# PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS IN CHINA

## ROUNDTABLE

BEFORE THE

## CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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# CONTENTS

Page

STATEMENTS

Goldman, Merle, professor emerita of Chinese history, Boston University and executive committee member, Fairbank Center for East Asia Research, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA ..... 2
Link, Perry, professor of Chinese language and literature, Princeton, University, Princeton, NJ ..... 4
Hu, Ping, chief editor, Beijing Spring, board member, Human Rights in China, and a regular commentator for Radio Free Asia, New York, NY ..... 8

APPENDIX

PREPARED STATEMENTS

Goldman, Merle ..... 24
Hu, Ping ..... 27

# PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS IN CHINA

**THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2005**

CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE
COMMISSION ON CHINA,
*Washington, DC.*

The roundtable was convened, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room 385, Russell Senate Office Building, John Foarde (staff director) presiding.

Also present: Susan Weld, general counsel; Carl Minzner, senior counsel; Adam Bobrow, senior counsel; Katherine Kaup, senior advisor; Keith Hand, senior counsel; and William Farris, senior specialist.

Also present: Michael Yan, U.S. Department of State, interpreter.

Mr. FOARDE. Good morning. Welcome, on behalf of the Members of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, to this issues roundtable.

I wanted to bring to everyone's attention that the statements of our panelists this morning will be up on the Commission's Web site, which is *www.cecc.gov,* and that you should routinely check the Web site for witness statements for our issues roundtables. The full transcript of the proceedings will be there in a few weeks, as well as copies of previous roundtables and hearing transcripts.

In addition to those items, we have on the Web site news, information and analysis about human rights and the development of the rule of law in China. The part of the Web site known as the "Virtual Academy," I recommend to you because it is becoming an increasingly popular part of our site.

This morning we are gathered to hear from three quite distinguished panelists about the current crackdown on Chinese intellectuals, and its implications. Throughout the history of modern China, scholars and intellectuals have helped to guide China's political and social development. They have served as voices of introspection, reform, and in some cases dissent, against the excesses of China's leaders. Some observers had expressed hope that the succession of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao to the top leadership posts in the Party and the Chinese state might usher in a new period of openness for Chinese intellectuals. In recent months, however, government intimidation and harassment of public intellectuals appears to have intensified.

In September 2004, the publication Southern People's Weekly, a publication in the relatively progressive Southern Daily group, published a cover story entitled, "Fifty Public Intellectuals Who Influenced China." Later that fall, official newspapers published a series of editorials critical of the concept of public intellectuals. Since

then, numerous prominent intellectuals, many of whom have published writings critical of the Chinese government, have been detained, demoted, or blacklisted from publishing.

To help us understand these developments, we have three enormously distinguished panelists this morning. I will introduce each before he or she speaks, but I wanted to remind our panelists and the audience about the format of our roundtables.

Each of the panelists will be asked to make a 10-minute opening presentation. After about eight minutes, I will let you know that you have two minutes remaining. After all panelists have spoken, we will go to a question and answer session. Each of our staff panel here will have about five minutes each to ask a question and hear the answer, and we will continue to go around in questioning until either the subject matter is exhausted, which hardly seems possible, or 11:30 arrives, whichever comes first.

So it is my great pleasure to introduce our first panelist, Professor Merle Goldman, who is Professor Emerita of Chinese History at Boston University, and executive committee member of the Fairbank Center for East Asia Research at Harvard University. Professor Goldman is the author of numerous books and articles on Chinese intellectuals and their role in modern China, including "China's Intellectuals: Advise and Dissent," from 1981; "Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China: Political Reform in the Deng Xiaoping Decade," from 1994, and she is currently completing a new book entitled, "From Comrade to Citizen: The Struggle for Political Rights in China." In addition to her teaching duties and scholarship, Professor Goldman serves as an adjunct professor at the Foreign Service Institute of the U.S. Department of State here in Washington. I had the enormous pleasure, many years ago, of being her student there.

Welcome. Over to you for your presentation.

**STATEMENT OF MERLE GOLDMAN, PROFESSOR EMERITA OF CHINESE HISTORY, BOSTON UNIVERSITY AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER, FAIRBANK CENTER FOR EAST ASIA RESEARCH, HARVARD UNIVERSITY, CAMBRIDGE, MA**

Ms. GOLDMAN. In the short paper I wrote, I said that "public intellectuals" are not just a modern phenomenon in China. They actually existed back in the Confucian era. It was the responsibility of Confucian literati to criticize the leaders if they diverged from Confucian morals or if they were engaged in unjust kinds of practices. As I see it, this is a tradition that is not unique to Western civilization. This is also part of Chinese civilization. It was only under Mao Zedong that the public intellectuals were silenced and not allowed to speak.

In the post-Mao era, there is a reemergence of public intellectuals, but there has been a change from the traditional role of public intellectuals. In the 1980s, most of the public intellectuals were people who became part of the reform process; they were members of the intellectual networks of reform leaders, such as Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang. So they were part of the establishment.

After June 4, 1989, however, they lost their positions. Some of them were imprisoned; others were forced to find work as workers or small businessmen. Therefore, in the 1990s, something new be-

gins to happen. Public intellectuals emerge who are not part of an official establishment and do not have political mentors who can protect them. So the 1990s sees the emergence, I believe, of independent public intellectuals. Some of them had participated in the Democracy Wall movement in 1978 and 1979. Some of them were the participants in the 1989 Tiananmen movement and were put in prison. When they were released, they went back to being public intellectuals. Since they were no longer members of the establishment, they became freelancers.

Something very new was happening here. They had access to publishing through private contractors. They were able to get their ideas across through the foreign press because the Chinese were opening to the outside world so that they could give interviews on Voice of America, Radio Free Asia, the BBC, and in Hong Kong that would be broadcast back to China. They also publicized their ideas on the Internet. These were all areas in which they were able to express themselves and get their ideas before the public.

By the late 1990s, a new phenomenon developed: the effort to establish an opposition political party, the China Democracy Party. This party is the first time there is a joining together of intellectuals with workers and small business people in an unofficial political organization. The party included veterans of Democracy Wall and the 1989 Tiananmen movements; it also included workers who were dissatisfied with increasing exploitative working conditions. Among the members of the opposition party were small business people who were once public intellectuals. They had been thrown out of the establishment, and then turned to the market to make a living. It is not the large entrepreneurs or the middle entrepreneurs, but the small entrepreneurs, who were once intellectuals, who helped finance the effort to build an opposition party.

So what you see developing are freelance intellectuals, in combination with other social groups—workers and small business people who help to establish an opposition party. That, to me, is something very new in the People's Republic of China. The question I have always had is what role can the United States, or human rights activists outside of China, play in helping these people?

I mean, the United States cannot be right there on the scene as it is today in Iraq. We can only be a catalyst. But I think there are ways in which we can help and I am sure other speakers will talk about that as well. Because China, unlike under Mao, really does care what the outside world thinks about it and wants to become a respected member of the international community, it is open to outside pressure. I saw that when I was a member of the U.S. delegation to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights during the Clinton era. At Geneva I saw how much effort the Chinese put in to making sure they were not criticized in that forum.

My belief is that the threat of criticism plays a great role in influencing China's actions on human rights. One area in which I think we can make a specific difference is on the issue of having the National People's Congress ratify the U.N. Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Chinese signed onto the covenant in 1998, but they say it is not operable until it is ratified by the National People's Congress. We can bring pressure on the National People's Congress to ratify the Covenant.

I think the very fact that the Chinese have already released political prisoners early, before their term is up, is an indication that they seek to stop any kind of criticism of them at the annual meeting of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. Even though China's having signed the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights may not affect what the leadership does, it does affect the people who are demanding human rights in China. We saw the same thing in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The Helsinki Accords played a great role in activating the dissidents and the human rights activists, though it did not play much of a role on the Soviet leaders until Gorbachev. Nevertheless, it did play a role in bringing pressure from below.

So, I guess I would like to conclude with saying that I believe that the way we are going to see change on the issue of human rights in China is through pressure from below, coming from intellectuals, workers, small business people, plus pressure from outside. Hopefully someday there will be a leader in China who will say, "All right, we are moving toward some kind of democracy here, let us recognize it," as occurred in Taiwan in the late 1980s.

