

GLOBAL
Q&A

'What's it like living as a foreigner in this country?'

Adapting to a new culture, lifestyle, and finding a job are among the challenges and joys discovered by Epoch Times reporters from London to Fairlie when they asked locals around the world, "What's it like living as a foreigner in this country?"

LINKÖPING, SWEDEN (Italian, in Sweden for 20 years)
IDOARDO MASTROVITO, 50, PRESIDENT DIRECTOR GENERAL



I'm from Milan, Italy, and I have lived here for 20 years. I met my wife, who is Swedish, during a trip to England. We moved in together; that's how I ended up in Sweden. I think you need to learn the language to feel at home in a new country. I found employment immediately after I finished college.

LONDON, GREAT BRITAIN (Czech, in U.K. for five years)
JAN UHLIR, 33, SOFTWARE DEVELOPER



It's mostly the same as living in the Czech Republic; just the family and everyone are much further away. I do the same job as back in my home country, but it's more challenging here as everything is in a different language. But there are more opportunities and a little bit more money. Eventually, I plan to return.

FAIRLIE, NEW ZEALAND (British, in New Zealand for seven years)
ANDREW KERR, 41, FARMER



Very positive! A very easy country to settle in to. I'm from England and have been living here for seven years. There are more opportunities to start afresh in New Zealand than there would be in the U.K. if you're prepared to put yourself out there. If we went back it would be selfish; our children definitely have a better life here.

PIRACICABA, BRAZIL (French, in Brazil for two years)
OLIVIA COPPIN, 24, ENGINEER AGRONOMIST



It is a really great personal effort to be here, because everything is different; you adapt yourself or leave. It is difficult to find a job, or a position as a trainee to stay here. On the other hand, I like the life style, solidarity, and people helping each other. Here in Piracicaba, I like the pace, as there are many things to do. It is possible to drink a beer with friends, enjoy a party; it's very quiet and people are more serious. I have lived in Pernambuco. It was good, but people thought only of parties and there was a lot of violence.

TWEED HEADS, AUSTRALIA (Japanese, in Australia for six years)
ATSU TOMIZAWA, 39, LANDSCAPER



Living in Australia is great. I guess, yes, I think, safer [in] Australia. Education is great; we are very happy. Our children go to private school. Yes, very happy with it. People are very kind; we have been helped a lot from the Australian community and Australian people. We really appreciate that. My working here is some kind of contribution to the Australian community. That's my intention.

CANARY ISLANDS, SPAIN (Spanish, lived in Germany for 40 years)
TERESA GIL MARTEL 73, HOUSEWIFE



I would say that living in Germany as a foreigner, it was wonderful. I adapted easily because my mother-in-law treated me as if I were her daughter, so I was comfortable. But I can't deny that I took my time to fully understand and assimilate to the way people lived in Germany, because they were really very precise, and ordered.

TERRANOVA BRACCIOLINI, ITALY (Indian, in Italy for 15 years)
SINGA KAMALJIT, 42, UNEMPLOYED MECHANIC



I'm from India. Fifteen years ago I came to Italy and life was good with a lot of work everywhere, and many people brought their friends and family. But today in 4, with luck, works. Many people have a problem finding work in Italy now, and Italian people prefer not to employ a foreigner. In this moment I do not feel good in Italy.

Look for the Global Q&A column every week, when Epoch Times correspondents interview people around the world to learn about their lives and perspective on local and global realities.

Next week's global question: If you could meet yourself as a child, what advice would you give?

ALL PHOTOS BY THE EPOCH TIMES

U.S. House calls for end to persecution of Falun Gong

By JAN JEKIELEK & GARY FEUERBERG
Epoch Times Staff

WASHINGTON—In a landslide vote, the U.S. House of Representatives last Tuesday voted 412-1 to call for an end to the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China.

House Resolution 605 calls upon the Chinese regime "to immediately cease and desist from its campaign to persecute, intimidate, imprison, and torture Falun Gong practitioners, to immediately abolish the 6-10 office, an extrajudicial security apparatus given the mandate to 'eradicate' Falun Gong."

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking member on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, authored the legislation.

