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February 24, 2003

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President Jiang Zemin
C/o Ambassador Yang Jiechi
Embassy of the People's Republic of China
2300 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20018

Dear President Jiang:

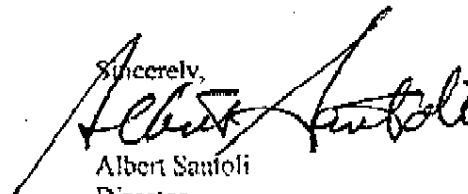
I am writing to express my concern about the detention of Dr. Jianli Yang, a Ph.D. from Harvard University, who has been detained in China since April 26, 2002. The American Foreign Policy Council's Asia-Pacific Initiative supports numerous requests by the U.S. Government and a number of international human rights and educational institutions for the release of Dr. Yang and his return to his wife and small children in Massachusetts. Dr. Yang's elderly parents also live in the United States.

Dr. Yang was held for months without any detention notice being issued, without any details of his status being made available to his family, without any details being given of formal charges, without access to legal counsel, and is still being held without contact with his own family in China or abroad. While Chinese procedural law requires that the family or an employer of a person detained be contacted within 24 hours of detention, the Chinese government has yet to present Dr. Yang's family or employers with a formal detention notice. According to Harvard Law School, the Chinese government has also violated its own law both through the prolonged detention as well as by denying access to an attorney or visits by family members.

In addition, although China has not ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as a signatory, your government is obligated to abide by treaty provisions. In this regard, the treaty provides that a detainee cannot be denied the right to communicate with family "for more than a matter of days." The ICCPR also states that anyone detained, "shall be entitled to be brought promptly before a judge and shall be entitled to a trial within a reasonable time or to release."

The Press Desk of the State Council has written to the media that Dr. Yang faces charges for being in China on "another person's passport." We do not dispute that claim. However, he has already served ten months in detention. The Asia Pacific Initiative joins numerous other international humanitarian agencies in requesting an expedited release for Dr. Yang, so that he can return to his family in the United States. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Albert Santoli
Director,
AFPC Asia-Pacific Initiative