 1999, there were over 70 million Chinese practitioners, according to an official regime survey.

Today Falun Gong is practiced by tens of millions of people, in over 70 countries and regions worldwide.

A Falun Gong practitioner meditates in New York.



LARRY DYE/EPOCH TIMES

The Persecution of Falun Gong

On the night of April 25, 1999, then-leader of the Chinese Communist Party Jiang Zemin brought Falun Gong, or Falun Dafa, to the attention of all members of the Politburo with an angry and bitter letter. "Can it be that we Communist Party members, armed with Marxism, materialism, and atheism, cannot defeat the Falun Gong stuff?" Jiang wrote, making clear the battlelines he perceived between the Chinese regime and the traditional Chinese meditation practice.

On June 10, Jiang created the 610 Office, an extralegal Party organization endowed with unchecked power to oversee and direct the campaign of elimination.

On July 20, mass arrests of Falun Gong practitioners by the regime's security forces marked the beginning of a brutal suppression campaign that is now in its 17th year.

Instantly, the country's media were filled with propaganda that demonized Falun Gong. All parts of society were used to place pressure on Falun Gong adherents, who stood to lose their jobs, their housing, and their places in school if they did not agree to give up the practice.

In the first months of the persecution, practitioners journeyed to the petitions office in Beijing to call on the authorities to end the suppression. Many were seized on the streets before they reached their destination and detained. Soon, it emerged that practitioners were being tortured to death.

Minghui.org, a clearinghouse for firsthand information about the persecution, has confirmed that over

4,000 practitioners have been killed from torture and abuse. The actual number of deaths is believed to be far higher, but can not be confirmed due to the difficulty of getting information out of China.

According to the Falun Dafa Information Center, at any one time hundreds of thousands of practitioners are confined in the regime's labor camp system, brain-

washing centers, and prisons, where they are brutalized. The horrific abuses are numerous: female practitioners being gang raped by prison inmates; guards using electric batons to shock practitioners' groins; practitioners being forced to sit on the dreaded "tiger bench," a medieval torture device.

In 2006, researchers found that the Chinese regime was harvesting the organs of still-living Falun Gong practitioners and other prisoners of conscience, for profit. The United States House of Representatives and the European Parliament have both issued resolutions condemning the Chinese regime for this act.

In a recently released 680-page report, organ harvesting researchers David Matas, David Kilgour, and Ethan Gutmann estimated that the regime had carried out 1.5 million transplants over the last 15 years, and that the bulk of the organs are believed to have come from Falun Gong practitioners who are killed in the process. At a press conference, Gutmann, an investigative journalist, likened organ harvesting to "slow-motion genocide."

The perils of torture and organ harvesting, however, haven't stopped Falun Gong practitioners in mainland China from hanging Falun Gong banners in public places, and distributing literature that exposes the persecution and explains what Falun Gong is.

These efforts have had an effect. In several cases in recent years, petitions signed by hundreds or thousands of non-practitioners in China have called for the release of a detained Falun Gong practitioner, despite the risk involved in signing such a petition.

Outside China, Falun Gong practitioners explain the persecution to Chinese tourists at popular tourism sites. Since the wave of lawsuits against Jiang Zemin in 2015, current Party leader Xi Jinping has been greeted with banners whenever he travels abroad, calling on him to act on the criminal complaints in China, and to put his predecessor Jiang Zemin on trial.

bodies to accept and acknowledge all criminal complaints.

Under the reign of Jiang and his immediate successor Hu Jintao, however, any attempt to start legal proceedings against a Party leader or even a retired one was unthinkable and impossible.

It took Zhu Keming and Wang Jie's failed effort in August 2000 to spark a very gradual change in the mindset of both the Chinese rights defense community and Falun Gong practitioners toward challenging Jiang's persecution on legal grounds, according to Hugo Peng, a former human rights lawyer in China.

"They were the first ones to eat the crab," Peng told Epoch Times, using a Chinese idiom to describe a difficult activity when performed for the first time. "Without what they did, perhaps there wouldn't be so many others who thought of using the law to scrutinize the suppression, as well as the crimes Jiang and others committed."

"After all, someone needs to take initiative, and history chose them."

Physical Destruction

In the evening of Sept. 6, 2000, Zhu Keming and Wang Jie were arrested in Duan Wei's Beijing home. Duan later learned through her personal network that Jiang Zemin and his security chief Luo Gan had issued the order to seize her husband and nephew.