So, on that optimistic note, I will conclude.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Merle Goldman appears in the appendix.]

Mr. FOARDE. Thank you very much for giving us a good start with a lot of rich issues to explore during our question and answer session.

I would now go on to recognize Professor Perry Link, Professor of Chinese Language and Literature at Princeton University. Professor Link has been a distinguished scholar for many years, specializing in 20th century Chinese literature. He has written widely on Chinese literature and culture. His publications include: "Evening Chats in Beijing," (1993), a discussion of modern China as viewed through the eyes of Chinese intellectuals; and "The Uses of Literature: Life in the Socialist Chinese Literary System," in 2000.

Professor Link, of course, also co-edited the "Tiananmen Papers," which provided an inside account of key leadership deliberations over the Tiananmen democracy protests in 1989. In addition to this teaching duties at Princeton, Perry Link serves on the Board of Advisors of Beijing Spring, a Chinese language magazine dedicated to the promotion of human rights, democracy, and social justice in China.

Perry Link, welcome. Over to you for your comments.

**STATEMENT OF PERRY LINK, PROFESSOR OF CHINESE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY, PRINCETON, NJ**

Mr. LINK. Thank you. I want to try to make three points in my 10 minutes.

One is that public intellectuals' willingness to speak out has declined, in my view, over the last 15 years. You just heard about my book, "Evening Chats in Beijing," which makes a lot of what Merle just mentioned about the traditional role of the Chinese intellectual to "take responsibility for all under heaven," (*yi tianxia wei ji ren*) and to speak truth to power.

I regret to say that I think there has been a considerable decline in that spirit, partly because the Communist Party has been successful in co-opting intellectuals by using higher salaries, better housing, higher status, access to travel abroad, more publishing freedom for writers who can write just about whatever they want to now—as long as you do not cross the government—and so on.

The second main point I would like to make, and here I will take a little more time, is that, despite my pessimistic first note, I think that public intellectuals do remain, and are, important. They are fewer than before, and fall into several kinds of fairly disparate spheres, which I will call (1) Internet essayists, (2) journalists, (3) muckraking novelists, (4) special cause activists, and (5) lawyers.

1. Internet essayists. We know about the recent detentions of Yu Jie and Liu Xiaobo. People like this are important because they provide a critical voice. But if we ask what their impact is, we need to divide the question between an international, external impact and the internal impact inside China.

Inside China, the impact is not as great as one would hope. These writers are banned from print publication. They do publish on the Internet, and there are, of course, about 90 million Internet users in China. But the Internet users are blocked, usually successfully, by 50,000 or more Internet police. The actual readers of these Internet essayists are primarily the overseas diaspora. Inside China, only a small group of sophisticated computer users who can get around the government's firewall get access to these writings.

It is worth asking why the ruling authorities allow these dissident voices onto the Internet at all. They could easily detain them and keep them off the Internet if they wanted. One answer, of course, is that there would be an international outcry if such famous voices were squelched. But an even more important factor, in my view—if I imagine myself in the place of the authorities—is that outside China it enhances the government's image to be able to show that people are publishing what looks like liberal thought from inside China. Defenders of the regime—at the U.N. Human Rights meetings in Geneva, for example—can point to them and say, "Look, Liu Xiaobo is publishing pretty wild stuff, so is China's media control not loosening up?" But this induces a fundamental misperception, because most media control—the bottom of the iceberg—is not loosening up at all.

2. Journalists. The journalist He Qinglian has written a couple of very important books in the last five years: "China's Quagmire" (*Zhongguo de xianjing*) and "How the Chinese Government Controls the Media" (*Zhongguo zhengfu ruhe kongzhi meiti*). She, of course, is in exile from China now. But inside China—and I don't have time to go into detail here—Liao Yiwu, with his "Interviews from the Bottom of Chinese Society" (*Zhongguo diceng fangtanlu*), Xiao Shu, with his "Harbingers of History" (*Lishi de xiansheng*), Chen Guidi and Wu Chuntao, with their "Investigation of the Chinese Peasantry" (*Zhongguo nongmin diaocha*) have all written very important books. Some in this group are sociologists, like Cao Jinqing, with his "China Along the Yellow River" (*Huanghebian de Zhongguo*). These are all important works that remind people that there are basic truths beneath the fluff and the rosy surfaces that

get projected not only by the Communist Party but by rosy-eyed Westerners.

It is worth noting, though, that there are fewer of these books now than there were even a few years ago under Jiang Zemin. I am not enthusiastic about making Jiang Zemin look good, yet this statement is true.

3. Muckraking novelists. Here again, a professor could go on for hours, but let me be brief. In the 1990s, long novels by Lu Tianming, Chen Fang, Zhang Ping, Wang Yuewen, Liu Ping, and others have exposed corruption in China. These are partly entertainment, to be sure. There is murder, sex, detectives, and so on. But they are more than that. They expose wrongdoing, and thrive on a strong public interest in watching wrongdoing get exposed and allow readers to let off steam vicariously.

Things can be said in this fiction that are remarkably bold, so long as they come out of the mouths of villains. A villain can say the Communist Party is done for, that it is not going to last even a couple of more years—and so long as the character is a villain, the novelist can get away with the statement. When it reaches a reader, though, the reader can take it as he or she likes.

4. Special case advocates. Here I mean people like Ding Zilin and her Tiananmen Mothers Movement, or the very important movement for AIDS activism led by Dr. Gao Yaojie, Hu Jia, Wan Yanhai, and others. Efforts like this do a lot of good. Here intellectuals engage people "on the ground," making a difference where, in the American cliché, "the rubber hits the road."

5. Lawyers. I want to spend a little time on this topic because I think this is becoming a very interesting and important kind of public intellectual. Beginning with Zhang Sizhi, who defended Wang Juntao, to Mo Shaoping, who defended several dissidents, to Zheng Enchong, imprisoned for his defense work, to Guo Guoting, who defends journalists and Falun Gong believers, to Pu Zhiqiang, who is defending the authors of "Investigation of the Chinese Peasantry"—and several others—quite a cadre of very useful legal "public intellectuals" seems to be emerging.

Let me read a few sentences from Vaclav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless," that tell why even futile legal activity can be important under Communist rule. Havel writes—of Communist Czechoslovakia—"Because the system cannot do without the law, because it is hopelessly tied down by the necessity of pretending the laws are observed, it is compelled to react in some way to these kinds of appeals that lawyers can make. Demanding that the laws be upheld is, thus, an act of living within the truth."

At a minimum, appeal to the law in China today has this same function of exposure of hypocrisy. Increasingly, though, it has been doing more than that. Lawyers are actually getting some very good things done these days, and for a couple of very interesting reasons.

Twenty years ago, the "work unit" (*gongzuo danwei*) system still held sway in Chinese cities, and virtually all social conflicts were settled by work unit leaders. Today the power and scope of work units both are greatly reduced, but of course there are still conflicts in society, and they still need to be settled somehow, so courts and lawyers have become much more important even if the leaders had

not planned that this happen. The increased role for lawyers makes space for those among them who want to try to nudge political rights forward.

Another interesting aspect of the role of lawyers is that they by nature abstract the question of rights. Traditionally in Chinese politics, and especially in Communist Chinese politics, battles were conceived as having only two sides: I'm right and you're wrong; the Party is right and Falun Gong is wrong, etc. There was no in-between position. But a lawyer, now, can distance himself from a "wrong" point of view but still defend the person who holds it. He can defend Falun Gong without being vulnerable to the charge of believing Falun Gong. Hence his position serves the function of "abstracting" the concept of rights above the question of substantive right-or-wrong. This is a first step to universalizing rights. The Communist Party is not used to handling this kind of problem. Rulers may come to realize that lawyers are undermining authoritarian power, but they will not easily be able to crack down on the trend, because, as Havel points out, their legitimacy depends on the pretense that rule of law is observed.

I want to turn to my third main point now, but make it only briefly because of time constraints. It is this: if there is hope for political reform in China, or—dare we say it—regime change, I am not sure it will come from intellectuals. I am not as optimistic about them as I was 15 years ago. I think the impetus for change is more likely to come from the less educated classes.

The West tends to underestimate the sea of change in popular Chinese thinking that grew out of the Cultural Revolution. Although these results were hardly what Mao Zedong planned, the Cultural Revolution years did revolutionize the way a generation of people think about their rights and their ability to protest.

