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CHINA INSIDER

END THE PERSECUTION

**RALLY SPOTLIGHTS CCP'S 24-YEAR
SUPPRESSION OF FALUN GONG**

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Falun Gong adherents take part in a rally to mark the 24th anniversary of the persecution of the spiritual discipline in China, in Washington on July 20, 2023.

By Terri Wu & Eva Fu

WASHINGTON—An estimated 1,500 people rallied near Washington's National Mall on July 20 to call for an end to communist China's brutal 24-year-long persecution of the spiritual group Falun Gong.

At a rally held near the Capitol, U.S. rights advocates and experts voiced concerns that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has taken its persecution well beyond its borders into the United States and other free societies.

"It is something that should strike concern, if not fear, in the heart of every single American and every single person living in a country where China has sought to repress, to spend to censor, to propagandize, to intimidate, to violently attack," said Katrina Lantos Swett, president of the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights & Justice.

Advocates cited recent federal prosecutions of suspected Chinese agents in the United States who allegedly aided the CCP in silencing and harassing Falun Gong adherents as part of the regime's transnational repression. This includes one case involving an undercover Chinese police station in New York, and another involving an alleged attempt to bribe a U.S. official as part of a scheme to "topple" Falun Gong.

"We must recognize that if we don't confront them if we don't meet the challenge that they pose, they will continue to spread their tentacles and the threat that they pose far beyond the borders of China itself," Ms. Swett said.

July 20 marks the 24th anniversary of the launch of the Chinese regime's violent suppression of Falun Gong.

Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is a spiritual practice composed of meditative exercises and moral teachings centered on the principles of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance. By 1999, an estimated 70 million to 100 million people had taken up the practice in mainland China.

The CCP, viewing this popularity as a threat to its authoritarian control over the population, vowed to eliminate the faith group by any means necessary. Millions of adherents have since been detained in facilities across the country, where they endure forced labor and torture in a bid to force them to give up their belief. An untold number have died from torture, or been killed for their organs to fuel the regime's lucrative transplantation industry.

Abraham Cooper, chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, expressed gratitude that U.S. authorities "are moving to charge and bring to justice those parties acting on behalf of the Chinese government to suppress the Falun Gong and other Chinese dissidents."

The commission will continue to urge the U.S. government to "take more consequential actions to hold the Chinese government and its agents accountable for religious freedom abuses in China and here in the United States," Mr. Cooper said.

Forced Organ Harvesting

Andrew Bremberg, former U.S. ambassador to the U.N. and current president and CEO of the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, especially condemned the Chinese regime's killing of detained Falun Gong believers for their organs.

There is, and was a genocide 20 years ago. It needs to be recognized.

Nina Shea, senior fellow and director, Center for Religious Freedom

"The grotesque practice of forced organ harvesting is one of the CCP's most abhorrent acts of oppression," Mr. Bremberg said at the rally.

After years of mounting evidence of the grisly crime, an independent expert panel in 2019 concluded "beyond a reasonable doubt" that the communist regime has been harvesting organs from prisoners of conscience, primarily Falun Gong adherents, on a "significant scale."

Mr. Bremberg also cited research from April 2022, co-written by a fellow from his foundation, which showed "conclusively" that "Chinese surgeons had been turned into executioners, that their surgeries were used to execute political prisoners under the scalpel for the purpose of forced organ harvesting."

He credited the International Society for



Falun Gong practitioners call for an end to the persecution of the spiritual group in China, during an event marking 24 years since the launch of the persecution, in Washington on July 20, 2023.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Washington Rally Calls for End to CCP's 24-Year Persecution of Falun Gong

Experts have recognized the Chinese Communist Party's 24-year persecution of Falun Gong as a genocide and have called on the United States to designate it as such—in the same way it has already done regarding Beijing's suppression of Uyghurs in the northwest Xinjiang region

Heart and Lung Transplantation for taking "a hugely important step" last year to ban Chinese transplant data or papers from its publications, and called on other medical institutions to follow suit.

Mr. Bremberg also cited a Texas law banning insurers from funding organ transplant surgeries linked to China, which marks the first American measure to take such a step.

"After 24 years of constant continual persecution of Falun Gong practitioners by the Chinese Communist Party, it is important for Americans and people from free countries all around the world to know about and then take action to demand that the Chinese Communist Party stop its heinous human rights abuses," he told The Epoch Times after the rally.

"At any time, human rights are violated anywhere we need to speak out, and demand that people take action."

And even though U.S. institutions breaking off their relationships with Chinese hospitals might not end the practice, "it'll stop our complicity with those activities, and that's the important step that Americans need to demand gets taken," he said.