"The Falun Gong spiritual discipline is based on truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance. Yet these innocents are brutally targeted by the Chinese regime, whose heinous tactics include harvesting the organs of Falun Gong practitioners and violently harassing even those practitioners living in the United States," Ros-Lehtinen said in a statement.

The resolution "expresses sympathy to Falun Gong practitioners and their family members who have suffered persecution, intimidation, imprisonment, torture, and even death for the past decade solely because of adherence to their personal beliefs," she said.

All but one of the 413 Members of Congress who voted on the resolution recognized the persecution and called for it to end. Seventeen abstained.

"One of the invaluable things



LENDING A VOICE: U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen speaks at a rally on July 20, 2007, the eighth anniversary of the launch of the Chinese Communist regime's persecution of Falun Gong. The House of Representatives voted 412-1 on March 16 to call for an end to the persecution. JAN JEKIELEK/THE EPOCH TIMES

about this resolution is that it officially documents this Chinese government sponsored violence on American soil, exercised against American citizens," said Congressman Chris Smith.

"Many of the Falun Gong have fled to America and the government has followed them here, cyber-attacking their American Web sites, installing agents in their midst, and raising crowds to harass and beat them, as happened last year in New York."

Levi Browde, executive director of the Falun Dafa Information Centre (FDI), said the resolution is "especially significant for it demonstrates that the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China is as urgent today as it ever was. As it recognizes, the reality remains that millions of

innocent people in China who practice Falun Gong are at constant risk of arbitrary detention, torture, and death."

The official press office for Falun Gong, FDI also specializes in documenting the human rights abuses adherents of the practice face in China.

Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is a spiritual discipline that was introduced to the public in 1992 in mainland China. On July 20, 1999, then-head of the Chinese Communist Party Jiang Zemin initiated a campaign of defamation and persecution against the practice and its adherents.

Following the resolution's passage, Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey said, "In 2002, I was the author of

a resolution expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the Chinese government's oppression of Falun Gong in the United States and in the People's Republic of China. Sadly, eight years later, the persecution continues."

In October 2003, the House passed 304, which, in addition to calling for an end to the persecution in China, raised concerns over numerous incidents of physical and other harassment of Falun Gong practitioners and their supporters in the U.S.. Two other resolutions were passed in the early years of the persecution expressing Congressional condemnation of the Chinese regime's persecution of Falun Gong.

"The [605] resolution's content also highlights that attaining genuine freedom and human rights protection for all Chinese people is predicated on ending the persecution of Falun Gong. For how can a civil, healthy society develop when tens of millions are targeted in such a fashion?" said Browde.

Over the past 11 years, Falun Gong practitioners in China have been tortured, killed, sent to labour camps and forced brainwashing centers, and endured other forms of suppression, according to numerous government and NGO reports, including those cited in the resolution.

Congresswoman Diane Watson said that according to the U.S. State Department's latest human rights report on China, Falun Gong's core leadership was "singled out for particularly harsh treatment, and simply believing in the discipline—without publicly practicing any of its tenets—was enough for practitioners to be punished or imprisoned."

U.K. looks at threat of nuclear terrorists

By STEPHEN JONES
Epoch Times Staff

LONDON—A nuclear attack on the heart of London by al-Qaeda terrorists is now a possibility, a series of U.K. government reports has warned.

Militants trained in Afghanistan may have already acquired a "dirty bomb" owing to an increase in international black market trade in radioactive material.

In January, the U.K.'s national terrorism threat level was raised from 'substantial' to 'severe,' after a failed terrorist plot to blow up an airplane heading for Detroit.

However, in three separate reports all released on Tuesday, the U.K. government outlined the possibility that a future terrorist attack on London could involve weapons of mass destruction.

An update to the government's National Security Strategy says that "the U.K. does face nuclear threats now," due to "the possibility that nuclear weapons or nuclear material could fall into the hands of rogue states or terrorist groups."

Officials are concerned about the amount of radioactive material that has simply gone missing. Between 1993 and 2008 there have been 1,562 incidents where nuclear material was

lost or stolen, according to the International Atomic Energy Authority.

A staggering 65 percent of the losses were never recovered.

According to the annual report by the U.K.'s Office for Security and Counter Terrorism, the possibility of a dirty bomb terrorist attack on the U.K. is now greater because of a "significant increase" in the illicit trade of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) weapons and material.

