

Peace and Justice Commission

CONSENT CALENDAR

October 22, 2002

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From: Peace and Justice Commission

Subject: CHINESE PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN'S VISIT TO UNITED STATES

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution expressing concern regarding President George W. Bush's invitation to Jiang Zemin, President of the People's Republic of China, to visit the United States and President Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas, and asking that President Bush specifically raise the issue of human rights abuses against Falun Gong members in his discussions with President Jiang Zemin; and send copies of the Resolution and attached letter to President Bush with copies to Berkeley's members of Congress and the United States Secretary of State.

BACKGROUND:

At the regular meeting of June 3, 2002, the Peace and Justice Commission established a subcommittee to follow-up on its recommendation to the City Council regarding allegations of human rights abuse against members of the Falun Gong in Berkeley's sister city, the Haidian District of Beijing by bringing a new proposal to the full Commission. The original recommendation requested that a letter be sent to the Mayor of our Chinese sister city and to other Chinese officials requesting them to investigate and advise of the situation, and appeal to the Chinese government to resolve differences without resorting to violence. On July 9, 2002, Council adopted Resolution No. 61,670-N.S. supporting that original recommendation.

At the regular meeting of September 9, 2002, the subcommittee made its report to the full Commission. The subcommittee recommended that a resolution and letter expressing concern regarding President George W. Bush's invitation to Jiang Zemin, President of the People's Republic of China, to visit the United States and President Bush's ranch in Crawford, TX be approved and forwarded to the City Council for its consideration.

PRESIDENT ZEMIN'S VISIT TO US

CONSENT CALENDAR

October 22, 2002

At the regular meeting of September 30, 2002, the Peace and Justice Commission approved the following motion:

M/S/C (McDonald, Freedkin) to approve the attached resolution (with changes), and letter (Attachment A) to President Bush, and recommend that the City Council adopt them. Ayes: Unanimous; Absent: Rose, Wagley.

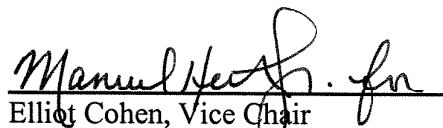
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None.

CONTACT PERSON:

Elliot Cohen, Vice Chair, Peace and Justice Commission, 594-4088
Mark McDonald, Peace and Justice Commission, 849-1255
Steve Freedkin, Peace and Justice Commission, 644-2778
Manuel Hector, Secretary, Peace and Justice Commission, 981-5110

Approved by:



Elliot Cohen, Vice Chair
Peace and Justice Commission

RESOLUTION NO. -N.S.

EXPRESSING CONCERN REGARDING PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH'S INVITATION TO JIANG ZEMIN, PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES AND PRESIDENT BUSH'S RANCH IN CRAWFORD, TEXAS

WHEREAS, in accordance with Berkeley Municipal Code Section 3.68.070.A, it is the function of the Peace and Justice Commission to "advise the Berkeley City Council and the Berkeley Unified School Board on all matters relating to the City of Berkeley's role in issues of peace and social justice, including ... support for human rights and self-determination throughout the world"; and

WHEREAS, Section 3.68.030 of the Berkeley Municipal Code defines "peace and justice" as "the goal of creating a world community in which the relations between people are based on equality, respect for human rights, and the abhorrence of exploitation and all forms of oppression"; and

WHEREAS, Section 3.68.070 (H) of the Berkeley Municipal Code states the Peace and Justice Commission shall "act as a liaison between community groups organizing around issues of peace and social justice and City government"; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley residents who are Falung Gong members have reported to the Peace and Justice Commission about actions by the Chinese government taken against them and other Falung Gong practitioners living in the United States, including arrest and beating of a Berkeley resident when he visited China, and the naming of Berkeley residents on a list used to interfere with their freedom of international travel¹; and

WHEREAS, there are reports that the President of China, Jiang Zemin, was the chief architect of the suppression of the democratic movement in Shanghai where he served as the mayor, and was personally involved in overseeing the bloody massacre of students on Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989²; and

WHEREAS, President Jiang Zemin is reportedly responsible for suppression of religious and ethnic groups such as Tibetans, Buddhists, and Christians; and for a vicious campaign since July 1999 to targeting practitioners of the Falun Gong meditation practice³; and

¹ The U.S. Department of State warns travelers about potential government action against visitors to China who are engaged in pro-Falun Gong activities. See: "China -- Consular Information Sheet," April 11, 2002, U.S. Department of State, at: <http://travel.state.gov/china.html>

² "Jiang was made a full member of the Politburo in 1987, and two years later he won the favor of China's paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping, by supporting the suppression of the student-led pro-democracy protests at Tiananmen Square. Source: "Shrewd guardian of the Deng legacy," CNN, at: <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/1999/china.50/inside.china/profiles/jiang.zemin/>

