

WEEK 4, 2022

THE EPOCH TIMES

# CHINA INSIDER

A security officer walks by the headquarters of the Beijing Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games, in Beijing on Dec. 7, 2021.



# CHINA IMPRISONS FAITH ADHERENTS

WEEKS BEFORE OLYMPICS

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## CHINESE SPIES

# As DOJ Cracks Down on Chinese Espionage, Critics Seek to Abolish Initiative, Citing Racial Discrimination

PHILIP LENCZYCKI

As the Justice Department's (DOJ) crackdown on Chinese-state-sponsored theft of intellectual property nets the high-profile conviction of Harvard University's former chemistry department chairman, Charles Lieber, a growing list of critics of the department's "China Initiative" seeks to abolish the program that they say unfairly targets Chinese academics.

Notable opponents of the China Initiative include Rep. Ted Lieu (D-Calif.) and Judy Chu (D-Calif.); a Stanford University faculty group named Winds of Freedom; and the Chinese American organization Committee of 100.

Established in 2018, the initiative was billed by the DOJ as seeking to stem China's rampant theft of U.S. intellectual property and as an "enforcement strategy" for "individuals whose primary profession is not intelligence collection, but who collect sensitive U.S. technologies and information on behalf of Chinese government entities"—that is, "non-traditional collectors."

Lieber is among a series of U.S. academics charged or convicted under the initiative. Many of these academics have been charged for failing to disclose their ties to Chinese funding sources.

"From at least 2012 through 2015," Lieber served as a "High-Level Foreign Expert" in the Thousand Talents Program for the Wuhan University of Technology, receiving "up to \$50,000" per month in pay and "approximately \$158,000" for living expenses, according to prosecutors.

At the same time, Lieber also was supplied with "more than \$1.5 million to establish a research lab" in China.

On Dec. 21, 2021, Lieber was convicted on two counts of failing to report foreign bank and financial accounts to the IRS, two counts of filing fraudulent income tax returns, and two counts of making false statements to federal authorities.

Prosecutors argued that Lieber was motivated by the desire to conceal his undisclosed connections with the Thousand Talents Program, which U.S. authorities say is a Chinese Communist Party recruitment plan that facilitates the transfer of foreign technology and know-how to China.

Critics, however, maintain the China Initiative betrays its original charter, claiming the government pursues "process offenses" and "research integrity issues," which they allege aren't crimes related to economic espionage.

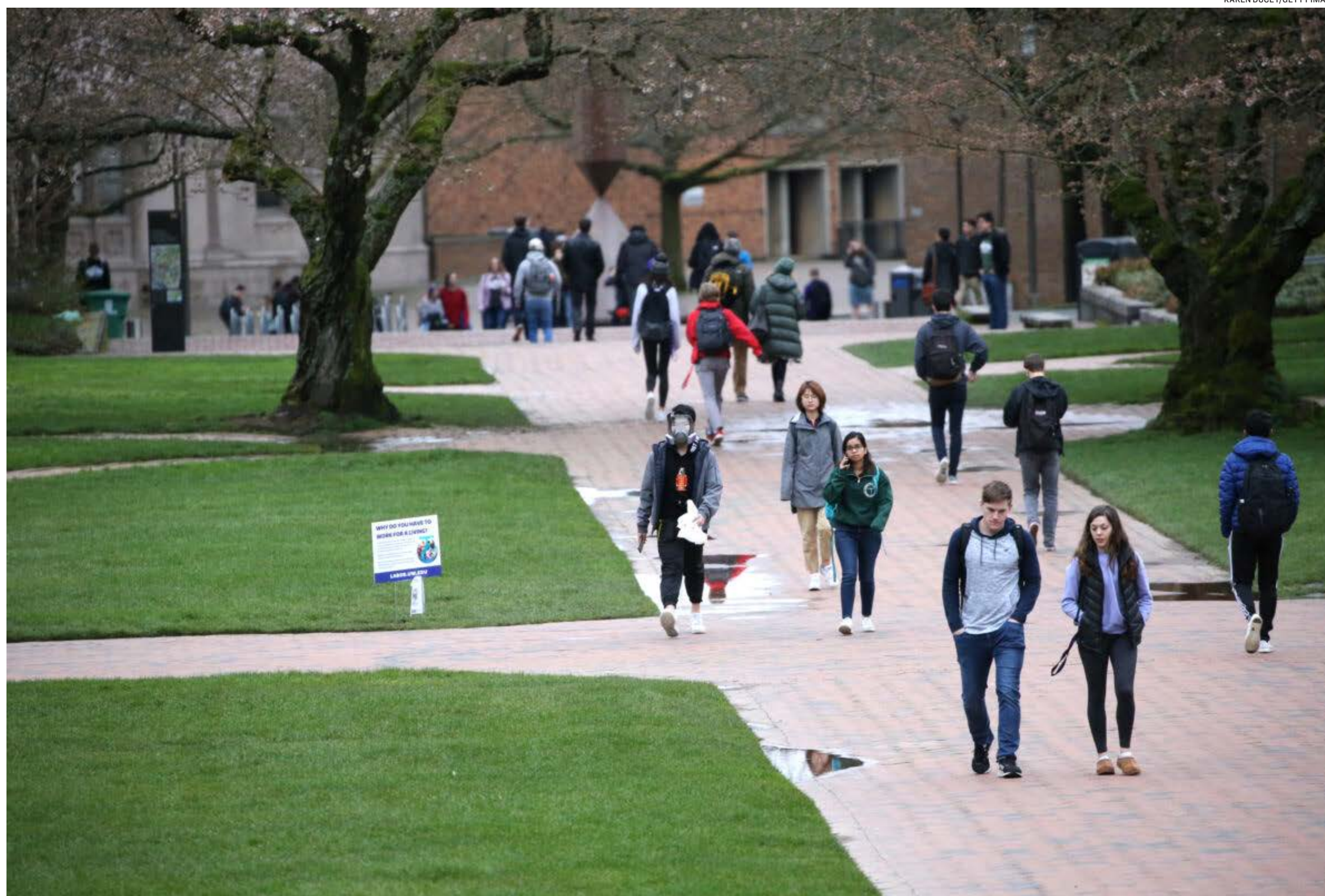
Students walk on campus at the University of Washington in Seattle on March 6, 2020. Between 2018 and 2019, the University of Washington received millions of dollars from Chinese companies.

