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CHINA INSIDER

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A Falun Dafa parade in New York on May 12, 2023.

POWER OF FAITH

FALUN GONG PRACTITIONERS CELEBRATE BELIEF IN TRUTHFULNESS, COMPASSION, TOLERANCE

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Jami Smith meditates with her children in the front yard of their house in Springville, Utah, in May 2020.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

POWER OF FAITH

Healing Through Truthfulness, Compassion, and Tolerance

EVA FU

Looking back at four decades of her life, Jami Smith struggled to recall a moment when she felt genuinely happy.

She had a troubled childhood filled with abuse and harassment from the people she held dear. From the age of 9, she began experiencing chronic menstrual pains. Problems piled up as she grew older. At 40, her list of health issues was so long that she says her medical record made doctors gasp.

As a mother of six, she barely had enough energy to take care of the children. Migraines plagued her for weeks at a time, sometimes so severely that she would start vomiting as soon as she stood up. Her body would bruise easily, even from simple things such as lifting a pot or crossing her legs. Supplements made her sick. Laying on her left side at night, she listened to her heartbeat. It was so weak that she more than once wondered if it would stop in her sleep.

Day after day, Smith dragged herself through the motions. She got up early to make breakfast and set up homeschooling assignments for the younger three children. Then, she would be right back to bed, wincing in pain.

It bothered Smith that she couldn't sit up to take care of her loved ones and "be there for them." She wondered if she had anything worth living for.

"At times, I would be in so much pain, I almost wanted to die. It was so miserable," she told *The Epoch Times*. "I didn't understand what the purpose was. I couldn't take care of my family, so why keep going?"

Sitting on the bedroom floor one day, she cried out to the universe for help—to be a better mother, to be a healthy and happier person, and to make sense of the suffering in life.

"Why do I keep suffering like this? Why is life so hard for me? Why is my quality of life so miserable? I was trying to be a good person, I had that wish to do that, but I didn't totally understand how to do it," she said.

An answer did come, although Smith didn't know it immediately.



(Above) Rep. Burgess Owens (R-Utah) poses with Jami Smith and her children at an event in Herriman, Utah, in June 2022.

(Above Right) Jami Smith with her children in Moab, Utah, in September 2022.

About a week or two after she made the plea, Smith stopped at a cultural event out of town, where her family was handed several lotus flowers and a flyer about Falun Gong, a spiritual practice involving a set of meditative exercises and teachings based on the values of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance.

The flyer sat in Smith's kitchen for months as she tried different healing methods, such as tai chi, although none had a lasting effect. In her continued search for a cure, she came across a video about the fact that Falun Gong, which was practiced by an estimated



The kitchen window looking out at the fence at Linda Campbell's home in Sonoma County, Calif., on May 12, 2023.



70 million to 100 million in China, was being persecuted by the Chinese Communist Party.

Smith found the flyer that had been sitting there and recognized the name. The next thing she knew, she was reading a book explaining the principles of Falun Gong and trying the exercises, during which she says she felt a kind of electricity going through her hands and arms.

"To me, that was something huge—a recognition that this is something real," she said. And all that time, "I continued to search not realizing what I was searching for was hanging in my kitchen."

"There Is an Answer to Everything"

If the life story of Smith, who now works in customer service from her home in Springville, Utah, falls toward the more intense end of most Americans' experiences—her quest for meaning in life is not.

A decade before Smith, in Sonoma County, California, acupressure therapist Linda Campbell first learned about Falun Gong and the persecution of its adherents in China through a client. So when she saw a Falun Gong meditation class being offered three years later, Campbell decided to check it out.

Campbell still remembers that community center classroom near her home

looking out into an oriental-looking garden green with stones. After learning the exercises, the assistant there handed her an introductory book that she finished within three days. She then read the practice's main book, *Zhuan Falun*. Reading that text took a lot longer, but left her "just in awe."

"The book covered so much," she told *The Epoch Times*. "All my life, I had been studying and looking into different kinds of metaphysical things" for answers about life and the universe, "and it was all in *Zhuan Falun*."

It made her feel more solid and comfortable with life—as if she had "come home to something."

"When anything comes up, I just know that there is an answer to everything, and there is going to be a way through it," she said.

Saying that is easier now for Campbell compared to eight years ago, when she was confronted with a monthslong ordeal.

It began with her neighbor asking to rebuild a shared, battered wooden fence. Campbell, who agreed to the plan and to split the costs, was vexed by the finished project. In place of the once-straight line was a crooked fence angling downward, looking clumsily out of place from her kitchen window.

To Campbell, who had worked from home most of her life and enjoyed visual harmony and balance, the fence was a constant source of irritation. She felt wronged and despondent, believing the builder and the neighbor had worked together to make her life miserable.

It took her about eight months to turn her thinking around.

Failing initially to persuade her neighbor to redo the fence, she devised ways to mitigate her view. She installed a custom-made window covering that closes in the middle to obscure her view of the fence, and planted bushes along the fence to further hide it.

Once she stopped focusing on her own feelings, the fence ceased to be a problem. In the end, her neighbor declined to let her pay and covered the entire expense—which roughly came down to what she paid for the window covering.

"Everything just ended up seeming like it was such a small issue, there were solutions to all parts of it," she said. "It wasn't a big thing, and I had made it this huge, huge issue."

Now, if faced with a similar challenge, Campbell has a different way to handle it.

"It might bother me, but I would figure it out," she said. "I would see if I was putting myself first or if I was thinking of others, and if I was just being selfish or attached to getting my own way."

Healing

A month before the pandemic hit, Nick Haley, a college junior studying biomedical science at the University of Cincinnati, was considering dropping out of school.