Piero Tozzi, a senior adviser to Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.), shared a statement from the bipartisan and bicameral Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC).

"For the past 24 years, Falun Gong practitioners have suffered the most appalling human rights abuses imaginable, abuses that are ongoing. Falun Gong prisoners must be released and PRC officials held accountable for their crimes," he said on behalf of CECC and Mr. Smith, who chairs the committee.

Mr. Tozzi also referenced Mr. Smith's bill, the Stop Forced Organ Harvesting Act of 2023 (H.R. 1154), which passed the House

earlier this year.

The bill would sanction anyone involved in forced organ harvesting and require annual government reporting on such activities taking place in foreign countries. Sanctions include a criminal penalty of up to 20 years in prison. The bill is currently awaiting markup with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Mr. Tozzi recommended people urge their senators to get the measure passed.

He noted that the CECC and Mr. Smith are now making targeted inquiries to U.S. companies to ask them to ensure that their technology isn't implicated in the forced organ harvesting in China.

"They must make sure that their technology is not used for pernicious purposes,"

he said.

Arielle Del Turco, assistant director of the Center for Religious Liberty Family Research Council, urged the United States to acknowledge the CCP as the "biggest threat to human rights in the world today," and to start by passing the Stop Forced Organ Harvesting Act.

Call to Recognize a Genocide

Nina Shea, director of the Center for Religious Freedom at Hudson Institute, was recognized with an award from the advocacy group Friends of Falun Gong for her work in defending the faith group.

"Transnational repression by the Chinese Communist Party on American soil that curtails the rights of religious free-



▲ Andrew Bremberg, president and CEO of the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, speaks during a Falun Gong rally marking the 24th anniversary of the persecution of the spiritual discipline in China by the Chinese Communist Party, at the National Mall in Washington on July 20, 2023.

dom and freedom of speech for American citizens and American residents: this must stop," Ms. Shea said at the rally.

Ms. Shea, holding a golden statue of a goddess bearing a trumpet and a lotus flower—a popular Chinese symbol of purity—said the award motivates her to want to do a lot more.

"This repression here, genocide there—it's one of the world's worst situations in terms of human rights," she told The Epoch Times. "China is the biggest threat to religious freedom and free speech in the world today."

Ms. Shea and other experts have recognized the CCP's persecution as genocide and have called on the United States to designate it as such, as it has in relation to Beijing's suppression of Uyghurs in the

northwest Xinjiang region.

"There is, and was a genocide 20 years ago. It needs to be recognized," she said.

Darren Spinck, an associate research fellow at the Henry Jackson Society, echoed Ms. Shea's sentiments. He said that it "was often convenient for U.S. officials to ignore what was happening to Falun Gong practitioners."

"A lot of the persecution was taking place out of sight in China but now the problem has actually reached the shores of the United States," he told The Epoch Times, noting the recent prosecutions involving the New York Chinese police station and alleged tax bribery.

"It is a direct threat to our constitutional rights of freedom of religion, freedom of



▲ Nina Shea, director of the Center for Religious Freedom at Hudson Institute, was recognized with an award from the advocacy group Friends of Falun Gong for her work in defending the faith group.

speech, and freedom of assembly," as well as a demonstration of the CCP's ambition to supplant the U.S.-led value system embraced in large parts of the world, he said.

Mr. Spinck urged the U.S. government to restrict outbound investments to China. "U.S. funds cannot be allowed to fuel the CCP and its authoritarian policies toward religion."

Bearing Witness

After the rally, about 1,500 Falun Gong adherents marched down Pennsylvania Avenue holding banners and signs highlighting the persecution and calling for action.

Among the participants was 83-year-old An Rongfen, a Falun Gong adherent who traveled from Canada to participate in the event. Ahead of the march, she recalled her escape from China to Toronto nearly two decades ago.

Originally from Beijing, Ms. An was sentenced to 1 1/2 years in a labor camp after police broke into her home in the middle of the night.

While detained, she thought she might be able to survive the cruel conditions. In exchange for food, guards would force detained adherents to utter insults against their faith. She was deprived of sleep and forced to make large quantities of products such as disposable chopsticks, candles, pet apparel, and sweaters for export—often until 2 a.m. or 3 a.m. If just one person failed to reach her quota, the entire prison unit wouldn't be allowed to sleep.

Even now, seeing those products in shops makes her want to cry. Ms. An said, pausing a moment to compose herself.

"You weren't living like a human being," she told The Epoch Times.

After going through that, "no hardship feels like suffering anymore," she said. She pointed to her right leg, where a

The grotesque practice of forced organ harvesting is one of the CCP's most abhorrent acts of oppression.