There are thousands of students from China at the University of Washington campus, and China pretty much controls them.

Bob Fu, CEO, China Aid

(Below) Dr. Bob Fu, president of China Aid, speaks at the event "China Threat Briefing: Unrestricted Warfare: The Chinese Communist Party's War against America and the Free World" organized by the Committee on the President Danger in Washington on May 2, 2019.

(Bottom) Charles Lieber leaves federal court after he and two Chinese nationals were charged with lying about their alleged links to the Chinese government, in Boston on Jan. 30, 2020.



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SAMIRA BOUADU/THE EPOCH TIMES



In September 2021, Winds of Freedom, the Stanford faculty group, sent a letter to Attorney General Merrick Garland seeking the termination of the initiative.

"Most prosecutions are for misconduct such as failure to disclose foreign appointments or funding," it stated. "While such problems should be addressed, they should not be confused with national security concerns."

**Vera Zhou**

Rachelle Peterson, a senior research fellow at the National Association of Scholars, shared an alternative perspective with Insight magazine.

"Transparency of foreign gifts and contracts is crucial to public accountability. The public should know what foreign parties are buying influence over the colleges and universities that they attend, send their children to, or donate to."

She cited the story of a University of Washington student named Vera Zhou as "one of the most poignant stories showing the power of foreign funding."

"On a trip back to China to visit family, Vera used a virtual private network to access her homework," Peterson said. "For this, she was arrested, sent to a re-education camp, and then held under house arrest. Bob Fu, the Chinese dissident and pastor, advocated for her release. The State Department worked, too, to free Vera. The University of Washington did nothing."

From October 2017 to March 2018, Zhou was held in a re-education camp in Xinjiang, according to Department of Education (DOE) records and State Department officials. After March 2018, Zhou was remanded to "house arrest" and remained under the watch of Chinese authorities until the State Department secured her release and return to the United States in September 2019.

"When the State Department approached the University of Washington about asking for Vera's release, the university refused, saying it was in the middle of negotiating 'a multimillion-dollar deal' with China and didn't want anything to jeopardize that," Peterson said.

"Shortly afterward, the University of Washington brokered a deal with Huawei, the Chinese tech firm designated by the FCC as a national security threat."

In December 2020, the University of Washington officials published a letter in response

to the allegations, writing, "the insinuation that the University allowed financial interests of any kind to interfere with its handling of this situation is outrageous," adding that they had "no idea what 'multimillion-dollar deal' [was] being referenced."

However, DOE records that document the receipt of foreign gifts note that between 2018 and 2019, the University of Washington received millions of dollars from Chinese companies Huawei, Origicell Technology Group, Shanghai De Novo Pharmatech, and Futurewei. In addition, the University of Washington also was receiving money from its on-campus Confucius Institute, a Beijing-funded language center that has been criticized for promoting Chinese propaganda, and maintaining an exchange program with Tsinghua University.

Fu, the president of the Christian nonprofit organization China Aid, advocated on behalf of Zhou's mother with the University of Washington before working with State Department officials to secure Zhou's release. Fu told The Epoch Times he believes the University of Washington's decision not to assist Zhou was "1,000 percent" influenced by the university's Chinese entanglements.

"The timeline tells clearly there's a link, there's a relationship," Fu said. "There are thousands of students from China at the University of Washington campus, and China pretty much controls them."