Zhu and Wang were first taken to a secret detention facility in Beijing's Fangshan district, then later to Beijing No. 1 detention center, an infamous jail that held political prisoners during the Cultural Revolution and after the Tiananmen Square crackdown. Zhu and Duan had presumed that Wang would be treated better in detention because his parents were high-ranking Party members. But Wang's minders in the secret detention center, and later in the jail, were more interested in obeying Jiang's instructions to physically "destroy" Falun Gong practitioners.

In the secret detention facility, the prison guards stripped off his clothing and secured him under a dripping faucet, during fall in the frigid mountainous Fangshan area west of Beijing. They then, at their pleasure, delivered savage kicks to his back and chest. The internal injuries received from this abuse later contributed to his death, according to Duan, a medical doctor.

In Beijing No. 1 detention center, the ankle cuffs that were put on Wang wore away his skin and exposed the bone. Wang later told Duan that he

was put through many of the mind-bending torture methods administered on Falun Gong practitioners, as documented by Minghui at the time: terrible beatings, branding with cigarettes, toothpicks rammed under fingernails. At one point, Wang was beaten into a month-long coma.

When Wang was released on bail on Nov. 30, 2000, his body had been nearly destroyed—he required dialysis every other day and had no control over his bladder or bowels. In April 2001, some friends smuggled Wang out of China to Indonesia, where his aunt Duan was then residing. A little over a month later, he collapsed on the cold tiles of her bathroom floor and died.

After all, someone needs to take initiative, and history chose them.

Hugo Peng, former human rights lawyer in China

Zhu spent five years in prison and was put through similar tortures—the prison guards shocked his head, armpits, and groin with high-voltage electric prods, beat him, and deprived him of sleep by forcing him to sit atop a small plastic stool for six days straight. He was released in 2006.

Waiting for Change

Some of those who bring legal complaints against Jiang Zemin today still face arrest and detention, but no cases of abuse have been recorded that parallel what happened to Zhu Keming and Wang Jie.

"The persecution against those who sue Jiang has noticeably softened," said Zhang Zanning, a law professor at Southeast University in Nanjing City and a practicing lawyer, to Epoch Times in a telephone interview. "Even if arrests are made, it's not on the pretext of suing Jiang."

The case of Sheng Xiaoyun, the mother-in-law of YouTube celebrity Ben Hedges, is an example.

Last October, security officers in northeast China barged into Sheng's home and arrested her after she had mailed a criminal complaint against Jiang. A number of Falun Gong practitioners in Daqing City in Heilongjiang, a province that ranks among the most severely persecuted regions in China, were also imprisoned with Sheng.

However, while in detention, Sheng and the other practitioners

were allowed to perform Falun Gong exercises and recite Falun Gong's teachings. When Sheng was released 10 days later, the police even returned the computer that they had seized.

"Police treat Falun Gong practitioners better these days. They know that practitioners are good people who have been mislabeled," she said in a phone interview.

Zhang Zanning, the law professor, thinks that officials in the public security and the legal system are slowly recognizing that the persecution of Falun Gong was a mistake, and are waiting to see how the political winds change.

"For instance, in many of the recent Falun Gong cases I've handled, the courts used various excuses to postpone the prosecution of practitioners," Zhang said. "I reckon that they're waiting for policy changes from above."

Since coming to power, Xi has purged many of Jiang's lieutenants and their cronies as he consolidates his control over the regime. Men like former Politburo member Bo Xilai and former security czar Zhou Yongkang are known to have been deeply involved in persecuting Falun Gong. Even Li Dongsheng, head of the extralegal agency created by Jiang to eliminate Falun Gong known as the 610 Office, was purged—an unmistakable signal that persecutors would no longer be immune.

Xi has recently been "making all these moves that are at least ambiguous," such as the "displacement of the Jiang Zemin faction" and the "taking over of the 610 Office leadership," said Andrew Junker, a sociologist at the University of Chicago who is writing a book about Falun Gong, in a previous interview.

"I see no benefit for Falun Gong to polarize its relationship with Xi Jinping; it makes total sense to open the door as much as possible, to encourage him to make a step in the right direction," Junker added.



Over 10,000 Falun Gong practitioners hold a peaceful demonstration near the leadership compound of Zhongnanhai in Beijing on April 25, 1999.