The distinguished writer Liu Binyan made a very interesting point to me the other day. He asked: why was the suicide rate in China in the 1990s so much higher than it was in the 1940s? There certainly was much more money in society, generally, in the 1990s than the 1940s, yet more people killed themselves in the 1990s.

He says that this was because in the 1940s, the poor and the destitute did not much expect that they should have respect or rights. But during the Cultural Revolution, with its combination of egalitarian ideology and social chaos, there grew a notion that "I ought to get respect if I am a worker or farmer—and if I don't, there'd better be a good reason why not." But now, when you look around at society, there do not seem to be any fair reasons why the rich are rich and the poor are poor. It looks like corruption and unequal opportunity are the reasons. The "losers" feel insulted, humiliated, disgusted—hence the higher suicide rate.

The other source from which change might come—Merle referred to this briefly a moment ago—is a move by a top leader. Frankly, I do not pin any hopes on Hu Jintao in this regard.

The compiler of the Tiananmen Papers recently told me he does not think that top-inspired political reform can happen in China until about 2020, or at the very best maybe 2010. But to me it is significant that he still believes top-down change to be a possibility. A top leader could look at the situation and see the historic opportunity to be a world-class figure in Chinese history by ending the

rickety, corrupt, and very un-modern political system that still burdens the Chinese people today.

Mr. FOARDE. Thank you very much, Perry. Again, a rich presentation with many issues to go into during our question and answer session.

It is now my privilege to introduce Mr. Hu Ping. Mr. Hu is chief editor of Beijing Spring. He has been the chief editor of this monthly Chinese-language magazine that is dedicated to the promotion of human rights, democracy, and social justice in China since 1993. He is also a board member of Human Rights in China, the respected NGO, and a regular commentator for Radio Free Asia. Mr. Hu received his master's degree in philosophy from Beijing University and studied at Harvard University. During the Democracy Wall movement of 1979 in Beijing, Mr. Hu published a long essay entitled, "On Freedom of Speech." In 1980, he was elected as a People's Delegate in China's first free local election, and he is also former chairman of the Chinese Alliance for Democracy.

Mr. Hu will speak in the Chinese language and will be assisted this morning by our friend and colleague, Mr. Michael Yan, one of the premier interpreters and translators from the U.S. Department of State.

Michael, welcome, and thank you for your help.

Mr. YAN. Thank you, sir.

Mr. FOARDE. Mr. Hu.

**STATEMENT OF HU PING, CHIEF EDITOR, BEIJING SPRING, BOARD MEMBER, HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHINA, NEW YORK, NY; INTERPRETED BY MICHAEL YAN, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Mr. HU. I would like to thank everybody for giving me this honor to be here today.

Today I will be talking on three issues. The first is the fact that since Hu Jintao took office, the plight of the public intellectuals in China has not improved; in fact, it has worsened. As a matter of fact, the lack of improvement, in itself, is tantamount to worsening, because the same oppression becomes more and more onerous as time goes on, and the consequences of that oppression become more and more severe. Not long ago, the Hu Jintao regime unleashed a new crackdown on intellectual circles. This shows that Hu Jintao and his predecessor, Jiang Zemin, are cut from the same cloth.

The Chinese Communist leaders are deeply cognizant of the fact that their political power is entirely based on the fear of the masses. Consequently, if they are to preserve their own rule, they must keep the people in fear. This means they cannot appear amicable and big-hearted in front of the masses. In their mind, if the people feel the authorities are amicable and big-hearted, they will dare to speak out, saying things they would never have dared otherwise. Then they would dare to speak out demands they would not have dared otherwise. If that happens, of course, the authorities would have to make more efforts to crack down. That is why, after Hu Jintao took office, he took a hard-line approach to everything, with a goal of consolidating the rule of his Party. That way he would nip it in the bud, and that way he really does not have to crack down on a bigger number of people. That is why many people

outside of China are feeling disappointed by what Hu Jintao has done, but actually that is precisely what he wanted to achieve in the first place.

After Hu Jintao took office, he reiterated time and time again his concerns for the disadvantaged groups. However, he absolutely does not permit the people to initiate any open collective actions or to stand up to defend their own rights, because they are really afraid of the possibility that the people would obtain the ability to engage in independent collective activities. Also, the Chinese authorities are well aware of the fact that the allocation of wealth in China is based on injustice, and all that allocation is illegitimate. In China, the poverty of the poor exists for different reasons. It is not the product of history. It is not the product of the market. It is the product of political power.

As we can imagine, if the people do have their political power, do have their rights, they are not going to be satisfied with a tad more added to the unemployment, or a small additional subsidy for the poor. They will, first, demand that a group of people who use their power to enrich themselves turn over the property they plundered, and that, of course, will be a threat to the regime itself. That is why the so-called concern for the disadvantaged touted by the Hu Jintao regime, in reality, is no more than a desire to employ controlled oppression and to maintain continued squeezing.

Second, I would like to talk about the control that the Chinese Communist regime has on the intellectuals in China. On the surface, it seems that the intellectuals in China are very active in today's politics. On the Internet, even in the official media, discussion of certain public issues is quite open, and even quite likely. Some dissidents express themselves without fear and nothing happens to them. They sit at home quite well. Nothing happens. However, I must bring to your attention the fact of a principle being implemented by authorities in China today, and that principle is that all people are not equal before the law.

When the authorities handle issues related to expression and speech, there is no single standard measure used. The standards vary by person, by time, and by place. That is why we cannot draw the conclusion, based solely on the situation of a few well-known dissidents, that freedom of speech in China has expanded. Of course, the number of people who have been arrested and who have been detained is very high, and that puts China in first place in the world. However, this should not be the only yardstick with which we measure freedom of speech in China. Nations that arrest a smaller number of dissidents do not necessarily have more freedom of expression than those that arrest many.

We know that traditional autocratic regimes use investigation and punishment after the act to control freedom of speech, whereas, the Communist Party in China takes a preventive approach before anything even happens.

If we liken the traditional method of autocracy and its treatment of free expression to killing people or butchering children, then the Communist autocratic methods are not limited to killing people and slaughtering babies, but also includes abortion and contraception.

Now, the effects of this oppression are not only more severe and far-reaching, they are also more insidious and more apt to fool people. On the surface, the yardstick used as a measure for the control of free speech by the authorities is broader than before, with the standards not only looser than those of the Mao era, but also even looser than those of the 1980s. Now, there are many factors that resulted in this. One, with the June 4th massacre as the landmark, the Chinese Communist regime has lost the traditional support of belief. It has been transformed into a rule of naked violence. Violent rule results in people's passiveness and political apathy. It means widespread cynicism. Under these circumstances, the role that the intellectuals play is much, much smaller in today's China.

Simply put, the government really does not care about your criticism any more. The attitude is, "You yell about what you want, and I will do what I like, all the same; what can you do to me?" I think Wang Shuo put it very well by saying, "I'm a rogue, who should I fear?" That means the authorities have become even more shameless.

So that is why liberal intellectuals all over feel that their situation has worsened in these circumstances. These activities still hold on tenaciously among the people, but it is very difficult for them to develop any further.

Third, I would like to talk about the fact that, contrary to the early hopes of many people, economic reforms and economic growth in China have not put China on a pathway to freedom and democracy. On the contrary, the reform and the economic growth have become the main reason the authorities use to claim to one-party rule and to deny freedom and democracy.

From Li Peng and Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, leaders have taken China's successful economic growth as their basis to justify the crackdown on June 4th as necessary and right. They use it to show that a one-party autocracy is necessary and right. In reality, China's privatization of the "China model" or the "China miracle," has not brought out democracy and freedom. They have thrown obstacles to developing democracy and freedom.

If the truth can be told here, privatization in China was nothing more than officials using their power to misappropriate resources that originally belonged to all the people. This sort of privatization reduces the "transaction cost" to a minimum, making it far quicker and more effective than privatization accomplished with democratic participation. However, such reforms are bound to be of the type that can never be approved by the people. The blocks, the groups of people who profit immensely from all this, are those who are most in fear of democracy and most stoutly oppose it. This is because these officials know very well that if they open the door to freedom and democracy, they will not only lose their monopoly on political power, but also, very possibly, will be called out by the people on charges of economic corruption.