Andrew Bremberg, president and CEO, Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation



▲ Passersby accept lotus flower decorations from a young Falun Gong practitioner on July 20.



▲ Zhang Hongru, a Falun Gong adherent who came to the United States in 2019, at the National Mall in Washington on July 20, 2023.



▲ An Rongfen, a Falun Gong adherent, poses for a photo at the National Mall in Washington on July 20, 2023.

dimple is visible. Her time at the labor camp caused her to suffer heart problems and high blood pressure. Afterward, her legs would often swell, and even light pressure by her hands would cause pits to appear in them.

What she's been through shows the evil of the CCP, Ms. An said. And in attending the event, the survivor wants the world to "wake up" to the true nature of the regime.

This is Zhang Hongru's second year attending the July 20 rally in Washington since joining her daughter in Dallas in 2021. Ms. Zhang said she was looking forward to the march, which always brings her to tears.

Before she escaped China, the former accountant was sentenced to three years in Jinan Women's Prison for hanging up a poster about the persecution of Falun Gong in her hometown of Qingdao, a port city in China's eastern Shandong Province, in May 2016. Ms. Zhang said she was humiliated and subjected to brainwashing every day there.

Coming to the United States was like night and day.

"The difference is so drastic. Falun Gong practitioners don't have a voice in China. People could be sentenced to jail for just unfolding a banner," she told The Epoch Times before the rally.

"Here, we can hold a banner and walk in a march with dignity. And the police are there to keep order. I feel very honored and happy."

During a march in New York last weekend, which she also attended, she felt encouraged when she saw a local give her a thumbs-up.

The difference reminds her even more of the lack of freedom of her fellow adherents in China.

"I want to be a voice for them," she said.

HUMAN RIGHTS

US Stands ‘In Solidarity’ With Falun Gong 24 Years Since CCP’s Persecution Began: State Department

By Catherine Yang

The State Department reiterated the United States’ commitment to supporting Falun Gong on July 20, which marks the anniversary of when the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) first began its persecution campaign against the peaceful spiritual practice.

“Today, we recognize 24 years since the People’s Republic of China launched a campaign of repression, inside and outside its borders, against Falun Gong and its millions of practitioners, advocates, and human rights defenders. We stand in solidarity with this community,” State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said in a tweet.

U.S. Ambassador at Large Rashad Husain joined the State Department, writing on Twitter: “The People’s Republic of China should end its 24-year persecution of followers of Falun Gong, a meditation practice in the Buddhist tradition centered on truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance. PRC abuses have targeted and harmed millions of practitioners, including individuals in the U.S.”

Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is a spiritual practice rooted in traditional Chinese culture, and consisting of meditative exercises and moral teachings based on the principles of truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance. It surged in popularity in the 1990s, with an estimated 70 million to 100 million Chinese taking up the practice by 1999. The communist regime, deeming this to be a threat to its control, initiated a sweeping campaign of suppression against the practice 24 years ago.

The persecution, which continues today, has seen millions of adherents thrown into detention facilities where they suffer torture or are even killed for their organs. An untold number of Falun Gong practitioners have died as a result of the campaign.

Mr. Miller, at a regular press briefing on July 20, referred to several U.S. sanctions on Chinese officials for their involvement in persecuting Falun Gong adherents, adding that “it’s an issue that remains a concern for us.”

Frank Wolf, commissioner of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), also described the regime’s abuses.

“Marking the 24th commemoration of the Chinese Communist Party’s persecution of Falun Gong on July 20, USCIRF condemns in strongest terms the brutality with which the CCP has carried out its abuses,” Mr. Wolf wrote in a statement sent to The Epoch Times.

“CCP authorities have been harassed, detained, imprisoned, and killed thousands of Falun Gong practitioners—up to 5,000 victims, according to a recent report. We commend the U.S. government for taking measures to hold the Chinese government accountable, including the imposition of sanctions on officials responsible for religious freedom violations against Falun Gong practitioners and many other religious communities.



▲ Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) speaks during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington on Dec. 8, 2022.

We look forward together to a day when the Falun Gong community, along with believers of all faiths and traditions in China, can worship freely, safely, and in peace.

Frank Wolf, commissioner, U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom



MADALINA VASILIU/THE EPOCH TIMES

“USCIRF further urges the U.S. government to work with like-minded international partners, including in the United Nations, to use all tools at their disposal to counter these abuses. USCIRF will continue to work with our civil society partners as we look forward together to a day when the Falun Gong community, along with believers of all faiths and traditions in China, can worship freely, safely, and in peace.”

Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.) and Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), co-chairs of the bipartisan and bicameral Congressional-Executive Commission on China, in a statement called on all Falun Gong practitioners to be released in China and for CCP officials to be “held accountable for their crimes.”

Voices of Support

Rep. Pete Sessions (R-Texas) said he was “proud to stand by these individuals, and for religious liberty worldwide.”

“The CCP has persecuted Falun Gong practitioners for 24 years. We must not ignore the egregious human rights violations committed daily against the peaceful people practicing Falun Gong in China,” he wrote on Twitter.

Del. Eleanor Norton (D-D.C.) said in a statement supporting the anti-persecution efforts, “On the 24th anniversary at the start of the persecution of Falun Dafa in China, I write in support of Falun Gong practitioners in the District of Columbia and around the world who are working to end the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners.”

Ms. Norton, a lifelong civil rights advocate, wanted to recognize Falun Gong practitioners calling for an end to the persecution, as well as those in China who still face persecution and those who have died at the hands of the CCP for their beliefs.

“Falun Gong is a peaceful religion based on self-improvement through teachings, meditation, slow movements, and regimented breathing. Falun Gong practitioners have suffered mercilessly at the hands of the Chinese government for over two de-

acades. Reports of this persecution include detention, torture, and organ harvesting. The only crime of those who practice Falun Gong is to be born into a society of intolerance,” she wrote.

“The United States of America was founded on the belief that individuals have fundamental rights, including freedom of religion, speech, and due process under the law,” she wrote, adding that the CCP’s “suppression and violence” remind Americans what they might take for granted.

“We must fight to raise awareness of those persecuted in China who cannot raise awareness themselves,” she wrote. “I stand in solidarity with the many Falun Gong practitioners who fight for the freedom to speak and practice the religion of their choice. I hear you, and I stand with you.”

Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.) issued a statement of support and referred to a measure introduced last month that would impose sanctions on people who participate in the organ trafficking orchestrated by the CCP.

“On this day in 1999, the CCP launched a brutal persecution of #FalunGong, a spiritual practice based on Truthfulness, Compassion & Tolerance,” he wrote on Twitter. “The Falun Gong Protection Act seeks to stop the torture, forced organ harvesting and killing of these peaceful people. #FreeFalunGong.”

Rally in Washington

On July 20, an estimated 1,500 people participated in a rally and parade near Washington’s National Mall to call for an end to the CCP’s atrocities.

Falun Gong practitioners, leaders of human rights organizations, experts, and policymakers attended the event to show their support for Falun Gong and decry the human rights abuses carried out by the CCP.

“There is, and was a genocide 20 years ago. It needs to be recognized,” said Nina Shea, director of the Center for Religious Freedom at Hudson Institute.

▲ Frank Wolf, a commissioner of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) and a former Virginia congressman, speaks during a candlelight vigil to mourn the victims of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, in Washington on June 2, 2023.

1,500
PEOPLE

On July 20, an estimated 1,500 people participated in a rally and parade near Washington’s National Mall to call for an end to the Chinese Communist Party’s atrocities.



SAMIRIA BOUAOU/THE EPOCH TIMES

▲ More than 1,500 Falun Gong adherents hold a candlelight vigil at the National Mall in Washington on July 20, 2023. The vigil remembers practitioners killed by the Chinese Communist Party’s 24-year-long persecution of the faith group

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Candlelight Vigil Remembers Victims of CCP’s Persecution of Falun Gong

By Terri Wu

WASHINGTON—As the night fell on July 20, over 1,500 Falun Gong adherents sat on the National Mall, carrying candles to commemorate those who have died as a result of the Chinese regime’s repression. Liang Guiyu, 53, a resident of New York’s Flushing, originally from northeast China’s Shandong Province, was one of them.

July 20 is a somber day for him. That’s the date the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) launched the persecution of Falun Gong 24 years ago. Mr. Liang personally knows at least ten Falun Gong adherents who died for not giving up their beliefs. He was also detained and tortured himself.

“July 20 is a nightmare to me. Whenever I recall July 20, I’m in pain, and my heart is trembling,” Mr. Liang said.

Falun Gong, also called Falun Dafa, is rooted in Chinese traditional culture and centers around the principles of truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance. Before the persecution began in 1999, the spiritual belief had an estimated 70 to 100 million adherents in China.

Since 1999, tens of millions of adherents have been targets of a brutal suppression effort designed to break them physically, financially, and socially. This includes forced firings, family separation, detention, harassment, surveillance, forced labor, torture, and forced organ harvesting.

An untold number of practitioners have perished.