Haley had gone on a cross-country road trip to California the previous summer, traveling through snow-capped mountains and deserts to escape the world, hoping to figure out what he wanted in life.

Despite all the scenic attractions checked off his list, he felt the trip fell short of what he expected.

"I felt if I have this experience, I'll feel fulfilled, but it was never quite as satisfying as I hoped it would be," he told *The Epoch Times*.

Haley kept looking, although not ex-



When anything comes up, I just know that there is an answer to everything and there is going to be a way through it.

Linda Campbell, retiree

It would just dawn on me: 'Hey, I feel pretty good. This is new. This works.'

Jami Smith, mother of three

actly sure what he was looking for. He looked into yoga, took a class on Buddhism, and read about stoicism and the Chinese classic text *Tao Te Ching*.

Then, during that 2020 spring semester, the same week after he dropped out of school, a co-worker introduced him to Falun Gong.

"It was almost like being plugged in," he said, recalling reading a Falun Gong teaching for the first time on his phone. "It was really relieving and I felt like I just came up for air after being underwater for a really long time."

Right from the second paragraph, he found an answer to his search.

"It's all about working on your character," he said. "It was just very clear that's what it was all about. It was about working on yourself. And that was the purpose."

In high school, Haley had felt disappointed when his religion teacher couldn't explain why people suffer like they do if gods look after them. While still in grade school, Haley's parents began a yearslong divorce battle that left the two unable to be at the same events for years.

Haley struggled to forgive both of his parents as he was growing up. But since starting to practice Falun Gong, he said, his thinking flipped.

"I realized how difficult it was to change my own mindsets on things and my own imperfections, and that helped me let go of a lot of the resentment I had about my parents' imperfections and about the mistakes they made," he said, adding that pains like those had helped him become more empathetic toward others.

"It was almost like I needed to understand what suffering was to want to help other people," he said.

"This Is New"

While six months pregnant in 1997, Smith had been hit by a car while crossing the road. The car hit her in the back so hard that she was thrown into the air, before landing on her tailbone.

Smith's baby—a boy—didn't move for several hours, although he eventually was found to be unharmed. Smith, however, suffered serious lower back injuries that kept her in bed for weeks and gave her lasting back troubles. Her back hurt so much that at one point, she fell to the floor in her kitchen, unable to move her legs.

That, in addition to her other health problems, made learning exercises itself



(Far Left) Nick Haley in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colo., in May 2019.

(Left) Nick Haley meditates in a park in upstate New York, on May 13, 2023.

no small feat.

In increments of 10 to 20 minutes, Smith did the Falun Gong exercises, working her way up to being able to sit through a full hour of meditation with her legs crossed in a double lotus position. At times, she cried because "it was so painful."

While she always tried to block the pain out of her mind, it took about a year for Smith to be able to do the hour-long meditation. mind. Meanwhile, she noticed that she no longer experienced the debilitating back pain and could now often easily sit with her children.

"It would just dawn on me: 'Hey, I feel pretty good. This is new. This works,'" she said.

Other health issues also gradually melted away, and Smith found herself finally able to "be part of my family," cooking meals for them, laughing together, playing games, and shopping for groceries, something that used to give her anxiety.

One consequence of the 1997 car accident was her fear of driving. If someone cut her off on the road, she would hold tight to the steering wheel in panic. That fear eventually dissipated as well.

During a 1 1/2-hour drive to Salt Lake City this past winter with four of her children, Smith was caught in a heavy snowstorm. It was windy, the visibility was low, and the children were loudly arguing with each other. Smith, instead of panicking, suggested that the children could think about something nice they had done for each other.

"That changed the whole drive," she said. "Everybody was happy the rest of the way."

Smith has surprised herself in situations like that by applying the mindset of "thinking more compassionately toward one another and reminding each other of that."

"It's one of these aha! moments where I just go, 'Wow, you know, I did that,'" she said. "I showed more compassion and I didn't blow up, and it didn't escalate into something that it would've before. That happens all the time."

A Sense of Purpose

In midsummer of 2020, Haley decided to go back to school.

"I wanted to finish what I started," he said. "I felt like I just needed to focus on that rather than trying to plan out my whole life."

Just weeks after graduating, Haley took a job as a research and communications officer for Falun Dafa Information Center in New York. He credited his degree for teaching him the essential skills to do what he needs: diving into unfamiliar subjects without feeling daunted, and knowing that he can learn what he needs to know on the go.

He still enjoys having new experiences, but it's no longer about the experience itself.

"It's not like my happiness depends on it anymore," he said. "It's just an added life experience, like a bonus, rather than what gives my life meaning."

Campbell, who's now retired, recently went to a World Falun Dafa Day event in San Francisco, to celebrate the 31st anniversary of the founding of the faith, as well as the birthday of Falun Gong's founder, Mr. Li.

"I just feel like I have this wonderful family," she said, adding that she felt "so joyful in kind of a quiet way" to know so many people—no matter where they are in life—are all "working hard to improve."

"All this has just been such a wonderful thing in my life."

And that fence? Bushy, silver-green shrubs have grown over it.

"You wouldn't even know that there was a fence behind it or that there was any issue at all."



Linda Campbell in her home garden in Sonoma County, Calif., on May 12, 2023.



Falun Gong practitioners march in Manhattan to celebrate World Falun Dafa Day in New York on May 12, 2023.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Officials Across US Commemorate World Falun Dafa Day

TERRI WU

On the 31st anniversary of its introduction to the public, Falun Dafa has been recognized by officials and elected bodies across the United States for its spiritual values and its adherents' contributions to communities.