Outside China, Falun Gong practitioners explain the persecution to Chinese tourists at popular tourist sites.

By placing sole responsibility of the persecution on Jiang Zemin in their criminal complaints, Falun Gong practitioners could have unwittingly presented current Party leader Xi Jinping an opportunity to end the persecution and not immediately implicate his leadership.

Meanwhile, Jiang Zemin and his sons are said to have had their movements restricted in March, and could now be held under some form of soft detention, according to sources familiar with the circumstances who asked to remain anonymous for security reasons.

Zheng Enchong, a prominent Shanghai human rights lawyer who came under house arrest after tussling with members of Jiang's "Shanghai gang," recently told international broadcaster Sound of Hope Radio that the security forces watching over him are openly discussing the plight of Jiang and sons, and his well-connected former classmates even invited him over to celebrate "the fact that Jiang Zemin's finished."

In an earlier interview with Epoch Times, Zheng said that many residents of Shanghai and human rights lawyers support the movement to bring Jiang to justice, and he volunteered to be the chief prosecutor when Jiang's case goes to court.

In light of the lawsuit wave, Zhu Keming decided to mail another legal complaint. "Falun Gong practitioners are not suing Jiang Zemin for the sake of suing Jiang Zemin... So many practitioners' families have, due to the persecution, been broken up; some have been killed for their organs, so how can we remain indifferent?" he said.

"I hope this wave of lawsuits against Jiang Zemin will grow from strength to strength," Zhu continued. "We will bring Jiang Zemin to justice, and then we can resume our normal lives."

Juliet Song and Matthew Robertson contributed to this report.



Falun Gong practitioners from 36 countries protest in Tiananmen Square for an end to the persecution and torture of Chinese practitioners, in Beijing in 2001.

Essence of China

How Japan Got Its Name and Other Influences From China's Tang Dynasty

By Leo Timm | Epoch Times Staff

When Japanese emperor Kotoku rose to the Japanese throne in the seventh century, he began a new age that would bring the island nation into a new era of civilization.

Across the sea on the Asian mainland was the massive and prosperous Tang Chinese empire. During his nine-year reign, Kotoku ordered multiple missions to visit the Tang capital of Chang'an, and started the reforms that would lead to Japan learning from and emulating China at its finest.

The transformations that Japan underwent in the following decades and centuries represented the Japanese elite and nobility's respect and admiration of the Middle Kingdom. Their efforts to replicate intact the core virtues of Chinese culture in their own architecture, attire, literature, calendric system, arts, and national character would shape the land of the rising sun for over a thousand years.

The Taika Reform Brings Tang Culture to Japan

Driving the success of the Tang Dynasty was founding Emperor Li Shimin, regally known as Taizong, who ruled

from A.D. 626 to 649. The sprawling empire he built stretched from Central Asia to Korea, and was an unparalleled cultural as well as military superpower that for-

Kyoto was planned and built with the same rectangular layout and architectural style as the Tang capital at Chang'an.

ign kingdoms regarded in awe. Taizong's imperial capital, Chang'an was a world city of over a million people and was bustling with delegations, students, and monks from around Eurasia.

Sino-Japanese relations took off in the later years of Taizong's reign, when Kotoku took the throne in 645. Known by his regal name Taika, the ruler launched a reform of the same name. With a mind to restructuring and formalizing the Jap-

anese state and economy, the purpose of the emperor's reform was to learn from and institute the political and legal workings of the Tang Dynasty.

Kotoku's reform lasted five years and ended the previous Asuka period of Japanese history that had begun in the fourth century. In the following two decades, Japan dispatched over a dozen diplomatic missions to China to study the ways of the Tang Dynasty. Such delegations, consisting of hundreds of monks, scholars, architects, and artisan women in addition to official diplomats, visited legendary relics, learned the classics, and brought back with them to Japan invaluable knowledge.

Mainstream Japanese society quickly adopted the cultural, spiritual, and scientific imports. A fine example is the spread of classical Chinese language and poetry. The Japanese had written using Chinese characters, called kanji in Japan, for centuries before the Tang, but the introduction of definitive Chinese works such as the "Classic of Poetry" (Shijing), the "Selections of Refined Literature," and "New Odes of the Jade Terrace" produced a typhoon of interest.