I would like to close this by saying that in today's China, the Mao era is gone forever. Even the ruling class itself is not willing to go back to the days of Mao. Today's China must concern herself with something that seems even more old-fashioned, but which could be an even more persistent type of oppression: that of rule

by people who believe in no "ism" but wield enormous power, and are determined to use every means at their disposal to preserve it.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hu appears in the appendix.]

Mr. FOARDE. Thank you, Mr. Hu, for, also, a very rich and deep presentation. We will be coming back to some of your themes in our question period.

I would like to give our panelists a moment to rest their voices and gather their thoughts, and make a brief administrative announcement.

The next CECC issues roundtable will be held next Monday, March 14, at 2 p.m. in room 2255 of the Rayburn House Office Building, over on the other side of the Capitol, entitled, "China's New Regulation on Religious Affairs: A Paradigm Shift?" This roundtable will examine the Chinese government's new regulation on religion, which became effective on March 1.

We have three quite distinguished panelists for that roundtable as well: Dr. Carol Lee Hamrin from George Mason University, here in the area; Professor Daniel Bays of the William Spoelhof Teacher-Scholar in History at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, MI; and Mickey Spiegel, senior researcher at Human Rights Watch/Asia in New York City. So we hope to see all of you on Monday afternoon at 2 p.m. in 2255 Rayburn.

With that, let us go to our question and answer period. I will exercise the prerogative of the chair and address this question to all of our panelists.

Given that you have given us an extremely sobering assessment of the condition of the public intellectual in China, and given the history of public intellectuals in China that you have limned for us since 1949, what would possess anyone in China to want to become one of the members of the four categories, Perry Link, that you traced in today's environment? What motivates people to do this? Anyone can begin.

Mr. LINK. Well, for some, idealism. I think that the traditional Confucian ideal of serving the good of society and thinking that that is a right thing to do still has life. It is somewhat in recess now, but it is too big and too strong to have died completely.

To put another possibility on the table, though, it is sometimes hard to separate idealism from careerism in contexts like this. There can be a certain careerist benefit in making a name for oneself as a dissident intellectual. People occasionally make a splash in hopes of becoming well-known for having made the splash. But to view them as purely so motivated is usually too cynical. Often idealism and careerism are both there, mixed.

Ms. GOLDMAN. But besides that tradition, I think, also, Chinese are very much influenced by the West. The West does have a big influence through the Internet. The Internet is censored; there is no question about that. But they find all kinds of ways, as I find out when I interview these people, to get around the censorship. I am amazed of what they can do to get around the censorship. If they are blocked at one Web site, they go to another one, and so forth. So, they learn about the West and there is a great attraction to those interested in the free exchange of ideas.

You are right. Even under Mao, there were intellectuals, like Liu Binyan, who spoke out. The difference was that under Mao they did it when he let them do it, as in the "Hundred Flowers movement." Now they speak out and act politically whenever they want to.

I would just like to add one other thing. I do not necessarily agree with Hu Ping. I believe that the move to the market and the move to the outside world has really made the political system less rigid. Let me put it this way. The oppression is less rigid; they have found ways to get around it. There is more freedom of speech, at least in private meetings and even in academic meetings. I am amazed, when I go to some academic meetings in China, at the kinds of things they say.

What there is not, is more freedom of association. Any group that wants to join together for some kind of political purpose will quickly be repressed.

But on the whole, among themselves, they can say almost anything—Perry has written about this very well. So, I am not as pessimistic as the others here.

I do agree that the Chinese young people, students are less politically involved than in the 1980s. But they also want more freedom and more political participation.

My two fellow panelists have said intellectuals are not going to play the political role they had in the past. In the last part of my forthcoming book, I deal with ordinary people demanding human rights, whether they are peasants or they are workers who are beginning to demand political rights. Usually, it is an intellectual among them who helps them articulate what they believe or helps them in what they are doing. So even if the intellectuals, as a group, are not going to play a role in political affairs, they will play a role, I believe, with other social classes. That is where I think they get their clout.

Mr. FOARDE. Useful. Thank you.

Mr. Hu, do you have a comment?

Mr. HU. Now, that is a very interesting issue. A lot of times we find ourselves asking ourselves the same questions. "Why did we put ourselves in situations like that? Why did we speak out, saying things that the authorities did not want to hear? Why did we, as intellectuals, do that?"

In addition to the reasons that Professor Link and Professor Goldman have listed just now, there is another reason. That is, in recent years there is a bigger and bigger group of young people who do have some religious beliefs. They have to somehow find some sort of moral support to prop themselves up so that they can keep doing what they think is right, but not officiated by other people.

Another fact I would like to draw everybody's attention to is that compared to the 1980s, or compared to even the 1990s, the role that intellectuals in today's China play is much more marginalized.

Of course, there is another fact which is that in today's China, intellectuals have become really meek and docile. They know what to say, at what time, and they know what not to say under what circumstances. So when they do speak out, the outside world would be under the impression that these are daring people, they are speaking out as a matter of fact. These intellectuals who are speak-

ing out are speaking within the dictates of what they can and cannot do.

Mr. FOARDE. Thank you all very much. A useful set of responses.

These roundtables take a great deal of teamwork to organize, but there is always at least one person at the head of the organizational pyramid. I am happy today to recognize that person, my colleague, Keith Hand, who is a senior counsel with the Commission staff. Over to you for some questions, Keith.

Mr. HAND. Thanks, John. Thanks to all of you for coming and for a fascinating set of presentations.

I wanted to discuss a bit more deeply an issue that Professor Goldman just touched on, that is the relationship between intellectuals and the public at large. We have talked a lot about state repression and how the new regime is dealing with intellectuals. Has the public view of the role of intellectuals changed? Do intellectuals still hold a special place in the eyes of the public? If intellectuals were able to circumvent some of the state controls we have talked about today, would they be able to mobilize public opinion?

Ms. GOLDMAN. That is a good question. Here, I guess I agree with my colleagues on this. The intellectuals today do not have the kind of honorable role that they had in the Confucian era, or even in the Mao era. Today they are seen as part of the commercialization of Chinese society. They are out to get as much as they can; they are less interested in political issues. There is no question about that.

Yet, I still think—and this gets back to the other question—there is a residual desire to play a political role and a residual respect for intellectuals. If someone has a little more education and they become part of some kind of a protest movement, they usually move to the fore. They usually are the ones who help organize it or help articulate what the participants want. So, whether it is workers or it is peasants, it is usually the one with a little more education who plays a leadership role and is able not only to mobilize, but also articulate what these views are.

I would agree with my panelists here that the ordinary people are getting a sense of rights. You can see this all over China today. Last summer, I was in Xi'an and I saw huge posters in front of the Big Goose Pagoda. They were put up by peasants who were complaining about their land being taken away for modernization projects. But what arguments did they use? The posters said that their rights had been taken away. They said that they wanted back their land and wanted back their rights. In other words, they were not just acting to demand their rights. They are beginning to articulate those rights as well.

Now, it is not clear whether the intellectuals have gotten to them with that concept or it is coming out of their own experience, it is probably both. So even though the intellectuals are seen as part of China's modern commercialization, I still think they play this residual role as public intellectuals.

Mr. LINK. Let me take another crack at what I tried to say about the groundswell of secular change during the last 50 years in ordinary Chinese people's consciousness of their independence. I hesitate to use the word "rights," because that almost crosses a borderline that is a little bit too modern and Western for what I mean. But just

to try to put a nub on it, let's go back to the protest movement in 1989 when, of course, at Tiananmen Square there was lots of superficial representation of Western democratic influences. You will remember students bandying Lord Acton's famous phrase about absolute power corrupting absolutely. Dan Rather was at the square, Mikhail Gorbachev came, and so on. It was all called a Democracy Movement and seemed to spring from Western influence. In fact, though, the power of the movement came from the bottom up. The discontent and the demonstrations were not just in Western-influenced Beijing but all over China—as the Tiananmen Papers make clear. There was hardly a provincial capital that did not see major demonstrations, and many middle-sized cities had them as well. All this was not because Dan Rather was in the square in Beijing. It was because of discontent that came deep out of China's recent historical experience.