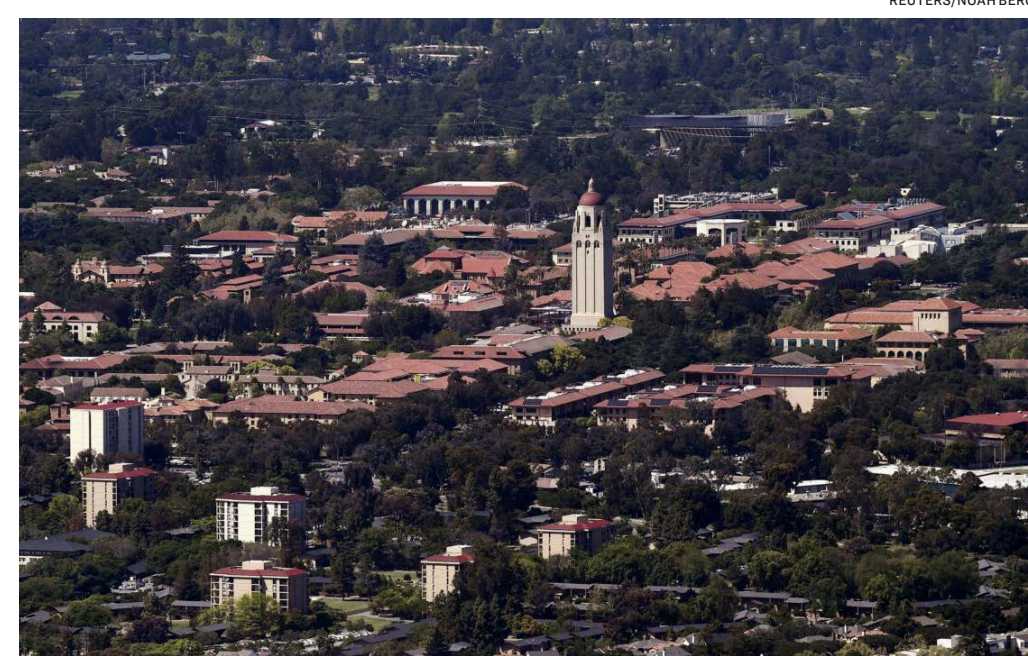
At a DOE press conference in October 2020, Zhou recalled her ordeal, describing the national security threat posed by undisclosed foreign money.

"Donors can hold power over U.S. universities and influence actions ... I spent my Thanksgiving, Christmas, and 2018 New Year in that cell ... It makes me wonder, as a prestigious university, what do you really care [about]?"

**China Funding**

A 2019 letter sent by then-DOE Acting General Counsel Reed Rubinstein to the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations announced the government's intention to correct "historically lax oversight" regarding the reporting of foreign money by universities.

Rubinstein's letter recounted Chinese Communist Party (CCP) national security threats discovered from an investigation into six universities: Cornell University, George-



REUTERS/NOAH BERGER

town University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Rutgers University, Texas A&M, and the University of Maryland.

While the name of the given institution responsible for each of the entanglements was withheld, the letter reported: one university accepted funds from a foundation suspected of serving communist Chinese propaganda and influence operations, one university received funds from a Chinese conglomerate to "develop new algorithms" and "biometric security techniques" for "crowd surveillance capabilities," while another university had "multiple contracts" with the CCP's Central Committee.

Moreover, as with the University of Washington, five of the six universities investigated had contracts with Huawei, which Rubinstein's letter characterized as "a company that has been the subject of U.S. national security and trust concerns and banned from access to federal broadband subsidies for posing a national security risk."

Furthermore, while Rubinstein's 2019 letter detailed how between 2012 and 2019, the six universities collectively failed to report \$1.3 billion from foreign sources, a 2021 follow-up letter to the subcommittee expanded upon the original investigation, revealing \$6.5 billion in unreported foreign money accepted by universities.

**Racial Profiling?**

While there is documentation of ethnically Chinese victims resulting from China's operations on U.S. campuses, such as Zhou,

and of ethnically non-Chinese academics, such as Charles Lieber, being targeted by federal prosecutors, critics assert that the China Initiative promotes racial discrimination.

A September 2021 white paper produced by the Committee of 100, a business organization of Chinese Americans, states, "The China Initiative launched by the Department of Justice is clearly racial profiling and injustice."

Fu, the Chinese American pastor who advocated on behalf of Vera Zhou, calls such claims "ridiculous."

"The Communist Party's threat, their agent's skin color happens to be yellow—that does not have anything to do with race, racial discrimination, or racism," Fu said. "China's Communist Party is a Chinese Communist Party."

Nevertheless, critics such as Winds of Freedom view the number of ethnically Chinese academic defendants in China Initiative cases as evidence of the program's discriminatory nature.

"We believe the China Initiative raises concerns of racial profiling. The investigations have been disproportionately targeting researchers of Chinese origin," the 2021 Stanford faculty group's letter states.

Meanwhile, Thomas E. Wheeler, who is a member of the Alliance for Asian American Justice as well as a former assistant attorney general for civil rights, responded to critics' concerns of discrimination, racism, and racial profiling in China Initiative cases.

(Left) An aerial photo of Stanford University's campus in Stanford, Calif., on April 6, 2016.

(Above) The Department of Justice in Washington on Jan. 14, 2020

(Top) The Confucius Institute building on the Troy University campus in Troy, Ala., on March 16, 2018. In recent years, dozens of American universities have closed their Confucius Institutes.

"The Thousand Talents Program, as articulated by the Chinese Communist Party, targets individuals of either Chinese nationality or with Asian connections. It's designed to pressure those Chinese individuals who have come to the United States and been educated in the United States, who have chosen to stay and work in the United States to engage in espionage," he said.

"The reason that a disproportionate number of Asians are implicated in the China Initiative is because China itself targets Asian Americans—and, in particular, Chinese nationalities."

**Confucius Institutes**

In August 2021, Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita opened an investigation into Valparaiso University's Confucius Institute to determine "the true intent of any relationships between Valparaiso University's programming and the Chinese Communist Party."

In recent years, dozens of U.S. universities have closed their Confucius Institutes amid heightened criticism of the center's role in hampering academic freedom and promoting CCP propaganda. As of Jan. 18, there are 24 Confucius Institutes in the United States, down from more than 100 in 2017, according to the National Association of Scholars.