A 300-Mile Walk

One year into the persecution campaign, Mr. Liang decided to embark on a 400-mile journey by foot from Shandong to Beijing.

He, like many other adherents at the time, wanted to tell the CCP central authorities in the nation’s capital that Falun Gong was good and that the persecution was a bad decision. He couldn’t take public transportation because police officers were stationed at train and bus stations to round up Falun Gong adherents planning on making that journey.

The then-30-year-old farmer left home on July 10, 2000. He walked every day from 3:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Mr. Liang had no money on him because his family had taken it away and watched him day and night after he went to Beijing’s Tiananmen Square the previous year to peacefully protest the persecution. All he had with him was a spare pair of shoes.

He slept by the roadside at night and ate leftover food given by donations or restaur-

rants. He walked through forests, cemeteries, and crossed streams to dodge local police officers who came after him.

July in China was very hot that year with temperatures often over 100 degrees (40 Celsius). He often poured water over his head at gas stations or soaked his clothes in stream water to cool down his body. After seven days, he discarded his first pair of shoes and developed blisters soaked in blood.

After 10 days of walking, he arrived at Qing County in Hebei Province, about 100 miles south of Beijing and about 300 miles away from home. He got a bit lost, so he asked a taxi driver for directions to Beijing. Within minutes, the taxi driver reported him, and he was captured by the police and taken back to his hometown, a rural village in Qingdao, a port city in Shandong Province.

For 15 days, he was detained by local village authorities. The village had some one-story single-room houses near its government building and used these empty buildings as a black jail.

For half a month from late July, Mr. Liang was handcuffed to an 8-inch wide, 10-foot tall iron pole that stood in the courtyard in front of the house. He was handcuffed most of the time, except for when he was taken elsewhere to suffer. Because it was very hot, he had to stand and make sure his arms didn’t touch the pole so they wouldn’t get burnt.

Whenever I recall July 20, I’m in pain, and my heart is trembling.

Liang Guiyu, Falun Gong practitioner

His breaks from being handcuffed to the pole usually came during mealtimes. But once, police officers threw him into the restroom while handcuffed and urinated on him to humiliate him.

But the worst humiliation he suffered was when local CCP officials handcuffed him to an idling motorcycle on the roadside. He was forced to sit on the street for about two hours enduring a session of public humiliation. In that small village where Mr. Liang grew up and went to school, everyone knew each other.

“They humiliated me to break my will, but I didn’t feel ashamed because I did the right thing to safeguard Falun Gong’s reputa-



MADALINA VASILIU/THE EPOCH TIMES

▲ Liang Guiyu, a Falun Gong adherent from Flushing, New York, holds a candle during a candlelight vigil in memory of Falun Gong practitioners who passed away due to the Chinese Communist Party’s persecution, at the National Mall in Washington on July 20, 2023.

tion, and I didn’t violate the law,” he said. “They realized that it was no use on me and stopped humiliating me in public.”

Officials didn’t stop their campaign of torment until Mr. Liang, in a desperate attempt to end his suffering, dashed to the iron pole after a restroom trip one day in August. “I was going to use my life to resist the violence,” he told The Epoch Times. Fortunately, he tripped before hitting the pole, so he didn’t die from it. Still, he heard a loud clanging sound and fell down. During his fall, he saw the village officials in the administrative building next to the detention site staring at him through the windows.

After that, he was detained for 35 more days but spared from being handcuffed to the pole. His family had to pay 3,000 yuan, or about \$400, to secure his release in September 2000.

Eventually, the family borrowed the money for Mr. Liang’s wife, also a Falun Gong adherent, to escape to the United States in 2012. In November 2017, Mr. Liang came over to join her.

Finishing an Unfinished Journey

Mr. Liang, now 53, now works at a windows company in Flushing and volunteers his evenings to call prison officials in China urging the release of detained Falun Gong adherents.

When he was still in China, his two aunts

were each sentenced to four years in prison. “The family disclosed the prison officials’ names and phone numbers, causing it to be published on Minghui, a U.S.-based website tracking the persecution of Falun Gong. As a result, the prison guards received international calls urging them to release his aunts.

The prison officials met with the family and were very angry and afraid that their names and specific crimes had been exposed internationally. This left Mr. Liang with a deep impression.

So much so that he decided to give hours of his own time each night to call China. Every evening from 9:30 p.m. to midnight, he would call authorities in China to urge for the release of Falun Gong practitioners based on the persecution cases published on Minghui.

He has done this for over five years, sometimes six to seven nights a week. According to Mr. Liang, prison guards are now afraid of the calls because they had stopped yelling and cursing at him. He could sense the fear; they either hung up right away or listened in silence.