Much of it originated in the Cultural Revolution years, when, along with all the hate and turmoil, people began to think, "I am a person, I can stand up, I can argue back, I can criticize my leadership." Again: I do not believe that Mao foresaw the effects of what his movement was doing, but his movement unleashed the effects nonetheless. Then, when the unfairness of the 1980s became so obvious—when people saw the massive misappropriation of resources by officials called *guandao*—they grew angry and indignant. We need to understand that long-term groundswell in popular thought.

Still—with all that said—I do agree with Merle that it tends to be true in Chinese history that disaffection gets channeled through or captured by an intellectual, or a quasi-intellectual. This pattern is visible in many of the peasant revolts at the ends of earlier dynasties. Rebellions usually had a quasi-intellectual or religious leader. This, of course, is one reason why Falun Gong looks so frightening to the current regime: the spark that a charismatic leader provides can be important.

Mr. HAND. Thank you.

Mr. FOARDE. Let me go on and recognize our friend and colleague Kate Kaup, who is with us as a special advisor here during 2005 on her sabbatical year from her professorship at Furman University in Greenville, SC. Kate, please.

Ms. KAUP. Thank you. And thank you to all the panelists for coming, and for your interesting comments.

I would like to pick up the discussion of the role of the peasantry and the workers that both Dr. Goldman and Dr. Link mentioned. Several political theorists have noted the contribution of the middle class in democratic transitions outside of Asia. Bruce Dickson and other China specialists have discussed the role of the middle class in China as being somewhat unique, however. Will you speak a bit about whether or not there are any public intellectuals emerging from the entrepreneurial and middle classes?

Ms. GOLDMAN. Certainly, in Western history it was what we have called the bourgeoisie who made the revolution, and they became an independent middle class.

I think one of the big differences in China is that there is a fast-growing middle class, getting very wealthy, but they are not independent. They do not have an independent status. They do not

have the rule of law to help them maintain their independent status. Most important, they have been co-opted into the Party. The largest percentage of people going into the Party today are the new business people. That is what the "Three Represents" of Jiang Zemin is all about.

So like the literati who were co-opted into the establishment, this large middle class is being co-opted. However, the people I am talking about—members of the small entrepreneurs—are people who the Party will not take because of their past political activities. In other words, some people who were in the Democracy Wall movement and the Tiananmen demonstrations or demonstrations that Perry mentioned that are going on all over China. What do they do to make a living? They have gone into some kind of business, and it is not at a very high level.

But whether they are engaged in private contracting, or whether they are in some kind of technology, they are willing to put money into some kind of political activity such as the China Democracy Party. Some of its members were on the fringes of the emerging middle class.

So, I think where you are going to see the change in China coming, is from ordinary people, workers, peasants, as well as some of these intellectuals we talked about, and some of these marginal people in the middle class. It is not going to come from an independent bourgeoisie. I would like to think it would, but so far there is no evidence of that.

Mr. FOARDE. Would anyone else like to remark?

Mr. LINK. I agree with that.

Mr. HU. In China, what is happening is that it is very hard to come to a conclusion by a very simple process, predicting what is going to happen in China. It really depends on the big picture, on the environment in which these events happen. To put it very simply, the June 4th movement, in 1989, was a big watershed. Before the June 4th event, with the deepening of economic reforms, people were coming up with more and more demands for political reforms. However, after the June 4th event, the opposite became true. The more successful the economic reform was, the less demand there was for political reform. The same thing can be said of the intellectuals, as well as of the middle class.

Before the June 4th event, the status of intellectuals got higher and higher. With that ascending status, they had more and more political demands. However, after the June 4th event, some of these people got well-to-do and some of these people got better treatment from the authorities. With that, they had fewer and fewer political demands.

Ms. GOLDMAN. Can I just say, I really disagree with Hu Ping on this one. Before the 1980s, intellectuals were talking about political reforms within the Marxist-Leninist framework. In other words, they were humanistic Marxists, and in some ways they echoed what was going on in Eastern Europe. After June 4th, Marxism-Leninism, as a motivating ideology, I believe, became bankrupt. So for the first time, intellectuals are beginning to contemplate another political system.

What is unusual is that they use Marx to do this. They do it very cleverly. Marx, after all, talked about, when you have a change in

the substructure then you have to have a change in your superstructure. So, obviously as China moves to a market economy, it must also move to a different political structure. They are talking about systems of checks and balances and some are talking about an opposition political party. The ones who are talking about political reform are asking for much more radical reforms than they were in the 1980s.

Mr. FOARDE. Thank you. Useful.

Let me recognize Susan Roosevelt Weld, who is our general counsel on the Commission staff, for another round of questions. Susan.

Ms. WELD. My first question is quite simple. It is whether Wen Jiabao has any influence on Hu Jintao in the tenor of the leadership's attitude toward intellectuals. Just after the two came into power we saw, on May 4, at a speech on the campus of Qinghua University, Wen Jiabao calling on the ideals of the May 4th movement, and saying China should push forward with them. Is there anything you could tell us about that?

Ms. GOLDMAN. Let me put it this way. I think there was great anticipation that a younger generation of leaders would be more liberal and more open. Initially, it seemed that way, especially because they were interested in dealing with the growing inequalities, especially in the countryside. We thought that they were going to be a much more receptive, or certainly flexible kind of leadership. But in some ways—and this comes from the people I have talked to in China—they say it is much more repressive today than it was in the later years of Jiang Zemin.

Even a famous political scientist—I mentioned him in my statement, Liu Junning, who was thrown out of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences by Jiang Zemin personally, said he could say more, and he could do more under Jiang Zemin than he can today. He is the one whose Web site is being closed down constantly.

I will give you another example of increasing repression of public intellectuals. The leadership says they are concerned about the increasing inequalities among the peasants. Yet, when a survey of the Chinese peasants, written by a couple based on their work in Anhui province, came out describing the inequalities and showing what caused them, China's new leaders banned the book the next month.

Unless the leadership approves, public intellectuals cannot express their own criticisms. And if they do it is likely they will be repressed. If it is not a designated representative, an intellectual that represents the leadership, then they crack down. So, I see this as a much more repressive regime than the later years of Jiang Zemin.

Because Hu Jintao came out of the China Youth League, which was always considered to be the center for more liberal political views, such as those of Hu Yaobang, we expected more of the new leadership .

Mr. FOARDE. Do either of the other panelists want to address that question?

Mr. HU. Well, talking about Hu Jintao and Wen Jiaobao's concerns for the disadvantaged groups, one example I would like to cite here is the attention they are paying to "xinfang," which means to appeal to a higher authority with your concerns.

Now, as a result of the reforms over the years, there emerged a lot of disadvantaged groups who find themselves in difficulty. They find it necessary to cut across several layers and appeal to higher authorities with their concerns.

On the other hand, since Hu and Wen took power, they have been saying that they are close to the people. That, in itself, kind of encouraged these "letters and visits." But, as a matter of fact, both of them know very well that this method of appealing to the higher authorities, cutting across several layers of authority, by doing this, nothing can be resolved. It does not really help at all.

Of course, both of them know very well that a democratic system would very easily take care of issues like this. Either you have a very independent media or you have an independent judiciary system, and all these problems would be taken care of automatically. Of course, they reject the adoption of democracy, they reject the emergence of an independent media, an independent judiciary system. Instead, they do it with what is in place. That is why the whole situation remains the same.

Mr. FOARDE. Thank you very much.

Let me now recognize my friend and colleague, Carl Minzner, who is a senior counsel with the Commission staff. Carl.

Mr. MINZNER. Thank you very much, John. Thanks to all of our participants for coming here today.

I want to address the portrayal in the American or Western media that all Chinese public intellectuals are cut from the same cloth; that they are all promoting democracy, that they are all promoting limited government. I want to ask the question, is that true? Is that an accurate portrayal? To what extent are public intellectuals in China taking up the flag of nationalism, such as with the book, "China Can Say No," espousing policies that might be more hard line than government policies? That would be the first question.

The second question is, is there a difference in treatment by the Chinese government of these intellectuals vis-a-vis those who are promoting democracy and limited government?

Ms. GOLDMAN. There is certainly much greater intellectual pluralism today in China than there was under Mao, and in fact, more even than there was in the 1980s. There is, I think, also an increase in nationalist feeling. I have not yet been able to pinpoint it in the intellectual community and I have not seen any recent works on that. But that certainly is a rising source.