The Trump administration in August 2020 designated the Confucius Institute U.S. Center, a nonprofit that supports Confucius Institutes and Classrooms across America, as a foreign mission, in recognition of its role in "advancing Beijing's global propaganda and malign influence campaign on U.S. campuses and K-12 classrooms."

While Rokita refrained from commenting about the "active investigation" into Valparaiso University, he told Insight, "Illegal conduct doesn't know any specific border or kind of person. We go where the facts take us, it's as simple as that."

"What other attorneys general should do is recognize this soft power, this propaganda, is real. And it's going on in their states."

It's unclear if officials such as Rokita will succeed in convincing colleagues to be more cognizant of potential Chinese government clandestine operations. Likewise, it remains unclear if critics of the China Initiative will succeed in persuading Attorney General Garland to abolish the program.



JENNIFER ZENG/THE EPOCH TIMES



REUTERS/KATHERINE TAYLOR

LOREN WANG/LOREAN

## RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

# Faith Fuels Art and Stance Against Persecution

Award-winning 3D animation student calls for release of mom jailed in China

MICHAEL WING

An award-winning, young digital animation student whose family has suffered spiritual persecution for decades in China arrived in Canada in August 2020 to avoid harassment and secure her future. But nearly a year later, she learned her mother was, once again, placed in detention. This is her story.

The talented 24-year-old student at world-renowned Sheridan College in Ontario—who at the age of 4 was taken away as a hostage by Chinese police in an attempt to arrest her parents—is now speaking out to seek immediate release of her mother facing persecution for upholding her spiritual faith.

Lucy Mingyuan Liu, whose father is an accomplished artist and mother a former dean at a Chinese university, is gifted in traditional 2D painting. She ventured into full 3D digital animation recently, making a huge splash in her first year at Sheridan—a campus where Disney and Pixar spot top talent to fill their ranks.

Sheridan college held a Zoom call in May 2021 and presented the Tibor Madjar award for Best Overall Animation. Lucy was the winner. Her breathtakingly beautiful classical dance demo reel had the judges spellbound.

Lucy told The Epoch Times in an interview that in the world of CGI (computer-generated imagery), animating figures realistically is one of the hardest challenges.

Her anatomically correct, gracefully choreographed dancer could've only come from a mind ablaze with inspiration—the judges were cognizant of it.

## Inspired by Dancers of the Divine

Lucy's CGI dancer didn't appear in a vacuum. The character was inspired by Shen Yun Performing Arts, the world's premier classical Chinese dance and music company dedicated to reviving the 5,000-year-old divinely inspired traditional Chinese culture.

Lucy, who practices the persecuted self-cultivation system of Falun Gong, grew up amid tranquil meditators and qigong practitioners living by the virtues of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance. Her parents, like countless other Falun Gong adherents, suffered under the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) persecution of their faith.

"It's saddening that upholding one's spiritual beliefs has become the 'biggest and most dangerous crime' in today's China," she said. "Falun Gong practitioners are facing discrimination and alienation on a daily basis, for striving to be good people."

Falun Gong (or Falun Dafa) is a spiritual discipline that became popular in China in the 1990s because of its moral teachings and health benefits, but it drew fire from the Communist Party—a totalitarian regime that perceived the peaceful practice's growing foothold in Chinese society as a threat to its Marxist ideologies and power. The CCP's former leader Jiang Zemin then initiated a persecution campaign in July 1999 to eradicate Falun Gong and its adherents, which continues to date.

Like many others, Lucy's parents, when she was in high school, lost their jobs and were given multiyear prison sentences for practicing Falun Gong, after which she would worry in tears each day until they got home.

Faced with nationwide persecution, Lucy's parents worried for her.

"My parents said it's not safe for me to stay in China, so they wanted me to come abroad," Lucy said. "They decided to send me to Canada so that the shadow of persecution can no longer overhang my future career and life. I know the Canadian government is the most kind, or very supportive of Falun Gong, so I just have a good impression of this country."

"And I know that Sheridan College in Canada is the best; that's why I chose animation."

## A Fresh Start and a Mission

Lucy landed in Canada in the summer of 2020. Now in her second program, she has high hopes of one day working for a major studio.

"Some company like Disney, that would



Lucy Mingyuan Liu's 3D animated demo reel of the CGI dancer.



Lucy Liu speaks outside the Chinese Consulate in Toronto.

be the dream job," she said. "From my last program, I know there are only one or two students who end up working there."

With her first Digital Animation program secured under her belt, she last fall entered her second, more advanced Digital Creature program, exploring further the 3D world of texture, detail, and realism. It's like advancing from TV-grade kid cartoons to feature film-grade full-length movies, she said.

Every piece of fur, feather, and scale is painstakingly rendered and animated in 3D. She's now creating a merboy (a boy with a fish tail) for her next big assignment. But in September 2021, the CCP cast another shadow upon her once-confident start.

One day in the winter of 2001, over 20 police officers showed up on campus, trying to grab my mother from her classroom.