This is Mr. Liang’s fifth time joining the July 20 commemoration activities in Washington since arriving in the United States. He said he felt that his unfinished journey to Beijing 23 years ago was completed in America.

“I want to speak up for those persecuted in China. I want to support them, and I want to end the CCP’s persecution,” he said.

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THE EPOCH TIMES
TRUTH AND TRADITION

OPINION

When China's Economy Slumps, so Does Beijing's Political Power

By Anders Corr



China's economy is in desperate straits. So desperate that a county in Guangdong Province offered an illegal bribe to U.S. investors.

Any U.S. corporate "decision-maker" who brings investment would get 10 percent of the deal's total value. A \$100 million investment by a U.S. company, for example, could get a kickback of \$10 million to the company's CEO. Shareholders would be stuck with the lousy investment while the CEO laughed all the way to the bank and then cried on his way to prison.

Meanwhile, the value of investments in China is increasingly hard to estimate because normal due diligence activities by U.S. companies are treated by the regime as spying, and due diligence firms downsize.

Profits made in China by foreign firms are now more difficult to repatriate, so they risk having no option other than reinvestment in China. In March, investor Mark Mobius warned his colleagues to "be very, very careful" with their investments in China after revealing he couldn't repatriate his money from the country.

Inscrutably, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) targets the most successful private ventures, including those founded by Chinese nationals, with massive fines, bans, regulations, and detention of business leaders. Any company or leader seen as competition to Xi Jinping and his totalitarian rule is squashed.

The CCP is threatening to detain regular U.S. citizens, too. Last month, the U.S. State Department issued a warning against traveling to China due to the increased risk of wrongful detention.

Beijing's threats against Taiwan, decoupling in the form of technology and mineral export controls, tariffs, COVID-19 lockdowns, human rights and international law violations, and blocks on international data flows instituted by China's regulators have dealt additional body blows to China's economy and foreign direct investment (FDI).

FDI into China dropped to just \$20 billion in the first quarter of 2023 from \$100 billion in the first quarter of 2022. China's GDP grew only 3 percent in 2022, one of its worst years in decades. The China share index of MSCI is down 2 percent this year, compared to a 15 percent gain for stocks globally. The yuan is at eight-month lows, which will boost exports but hurt investors with yuan revenues.

China's financial regulators are trying to reverse the tide by courting the world's biggest U.S. investors in a symposium this week. In an uncharacteristic fashion, they will ask the investors for feedback



▲ A man walks past the Central Business District in Beijing on May 31, 2023.

and a better understanding of the challenges faced by global investors in China. While China's regulators promise that the tech crackdown, which started in 2020, is over, its arbitrary nature under the thumb of Mr. Xi makes it hard to trust the regulators' word.

One of China's strongest supporters over the past decade has been Germany. Volkswagen and BMW manufacture and sell massive quantities of vehicles in the country. But even Berlin is pulling back from China. On July 13, the German government announced it would reduce dependence on Chinese supply lines in critical sectors, including electric vehicles, medical technology, pharmaceuticals, rare earth elements, and computer chips.

After experiencing Russia's stoppage of gas supplies to Germany to pressure the European Union not to support Ukraine, Berlin finally realizes that trade can be used as a cudgel against it by dictatorships like China. "In key areas, the [EU] must not become dependent on technologies from [non-EU] countries that do not share our fundamental values," a government strategy paper stated.

In a potential first, Germany stated that it would issue provisions to limit federal funds for research and development with China "in which knowledge drain is likely." The United States, Japan, and the EU as a whole should take notes and follow suit.

The CCP's strategy for its own economic revitalization is multi-fold, including reinvigorated trade with Europe and Southeast Asia, higher domestic consumption, and stimulus spending.

However, Brussels has already taken a hard line against reliance on China's supply chains, and countries in Southeast Asia, such as the Philippines and Vietnam, don't trust Beijing any longer because of the latter's attempts to steal oil, gas, fishing, and trade routes in the South China Sea.

More domestic consumption could move Chinese citizens beyond demanding a better standard of living to demanding democratic governance. And China's economy is already overstimulated with inefficient production, for example, the ghost city construction boom that has led to the property market collapse.

So the CCP has painted itself into a corner economically and politically. This isn't surprising as communists have never been good at operating in the free market, or among free and diverse populations in liberal democracies.

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

Anders Corr has a bachelor's/master's in political science from Yale University (2001) and a doctorate in government from Harvard University (2008). He is a principal at Corr Analytics Inc., publisher of the Journal of Political Risk, and has conducted extensive research in North America, Europe, and Asia. His latest books are "The Concentration of Power: Institutionalization, Hierarchy, and Hegemony" (2021) and "Great Powers, Grand Strategies: The New Game in the South China Sea" (2018).