The more nationalist views appear to be coming from the younger generation. This is also true of what we call the "new left." They want to go back to some of the ideals of the Mao era in the Great Leap Forward, and even in the Cultural Revolution. In other words, some form of collective ownership, some form of direct democracy. They give those as their two major examples.

Of all the ideological groups, the one that the leadership has most directly repressed is the neo-Maoists. But they are dying out. The neo-Maoists wanted to go back to Mao before the Great Leap. This was something the leadership did not want to do. The next group that the leadership has repressed are the liberal intellectuals because they are calling for a change in the political system. They

are losing their positions in the establishment. They have now become part of this non-establishment group.

The leadership has not yet turned against the new left nor the nationalists. Now, it could be that if some of these intellectuals, particularly the nationalists become too fervent and too jingoistic, they might crack down because jingoists would hurt the leadership in their relations with the outside world. Thus, so far the only intellectuals who have been criticized by the new leaders have been the liberals and neo-Maoists.

Mr. LINK. I would say that we need to notice two things about independent thinking in China—and maybe anywhere. One is that, almost by definition, it exhibits variety. So what Merle sketches here about liberal intellectuals, about the more radical crypto-Maoists—and, of course, there are many shades in between—are all there.

The other thing to say, though, is that from the current government's point of view, no independent political thinking is really welcome. The government does not like people to think differently from the way they are supposed to think—to put it very bluntly.

So the government takes what you might call a pragmatic attitude toward this variety of opinion: it is ready to cooperate with those who express views that are supportive of or compatible with its own views—but will ignore or repress others. The question of the difference between the "new left" (*xinzuopai*) and the government is subtle, because sometimes the new left thinking coincides with and is useful to the government, but other times not. I do not think there is a fundamental trust there.

And if you go all the way over to the "China Can Say No" people, then the confluence of what the Party wants and what intellectuals are saying is pretty complete. But in cases like that, one has to ask whether we are observing a "natural confluence" of opinion or a case of people who lack intellectual integrity saying what they calculate that the Party would like to hear. With "China Can Say No" or "Behind the Demonization of China," certainly the latter is involved. The result is what one might call ersatz intellectual opinion.

Mr. HU. There are two things I would like to point out here. One, is before June 4th, it was very obvious that most of the intellectuals in China were for more freedom and democracy. Afterward, there appeared to be a division among the intellectuals in China. Now there is a group of intellectuals who have come out openly expressing their opposition to freedom and democracy. However, the impact that these intellectuals have on society, by and large, is very limited, the reason being very simple: they do not have a substitute for freedom and democracy. They do not have another choice to replace what they are opposed to. That is why, among intellectuals circles nowadays in China, a popular view is that democracy is a good thing for China, but China is not ready for it now. Of course, this is exactly what the Chinese leadership has been saying. The Chinese leadership would say, from time to time, that what they want is a "socialist democracy," and what they do not want is Western democracy. However, if you follow up by asking, what is "socialist democracy," they cannot explain themselves.

Of course, sometimes they resort to this tactic by saying, "Well, the United States has been there for over 200 years and we are

much younger in that respect," meaning that it would take them much longer to get into this developmental stage. What they do not want to discuss with you is whether concrete steps would be taken, what we should do as the first step, what we should do as the second step, and whether people can reach agreement on an over-arching principle regarding democracy. They are not willing to talk about all these issues. So on this very issue, they have taken a defensive approach.

Mr. FOARDE. Thank you. Public intellectuals are involved in nothing if they are not involved in expression. Our staff expert on freedom of expression issues is my friend and colleague, William Farris. William.

Mr. FARRIS. I would like to ask two related questions. Mr. Link mentioned that people today are free to publish anything as long as they do not cross the line. I would be interested in hearing what the three of you think that line is. What is it that people cannot actually say?

In a related matter, Mr. Hu mentioned the preventive measures and how important a role they play in preventing people from speaking freely and publishing freely. I would be interested to hear if any of you have any thoughts on the role of the General Administration of Press and Publication, and the Central Propaganda Department, in squelching public intellectuals' right to publish.

Perhaps, Professor Link, you could maybe just expound a bit on what you think that line is, to start.

Mr. LINK. It is a very fuzzy line. I wrote a piece a few years ago called "The Anaconda in the Chandelier," that shows how the line is intentionally made fuzzy. If the line between what is permitted and what is prohibited were clear, that would let people, whatever they said, know for sure either that "I am safe" or that "I am risking something." But if I don't know exactly where the line is, I need to guess, and guessing turns me subtly into my own policeman—and in most cases pulling back even further than I would need to, just to "be safe." From very early in the Communist movement—right from Yan'an times—it has been a standard ploy to keep the borderlines fuzzy.

That said, though, in a nutshell, what is prohibited is anything that threatens the power of the regime, directly or indirectly. Directly, by saying that policy toward Taiwan is wrong, or that Hu Jintao or other top leaders are mistaken, and so on; indirectly, by saying something good about Falun Gong or famous political dissidents, because these are viewed as forces that could become rivals for power. One way or the other, the nub is always the question of whether the current regime can keep its grip on power. That is the principle that determines what you can and cannot say in public. But even then, it is fuzzy, because who you are, as Hu Ping said, and under what circumstances you are speaking, matters in a number of different ways as well. It is a very complex question.

Mr. FOARDE. Anyone else want to comment?

Mr. HU. Of course, this situation brings us back to the changes that China saw in 1989. In the aftermath of the June 4th event, the Chinese people, whether they were in China or overseas, many of them burst out cursing the Communist Party of China. Of course, it was impossible for the Communist Party to have every-

body un-say what they had said. So now their approach is, "just say whatever you want, but do not say it in the open."

Another result of the June 4 event in 1989 is that even though people are still clear about what is right and what is wrong, they are not holding the government, the regime, to that standard any more. So, they kind of leave the government alone to do whatever it wants, whether it is right or wrong.

The story of Zhao Ziyang is a case in point. No rules or regulations stipulated that he should have been under house arrest for that long a period of time. However, he was. After his death, while there were no rules and regulations prohibiting people from attending his funeral, the authorities simply said, "If you attend, you will be in trouble." So, the authorities have really resorted to this undisguised method of controlling.

In the past, when the authorities wanted to ban a book, they would go to all the trouble of letting people know what the contents of the book were about. The authorities would try to mobilize the masses to criticize the book in question. Now if the authorities want to ban a book, they do not really have to do any of that. The authorities would simply issue an order and the book is banned.

Ms. GOLDMAN. Let me just say something about that, if I could.

Mr. FOARDE. Please.

Ms. GOLDMAN. That is true, the book is banned. But one of the differences now even from the 1980s is that because China has moved to the market and, because there is more economic freedom, these books are banned, but they can still be bought on the black market, even in airports and on street corners. People continue to sell them.

So the point is that they are daring in what they publish. The book will be banned, yet the book still circulates because the market situation is open and freer, and these ideas and these books are able to circulate. So, I am not as pessimistic as Hu Ping on this issue.

Mr. FOARDE. Thank you for that observation.

Let me recognize my friend and colleague, Adam Bobrow, who is our senior counsel for commercial rule of law. Adam.

Mr. BOBROW. That was, Professor Goldman, the perfect segue into the issues that we have been discussing in terms of the difference of opinion that the panelists have expressed about the effects of economic legal reform and how the *kaifang gaige,* the reform and opening up, have actually interacted with this movement for public intellectuals.

I am going to ask a wide-open question, because I would just like to see the debate continue a little bit. That is, what has been the most direct effect of the dramatic economic, commercial, and legal changes on public intellectual in China? I would throw that open to the whole panel.

Ms. GOLDMAN. The Party emphasizes the rule of law. Of course, it is rule of law to carry on business. Yet, we have seen, in the 1990s, in particular, the emergence of some very brave defense lawyers who defend some of these people when they are brought to trial, and do it very effectively. Of course, they never win, but the point is that they are making a statement there. So that is another real change in that a group of lawyers now are willing to take on

politically sensitive cases, even though they know they are going to get in trouble.

Certainly, the opening to the outside world is also a major factor. Yu Jie, for example, certainly is a public intellectual. He travels abroad a couple of times a year. He gets new ideas. He gets his ideas discussed in China. He is able to function in China, even though he has been periodically detained, and he is under surveillance. The point is, these people are not locked away. They are not totally silenced. They do have contacts at home and abroad. So they are very brave people, there is no question about that. But the big difference is that they are not silent the way they were in the Mao era. Also, public intellectuals are more independent than they were in the 1980s.