Lucy Liu

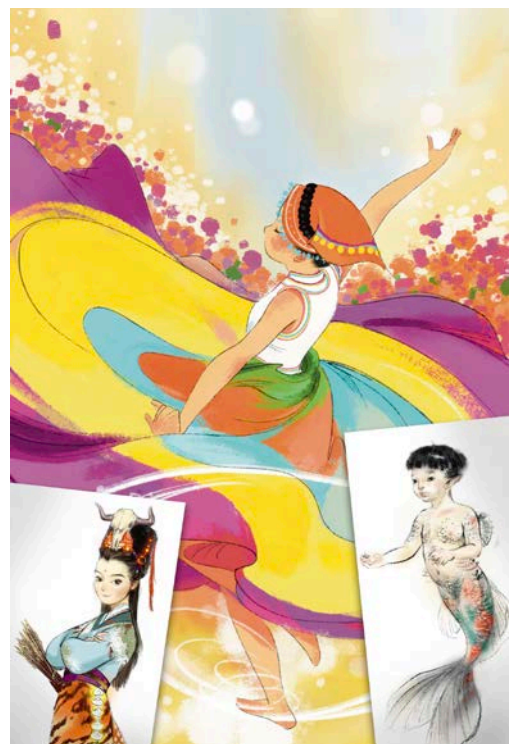
"My dad called me and said, 'Your mom was arrested again,'" she recalled.

Lucy's mom, Yan Liu, was taken to Kunming Detention Center in China's Yunnan Province, where only her lawyer was allowed to visit her twice but not her husband. "Now, even the lawyer is not allowed to meet my mom," she said. "People who have been there told me the environment inside the detention center is really terrifying."

"The police sent my mom's case to the procuratorate a second time around Dec. 30, 2021. The procuratorate is now preparing for her trial, and as far as I know, those trials against Falun Gong practitioners are held in secret; they won't notify the family members or our lawyer."

This is particularly concerning, for Falun Gong practitioners in prisons or labor camps, besides torture and death, are at the risk of having their organs harvested—hearts, kidneys, lungs, livers, and all—and sold for profit in China's state-sanctioned billion-dollar organ transplant industry.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF LUCY MINGYUAN LIU



Some drawings by Lucy Liu.

nership between Jilin University and the Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada. But seeing the suppression gradually escalating in Changchun led them to pack up, leave behind successful careers, and move 3,000 miles to distant Yunnan Province where they knew no one. Fortunately, the talented couple secured university lecturing jobs there—only to later resign and lay low, fearing the CCP.

But the nationwide persecution found them.

"One day in the winter of 2001, over 20 police officers showed up on campus, trying to grab my mother from her classroom," Lucy said. "A cleaning lady quietly let my mom out from the side fire-exit door. My mother left the school site and went to hide in a safe spot."

The family was forced into exile and hiding. In 2012, her father was arrested and sentenced to four years in prison. While her father faced persecution in detention, Lucy, who was then studying in the 12th grade, learned that her mother was expelled from the university lecturing job. In 2015, while Lucy was preparing for admission to a top art university, her mother was sentenced to three years.

The tragedies and trauma I have experienced as a child due to the persecution are beyond words.

Lucy Liu

Lucy said that her parents have suffered torture, brainwashing, and forced slave labor. By 2018, both her parents were released from the prisons, and the family managed to gather up their scattered life with resilience and courage. Today, with her mom detained in jail, Lucy can't believe it's happening again.

"For years, my parents were my shelters and shields, protecting me from storms and thunder amid the persecution," Lucy said. "Today, I would like to be the shield for my parents and the values they hold dear to their hearts and lives."

Lucy recently spoke in a video, seeking support for her mom's earliest release and to help end the CCP's over two-decades-long persecution of her spiritual faith.

Besides working for Disney or Pixar, Lucy aspires to one day use digital animation to amplify her voice and bring to light the atrocities in China. She also envisions using CGI to show people "the bright side of Falun Gong"—the beauty of its three core virtues of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance—as her 3D dancer had so magically impressed her judges.

"I know the persecution, all these things, happen because of the media, the propaganda," she said. "I want to use this animation method to create a film on the truth about the persecution. A film is a very good way to make an influence."

"I want to make a film on my family's story, showing how our beliefs gifted us a beautiful life and also let people see the CCP's persecution of faith."



The U.S. State Department in Washington on Sept. 12, 2012.



Falun Gong practitioner Xu Na in China, in this undated photo. Xu was sentenced to eight years in prison for her religious beliefs.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

## State Department Condemns Beijing for Imprisoning 11 Falun Gong Practitioners Weeks Before Olympics

US calls on Chinese regime to 'immediately end its deprived abuse and mistreatment of Falun Gong practitioners'

EVA FU

The U.S. State Department on Jan. 21 condemned the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) for sentencing 11 Falun Gong practitioners to prison terms of as long as eight years for exercising their religious beliefs.

The sentences were handed down on Jan. 14, just weeks ahead of the start of the Beijing Winter Olympics.

The State Department is calling on Beijing to "immediately end its deprived abuse and mistreatment of Falun Gong practitioners, release those imprisoned due to their beliefs, and address the whereabouts of missing practitioners," a department official told The Epoch Times in an email.

"Since 1999, the Communist Party of China has sought to eradicate Falun Gong, a spiritual practice originating in China, and its peaceful practitioners and human rights defenders who have fought for their right to practice their beliefs," the official said.

At the beginning of the regime's persecution in 1999, an estimated 70 million to 100 million Chinese people were practicing Falun Gong—which is based on the tenets of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance—and the Communist Party deemed its popularity a threat.

"Extensive evidence shows the PRC government continues to repress and abuse

this community to this day," the official said, citing reports of torture and the Beijing court's heavy-handed sentencing.

"Thousands of Falun Gong practitioners face detention, harassment, and reported torture and abuse each year for simply ... peacefully [practicing] their beliefs."