³ Source: "Background Note: China," U.S. Department of State, at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2742.htm>

WHEREAS, Falung Gong is a practice for improving the body, mind, and spirit through exercise, meditation, and teachings that are rooted in ancient Chinese culture⁴; and

WHEREAS, Falun Gong practitioners have peacefully appealed to the Chinese government for over three years, but have been met with incarceration and torture in return, resulting in at least 200 confirmed deaths, and thousands being put into labor camps.⁵ In February 2002, the Chinese police in Tiananmen Square beat a Berkeley resident for peacefully appealing for civil rights for Falun Gong practitioners⁶; and

WHEREAS, Falun Gong supporters allege that on March 5, 2002 President Jiang Zemin ordered police to shoot Falun Gong practitioners who were caught distributing flyers, banners or posters⁷; and

WHEREAS, in June 2002, Berkeley residents who are Falun Gong practitioners were apparently put on a blacklist and barred from entry to Iceland as the practitioners sought to appeal directly to the President of China during his visit to Iceland⁸; and

WHEREAS, Amnesty International named President Jiang Zemin a "human rights scoundrel" in 2001⁹ due to the worsening human rights situation in China; and

WHEREAS, on July 24, 2002, the United States Congress unanimously passed House Concurrent Resolution 188¹⁰, condemning the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China and calling on the United States government to use every appropriate public and private forum to urge the government of the People's Republic of China to end such persecution; and

⁴ See: http://www.falundafa.org/eng/index_en.htm, <http://www.faluninfo.net>, and <http://www.clearwisdom.net>

⁵ "Reliable reports indicate that thousands of Falun Gong practitioners are in re-education through labor camps; hundreds are in prisons or psychiatric facilities. More than 200 practitioners reportedly have died in prison as a result of mistreatment and torture." Source: U.S. State Dept., "Background Note: China," *op. cit.*

⁶ Testimony of Steve Ispas before Peace and Justice Commission, Sept. 9, 2002.

⁷ See "Asylum in the UK," British Immigration and Nationality Directorate, at <http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/default.asp?pageid=2816>; statement of Canadian Falun Gong practitioners at <http://clearwisdom.net/emh/articles/2002/3/15/19882.html>; and report from Jilin Province, China published by European Falun Gong practitioners at <http://www.clearharmony.net/articles/3792.html>

⁸ Statement of Sherry Zhang before the Peace and Justice Commission, Sept. 9, 2002.

⁹ Source: Amnesty Calls China's Jiang a Rights "Scoundrel," Reuters News Service, at: http://216.239.33.100/search?q=cache:7iuCRsPOQDoC:clearwisdom.net/emh/special_column/expo_evil/AI_calls_jzm_060101.doc

¹⁰ Available in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format at: http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/t2GPO/http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=107_cong_bills&docid=f:hc188eh.txt.pdf

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has sent letters to the head of its "sister city," the Haidian District in Beijing, and to other Chinese officials (Attachment B) regarding the persecution of the Falun Gong; and

WHEREAS, prior to President Bush's visit to China in February, 2002, 94 members of Congress sent a letter to him asking him to raise specifically the issue of the treatment of Falun Gong in China¹¹, but he made no such mention during his public speech there¹²; and

WHEREAS, President Bush has extended an invitation to President Jiang Zemin to visit his ranch in Crawford, Texas during President Jiang Zemin's visit to the United States this October¹³.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley expresses concern regarding President George W. Bush's invitation to Jiang Zemin, President of the People's Republic of China, to visit the United States and President Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas, and asks that President Bush specifically raise the issue of human rights abuses against Falun Gong members in his discussions with President Jiang Zemin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution and the attached letter to President George W. Bush be sent along with copies to Berkeley's Members of Congress and the United States Secretary of State.

¹¹ Source: "U.S. Congressmen Urge Bush To Mention Falun Gong In Beijing," Central News Agency, Taiwan, at: <http://www.taipei.org/teco/cicc/news/english/e-02-17-02/e-02-17-02-10.htm>

¹² See the transcripts linked under "President Bush's Visit to Beijing," about halfway down the page at: <http://www.usembassy-china.org.cn/press/release/2002/>

¹³ See "Chinese President To Meet With Bush," Associated Press, July 31, 2002, at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uslatest/story/0,1282,-1918917,00.html>

ATTACHMENT A

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

It has been reported that you have invited Jiang Zemin, President of the People's Republic of China, to your ranch in Crawford, Texas, during his visit to the United States this October. The Berkeley City Council voted on [date] to express its deep concern about this invitation, and to urge you to speak with President Jiang specifically about the treatment accorded Falun Gong practitioners by his government.