So my view is not as pessimistic as my colleagues. I really do see some positive changes coming out of this loosening up, opening up economically, and engagement with the outside world.

Mr. LINK. I would agree that opening up has had good effects, but would separate that from the question of whether the effects of more money-making have been uniformly good. To highlight a couple of the ways in which more money-making has had a deleterious effect on intellectuals speaking out in the public interest, I would go back to the first point I made in my presentation about the phenomenon of being "bought off" in the last 15 years.

In 1988 and 1989, when the intellectuals were complaining so articulately, they still felt they suffered from the stigma of the "stinking bottom" of society (*chou lao jiu*). Their expression of discontent was couched as social idealism but was considerably fueled by self-advocacy.

Deng Xiaoping and the Party, quite cleverly said, "All right, here is some money, some status, some housing, some artistic freedom." In this case money—not by force but by inducement, has led people to be much less critical than they were before. In particular, in the field of creative literature, which I study professionally, I think the trend is pretty obvious. Creative writers were getting more and more deeply probing and reflective in the 1980s, but in the 1990s and after either went into fairly arcane kinds of a vanguard experimentalism or turned toward money-making by writing popular entertainment or by writing for television or film. The Chinese intellectual's ideal of loyal remonstrance, of speaking truth to power on behalf of the populace, has been hurt by the rampant make-money-quick atmosphere of the last 15 years.

Can I make one last comment, and then sign off? In answer to William's question about the controls, there is one aspect of the complexity that I did not mention, and I really want to. It is, the public/private distinction. Of course, there are layers within this distinction. But what you can say in private and what you can say in public, as I am sure you know, varies immensely.

A few years ago, I did a paper on the popular "rhythmic sayings" that abound within China's underground grapevine. They are wry sayings and, I believe, are created primarily by intellectuals. They are very blunt and hard-hitting, skewering Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao, and virtually any top leader by name. They not only survive but travel all over China orally—a state office collects them to monitor popular opinion for the leaders.

All this happens except: you cannot put them into print, or onto a broadcast, or recite them openly in a public place—if you do get a few into public media, they are bowdlerized. The public/private distinction is not absolute, it too admits a certain spectrum. But the two ends of the spectrum are very different.

Mr. HU. Of course, there is no question that China today is very different from China in the Mao era. There is room for the intellectuals in China to express their political opinions. What I want to emphasize here is the fact that this room will not be expanding as time goes. For instance, if we compare China with China 16 years ago in 1989, I do not think that room has expanded any.

By the same token, if you asked Chinese dissidents, whether they are still in China or they are overseas, if you asked them their expectations for political reforms, for democratic reforms in China, I think their expectations are much, much lower than 10 years ago.

Mr. FOARDE. Thank you very much. Unfortunately, the time that we have available this morning for our conversation is gone. So, it is my duty, on behalf of the members of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, to first thank our three panelists, Professor Goldman, Professor Link, and Mr. Hu, for coming and sharing your expertise with us this morning.

Next, I would like to thank all of the members of the audience who came to attend today, and hope that we will see you next Monday, March 14, at 2 p.m. over on the House side for our roundtable on the new religious regulations, and that you will continue to follow our roundtables and hearings series this year for the Congressional-Executive Commission on China.

Thank you all. We will adjourn this one for today.

[Whereupon, at 11:41 a.m. the issues roundtable was concluded.]

# A P P E N D I X

# PREPARED STATEMENTS

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF MERLE GOLDMAN

MARCH 10, 2005

### THE ROLE OF CHINA'S PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS AT THE START OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

"Public intellectuals" are not unique to Western civilization. Public intellectuals have played a role throughout Chinese history. It was the responsibility of the Confucian literati to criticize officials and even the Emperor when they diverged from the Confucian ideals of morality and fairness. Public intellectuals helped to bring about the end of the dynastic system and prepare the way for the 1911 revolution. Sun Yatsen personified a public intellectual. Even though the Kuomintang government of Chiang Kai-shek (1927–1949) attempted to stifle criticism and dissent, it was too weak to silence the public intellectuals, who continued to criticize repressive officials and policies and advocate political reforms. With exception of during the Hundred Flowers period (1956–June 1957) and a short time in the early 1960s, it was only during the era of Mao Zedong (1949–76) that public intellectuals were silenced and unable to play their traditional role. Of course, one major difference between the West and China is that during the dynastic, Kuomintang, and Mao Zedong eras there were no laws to protect public intellectuals when what they said displeased the leadership, who could silence them with relative impunity.

In the post-Mao period, beginning soon after Mao's death in 1976, during the era of Deng Xiaoping (1978–97), there were also no laws to protect political and civil rights. Nevertheless, virtually all the intellectuals whom Mao had persecuted were rehabilitated and most found positions in the political and intellectual establishment. The public space for political discourse opened up in the media, books, universities, and research centers. Yet, even though a number of the rehabilitated intellectuals became members of the intellectual networks of party general secretary Hu Yaobang (1980–1986) and his successor, Zhao Ziyang (1987–89), when these intellectuals called for reform of the Communist party-state, they were purged once again. But unlike in the Mao era, though they were silenced for a while, China's move to the market made it possible for them to make a living, speak out, and publish on political issues by means of the new communications technologies, private publishing, and contact with the foreign media, such as VOA, BBC and Radio Free Asia, which would then beam back their views into China. For example, though the prominent political scientist Liu Junning was purged in 2000 from the Institute of Political Science of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences for having criticized party secretary Jiang Zemin (1989–2002) for demanding that the Nation rally around his leadership, Liu was not jailed and completely silenced. He was able to get his ideas discussed by setting up his own website and as a free-lance writer, often publishing under pseudonyms.

When the fourth generation of leaders, led by Hu Jintao came to power in 2002–2004, it appeared that they would continue the opening up of public space for political discourse, though circumscribed within certain limits, as we see in the case of Liu Junning. But that has not proven to be the case. In fact, there has been a contraction of public space for political discourse since Jiang Zemin announced he would step down from his last position as head of the state military commission in the fall 2004 and Hu gained full power over the government. The Hu leadership has cracked down on a number of people who use the Internet or publish their own websites to discuss political issues. A number of cyber-dissidents have been imprisoned as a warning to others as to how far they can go in discussing political reforms on the Internet. Independent intellectuals who speak out on controversial issues have been briefly detained as well. For example, the military doctor, Jiang Yanyong, who had countered the party's assertion in 2003 that the SARS epidemic had been brought under control, was detained and then put under surveillance when in 2004 he called on the party to reassess the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations as a "patriotic" movement.

Ironically, the Hu Jintao crackdown coincided with the publication of a list of "Top Fifty Public Intellectuals" in September 2004 in the Southern People's Weekly (Nanfang renwu zhoukan), connected to the Guangzhou Southern Daily media group. With China's move to the market, most of China's media were no longer funded by the state and were forced to be self-financing. One result has been a more daring and interesting media in an effort to gain readership and survive financially.

The Guangzhou Southern Daily media group is one of the most daring. In an accompanying commentary, the Weekly praised public intellectuals, pointing out that "this is the time when China is facing the most problems in its unprecedented transformation, and when it most needs public intellectuals to be on the scene and to speak out."[1] Although the list included intellectuals in a variety of professions—writers, artists, film directors, cartoonists, lawyers, environmentalists, and a number of overseas Chinese intellectuals—the list was dominated by intellectuals who in the 1990s had called for political reforms, free speech and association and greater political participation.

On November 23, an article in the Shanghai Party Committee's hard-line Liberation Daily (Jiefang Ribao) attacked the concept of "public intellectuals," claiming that their "independence . . . drives a wedge" between the intellectuals and the party and the intellectuals and the masses.[2] It insisted that China's intellectuals belonged to the working class, under the leadership of the party and therefore could not be independent. Moreover, it called the concept of "public intellectuals" a foreign import. The Liberation Daily article was then reprinted in the party's official newspaper, People's Daily, giving the criticism of public intellectuals the party's official imprimatur.

