

Testimony of Chai Ling

All Girls Allowed

September 22, 2011

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights hearing:

China's One-Child Policy: The Government's Massive Crime Against Women and Unborn Babies

Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee, thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify about this massive problem in hope and determination that one day it will come to an end.

We are here to report and mourn the loss of 400+ million lives taken in China since 1980 under the China's One-Child Policy. But I never realized until I was writing my memoir that 3 of those babies are mine.

The reason why the One Child Policy kills millions of infants and unborn children annually is because it is a "one-child **per couple**" policy. It is the "all other children must die" policy. That means most married couples are not allowed to have more than one child and of course, unmarried women in China are not allowed to have babies at all. There are 16 million forced and coerced abortions a year in China but when counting the number of abortion pills sold, possibly closer to 23 million). According to the Chinese government's own statement, 70% of these women are from unmarried. That means more than 10 million young women suffer this fate every year, up to 27 thousand every day, 19 every minute. And that is the poster of that young lady hiding her face in the IV.

The tragic equation for millions of unmarried women, especially those too young to wed is: "No marriage certificate, no birth permit. No birth permit, no baby."

The first time I became pregnant, I was 18 years old, a sophomore at Peking University. I was terrified and deeply ashamed. All I could think was a scene I saw a young couple when I first arrived Peking University, was being expelled in front of us freshman for she was found out in love and pregnant. The thought of being kicked out of school, which represented life, future, jobs, and a position in society, was unthinkable.

My father, who was an army doctor himself, took me in secret to the neighboring city's clinic to end the pregnancy. The surgery was performed on a cold operating table, with no anesthesia. It was extremely painful. We both took the bus back home without saying a word to each other. We never talked about this abortion or my second coerced abortion again for over two decades until a few days ago when he read this story in my book. In my book I tell at length how my forced abortion experience was a combination of the law requiring an abortion if you are not married and the pressure of the society, giving young women no choice.

The third time I was pregnant I was in graduate school, with my-soon-to-be-husband. But even if you are married you must abort unless you have a birth permit, and you cannot get married until you have a combined age of 48. This time I walked in with him to a clinic in Beijing, without help nor informing any of our parents. Only after that, we realized we could have tried to fake our age to and get a marriage certificate. We regret why we did not think of that earlier. We did get married shortly after. But the baby was gone. That is the way it works in China.

Similarly in my life, I now see how it was all threaded together. Started by Deng Xiaoping who decided to order the One-Child Policy, in addition to all these forced abortions, the policy led to the universities to expel young couples who were in love and pregnant, that led to my father and my boyfriend's father taking me to end my pregnancies. And that led to the third time when I was pregnant, I knew where to go and what to do. It did not stop here, worst yet, by the fourth time, when I was pregnant, I was already escaped to Paris in 1990, the land of freedom. Alone and in a very bad place in my marriage, with advice from a Chinese couple who loved very much their own child, I did what I was taught to do: ended that pregnancy too.

When I came to America in 1990 to testify about China's human rights abuses, Chairman Smith you asked me then whether I knew China's forced abortion One Child Policy. I assumed the world knew and asked in return, "Doesn't everybody know about it?" Even at that time, I did not make the connection of my experience having anything to do with that policy. It is an insidious policy causing the society to immediately demand an abortion for any woman without a birth permit, married or not. To refuse would be illegal but most unmarried women like me don't even dare to ask and certainly don't tell others about it but silently suffer in a country with the highest female suicide rate in the world, 500 woman a day every day.

Until December 2010, when I was speaking to an American teacher about his visit to China to teach about the development of pregnancies, I first saw the small but well-formed tiny babies at 8 weeks, 10 weeks, 12 weeks. Tears started stream down my face. It was at that moment, I realized four of my little babies were sent to the grinding tubes, and all turned into pink foam. Four little lives snuffed out by a Government and a society that does not value life and does not think twice with more abortions per year. In the capital city of Beijing there are more abortions than live births to this very day according to reports by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS).

As much as I thought I was a freedom fighter trying to bring freedom and save lives, I did not realize how much I was turned into the same sinful being as Chinese's leaders like Deng Xiaoping and others who are enforcing the One-Child Policy today. And how deceptive and blinded I was: even when I reached Paris, even though I was no longer under the threat of being thrown out of my school after I was already thrown out the country, even though I was married and no longer had to hide the pregnancy in shame, still I did not appreciate the potential for that life that was within me, still I carried the mindset of China that abortion was the right choice if the circumstances made keeping the baby difficult.

For by then I was long-trained to think and act as if abortion is the way of life. To be completely truthful about the situation, in hope to shed light on what needs to change now and in the future: there was never any discussion that there might be another choice. There was not a movie like Juno playing in China teaching us that we could give the baby away. There was not one example like the one couple I met at my Harvard Business School section, that when they were pregnant at college, they could take a year off, get married and come back to graduate and still have a great career. There was never this kind of freedom nor information about the full truth of abortion to teach us that we could have a choice to give these babies life. And that is why to this day China is where the majority of the world's abortions take place every year.

It is in this reason I chose to support the bill HR 2121. Once passed, this bill would give the President of the United States freedom to deny entry to the US for any Chinese official involved in forcing abortions and sterilization on unwilling women in China, an act that would be a clear crime in this Country. But today these would-be criminals in the United States are given visas to come

here and enjoy this great country. HR2121 would also apply to family members of these officials. With over 400,000 people employed by the family planning committee of China, this is no small matter. Just as I shared a very personal story today, this bill would be very personal to leaders in China. 130,000 Chinese students studied in America last year, up 30 percent from the year before. HR 2121 would change all of that. It is likely they will oppose it and possibly even threaten retaliation. But ask any member of Congress, if you were looking in the face of the person who just injected a needle of deadly poison into the brain of a near full term 8 month old baby in the womb of its mother as shown on Al Jazeera television would you grant them a Visa to come from China to the United States? If not, then why is there no law to make sure it does not happen?

I am not here to testify against you, the leaders of China, as Chai Ling, the human rights fighter; but as an equal sinner with you. I can tell you with peace and confidence that a spiritual transformation awaits you if you put your faith in Christ Jesus you will have the courage to change and demand change of others, and you will see clearly that you don't need to act like Deng Xiaoping in 1989, feeling that he had no other choice. You can still turn and end this policy, and can start reshaping the culture of China to value all women, their choice, and children's lives.

Freedom is awaiting you as it is awaiting 1.3 billion other Chinese men and women under your watch. Though evil blinded me and blinded all of us to do evil, God wants us to see, to be set free, and to experience his love and receive eternal life.

Isaiah 61

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor;^[a]
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;^[b]
² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³ to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.^[c]
⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins;
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.