The popularization of Chinese verse among Japan's literate elites influenced the development of Waka poetry and other Japanese forms of literary work. In 751, an unknown compiler put together the Kaifuso, a collection of 120 poems by 64 authors writing in the styles found in China's Six Dynasties and Tang era. The works include odes to the moon, Chinese plum, the chrysanthemum flower (now the symbol of the Japanese emperor), snow, drinking, and Buddhist and Taoist spiritual cultivation.

Kotoku's decisions also directly influenced the development of the Japanese state. In 700, senior ministers who had studied in China or were the descendants of those sent to China received orders to create the Taiho Code. These laws, the oldest body of legal literature in Japan, were inspired by those implemented under the Tang Chinese and fully promulgated in 702.

The Birth of Japanese Writing

Despite being an East Asian people, the Japanese speak a language far removed from the Chinese dialects. Nonetheless, Chinese characters—which primarily represent meaning and not sound—form the basic components of the Japanese literary language.

It was also during the Tang Dynasty that, to adapt to the unique characteristics of Japanese linguistics and grammar, different renaissance men created the curative style of phonetic writing that is used today alongside kanji, the Japanese word for Chinese characters.

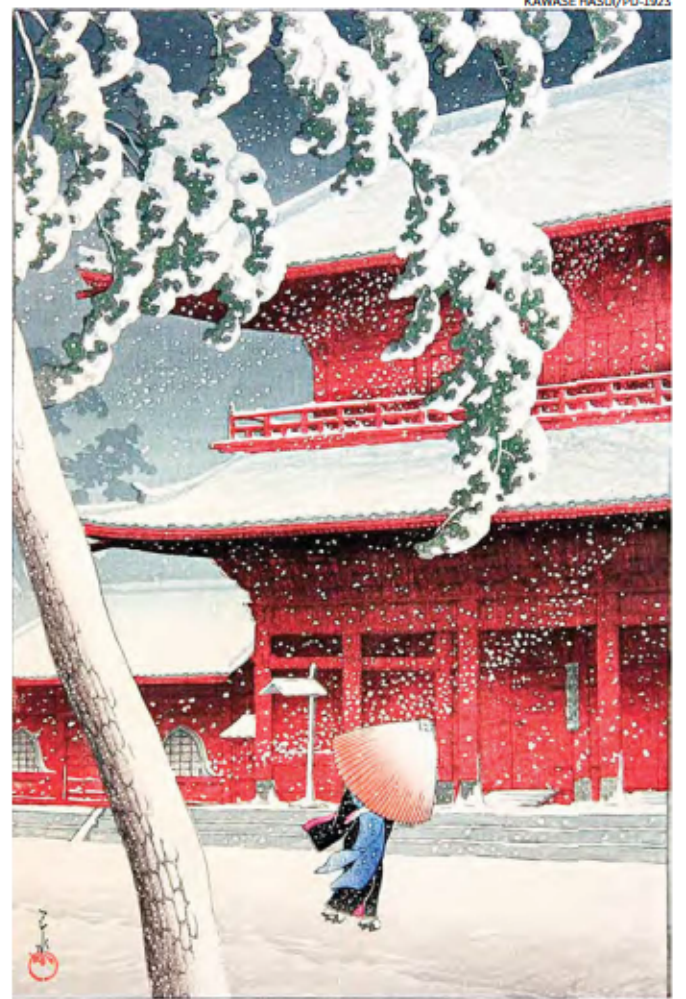
Kibi no Makibi was a noble of great scholarly accomplishment who made two trips to study astronomy, the Chinese calendar, military science, construction, and law in Chang'an. He invented the phonetic alphabet called katakana, generally derived from the straight strokes of kanji. Today, this script is mainly used to transliterate sounds and foreign words into Japanese.

Hiragana, the other phonetic script, was created by the monk Kukai, who studied Buddhism and Chinese classics in Chang'an's Qinglong Temple. This script and katakana came to be essential tools for writing vernacular Japanese.

Before the advent of kana, only Japanese who knew Classical Chinese—the East Asian counterpart to Latin in Western and Central Europe—could read and write. Kana allowed people to compose and read kanji in a way that fit their spoken language. This development facilitated the learning of Chinese history, astronomy, medicine, and other arts across general Japanese society.

Cultural Accomplishments Preserved

In 735, when Kibi no Makibi returned to Japan, he had with him 200 volumes, which he presented to the emperor, among them the "Essential Compendium of Music." This classic was later lost in China but preserved in Japan. He also brought classical Chi-



The Japanese's efforts to replicate intact the core virtues of Chinese culture in their own architecture, attire, literature, calendric system, arts, and national character would shape the land of the rising sun for over a thousand years.

nese musical instruments, such as the guzheng, or Chinese zither, which inspired the Japanese koto.