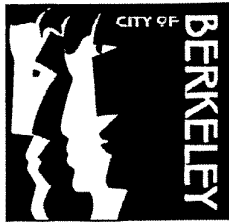
President Jiang Zemin is a leader whose power is based on violence and tyranny. He supported the declaration of martial law during the 1989 student demonstrations in Tiananmen Square, which led to the massacre of many innocent people. A report from Amnesty International in May 2000 reveals that those who try to seek justice for the victims, or even commemorate the anniversary of the massacre, continue to be subjected to detention and harassment over a decade later. In one instance, a man was sentenced to three years in a labor camp for collecting signatures on a petition that called for an inquiry into the 1989 crackdown.

In addition to suppressing religious and ethnic groups such as Tibetans, Buddhists, and Christians, President Jiang has waged a vicious campaign since July 1999 to target and "eliminate" the Falun Gong meditation practice. He has established an agency to oversee this persecution, known as the "610 Office." By the end of 2001, more than 1000 people had reportedly been tortured to death, and thousands are currently imprisoned in labor camps, mental institutions, and detention centers where they are beaten and tortured. Amnesty International awarded President Jiang the title "human rights scoundrel of the year" in 2000.

The House of Representatives on July 24, 2002 unanimously passed House Concurrent Resolution 188, which condemns the persecution of Falun Gong and urges your administration to investigate allegations of Chinese government interference with the lives of Falun Gong adherents on American soil.

Before you visited China earlier this year, you received a letter signed by 94 members of Congress asking you to raise the issue of Falun Gong with the President of China. During your speech there, while you did mention human rights, a creditable inclusion, you did not mention Falun Gong by name.

Your invitation to President Jiang in the context of continued Chinese human rights violations is troubling. Should you go forward with this meeting, we strongly urge you to specifically raise the issue of human rights abuses of Falun Gong members during your discussions with President Jiang.



City Clerk Department

ATTACHMENT B

July 16, 2002

Premier of the People's Republic of China
ZHU Rongji Zongli
Guowuyuan
9 Xihuangchengenbeijie
Beijing 100032
People's Republic of China

Dear Premier Zongli:

The City of Berkeley has established a Sister City Program for the purpose of promoting cultural and educational foreign exchange, to build international understanding and promote world peace. As part of this program we have established a sister city relationship with the Haidian District of Beijing.

We are concerned about reports by Falun Gong supporters that people being detained at the Haidian Detention Center are being subjected to beatings, the use of electrical shock batons, sexual molestation of female detainees, and other forms of torture, including an "icing" technique, which involves being forced to stand outside in freezing temperatures while water is poured upon them.

The reports by Falun Gong supporters allege that at least two women who had been detained at the Haidian Detention Center have died as a result of mistreatment. It is alleged that one unidentified woman in her sixties died as a result of frost bite after being subjected to the "icing" procedure, and that another woman, named Zhao Xin, died on or about December 11, 2000, after months of suffering, as a result of injuries received from beatings that allegedly occurred at the Haidian Detention Center.


Falun Gong supporters have also alleged that on March 5, 2002 President Jiang Zemin ordered police to shoot Falun Gong practitioners who were caught distributing flyers, or putting up banners or posters. We ask that you investigate these allegations and advise us as to what has happened and why.

Premier Zongli
July 16, 2002
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We further wish to appeal to you to resolve any differences that exist between the Chinese Government and the Falun Gong without resorting to violence.

Enclosed is a copy of Resolution No. 61,670-N.S. adopted by the Berkeley City Council at its meeting of July 9, 2002.

Sincerely,



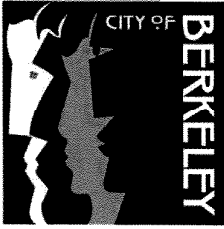
Sherry M. Kelly
City Clerk

cc: Director of the Jilin Provincial Department of Public Security
ZHAO YONGJI Tingzhang
Jilin Gong'anting
42 Xinfalun
Changchun 130051
Jilinsheng
People's Republic of China

Governor of the Jilin Provincial People's Government
HONG Hu Shengzhang
Jilingsheng Renmin Zhengfu
11 Xinfu Lu
Changchun 130051
Jilinsheng
People's Republic of China

Consulate of the People's Republic of China
1450 Laguna St.
San Francisco, CA 94115

Councilmember Dona Spring
City Manager Weldon Rucker



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR

October 22, 2002

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From: Weldon Rucker, *[Signature]* City Manager

Subject: CHINESE PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN'S VISIT TO UNITED STATES

The City Manager concurs with the content and recommendations of the Commission's Report.

The City Manager takes no position concerning the recommendations of the Commission.