Falun Dafa, also known as Falun Gong, is a spiritual practice involving meditative exercises and moral teachings rooted in traditional Chinese beliefs in body and mind improvement. It was introduced to the public by its founder, Li Hongzhi, on May 13, 1992, in northeast China and is now practiced in more than 100 countries.

Official proclamations in various U.S. states and locales credit the practice's slow-moving exercises and core principles—truth, compassion, and forbearance—as the source of its contributions to society.

"The Falun Dafa philosophy espouses the idea that when the heart is pure, the mind balanced, and the body energized, health and happiness are a natural outcome," wrote a New York state legislative resolution adopted on April 25 commemorating World Falun Dafa Day on May 13. "Individuals have been empowered to leave behind addictions and bad habits; families, to live in peace together; and communities, to embrace what is virtuous and life-affirming."

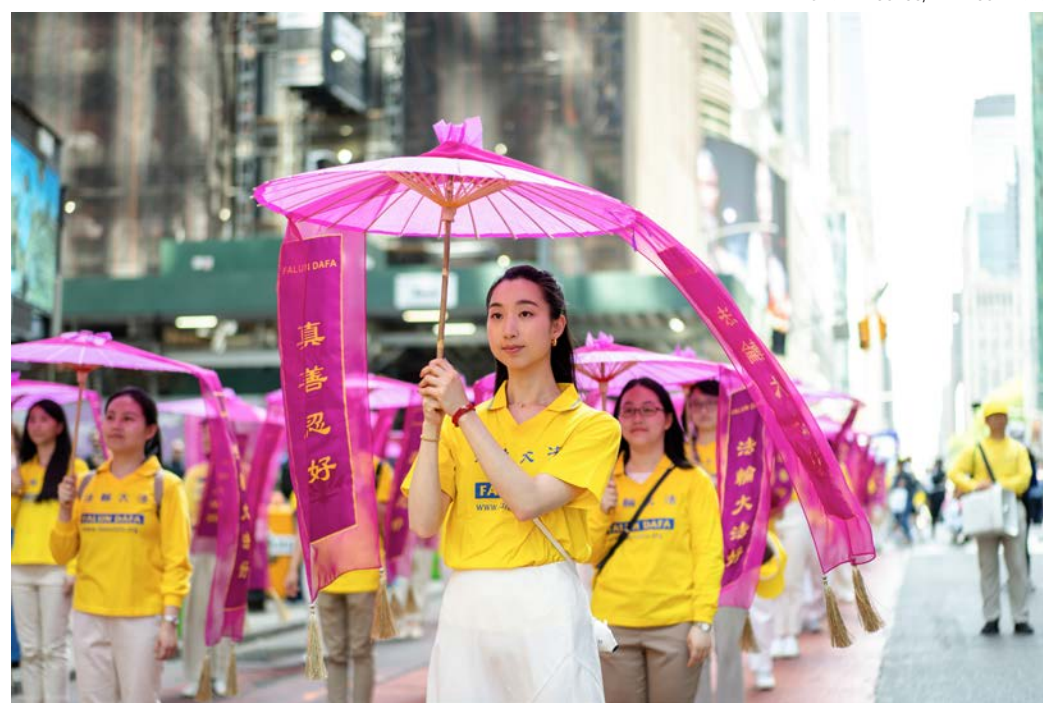
In addition, adherents' efforts to share the practice's benefits with communities through free workshops were also highlighted.

"Falun Dafa practitioners throughout the world dedicate countless hours to contributing to their communities by participating in local parades and street fairs, organizing free meditation and exercise classes, thousands of which have been offered in libraries, senior centers, public parks, and health clubs, as well as corporate offices and private residences," wrote New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu on May 9 in his proclamation for World Falun Dafa Day.

His remarks were echoed in other official recognitions, including the New York state legislative resolution and a Texas Senate resolution adopted on May 11. Both chambers of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts state legislature issued citations to acknowledge World Falun Dafa Day and wished adherents "continued success."

Some federal politicians have also voiced their appreciation of the spiritual practice and pointed out the contrast of brutal persecution by the Chinese communist regime.

Sens. John Cornyn (R-Texas) and Ted Cruz (R-Texas), and Reps. Stephen Lynch (D-Mass.) and Mike Kelly (R-Pa.) sent Fa-



Falun Gong practitioners march in Manhattan to celebrate World Falun Dafa Day on May 12, 2023, in New York.

lun Dafa adherents letters of recognition in commemoration of the anniversary.

"I applaud each of you for sharing the illustrious history and rich culture of China as well as drawing attention to the violence and persecution the county has endured," wrote Cruz in his letter to members of the Southern USA Falun Dafa Association. "Falun Dafa practitioners have continued to demonstrate the determination and courage to stand up for Truthfulness-Compassion-Forbearance."

Within eight years of Falun Gong's intro-



Falun Dafa practitioner Yu Haoxin before a World Falun Dafa Day parade in New York on May 12, 2023.

duction to the public in China, the practice had attracted 100 million adherents. Deeming this popularity a threat to its absolute rule, the Chinese Communist Party started a nationwide persecution campaign, subjecting adherents to detention, slave labor, torture, psychiatric abuses, and forced organ harvesting.

Ambassador Rashad Hussain, principal adviser to the secretary of state and adviser to the U.S. president on religious freedom conditions and policy, wrote in a tweet on May 13: "I am pleased to join the Falun Gong community in recognizing World #FalunDafa Day, a time to remember the peaceful ideals of truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance in solidarity with the many practitioners around the world who continue to suffer for their beliefs."