The Chinese Communist Party is targeting the most successful private ventures, including those founded by Chinese nationals, with massive fines, bans, regulations, and detention of business leaders.

OPINION

America Talks to China: Dialogue With Nothing to Show for It

By Grant Newsham



There's talk, and there's productive talk. You would sometimes think U.S. officials are paid by the word and are content with the former.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen have recently visited China. Climate Czar John Kerry is currently visiting.

These visits and attendant dialogue are variously described as "candid and constructive," "direct, substantive, and productive," and vital to "maintain open channels of communications," "responsibly manage competition," "reduce risk of misperception and miscalculation," and "to learn more about each other."

And the subtext is that if the Americans stop talking, then war with China is just around the corner.

The idea seems to be that enough talking and the right words or incantations will bring Beijing to its senses. Exactly how isn't clear. It's not as if the Chinese don't understand what the Americans are saying.

Maybe they'll just get fed up with blabbering by Americans and concede? Or maybe it's Blinken, Yellen, and Kerry's sheer animal magnetism that is supposed to win over the Chinese communists? Add in a visit by Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin to Beijing, and the magnetism will be overwhelming.

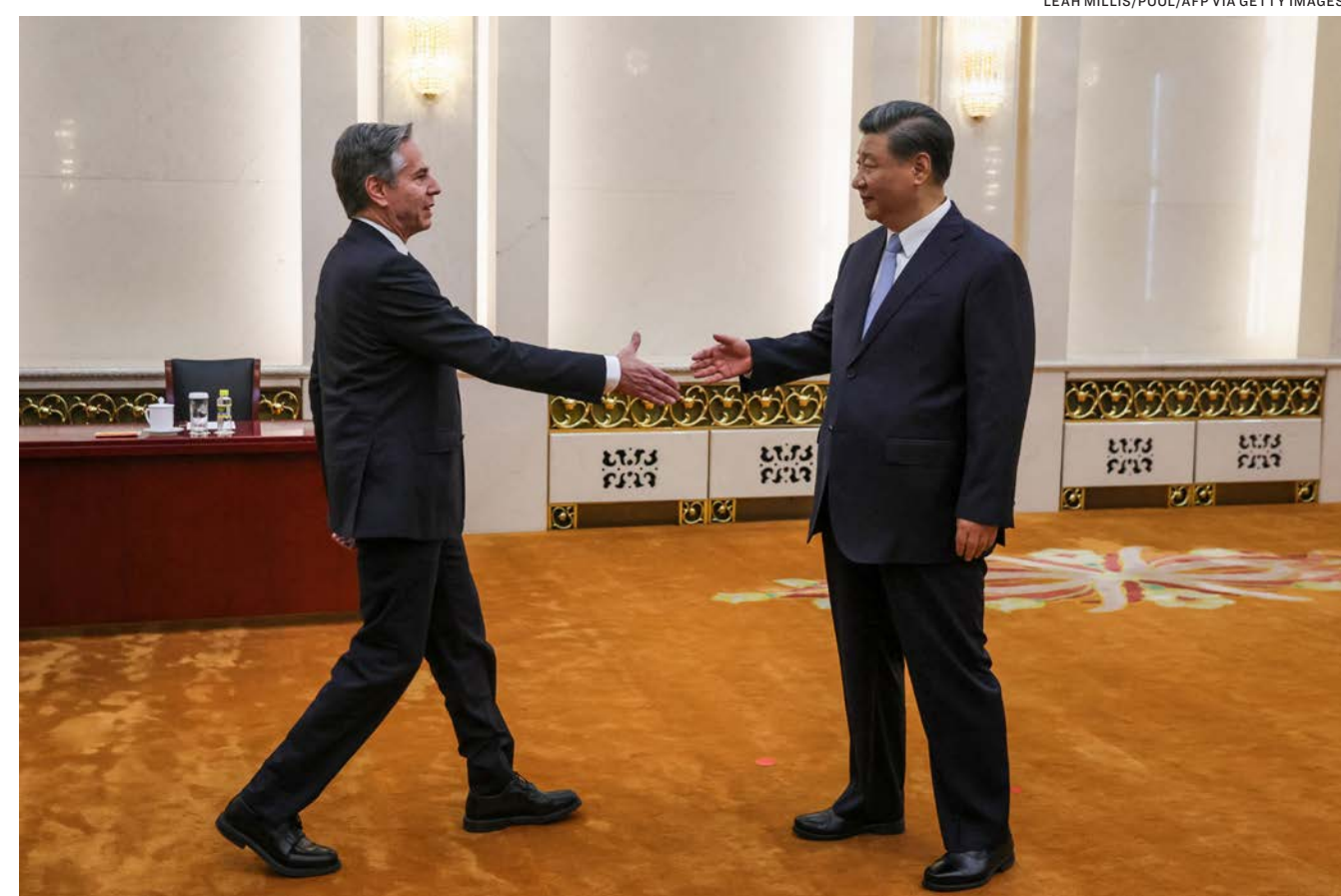
That said, suggest to our foreign policy elite and even our military top brass that talking for talking's sake is unproductive, and you'll get eye-rolling ridicule.