Practitioners who are arrested often are held in detention without trial for extended periods of time, denied proper legal representation, and punished on spurious and fabricated charges.

In the case of the 11 practitioners, 15 months in detention passed before they got a hearing last October, and at least one lawyer lost his license for taking their case.

A Beijing court claimed that their crime was "sabotaging law and order," both for exercising their spiritual beliefs and for sharing photos and information with The Epoch Times.

The 11 were detained in July 2020, after the regime discovered that, as citizen journalists, they had photographed the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic during the early stages and shared those images with The Epoch Times.

"The Chinese Communist Party is relentless in its campaign against religious minorities," Sen. Rick Scott (R-Fla.) told The Epoch Times.

"This latest attack on Falun Gong mem-

bers who were trying to provide information about the pandemic is only the latest evidence of their gross attacks and even more reason to cut ties and stop supporting this evil regime."

The Chinese Communist Party is relentless in its campaign against religious minorities.

Sen. Rick Scott (R-Fla.)

### 'Most Visible Time Possible'

The sentencing, weeks before the Feb. 4 opening of the Winter Games, is "a moment that calls for moral clarity," said Rev. Johnnie Moore, a former commissioner for the U.S. Commission for International Religious Freedom.

"Let's be crystal clear what's happening here: The CCP is rounding up people right before the Olympic Games," he told The Epoch Times. "Democrats and Republicans, and allies of the United States, need to draw their line in the sand. This also applies to all those businesses who've been waving their social justice flags: They now face a test."

The practitioner facing the harshest prison term is 53-year-old Xu Na, a still-life painter from Beijing, who also was fined 20,000 yuan (\$3,160).

She has survived two prior imprisonments for her beliefs and suffered various forms of torture inflicted by police—including one method in which her legs were pulled apart to 180 degrees. Three inmates then sat on her legs and back and continually applied pressure to create excruciating pain.

Xu's husband, folk musician Yu Zhou, died at the hands of the police in the run-up to the Beijing Summer Games 14 years ago.

Arrested during an "Olympic check" in January 2008, Yu died of torture two weeks after being taken into custody.

Levi Browde, executive director at the Falun Dafa Information Center, criticized how the "CCP has completely decimated this family."

"This brazen sentence is handed down as a message to the world," Browde told The Epoch Times. "Think about it: The CCP chose to sentence Xu at the most visible time possible—three weeks before the Olympics start as all eyes are trained on Beijing."

"It's as if the CCP is intentionally flaunting to the world that it will imprison Falun Gong practitioners at will, and there's no one to stop them. We can't let that be true."

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## OPINION

# China, Goldman Sachs, and Genocide Denial

Beijing and Moscow's dark money should be illegal

ANDERS CORR

Goldman Sachs, one of the world's most successful banks, has apparently found legal loopholes so its clients can secretly fund genocide denial.

It's despicable, but the big bucks in Manhattan high-rises don't come free of guilt. There's blood on those white shoe firms.

As Uyghurs see their population dwindle in China through concentration camp internment, forced labor factories, and subjection to rape, unwanted abortions, and birth control requirements, the Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund is funneling money to organizations that deny the genocide recognized by both the Biden and Trump administrations, according to a new investigative report.

Alexander Reid Ross and Courtney Dobson argue in New Lines Magazine, well known for its reporting on Islamic countries, that the genocide against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in China is supported by propaganda funded through the Goldman Sachs fund. The authors describe the fund as "a donor-advised charity that conceals its funders from the public record, making it a convenient clearinghouse for moving dark money to politically sensitive or controversial organizations."

The report, published on Jan. 18, reveals that "over the past five years almost \$65 million has filtered through various entities connected with people who have defended the Chinese government and downplayed or denied documented human rights violations committed by Beijing against the Uyghur and Turkic Muslim minorities."

The funding identified by New Lines is linked to an American tech magnate named Neville Roy Singham, who "has long held an ideological affinity with the Chinese Communist Party, dating to his youthful membership in the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, a Mao-influenced group based in Detroit, Michigan."

Singham worked with China's Huawei between 2001 and 2008 as a strategic technical consultant, according to a Chinese recruitment platform. During that period, according to Ross and Dobson, he "raved about China's economic model."

Research by IPVM, a video surveillance research organization, found that Huawei itself is implicated in the 2018 development of racialized facial recognition software that uses artificial intelligence to trigger a "Uyghur alarm" for police when it identifies an individual with Uyghur facial characteristics.

According to the New Lines investigation, Singham invested in three Chinese companies, including "Shanghai LuoweiXing, with a registered capital contribution of \$20 million; and Gondwana Foods, with one of \$32.5 million. Singham is also listed as the legal representative of a third company, Shanghai Shinong Company Ltd., registered in January 2020."

Singham's Thoughtworks company held a conference in Beijing, established itself in 17 countries, and did free work for progressive organizations like the Grameen Foundation and Democracy Now!, a left-leaning news organization that on March 16, for example, aired Beijing's baseless criticism of the United States and allies for having a "Cold War mentality."

In fact, Beijing is a territorial aggressor that is forcing Washington to depart from its preferred course of trillions of dollars in trade and investment with China that America's biggest corporations find so lucrative.

Democracy Now!'s Amy Goodman said on the show: "While the United States faces accusations of hoarding vaccines and blocking efforts to waive vaccine patent rights at the World Trade Organization, China has shipped millions of vaccine doses to nations in the Global South in what's been described as a form of vaccine diplomacy. China has sent free samples of Sinovac's vaccine to 53



The Goldman Sachs logo at the New York Stock Exchange on July 16, 2013.