Health Benefits During Post-Pandemic Times

Many county- and city-level proclamations highlighted the health effects of Falun Gong, particularly in the COVID-19 era.

"In these trying, post-pandemic times, the meditative exercise of Falun Dafa and its health benefits offers an effective option to those seeking peace and healing," wrote Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui of Cambridge, Massachusetts, in his proclamation this month.

That certainly rings true for Yu Haoxin, 29, a Chinese businesswoman who arrived in New York on April 6. The pandemic led her to Falun Gong.

On Dec. 21, 2021, she took a second shot of the Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine in southern China's Guangxi Province. Within five

days, she experienced a fast heartbeat and trembling hands.

Her symptoms deteriorated rapidly weeks later during her Chinese New Year holiday visit to her hometown of Harbin, the capital of Heilongjiang Province in northeast China.

She still remembers the trip to the hospital; even getting on and off the taxi took much effort. She couldn't breathe and felt no strength in her limbs. Her younger sister supported her all the way.

Before the hospital visit, Yu did some research online and suspected that she had hyperthyroidism, a not-uncommon condition developed by Sinovac vaccination recipients. She was terrified of acquiring such an illness, characterized by excessive production of thyroid hormone, which controls how the body uses energy and affects a person's metabolism. Through a customer at her beauty salon, she had learned that the condition would be lifelong.

The doctor's diagnosis confirmed her fear.

At that time, citizens' mobility was still under control. Each time she went out of the complex, she would have to get permission from property management by showing a negative COVID test. And that was limited to up to once every two days.

Yu's mother, a Falun Gong practitioner, saw that Yu was in despair and asked whether she wanted to try the practice's exercises. Yu took up the practice in February 2022.

The following month, her test results showed significant improvement. Her levels of T3, one of the hormones produced by the thyroid, decreased from over 50 in January to below 12. Her T4, another hormone produced by the thyroid, came down from over 100 in January to slightly below 34. She knew she was on the way to recovery. After another three months, her symptoms went away completely. A check-up this March confirmed that she had remained healthy.

Yu came to the United States on a tourist visa to escape the communist regime's persecution of her faith. She used to run a beauty salon business in China. Now she wants to focus on settling down before making a professional choice.

In 2022, on her first World Falun Dafa Day as a practitioner, she bowed in front of its founder's picture at her home in China to commemorate the anniversary. This year, she joined another 5,000 in a parade in Manhattan to celebrate the occasion.

"I'm very honored," she told The Epoch Times. "Celebrating World Falun Dafa Day in a grand parade was something we didn't dare to even think of in China."

OPINION

Beware of Chinese Carrier Conceit

RICK FISHER



The People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is learning how to deploy its conventionally powered aircraft carriers for political intimidation and potential combat missions. While they do not match the capabilities of larger and better-armed U.S. Navy nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, it is a mistake to diminish their potential threat.

This was the thrust of a May 5 Reuters article with a declarative headline, "China's aircraft carriers play 'theatrical' role but pose little threat yet."

The article states, "It could be more than a decade before China can mount a credible carrier threat far from its shores, according to four military attachés and six defense analysts familiar with regional naval deployments."

It continues, "Instead, China's carriers are more of a propaganda showpiece, with doubts about their value in a possible conflict with the U.S. over Taiwan and about whether China could protect them on longer-range missions into the Pacific and Indian oceans, the attachés and analysts told Reuters."

The article was referring to the PLAN carrier Shandong, which had just completed a 41-day mission that had the political import of a sortie of the German battleship Bismarck, steaming with its battle group to the east of Taiwan, and for the first time contributing to a major blockade/attack and intimidation exercise against Taiwan and the United States.

From March 19 to April 27, the Shandong deployed from its base at Sanya harbor on Hainan Island for exercises in the South China Sea, along with a 112 missile vertical launch system (VLS) armed Type 055 cruiser, a 64 VLS armed Type 052D destroyer, a 32 VLS armed Type 054A frigate, and very likely, escorting cruise missile armed submarines.

Then on April 4, Shandong transited the Bashi Channel south of Taiwan to participate in the April 8–10 PLA Joint Sword combined forces exercises to intimidate Taiwan—the CCP's response to Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen's visit to the United States.

By April 8, Shandong started exercise operations about 100 miles south of Japan's strategic Sakashima Island group near Taiwan, and by April 16, reached a point about 460 miles west of the major U.S. air and naval bases on Guam, well within the 900-mile combat radius of its Shenyang J-15 strike fighters.

The 65,000-ton steam-turbine-powered Shandong was completed in early 2018 as a nearly complete copy of the ex-Soviet/Ukrainian incomplete Project 1143 carrier Varyag, purchased and towed to China's Dalian city in 2002 and then completed as the Liaoning.

In contrast to the 100,000-ton nuclear-powered full conventional takeoff and landing (CTOL) flattop carrier USS Nimitz, steaming about 100 miles to the



China's aircraft carrier Liaoning (front) sails with other ships during a drill at sea in April 2018.

east of Shandong during the Joint Sword exercise, the PLAN carriers do not have catapults and utilize a "ski jump" to help its J-15 strike fighters into the air.

This means the Chinese carriers must be pointed into the oncoming wind to launch their J-15s, which will consume more of their fuel for takeoff.

In addition, the Nimitz can carry 80 or more combat aircraft. In contrast, the Shandong can only carry about 40, which will not be corrected until the 80,000-ton conventionally powered Fujian, launched in 2022 and which can carry 50-plus aircraft, enters service in several years.