Kukai, the bonze (a Japanese or Chinese Buddhist monk) who created hiragana, was an accomplished man of letters and calligraphist. A scholar of Chinese literary works, he compiled a groundbreaking theoretical volume on writings from the Han, Wei, Sui, and Tang dynasties—the Bunkyo Hifuron. He used his extensive research to reflect on his own literary style and for future generations to use as an analytical reference.

Kukai also helped spread Chinese calligraphy to Japan, and is considered one of the three calligraphy masters of the Heian period of Japanese history (794-1185).

Foundations of an Imperial State

The Taika Reform gradually transformed Japan into a nation governed by law and decrees, and paved the way for feudalism. Simple departments and ministries that had existed before were expanded and complemented with institutions like clan registry and tax collection.

Japanese authorities adopted the Tang Dynasty "circuit" as a province-sized subdivision, a term that has now mostly fallen out of use but is preserved in the name of Japan's northernmost island, Hokkaido—literally rendered "Northern Sea Circuit."

Kyoto, the traditional seat of the Japanese emperor prior to being replaced by Tokyo in the 1800s, was planned and built with the same rectangular layout and architectural style as the Tang capital at Chang'an. In both cities, the imperial palace was located due north—considered an auspicious position for the monarch or familial patriarch, for it symbolized the North Star.

While vastly overshadowed by Tokyo in population and importance, Kyoto retains a

distinctly classical character inherited from the days when the Japanese looked to the Tang and sought to learn from that great empire. During World War II, the city largely escaped the extensive American bombing raids that devastated more industrial cities, and was spared the atomic bomb partly for its cultural significance.

The Origin of the Rising Sun

Prior to Japan's extensive contacts with the Tang empire, the nation had no native name: the Japanese were an insular culture and had no

Kukai is considered one of the three calligraphy masters of the Heian period of Japanese history (794-1185).

need to refer to themselves as a whole, while the Chinese had used the disparaging title of "dwarf barbarians."

This changed as the Chinese became increasingly aware of the nation to its east. Texts written in the era show the emergence of a new term, composed of the characters "Ri ben," meaning roughly "the sun's origin." From a Chinese perspective, the Japanese were a people beyond the eastern sea, living at the sunrise. The Japanese pronunciation of the name is Nihon or Nippon.

In the writings of Marco Polo on his travels to China, he referred to the country as "Cipangu," or the country of Japan, approximating the Chinese dialect spoken at the time. This word eventually morphed into the modern Western name Japan.

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**PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION REQUEST
Wednesday Council Meeting 9:30 AM**

Council Meeting Date: 7-27-16

Today's Date 7/1/16

Name MARY ENG

Address city hall

Telephone _____ Email _____

Reason for the request:

The Americans with Disabilities Act
and the Disability Treaties Worldwide

Mary Eng
(signed)

- Give your request in writing to the Council Clerk's office to schedule a date for your Communication. Use this form or email the information to the Council Clerk at the email address below.
- You will be placed on the Wednesday official Council Agenda as a "Communication." Communications are the first item on the Agenda and are taken at 9:30 a.m. A total of five Communications may be scheduled. Individuals must schedule their own Communication.
- You will have 3 minutes to speak and may also submit written testimony before or at the meeting. Communications allow the Council to hear issues that interest our citizens, but do not allow an opportunity for dialogue.

Thank you for being an active participant in your City government.

Contact Information:

Karla Moore-Love, City Council Clerk
 1221 SW 4th Ave, Room 130
 Portland, OR 97204-1900
 (503) 823-4086
 email:
Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

Sue Parsons, Assistant Council Clerk
 1221 SW 4th Ave., Room 130
 Portland, OR 97204-1900
 (503) 823-4085
 email:
Susan.Parsons@portlandoregon.gov

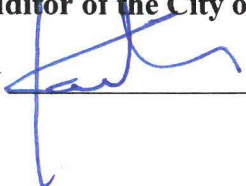
Request of Mary Eng to address Council regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Disability Treaties worldwide (Communication)

JUL 27 2016

PLACED ON FILE

Filed JUL 19 2016

MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland

By  Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Novick		
Hales		