

from market exchange. In addition, the CCP established a residential registration system, barring peasants from going to the cities to find work or dwell. Those who are registered as rural residents were not allowed to buy grain at state-run stores and their children were prohibited from receiving education in cities. Peasants' children could only be peasants, turning 360 million rural residents of the early 1950s into second-class citizens.

Beginning in 1978, in the first five years after moving from a collective system to a household contract system, some among the 900 million peasants became better off, with their income increasing slightly and their social status improving somewhat. However, such a meager benefit was soon lost due to a price structure that favored industrial commodities over agricultural goods; peasants plunged into poverty once again. The income gap between the urban and rural population has drastically increased, and economic disparity continues to widen. New landlords and wealthy peasants have re-emerged in the rural areas. Xinhua News Agency, the CCP's mouthpiece, stated that since 1997, "The income of peasants in the major grain production areas and of most other rural households have been at a standstill and, in some cases, has experienced a decline." In other words, the income the peasants obtained from their agricultural production did not increase. Instead, it declined. The ratio of urban to rural incomes has increased from 1.8 to 1 in the mid 1980s to 3.1 to 1 today.

II. Reforms in Industry and Commerce—Eliminating the Capitalist Class

Another class that the CCP wanted to eliminate was the national bourgeoisie who owned capital in cities and rural towns. While reforming China's industry and commerce, the CCP claimed that the capitalist class and the working class were different in nature: the former was the exploiting class while the latter was the non-exploiting and anti-exploiting class. According to this logic, the capitalist class was born to exploit and wouldn't stop doing so until it perished; it could only be eliminated, not reformed. Under such premises, the CCP used both killing and brainwashing to transform capitalists and merchants. The CCP used its long-tested method of supporting the obedient and destroying those who disagreed. If you surrendered your assets to the state and supported the CCP, you were considered just a minor problem among the people. If, on the other hand, you disagreed with or complained about the CCP's policy, you would be labeled as a reactionary and become the target of the CCP's draconian dictatorship.

During the reign of terror that ensued during these reforms, capitalists and business owners all surrendered their assets. Many of them couldn't bear the

humiliation they faced and committed suicide. Chen Yi, then mayor of Shanghai, asked every day, "How many paratroopers did we have today?" referring to the number of capitalists that had committed suicide by jumping from the tops of buildings that day. In only a few years, the CCP completely eliminated private ownership in China.

While carrying out its land and industrial reform programs, the CCP launched many massive movements that persecuted the Chinese people. These movements included: the suppression of "counter-revolutionaries," thought reform campaigns, cleansing the anti-CCP clique headed by Gao Gang and Rao Shushi, and probing Hu Feng's [3] "counter-revolutionary" group, Three Anti Campaign, Five Anti Campaign, and the further cleansing of counterrevolutionaries. The CCP used these movements to target and brutally persecute countless innocent people. In every political movement, the CCP fully utilized its control of government resources in conjunction with the Party's committees, branches, and sub-branches. Three party members would form a small combat team, infiltrating all villages and neighborhoods. These combat teams were ubiquitous, leaving no stone unturned. This deeply-entrenched Party control network, inherited from the CCP's network of "Party branches installed within the army" during the war years, has since played a key role in later political movements.

III. Crackdown on Religions and Religious Groups

The CCP committed another atrocity in the brutal suppression of religion and the complete ban of all grass-roots religious groups following the founding of the People's Republic of China. In 1950, the CCP instructed its local governments to ban all unofficial religious faiths and secret societies. The CCP stated that those "feudalistic" underground groups were mere tools in the hands of landlords, rich farmers, reactionaries, and the special agents of the KMT. In the nationwide crackdown, the government mobilized the classes they trusted to identify and persecute members of religious groups. Governments at various levels were directly involved in disbanding such "superstitious groups" as communities of Christians, Catholics, Taoists (especially believers of I-Kuan Tao), and Buddhists. They ordered all members of these churches, temples, and religious societies to register with government agencies and to repent for their involvement. Failure to do so would mean severe punishment. In 1951, the government formally promulgated regulations threatening that those who continued their activities in unofficial religious groups would face a life sentence or a death penalty.

This movement persecuted a large number of kind-hearted and law-abiding believers in God. Incomplete statistics indicate that the CCP in the

1950s persecuted at least three million religious believers and underground group members, some of whom were killed. The CCP searched almost every household across the nation and interrogated its members, even smashing statues of the Kitchen God that Chinese peasants traditionally worshipped. The executions reinforced the CCP's message that communist ideology was the only legitimate ideology and the only legitimate faith. The concept of "patriotic" believers soon emerged. The state constitution protected only "patriotic" believers. The reality was whatever religion one believed in, there was only one criterion: you had to follow the CCP's instructions and you had to acknowledge that the CCP was above all religions. If you were a Christian, the CCP was the god of the Christian God. If you were a Buddhist, the CCP was the Master Buddha of the Master Buddha. Among Muslims, the CCP was the Allah of the Allah. When it came to the Living Buddha in Tibetan Buddhism, the CCP would intervene and itself choose who the Living Buddha would be. The CCP left you no choice but to say and do what the CCP demanded you to say and do. All believers were

By eliminating the landlord class and the capitalist class and by persecuting large numbers of God-worshipping and law-abiding people, the CCP cleared the way for Communism to become the all-encompassing religion of China.

IV. The Anti-rightist Movement—Nationwide Brainwashing

In 1956, a group of Hungarian intellectuals formed the Petofi Circle, which held forums and debates critical of the Hungarian government. The group sparked a nationwide revolution in Hungary, which was crushed by Soviet soldiers. Mao Zedong took this "Hungarian Event" as a lesson. In 1957, Mao called upon the Chinese intellectuals and other people to "help the CCP rectify itself." This movement, known as the "Hundred Flowers Movement" for short, followed the slogan of "letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend." Mao's purpose was to lure out the "anti-Party elements" among the people. In his letter to provincial Party chiefs in 1957, Mao Zedong spoke his intention of "luring the snakes out of their holes"



Global Photos/Liaison

Tyranny caught on camera: Chinese uniformed and plainclothes police arrest approximately 10 Falun Gong practitioners, who had come to Tiananmen Square to appeal peacefully for an end to the persecution, November 9, 2000.

forced to carry out the CCP's objectives while upholding their respective faiths in name only. Failing to do so would make one the target of the CCP's persecution and dictatorship.

According to a February 22, 2002 report by Humanity and Human Rights online magazine, twenty thousand Christians conducted a survey among 560,000 Christians in house churches in 207 cities in 22 provinces in China. The survey found that among house church attendees, 130,000 were under government surveillance. In the book "How the Chinese Communist Party Persecuted Christians" (1958), it is stated that by 1957, the CCP had killed over 11,000 religious adherents and had arbitrarily arrested and extorted money from many more.

by letting them air their views freely in the name of freedom of thought and rectifying the CCP.

Slogans at the time encouraged people to speak up and promised no reprisals—the Party would not "grab pig-tails, strike with sticks, issue hats, or settle accounts after the autumn," meaning the party would not find fault, make attacks, place labels, or seek to retaliate. Yet soon the CCP initiated an "anti-rightist" movement, declaring 540,000 of the people who dared to speak up as "rightists." Among them, 270,000 lost their jobs and 230,000 were labeled as "medium rightists" or "anti-CCP anti-socialist elements." Later some summarized the CCP's political stratagems of persecution into four items: Luring the snakes out of holes; fabricating