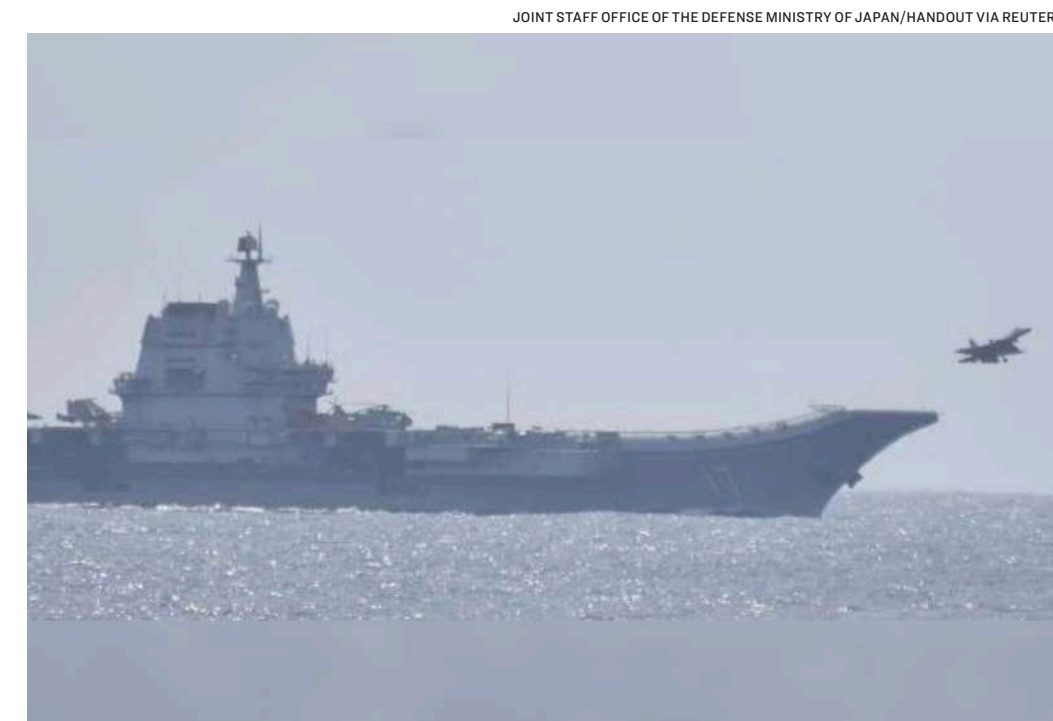
But what the Reuters article failed to explore, proving that Shandong and Liaoning are not "theatrical...propaganda showpiece[s]," is that both carriers will operate within a dome of PLA anti-ship missile superiority—they were never in-

tended for one-on-one contests with U.S. Navy carrier battle groups.

The PLA copied the strategic naval concept of one of its chief innovative heroes, the late Soviet Navy Admiral Sergei Gorshkov, who determined that to defeat the U.S. Navy's carrier-based battle groups and ensure the survival of his nuclear ballistic missile submarines, he had to launch long-range super-sonic missiles from ships, submarine, aircraft, and land bases.

Shandong and Liaoning can conduct small-scale air defense and air strike missions. Still, its J-15s will also be working to target the PLA's arsenal of long-range hypersonic, supersonic, and subsonic speed anti-ship missiles.

The PLA's development of long-range anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBMs) dates to the early 1990s when it pur-



A jet fighter takes off from China's Shandong aircraft carrier, south of Okinawa prefecture, Japan, on April 10, 2023.

Today, there is no justification for conceit about the balance of naval power in the Western Pacific.

JOINT STAFF OFFICE OF THE DEFENSE MINISTRY OF JAPAN/HANDOUT VIA REUTERS

chased "scrap" components of the U.S. Pershing-II precision-guided medium-range ballistic missile from U.S. Army bases. Now, the PLA Rocket Force deploys the 2,500-mile range DF-26B, the 1,800-mile range DF-17 hypersonic glide vehicle, the 950-mile range DF-21D, and the 620-mile range DF-16B, all ground-launched missiles.

PLA Navy ships like the Type 055 cruiser carry the 950-mile range YJ-21 ship-launched ASBM and the 920-mile range YJ-100 anti-ship cruise missile. At the same time, older Sovremenny destroyers purchased from Russia are being up-armed with new 290-mile range YJ-12 supersonic anti-ship cruise missiles. Other destroyers are getting the 300-mile range YJ-18 subsonic/supersonic anti-ship cruise missile. PLA Navy submarines are armed with the YJ-18 as well.

PLA Air Force Xian H-6N bombers can carry a large yet unnamed ASBM that may have a 1,800-mile range, while H-6K, H-6L, and H-6N bombers can carry the 300-mile range YJ-12 and the 950-mile range YJ-100.

Targeting is the Achilles' heel of the PLA's naval missile strategy, which is why it employs layers of optical surveillance satellites, radar satellites, electronic intelligence (ELINT) satellites, ELINT aircraft, radar aircraft, unmanned surveillance aircraft, carrier-based aircraft, and thousands of civilian fishing ships.

In actual combat with U.S. Navy carrier battle groups in the regions east of Taiwan or near the Japanese Ryukyu Island chain, China's carriers will be hiding behind a literal phalanx of missiles.

But to Reuters' credit, the PLA Navy was insulted enough by its article to issue a May 6 press release retort, paraphrased in the May 7 state media Global Times, saying there were "joint exercises with the Rocket Force, land-based aviation forces, and other surface combat units beyond the island chain."

The key question is whether the U.S. Navy carrier battle group can survive multiple barrages of long-range missile attacks. Does it have enough VLS for defensive ship-launched missile intercepting missiles, or can U.S. Navy nuclear attack submarines get within the fatal range of the PLAN's carrier and surface action groups, and then its large invasion fleets?