However, we've been talking nonstop to communist China for 30-plus years.

How well is dialogue and engagement working to modify Chinese behavior? You can make your own scorecard.

Does the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) do any of the following?

- Back off of Taiwan. Stop military harassment and intimidation, and let Taiwan into international organizations.
- Back off of Japan. Lay off the Senkakus, and no more hints that Okinawa and the Ryukyu Islands are Chinese. Stop demonizing the Japanese.
- Back off the Philippines—and recognize the 2016 Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling that repudiated CCP claims to the South China Sea. Stay out of Philippine maritime territory.
- End cyber attacks on the United States.
- Stop stealing intellectual property from U.S. companies. And no longer demand handing over sensitive technology as the price of foreign companies' admission to the China market.
- Allow foreign companies to conduct "due diligence" in China.
- End the requirement for Communist Party cells in foreign companies operating in China.
- Open the concentration camps and also stop eradicating Uyghur culture.
- End organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience, religionists, and dissidents—or anyone else.
- Allow religious groups to operate freely.
- Free Jimmy Lai and other Hong Kong freedom advocates and live up to the terms of the 1984 Hong Kong handover agreement.
- Stop fentanyl exports from China (that killed 70,000 Americans last year alone).
- Change the tone of public discourse so the Chinese media and official spokesmen no longer exhibit nonstop contempt and vitriol toward the United States.
- Enforce sanctions on North Korea (that Beijing has already agreed to



▲ Secretary of State Antony Blinken meets with Chinese leader Xi Jinping in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on June 19, 2023.

and stop interfering with aircraft and ships enforcing the sanctions.

- Rein in the Chinese fishing fleet—so it follows the rules rather than vacuuming the oceans—in the high seas and others' territory.
- Stop interfering with U.S. military operations in the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait.
- Make the yuan or RMB (Chinese currency) freely convertible—like Beijing promised to do years ago and more than once.
- Pull Chinese intelligence collection assets out of Cuba.
- Cooperate in an open inquiry into determining the origin of COVID-19.
- Close Chinese overseas "service centers" or "police stations," and stop intimidating the overseas Chinese diaspora.
- Stop taking hostages, and release the ones Beijing is holding.

[T]he subtext is that if the Americans stop talking, then war with China is just around the corner.

There are a few dozen others, at least, but you get the idea.

Don't get your hopes up, however. Everything described above that needs improvement happened during the previous 30-plus years of talking, engagement, and accommodation of the CCP that was supposed to moderate communist Chinese behavior and turn it into a "responsible stakeholder."

One could rightly be skeptical that more talking will improve things.

Dialogue and diplomacy are not the same thing. One observer recently described dialogue as being to diplomacy what "hyper-inflation is to money."

Talk when you have something to talk about and you are in a position to defend and enforce your interests.

The American statesman George Shultz

Chinese Premier Li Qiang (right) speaks with U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen during a meeting in Beijing on July 7, 2023.



aply said, "Negotiations are a euphemism for capitulation if the shadow of power is not cast across the bargaining table."

Mr. Shultz is gone, but one can imagine what he would have said about talking for talking's sake.

He might have agreed with an astute scholar of diplomatic history who recently noted that "diplomacy is not psycho-babble or social work."

We've been talking to China for a long time. Without results, for us, at least. But China has done quite well.

Putting it in baseball terms, the United States is batting .000.

Meanwhile, the Chinese are batting about .950—having tolerated U.S. dialoguing over the past 50 years while using U.S., Western, and Japanese investment and market access in the democracies to turn a dirt-poor nation into a superpower aiming for global domination.

The only exception was the Trump administration—in which certain officials who understood China were finally putting some wood on the ball—despite fierce opposition from the engagers and the "don't provoke China" crowd inside and outside the administration.

But in 2021, they were sent to the showers, and a team of .000 hitters replaced them in the lineup.

So the next time you hear that talk and more talk is good, get out the above list and see whether China is doing anything differently.

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

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