



Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: FDC's concern on Mr Chen Yonglin spy claim

We are writing to you to express our concern on the Chinese government's incursion on human rights in Australia. Their attempts to monitor, chase and bug Australian pro-democracy activists must be stopped through diplomatic pressure. Although we are citizens of a free country, who are guaranteed the freedom of belief, speech and right of assembly, these ostensible freedoms are continually being undermined by the Chinese government. Despite this, as Australians with a conscience, we feel morally obligated to commemorate the TianAnMen massacre, to promote Chinese human rights and democracy regardless of adversity.

The Federation for a Democratic China (FDC) was formed in 1989 soon after the Tiananmen Square massacre. Possessing a strong network of members in 14 countries - among them are Australia, New Zealand, US, Canada, Germany, France, Britain, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Japan, etc. - the organisation's primary goal is for the promotion of Chinese human rights and democracy. However, this has been met with unacceptable interference by the Chinese government. For example, on the 27th June, 2002, Dr. Wang Bingzhang (<http://wangbingzhang.us/main>) was kidnapped *from Vietnam to China*. He was our long-time leader, a pioneer of the overseas Chinese democratic movement. He is now serving a life sentence for trying to promote democracy in China. The government has also imprisoned Dr. Yang Jianli (www.yangjianli.com), a Harvard scholar who merely went into China in order to defend workers' rights in 2002. He was another dedicated pioneer of democracy activism. Dr Yang, a US-based Chinese citizen, was incarcerated for five years for entering China with a friend's passport. This was after his own government refused to renew his passport, hence denying its own citizen a basic human right. How can the Chinese government justify this imprisonment?

These violations of human rights have extended to Australia. In one case, a Sydney-based man - an Australian citizen who shall be referred to as Mr ZH - was prevented from openly debating against a Chinese government-backed association in Chinese-language newspapers. The newspapers which published his articles were threatened by officer from Chinese Consulate through telephone. Mr. ZH himself withdrew from this debate after receiving threats and hearing rumours about a plot to kidnap his sons, who were still in primary school. Subsequently referring this allegation to the Australian Federal Police, Mr ZH's suspicions were confirmed when the police verified his claims - validating that there was indeed such a plot. Although the police gave him appropriate protection, they advised him to keep the whole episode quiet. However, Mr ZH's feelings of insecurity led him to refrain from stringent criticism of the Chinese government.

Similarly, in 1999, when another Australian-Chinese, Mr XZ, was selected by a minor party as a candidate to stand in NSW state election. He received reports from friends within the Party that a leader of the Party had been approached by a delegate of Chinese Consulate which demand removal of Mr. XZ from the Party's candidate list, threatened his supporters, thereby eroding his support base and denying him a fair election opportunity. These two cases exemplify the sort of gross human rights violations incurred by the Chinese government in Australia – against free speech and the free election.

In a more general sense, the FDC's activities in Australia have been constantly monitored by the Chinese government. In our attempts to strive for a freer, more open China, our meetings times, discussions details and plans for events have been somehow made known to the Chinese governments by their vast network of informers. When our members return to China, they are harassed by the government and are followed by the secret police. One was harassed at his wedding, and consequently, he had to resign from our organisation. Ultimately, the Chinese government do not have any justification for their unceasing intrusion into the lives of Australian citizens *in Australia*. We strongly object and demand an end to the Chinese government's incursion of the freedom of Australians.

Underscoring the Chinese government's ability to constantly threaten overseas dissidents and undermine their activities is a prevailing culture of appeasement. The reason that the Chinese government is able to achieve this is the often conciliatory tone with which they are treated by foreign governments. The Australian government has never stood up formally to demand an end to their activities. They have always tolerated small Chinese encroachments of our freedom. Due to this culture, people begin to accept that the Chinese government's political and economic muscle cannot be opposed effectively. However, the Howard government must not continue this unfortunate culture of appeasement; it is up to the Australian government to stand up and claim their national sovereignty before significant damage is enacted.

Moreover, the FDC would like to express our anger at the Australian Federal government's handling of Mr Chen Yonglin's case. Their indifference to Mr Chen's plight indicates a blunt disregard for human rights. It has placed Mr Chen's life in danger by informing the Chinese consulate of his defection just to avoid offending them. The Australian government must not place their economic interest in China ahead of human rights and national sovereignty. Mr Chen is a man who only seeks defection in Australia because he is following his conscience. The Australian government has invaded Iraq by justifying a moral case. Yet Mr Chen's case is profoundly moralistic – he has thrown away a good life in China in order to expose the Chinese government's despicable activities. If he were forced to return to China, it would be naive to believe that he will not face persecution of danger. The Australian government must not ignore this as they consider his case.

The Australian government's indifference to Mr Chen's claims to a vast spy and informer network could lead to detrimental consequences. His claims that there are "1000 spies in Australia"(which we do believe more than that if including extensive network of

informers) can lead to an atmosphere of distrust and even antagonism towards the Chinese community. Unless Mr Howard takes action to investigate and take steps to eradicate this, the existence of extensive Chinese spies or informers can be used as a pretext for racial discrimination – that Chinese businessmen or students cannot be trusted because of their potential to be spies.

These acts sanctioned by the Chinese government are all acts of a totalitarian authority. The FDC condemn these acts. We urge the Chinese government to protect the basic human rights of the Chinese and Australian people alike, to uphold social justice, to end their one- party dictatorship, and to help build a democratic China. The FDC strongly request that the federal government investigate the classified documents gained from Mr Chen seriously, to evaluate Mr Chen not on petty economic grounds, but based on the tradition of an accepting, democratic country. Furthermore, it should take firm measures to protect its citizens' rights in order to prevent the Chinese government from undertaking further kidnapping and disruption.

Yours Sincerely,

John Liang
Vice-Chairman of FDC International

Chin Jin
Chairman of FDC Australia

Xiao Gang Zhang
Committee Member of FDC International