Today, there is no justification for conceit about the balance of naval power in the Western Pacific.

The survival of U.S. Navy forces in the Western Pacific is uncertain enough to require a crash program to develop new tactical nuclear warheads for U.S. ASBMs, long-range ballistic and cruise missiles, and U.S. tactical nuclear artillery shells to deter China, Russia, and North Korea from deciding they can win such a war.

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

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THE EPOCH TIMES

TRUTH and TRADITION

A NEWSPAPER GEORGE WASHINGTON WOULD READ

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Democracy activists join together to call on governments to stand against the CCP's suppression of freedom, democracy, and human rights, in front of the UN headquarters in New York on Oct. 1, 2020.

OPINION

A Necessary 'J'Accuse ... !' —The Crimes of the CCP Laid Bare

BRADLEY A. THAYER

Émile Zola revealed the stark power of laying the facts on the table in his attack on the French president and his government for the unjust conviction and imprisonment of French General Staff Officer Alfred Dreyfus due to false accusations of espionage anchored upon widespread antisemitism. In Frank Gaffney's new book, "The Indictment: Prosecuting the Chinese Communist Party and Friends for Crimes Against America, China, and the World," he analyzes the crimes of the Chinese regime with the same amalgamation of forceful logic and incandescent outrage that defined Zola's exposé of corruption in France.

Gaffney's work (NB: Gaffney is a friend and colleague at the Center for Security Policy) addresses both the threat and the needed response. He explains why the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) existential threat to the United States was ignored for many decades. He demonstrates that there is increasing recognition of the danger, including of "unrestricted warfare," the application of non-kinetic means of waging war against the United States, which is essential but insufficient—concrete measures must be taken against it. Thus, the book documents the crimes of the CCP against the United States and humanity so that readers will understand the all-encompassing nature of the threat and the critical steps of what must be done to defeat the CCP.

The first part of the analysis identifies nine specific charges against the CCP. It begins with the recognition the Chinese regime is at war with the United States. This is "people's war," a form of ideological and political warfare to mobilize the regime and its adherents against the United States. While the CCP has been at war with America since it came to power in 1949, the CCP's declaration in 2019 of "people's war" compels the recognition that the regime is determined to defeat the United States and its allies.

Moreover, Gaffney's analysis of "elite capture" is also critical for Americans to comprehend, that is, many of the Ameri-

can elite—in politics, business, finance, media, think tanks, and universities—are corrupted by the CCP so that Beijing has an enormous internal lobby in the domestic politics of the United States. For those captured to defend their pecuniary interest, they must defend the interests of the CCP.

The intertwining of the CCP's interests and America's captured elite is a fundamental problem that the U.S. Congress and the American people are only now comprehending and considering how to end this sordid situation. This keen analysis permits Americans to understand how the current cold war with the Chinese regime is unlikely the one with the Soviet Union, where elite capture was far less of a problem as most Americans patriotically would have nothing to do with the Soviet Union and would shun those, like Armand Hammer of Occidental Petroleum, who did.

The second part of the study defines 20 detailed and focused actions to be implemented against the CCP to punish it for its crimes against the Chinese people, the United States, and the world, and to defeat the CCP. These actions include understanding the threat and elite capture, investigating President Joe Biden and his

subordinates, demanding the removal from office of compromised politicians and others in government, rebuilding and replenishing the U.S. military, disengaging from China economically, banning TikTok and similar apps, securing the U.S. electrical grid, and insisting on full reciprocity in the Sino-American relationship. For example, if China does not let U.S. entities buy Chinese farmland, then Chinese entities, even if working through U.S. cutouts, should not be allowed to buy U.S. land.

The legacy of the study will be, first, that it provided American citizens with the knowledge of the threat and what to do today to combat it.

Having identified the actions, the third part of the study explains how to accomplish these measures through actions that individual Americans can take to promote public awareness and engagement, as well as necessary actions by federal, state, and local governments. This comprehensive, thoughtful, and

strategic analysis provides an unparalleled tour of the horizon regarding the CCP's "unrestricted warfare" campaign against the United States and how the CCP is assisted in this war by the American elite, businesses, and governments around the world—including on Wall Street and Silicon Valley. By identifying what individual Americans can do in response, Gaffney has produced a "how to" guide to assist Americans as they combat the threat.

Beyond its immediate contribution, the legacy of the study will be, first, that it provided American citizens with the knowledge of the threat and what to do today to combat it.

Second, mutatis mutandis, the core of the book may be applied to other countries so that people in other states who are plagued with the same problems, which will be all of them with which the CCP interacts, may adopt similar steps. Gaffney is right to stress repeatedly that the CCP is a global problem and requires that all states respond. The United States must take the lead, but all other states can contribute.

Third, the study serves as a metric for readers to gauge what actions the United States is taking and what more needs to be done. No doubt, progress will be uneven, but the guideposts are provided.

Fourth, as the United States moves into the 2024 campaign season, American citizens will use the book to be motivated to support and hopefully participate in the campaigns of candidates who will fight the CCP, and to weigh their voting decisions at all levels, from local elections to the presidential one, in light of the CCP threat.

Gaffney has produced a remarkable book for all who seek to understand the scope of the threat and what must be urgently accomplished to defeat the malevolent force that is the CCP.

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

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Chinese leader Xi Jinping and U.S. President Joe Biden meet on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit in Nusa Dua on the Indonesian resort island of Bali on Nov. 14, 2022.