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping shake hands at the 2017 BRICS Summit in Xiamen, Fujian Province, China, on Sept. 5, 2017.

countries and has exported it to 22 nations that have placed orders. Recipients include Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Bolivia."

Goodman did not mention that Sinovac vaccines are far less effective than Western vaccines, that there are strings attached to its donations, or that Chinese-made vaccines have sold at inflated prices relative to their effectiveness, likely due to Beijing's corrupting influence.

A British private equity fund bought Thoughtworks in 2017 for what is thought to be hundreds of millions of dollars. Since then, "a web of organizations and individuals that promote apologetics for Beijing has emerged around Singham," according to the authors. Yet he maintains a low profile, without significant social media activity or public appearances. Curious.

One of the Singham-linked organizations that has "an unmistakable bias in favor of the Chinese government," according to New Lines, is the People's Support Foundation, which was co-founded by Singham's apparent wife, Jodie Evans, and is capitalized at over \$160 million. Yet the organization has no website. Doubly curious.

Evans co-founded Code Pink, which does have a website. But it links to dismissive views on the Uyghurs. According to New Lines, "a video featuring Evans and British academic John Ross shows the latter characterizing the Uyghur genocide allegation as "farical" and a "total lie."

In 2020, Code Pink started a "China Is Not Our Enemy" campaign, "in which the organization advocates for the U.S. to adopt a thoroughly conciliatory approach toward China," according to the authors.

A beneficiary of both the Goldman Sachs fund and the People's Support Foundation, via another intermediary, the United Community Fund, is an or-

ganization called Tricontinental, which bills itself as an "Institute for Social Research."

Tricontinental's founder Vijay Prashad has focused on the Non-Aligned Movement and the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), both of which are heavily influenced and used by Beijing for its own political purposes of countering the United States and allies in international institutions and markets.

Goldman Sachs has over the years promoted the BRICS countries as investment destinations, bragging on its website of having written the report in 2001 that coined the acronym (which in this case is shortened to show just the first four countries). The Goldman Sachs site has a graphic of the four countries, in which China appears larger and at the top relative to the others' diminutive size and lower placement.

After Prashad's 2017 resignation from his professorship in Hartford, Connecticut, he became a senior fellow at a think tank associated with China's Renmin University. Ross is listed as a senior resident fellow at the institute.

"Prashad's own corpus has lately tended toward defending the Chinese government with respect to one of its worst human rights abuses: the mass internment, reeducation, forced labor and sterilization campaigns waged in the northwest province Xinjiang against ethnic Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslim populations," according to New Lines.

On the March 16 Democracy Now! episode, Prashad argues that "most of the U.S. corporate media have become stenographers of the U.S. State Department. You know, the credibility to have Mr. Mike Pompeo, former secretary of state, stand up there on behalf of the Muslims of China, after what the United States has done in Afghanistan, in Iraq—and, don't

forget, Pompeo used to head the CIA—I mean, it strains credibility."

Prashad fails to mention the causes of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, which include Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, and the Taliban's hosting of Osama bin Laden.

In an article published in April, Prashad presented the Uyghur genocide as U.S. propaganda meant to pave the way for offensive actions. "The U.S. government's information warfare against China has produced the 'fact' that there is genocide in Xinjiang," according to Prashad. "Once this has been established, it helps develop diplomatic and economic warfare."

According to New Lines, "Such articles appear to be part of a broader strategy to cultivate media outlets where pro-China propaganda can filter through."

Prashad has also posited a lack of evidence for the Uyghur genocide. "What's the evidence?" He then answered his own question. "Well, there's none, really."

The New Lines authors write, "That Prashad's denial of atrocities against the Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslim minorities should coincide with mounting evidence that implicates the Chinese government is particularly noteworthy because, until recently, his organization was on record lending credence to the fact that these abuses existed."

In 2018, Tricontinental described "the detention of unknown numbers of China's Uyghur minority—and the arrests of Marxist students" as "very grave," according to the investigation, which posits that Prashad's "about-face" could be due to his close association with Singham and his alleged funding of Tricontinental.

Tax filings, according to the investigation, indicate that Tricontinental received over \$12 million from the Goldman Sachs fund. The Justice and Education Fund got over \$15 million in 2019, and the People's Forum got \$12 million, according to the authors.

They claim that as recently as Sept. 18, the People's Forum hosted an event, co-sponsored by Code Pink and with a keynote by Prashad and the Qiao Collective, "a self-described Marxist group... whose Twitter account routinely promotes the Chinese government narrative on most any topic, including denying the Uyghur genocide."

New Lines found that "Housed within The People's Forum New York office is yet another media organization called Breakthrough News. Also pressing Uyghur genocide denial, this project is spearheaded by Rania Khalek, an apologist for Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad, whose previous media ventures, Redfish and Soapbox, were both exposed by journalists as cutouts of Russian state-funded media."

Democracies require transparency and unbiased news reporting to function, because they depend on informed voters to make their most important decisions. China-linked dark money is the opposite of transparency and democracy. The world, and more specifically U.S. voters, can stop the dark money problem, which produces propaganda for both left and right, from getting worse.

Demand better laws from our elected representatives that require public accountability and transparency of political and media donations, including those going to activist and "news" outlets that linked to dictators in China and Russia.