U.K. stockpiles of decommissioned materials were also identified in the report as a potential vulnerability due to poor security. It called current security measures "variable

and sometimes inadequate, leaving materials vulnerable to theft by insiders and criminal and terrorist organizations.

Al-Qaeda is suspected of conducting research into dirty bombs in Afghanistan while the country was under the control of the Taliban.

In a bid to counter gaps in maritime security, Lord West announced the establishment of the National Maritime Information Centre.

"Things like the attack on Mumbai and the forthcoming Olympics in 2012 made us realize we needed to look at the maritime domain more closely," U.K. security minister Lord West told reporters.

Gangs assault police stations in Caracas

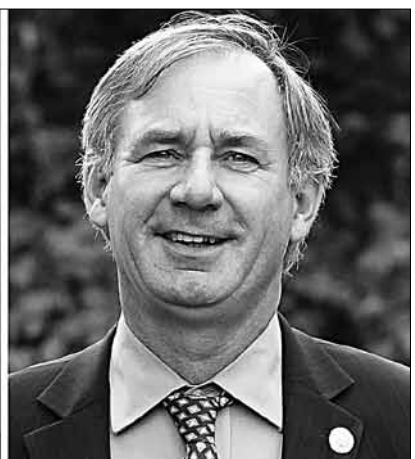
GANGS CONTINUED FROM P1

"There are already two investigations, a criminal one and an administrative one, because we assume that there was police misconduct, since the number of policemen there at the time of the event was the number that would be expected. That's why we must assume this—just like we have done with other police—that there was misconduct," said Aissami.

Some victims of the robberies said that the thieves were using police jargon when communicating with them, and among themselves.

However, a few hours after Aissami announced that the police force was being investigated, the metropolitan police announced that they had found the alleged criminals along with the weapons cache after conducting a successful sting operation in which officers posed as weapons buyers. Fourteen suspects were reportedly detained.

Concern among Caracas residents has been rising over the last couple of months, particularly now that police stations are being robbed and more and more guns are falling into the hands of criminals. There is a growing feeling of insecurity that if the police cannot protect themselves, who is left to protect average citizen.



SUSPENDED: (L-R) Former cabinet ministers from Britain's ruling Labour Party Stephen Byers, Patricia Hewitt, and Geoff Hoon have been suspended for allegedly preparing to influence policy in exchange for cash, in a scandal that erupted just weeks before Britain's general election. AFP/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Former British MPs caught lobbying for cash

MPS CONTINUED FROM A1

Other former ministers and MPs were also approached by The Sunday Times and Channel 4's Dispatches as part of an investigation into parliamentarians' lobbying and advice work.

Geoff Hoon, a former British Defense Secretary, was filmed saying, "One of the challenges I am looking forward to is translating my knowledge and contacts on the international scene into something that, frankly, makes money."

Following the broadcast, Hoon said he would not "attempt to sell confidential or privileged information arising from my time in government." He said his unpaid work with NATO, on the prime minister's behalf, would now cease.

Patricia Hewitt, a former health

secretary, said she "completely rejects" the suggestion that she helped obtain a key seat on a government advisory group for a client who paid her \$4,500 a day.

All three deny any wrongdoing. There is general concern from all parties about lobbying and advisory work by ex-ministers and MPs. Labour, the Tories, and the Liberal Democrats say the rules should be tightened to stop ex-ministers using their contacts for private gain.

Foreign Secretary David Miliband told Sky News, "The Labour manifesto is going to say more about the need for a statutory register of this lobbying industry, because there is absolutely no room for the sort of innuendo or promises that seem to have been floated in this case."

At present, sitting MPs are not banned from working for corporate clients. However, they must declare any payment in the register of members' interests.

Paid work by an ex-minister within two years of leaving office must be cleared by the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments. They are not allowed to table amendments or vote on bills in exchange for payment and are normally banned for 12 months from becoming lobbyists in their specialist fields.

The Code of Conduct and Guide to the Rules relating to the Conduct of Members lists selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, and leadership as general principles of conduct for MPs.

All three MPs had not planned to run in the upcoming election.