CHINESE REGIME

China's Heavy-Handed 'Rural Management' Campaign Sparks Widespread Discontent

Communist policy to increase grain production heaps additional burden on already struggling rural communities

LEO TIMM

Tens of thousands of "law enforcement" personnel dispatched by Beijing have descended upon China's vast countryside to enforce compliance with the Chinese regime's latest demands for expanded grain production. More than 2,500 grassroots "agricultural law enforcement teams" have implemented the central authorities' new directives on planting, animal husbandry, water usage, and product quality and safety.

The result has been chaos and misery across numerous communities as the rural management personnel wantonly inflict severe consequences on hapless residents and their property for minor or even nonexistent infractions.

Video footage and accounts posted on social media show the management personnel digging up healthy vegetable sprouts, bulldozing gardens, sawing down fruit trees, and rounding up livestock that they claim are in violation of the central policies.

One video posted in early April from the outskirts of Yuncheng, China, shows a road roller with an affixed banner reading "strictly ban planting and selling green produce." The machine can be seen crushing a patch of winter jujubes.

In a video taken in Leping, China, a woman bitterly describes how the rural management personnel decided to raze her painstakingly planted bamboo grove and revert it to farmland. Others lamented how their fish ponds were mercilessly filled in and their geese beaten with sticks. Some farmers reported being forced to immediately sell off their ducks, chickens, and pigs, no matter the price.

Villagers are also required to pay an additional annual fee of 18 yuan (\$2.60) for the officers' "services," according to Chinese internet users. Hundreds of millions of Chinese people live on less than 500 yuan (about \$80) per month.

Chinese rural residents have been ordered to cut down forests that had previously been planted on farmland under the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP's) earlier drive to improve the environment and revert them to grain production.

Even parts of the Green Belt, a 60-mile ecological park in Chengdu, China, are being dug up for agricultural use. Built at a cost of 34 billion yuan (about \$4.9 billion) between 2003 and 2017, the Green Belt is a popular attraction in the city.

'Managing the Countryside'

A combination of unprecedented flooding, droughts, and the seizure of fertile land to fuel China's bloated real estate development has taken a serious toll on the country's harvests. With the international climate turning against the regime, Beijing has set its sights on becoming 90 percent self-sufficient in grains as projections for China's food security dim.

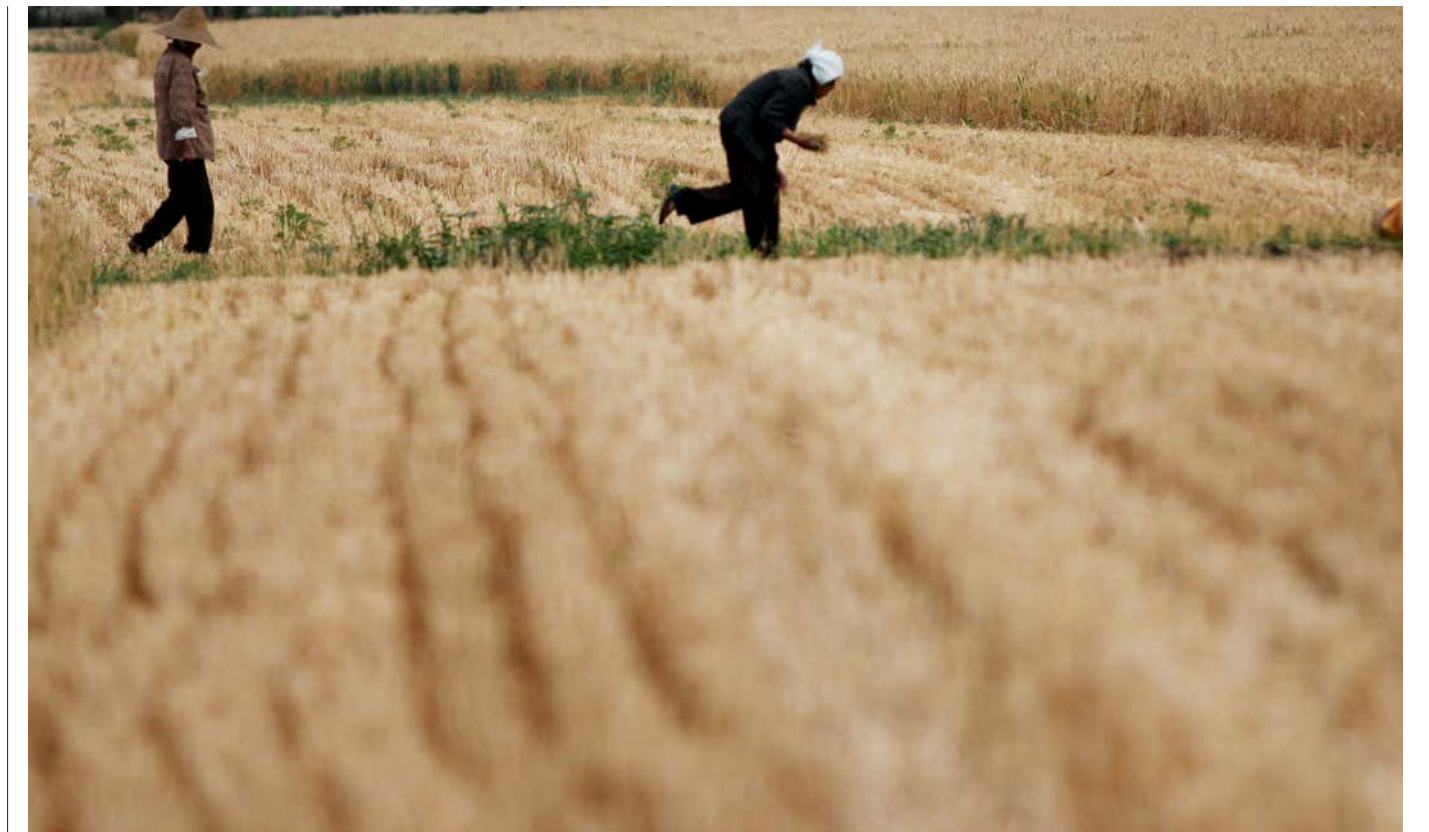
In February, the State Council, communist China's cabinet-like body, published its "No. 1 Document," which called for the "stable production and supply of grain and important agricultural products," as well as for China's farmers to meet a quota of 650 million metric tons of grain this year.

