

CHINA'S ONE CHILD POLICY: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Laogai Research Foundation aims to dispel some of the myths that have come to surround the One Child Policy:

Myth: The One Child Policy isn't enforced anymore. Although the policy has been relaxed in some places, couples in the vast majority of the country are still forced to seek birth permits (now called a friendlier sounding "birth services certificate") before they have a child, even if they have not exceeded their one child quota. Local family planning officials still determine the number and spacing of children born in their districts.

Myth: There is a single, national One Child Policy and the Central Government is the chief enforcer. This is an oft-repeated fallacy. In fact, what we term the "One Child Policy" is actually a collection of laws and regulations. The policy is decentralized, which not only fuels local corruption, but also allows the central government to absolve itself of responsibility for the human rights violations associated with the policy. So the central government condemns forced abortions and sterilizations while at the same time creating a structure of incentives that encourages these abuses.

Myth: We should not be concerned about the One Child Policy because it will end soon. The Central Government, and several high-level provincial officials have stated that the policy will remain in place for at least another decade. It may be true that the policy's days are numbered; but for the woman who is facing a forced sterilization or the family that is financially ruined because they had a second child, "soon" is simply not enough.

Enforcement of the policy is entirely extrajudicial, rife with corruption, yet affects China's families on the deepest, most personal level. There is no legal recourse for victims of the policy. The fact is that every single day, families are subject to violence on the part of China's family planning officials.

Former political prisoner and Executive Director of LRF, Harry Wu, said of China's population control policy: "No other country in the world has so turned the notion of "family planning" on its head. No other country in the world has created such an intricate and complex bureaucracy to decide the number and spacing of children a woman is allowed to bear. No other country in the world treats pregnant women as criminals, or turns families into international refugees simply for having too many children." He added, "one forced abortion or sterilization by a government official is one too many."

OCP Numbers

119:100 Current male to female ratio in China ¹

30 Million More men of marriageable age than women by 2020 ²

7 Million abortions are performed in China per year ⁵

50 Million Estimated amount of "missing girls" in China ⁴

67 Percentage of Chinese population that must comply with One Child Policy laws ¹

35 Estimated percentage of elderly in population by 2050 ¹

400 Million Amount of births "prevented" by CCP since 1979 ⁶

¹ Wang Feng, "Can China Afford to Continue Its One-Child Policy?" East-West Center, Asia Pacific Issues, No. 77, March 2005

² Beibei Bao, "Father Seeks to Sell Himself, Under China's One-Child Policy"

³ Kent Ewing, "China's Culture of Abortion," Asia Times Online, May 31, 2007

⁴ Mara Hvistendahl, "Where Have All the Girls Gone?" Foreign Policy, June 27, 2011.

⁵ Kent Ewing, "China's Culture of Abortion," Asia Times Online, May 31, 2007.

⁶ Reggie Littlejohn, "China's One-Child Policy" Address to the EU Parliament, December 4, 2008.)