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Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.



Workers load steel products for export to a cargo ship at a port in Lianyungang, Jiangsu Province, China, on May 27, 2020.

## OPINION

## Xi Jinping Struggles to Control China's Economy and Avoid Chaos

Central bank cuts interest rates to maintain stability

ANTONIO GRACEFFO



While the U.S. Federal Reserve and other central banks in the developed world are preparing to curb high inflation by winding down pandemic stimulus and raising interest rates, Chinese leader Xi Jinping is attempting to stimulate China's economy, as he fears public unrest.

"Once economic and financial risks are mishandled, they can easily be transmitted into the social and political sphere," a recent statement by the Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) reads.

Beijing claims that China's gross domestic product (GDP) rose by 8.1 percent in 2021, but that it's implementing expansionary monetary policy because growth in the final quarter of 2020 was only 4 percent, well below the 5 percent level the CCP considers acceptable. Many experts believe that Xi commanded interest rates to be cut in order to mend the economy and avoid social discord.

In 2021, Xi implemented a number of policies that had a negative effect on the economy. Regulations intended to decrease pollution by restricting the use of coal caused manufacturing slowdowns, while attempts to manage the price of electricity resulted in energy shortages. For-profit tutoring services were effectively outlawed, wiping out hundreds of billions of dollars from the economy. At the same time, the CCP launched "anti-monopolistic" regulations to rein in "the disorderly expansion of capital." These directives largely affected the tech and real estate sectors, both of which are still suffering.

The CCP imposed curbs on overseas IPOs, and the cyberspace administration announced new rules requiring tech firms to seek approval for investment deals. Consequently, China's tech sector stocks are down again. Real estate shares similarly took a nosedive in 2021 because Xi cut off the taps to easy credit. As the country moves into 2022, a depressed property sector is dragging down the rest of the economy.

In order to rejuvenate the real estate sector and hopefully revive the economy, the CCP is easing its monetary policy, lowering benchmark lending rates. The central bank is decreasing the one-year loan prime rate and one-year medium-term lending rate. It's also cutting the five-year loan prime

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rate, which includes mortgages. However, in spite of cutting rates, Beijing is keeping the "zero-COVID" policy, which is causing sporadic lockdowns, restrictions, and disruptions.

Anyang, China, a city of more than 5 million people, came under lockdown in mid-January. At various times, lockdowns have been imposed in some of China's largest cities, such as Tianjin, Xi'an, and Shenzhen. Ongoing travel restrictions are preventing the tourism sector from recovering. Constraints remain on trucks and warehouses, while mass testing and quarantines are reducing the supply of workers. Factories continue to see closures, and ports are facing bottlenecks. The costs of these measures are astronomical. A one-week delay at the port of Ningbo, China, for example, could affect roughly \$4 billion worth of trade.

Numerous large companies, such as Toyota, Volkswagen, and Samsung, have reported suffering under COVID restrictions. Quarantine measures disrupted Shenzhen International Group, a textiles company that supplies Nike, Adidas, and Uniqlo. U.S.-based company Micron Technology Inc. reported that lockdowns in Xi'an have reduced the number of workers on-site, which has affected the output of its DRAM memory chips.

The Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission cautioned that "with the economic downturn, some deep-seated problems may surface." CCP officials have warned that unemployment among young people could cause dissent. The jobless rate for those aged 15 to 24 increased to 14.6 percent in October 2021. Likewise, the number of migrant laborers, who work in construction and manufacturing, has decreased by 4 million since the pandemic began.

Tech sector job losses are thought to be at more than 1 million, while jobs erased in the education sector are estimated to be roughly 3 million. The tourism sector is believed to have lost 16 million jobs. Unemployment in the real estate sector is harder to quantify because it affects everything from construction and raw material sales to professional services. By some estimates, 14 percent of all jobs in urban areas are related to real estate. Consequently, a crash of the real estate sector could wipe out tens of millions of jobs.

In a meeting chaired by Xi in December 2021, the Politburo identified economic stability as the top priority for 2022. China's Central Economic Work Conference report states that "econom-

ic work next year must have 'stability' as its watchword."

The Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission stated, "If economic and financial risks are not handled properly, they can be easily transmitted to social and political realms."

In an address at the Davos economic forum on Jan. 17, Xi told world leaders that supply chain disruptions and rising gas prices could cause instability. He cited the example of Kazakhstan, where violence recently broke out because of general inflation and increased gas prices. Lowering interest rates is the CCP's attempt to fuel the economy and avoid negative fallout from two years of disastrous lawmaking. He urged other countries, particularly the United States, not to raise interest rates.

This advice was given in spite of the fact that U.S. GDP growth exceeded pre-COVID-19 levels in the final quarter of 2021. The CCP may have a conflict of interest in recommending that other countries cut their interest rates, however, as the higher interest rates in the United States will draw foreign investment into the United States and away from China.

Changes in lending interest rates may help stimulate China's housing market somewhat, but other sectors are unlikely to recover. As restrictions on the tech sector intensify, the jobs won't come back. Similarly, unless prohibitions are removed from the tutoring sector, those jobs are gone forever.

The "zero-COVID" policy will continue to decimate the tourism sector, removing any hope of recovery there. Investor and consumer confidence may not be sufficiently restored to invigorate the economy. This is particularly true of those investors and consumers who have lost their jobs or their fortunes due to Xi's policies.

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