Although China is roughly the same size as the United States, it has more than 1 billion people, compared with 330 million Americans. According to Chinese financial news site Economic Daily, the country had just 316 million acres of arable land in 2019, while the United States boasted 893 million acres—the most of any nation on earth.

Economic Daily further noted that China's agricultural capacity continues to decrease and that by 2032, it will fall below the "red line" of 1.8 billion mu (roughly 296 million acres).

Cao Yaxue, editor of the human rights website China Change, told The Epoch Times that in its anxiety over grain production, the "authoritarian government in Beijing knows it isn't enough to simply issue written edicts." "It has to implement its demands through force," Cao said.

The personnel tasked with carrying out the CCP's directives on maximizing grain output are part of the Comprehensive Agricultural Law Enforcement Teams (CALET), a program



Farm workers glean wheat in a field in Huaibei, Anhui Province, China, on May 29, 2011.



Stills from video posted to Chinese social media in spring 2023 show camouflaged "nongguan" personnel speaking with rural residents before digging up their produce and tobacco crops.

The one thing the CCP will never allow farmers is full control over their production.

Cao Yaxue, editor, China Change

In a video taken in Leping, eastern China, a woman bitterly describes how the nongguan decided to raze her painstakingly planted bamboo grove and revert it to farmland.



established under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs following CCP and state institutional reforms announced in 2018. According to state statistics, there are currently more than 80,000 officers assigned to 2,564 enforcement teams.

Chinese netizens quickly nicknamed the rural management enforcement teams "nongguan," after the infamous urban administrative and law enforcement officers called "chengguan," or "urban management." These officials are known for their coercive and violent behavior, terrorizing roadside business owners and other, often low-income, residents on the streets of China's cities.

Much like the maligned chengguan, CALET personnel also harangue rural residents over supposed violations of public order and aesthetics while abusing their power. Some peasants reported being ordered to not plant crops that turn yellow in the autumn near ponds because they "don't look good"; others were warned against hanging laundry in their yards; and some nongguan reportedly took villagers' "contraband" poultry for themselves.

The CALET personnel themselves seem to be aware of their reputation. In one video, a man in a black police uniform declares: "What the traffic management can't control, we control; what the chengguan can't control, we also control. We nongguan are empowered from the top; we act first, ask questions later."

Another video shows nongguan officers wielding shovels, apparently instructing farmers on the "correct" way to till their soil.

Tunnel Vision and Regime Control

On April 15, the Agricultural Ministry published a question-and-answer article between journalists and a "relevant person-in-charge" at the ministry's Department of Laws and Regulations.

During the Q&A session, the official explained how CALET was established in line with requirements made at the Third Plenum of the CCP's 19th Central Committee in March 2018. The Party leadership had at the time mandated the creation of five types of "law enforcement teams" to be responsible for agriculture and environmental protection, transportation, culture, and the market.

The official noted that the mission of CALET officials is to clamp down on fraud and other illegal activity in the countryside, not "interfere with the normal production and livelihoods of peasants."

However, the CCP's tunnel vision on maxi-

mizing grain output at all costs, coupled with the political culture of sweeping, heavy-handed mass campaigns, doesn't foster smooth or humane implementation of the Agricultural Ministry's stated goals.

According to Wang He, a Chinese political commentator and contributor to the Chinese-language edition of The Epoch Times, the arrogance with which "rural management" officials flaunt their "empowered" status indicates that they indeed operate with higher approval.

Wang noted in an April 27 analysis that in 2021, Chinese regime leader Xi Jinping explicitly instructed that "local Party committees and government at all levels must shoulder the political responsibility for food security."

This year, the instructions for local CCP officials are becoming even stricter. In March, the Agricultural Ministry issued a mobilization order to the CALET units nationwide, which followed the implementation on Jan. 1 of the ministry's "comprehensive administrative law enforcement measures for agriculture."

Yet the basic economic incentives for farmers run up against the policies of the CCP, which sees all farmland as public property that's merely worked, rather than owned, by China's roughly 400 million peasants.

Farming, and in particular the cultivation of grain, is extremely unprofitable in China, and peasants carry the burden of various convoluted regulations and fee schedules. They're also frequently the victims of outright graft.

"Farmers lack opportunities to generate income," Cao said. "This is because the state maintains monopolies on all the major agricultural products."

He brought up the case of independent agricultural mogul Sun Dawu—who was handed an 18-year prison sentence in 2021—as an example of how the CCP's rural policies, far from "revitalizing the countryside, and modernizing agriculture in a comprehensive manner," as the Agricultural Ministry claims, actually crush China's prospects for a successful farming sector.

Sun was an advocate of rural reforms that would allow farmers to both produce and market their products, something that the system of state monopolies prevents.

But Sun's multi-billion-yuan success story of a business built from scratch with his once-impoorished relatives would never convince authorities to reconsider their ways, Cao observed in an April 30 piece.

"The one thing the CCP will never allow farmers is full control over their production," she wrote.

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