

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: ASA 17/39/94  
Distr: UA/SC

UA 437/94

Legal/Health concern

8 December 1994

CHINA

Xin Hong (f), aged 67

---

Xin Hong, the mother of an exiled Chinese police official, was arrested in mid-September 1994 in Tianjin city and accused of "leaking state secrets", apparently in connection with her son's activities abroad.

Shortly before her arrest, Xin Hong had reportedly spent some time in hospital, where she was treated for a stomach ailment. She has been held incommunicado since her arrest and it is feared that her health might deteriorate in prison. She is reported to be held in Tianjin prison, where she was transferred after spending some time in a detention centre.

Xin Hong is the mother of Gao Peiqi, a former police officer in Shenzhen, who fled China after being detained for six months in 1990 in connection with the crackdown on the 1989 pro-democracy demonstrations.

After her arrest, Xin Hong's house in Tianjin was searched, and police reportedly confiscated letters and pictures of her son, as well as some of her son's personal work diaries. During the past year, she had sent such personal documents to her son, who now lives in Britain, at his request. This appears to be the reason for the charge against her. According to her son, neither Xin Hong, nor other members of the family, were in a position to have access to state secrets.

Her arrest is believed to be related to her son's former position as a police official and to his activities abroad. Gao Peiqi is a former deputy leader of the serious crimes section in Shenzhen's Public Security Bureau (police). He was detained for six months in 1990 for having shown support for the 1989 pro-democracy movement, which was brutally suppressed on 4 June that year. He fled to Hong Kong in 1992 and has since made public statements about corruption and other malpractices within the Chinese police and judiciary. He later came to Britain, where he now chairs the British branch of the *Alliance for a Democratic China*.

Following Gao Peiqi's escape from China, his mother, sister and seven year-old niece were expelled from the flat they had in police dormitories in Shenzhen, and forced to go back to their original place of residence, Tianjin city. Since then, family members, including Gao's young niece, have reportedly been under surveillance and frequently subjected to interrogations by police.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During the past year, a growing number of people have been arrested and sentenced in China on charges of "leaking state secrets", raising concern that the legal provisions concerning state secrets are increasingly being used to repress fundamental freedoms. Amnesty International considers some of those held on such charges to be prisoners of conscience. The definition given to "state secrets" in China is very broad, encompassing matters which would be the subject of public scrutiny in other countries, and going far beyond what is needed to protect national security.

Xin Hong was born and brought up in Jilin city, northeast China. After her marriage, she moved to Tianjin city where her husband's family had a shop selling

coal. The family was branded as "capitalist" in 1949 and their coal shop turned into a public enterprise. Xin Hong worked there as an accountant until 1956, but, due to the political label on the family, she was then forced to work at delivering coal, which she did until she retired in 1986.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: Please send telexes/telegrams/faxes and airmail letters in English or in your own language:**

- expressing concern that Xin Hong is reported to be detained on accusation of "leaking state secrets", to which she reportedly had no access and urging the authorities to make public the specific accusations on which the charge is based;
- expressing concern that Xin Hong, who is 67 years old, was last reported to be in poor health and that she has been detained incommunicado in Tianjin since her arrest in September 1994;
- urging the authorities to investigate the conditions of her detention and to grant her immediate and regular access to her family and a doctor of her choice, pending a prompt review of her case;
- urging that Xin Hong be granted immediate access to a lawyer of her choice, or be released immediately.

**APPEALS TO:**

Minister of Public Security of the People's Republic of China

TAO Siju Buzhang

Gong'anbu

14 Dongchang'anlu

Beijingshi 100741

People's Republic of China

**Telexes: 210070 FMPRC CN**

**Faxes: + 861 524 1596**

**Telegrams: Minister of Public Security Tao Siju, Beijing, China**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Tianjin City Mayor

Zhang Lichang Shizhang

Tianjinshi Renmin Zhengfu

167 Dagulu, Hepingqu

Tianjinshi 300040

**Telegrams: Zhang Lichang Shizhang, Tianjinshi, China**

**Salutation: Dear Mayor**

Tianjin City Public Security Bureau chief

Song Pingshun Juzhang

Gong'anju

26 Tangshandao, Hepingqu

Tianjinshi 300040

**Telegrams: Song Pingshun Juzhang, Tianjinshi, China**

**Salutation: Dear Bureau Chief**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:** diplomatic representatives of the People's Republic of China in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 19 January 1995.