Although the Hu Jintao leadership is much more concerned with the increasing inequalities spawned by China's economic reforms, and particularly with alleviating poverty in the countryside than Jiang Zemin, the Hu leadership has suppressed the very people, other than those they officially designate, who try to draw public attention to the growing inequalities and distress in the countryside. This can be seen in its treatment of A Survey of Chinese Peasants, written by Chen Guidi and Wu Chuntao and published in January 2004, based on interviews over several years with farmers in the poor province of Anhui.[3] This husband and wife team, who were both born in the countryside and had spent their early years there, described the developers' seizure of the land of rural residents without providing adequate compensation, the imposition of unfair taxes by local officials, and the lack of recourse available to farmers to right these wrongs. Their vivid depiction of the increasingly impoverished lives of peasants was exactly what the new generation of leadership had declared it sought to alleviate. Most importantly, the survey revealed the official abuse of power, which the new leadership seeks to remedy because of fears it would undermine the party's hold on power. Yet, in February 2004, just one month after its publication, their book was banned. Nevertheless, because of China's market economy it continued to be sold on the black market and by private book-sellers.

At the close of 2004, the party detained a number of well-known public intellectuals. In December, the writers Yu Jie and Liu Xiaobo, both typical examples of public intellectuals, were taken into custody, supposedly because their independent chapter of PEN had given an award to the writer Zhang Yihe for her memoir The Past is Not Like (Dissipating) Smoke about the party's 1957 Anti-rightist campaign against intellectuals. Ironically, even the Deng Xiaoping leadership had denounced the campaign in the 1980s. Though the book was banned, it too continued to be sold on streets corners and pirated copies continued to circulate. The political theorist Zhang Zuhua was likewise detained. All three were criticized for articles they had originally published in overseas journals and then had found their way back to China via the Internet. Although the three were later released, they remained under surveillance and served as a further warning to public intellectuals.

Along with the crackdown on a number of well-known independent intellectuals and the banning of discussion of "public intellectuals," the Hu Jintao government tightened controls over the media. Reports on the growing protests against corruption, abusive officials, and property confiscation as well as reports on peasant and worker demonstrations were banned from the media. Journalism professor, Jiao Guobiao, who on the Internet had criticized the repressive controls of the media by the Propaganda Department (now referred to as the Publicity Department) was no longer allowed to teach at Peking University. Another public intellectual Wang Yi, a law lecturer at Chengdu University, who called for a system of checks and balances, has also been barred from teaching. The journal Strategy and Management that had been an outlet for intellectuals of a liberal persuasion such as Liu Junning was closed down. The administrative editor in chief of the monthly China Reform magazine, Chen Min was briefly detained. Using the penname Xiao Shu, or Smiling Sichuanese, Chen had declared in one of his commentaries that a natural gas explo-

[1] "Under Fire Again, Intellectuals in China," The Economist, Dec 11, 2004.

[2] David A. Kelly, "The Importance of Being Public: Gagging China's Thinkers," China Review (London), Issue 31 (Winter 2004/2005), pp. 28–37.

[3] Chen Guidi and Chun Tao, Zhongguo nongmin diaocha (A Survey of Chinese Peasants) (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2004).

sion in December 2003 in Chongqing that had killed several hundreds of people demonstrated a lack of concern for human lives.[4] The China Reform magazine also published many articles on the plight of the peasants. Even the editor in chief of the China Youth Daily, the newspaper affiliated with Hu Jintao's China Youth League power base, which had been very aggressive in exposing official corruption, was detained.

Nevertheless, despite the crackdown on public intellectuals and the media, unlike during the Mao period when millions were harshly persecuted for the acts of a small number, in the post-Mao period persecution for political dissent has not reached far beyond the accused and their immediate associates. Moreover, though they might lose their jobs and may be briefly detained, they have been able to find jobs and outlets for their views in China's expanding market economy. Thus, unlike during the Mao era, they are not completely silenced. Some still try to function as citizens, either on their own or with others and they continue to express their political views in unofficial publications, on the Internet, and in increasingly organized petitions and protests. In addition, though their writings may be officially banned, they continue to be distributed over the Internet and sold on street corners.

There were also differences between the public intellectuals in the 1990s and at the start of the twenty-first century from the public intellectuals in the Hundred Flowers or even in the 1980s. It was not so much that the 1990s public intellectuals are imbued with a different political consciousness, but that they use different political strategies. Unlike their Marxist humanist predecessors of the 1980s and earlier,[5] most public intellectuals in the 1990s came to believe that more had to be done than just educating the people ideologically in order to bring about political change. It is necessary to establish new institutions to make possible the practice of democracy. Moreover, whereas until the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations, public intellectuals acted as an elite who did not join with other social classes in political actions, in the 1990s they began to join with workers and small business people in organized petition drives and political groups to try to bring about political change. Therefore, at the start of the twenty-first century there has been a qualitative change among public intellectuals, a willingness to join with other social groups in political actions, that may make them increasingly independent actors in China's struggles and may allow them to have a greater impact on China's political scene.

Clearly, it is in the U.S. interest that China move in the direction of political reform. Although the United States can bring pressure on China to release public intellectuals from detention and imprisonment, it is difficult for the United States to make China's political reform the central issue in the America's policy toward China. Not only is China becoming a power with considerable international economic and strategic clout, there are other interests in the U.S. relationship with China, such as prodding China to put more pressure on North Korea, reducing China's huge trade imbalance with the United States, and negotiating a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue. The United States can use external pressure to encourage China to live up to the two U.N. Covenants on Human Rights which it signed onto in 1997–98 and to have its National People's Congress (NPC) ratify the Covenant on Political and Civil Rights. (The NPC has already ratified the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.)

A genuine transformation of China's Communist party-state into a democracy, however, can only be achieved by the Chinese themselves. Although China's public intellectuals are unable to speak freely, it is through their efforts in alliance with other social groups, that can bring pressure on the Chinese government to reform. One way to help those seeking political change in China is for the U.S. Government to criticize China's repression of public intellectuals. Since China's present leadership wants to be considered a responsible member of the international community, it is sensitive to U.S. and European criticism of its human rights abuses. It does not want to seen as a pariah in the international community. Therefore, while the United States cannot be a major actor, it can be a catalyst in the effort to democratize China's Communist party-state.

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[4] Hong Kong: AFP Dec. 22, 2004.

[5] Merle Goldman, Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF HU PING

MARCH 10, 2005

### WHAT DOES THIS NEW CRACKDOWN TELL US?

Since Hu Jintao took office, the plight of the intellectuals in public life in China has not been bettered; in fact, it has worsened. In reality, the lack of improvement in and of itself is tantamount to worsening, because the same oppression becomes more onerous as time goes on, and the consequences of that oppression more and more severe.

Not long ago, the Hu Jintao regime unleashed a new crackdown on intellectual circles. The authorities once more raised aloft the banner of "anti-liberalization," and stridently criticized "liberalized thought" and "public intellectuals." The Central Propaganda Department brought out a list of names and banned a number of liberal intellectuals who had a tiny foothold in the official media from making more statements. The Ministry also demanded that the media implement rigorous checks, as they "may not report on premeditated bombings, riots, demonstrations or strikes." A batch of books was banned, and a number of Web sites were closed down. At the same time, the authorities also utilized administrative means and autocratic methods to persecute some liberal intellectuals. Some were discharged from their jobs, some had their houses searched and notes confiscated, some received very stern warnings, and others were arrested and sentenced. When Zhao Ziyang died, it was as though the CCP authorities were on their guard for all possible danger. They took all sorts of measures to strengthen their control, and many dissidents were subjected to house arrest, with others taken into custody. Those inside the system received harsh warnings: they were not to participate in any memorial event on pain of losing their posts. Moreover, we must not forget the world-renowned Dr. Jiang Yanyong, who fought against SARS. For no greater reason than the fact that the letter he wrote to the National People's Congress and the Chinese Political Consultative Conference last Spring asking for a rectification of names for the June 4th event was published overseas, he was kidnapped and held in custody, and continues under house arrest today.

The facts demonstrate that Hu Jintao and his predecessor Jiang Zemin are cut from the same cloth. In 1991, Jiang Zemin quoted a literary reference from the "Commentary of Zuo," a famous Classical Chinese work, while speaking privately to a visitor from Taiwan. The passage basically holds that in politics it is better to be fierce than lenient. Fire is fierce, and everyone who sees it is frightened and hides away. As a result, very few people are burned to death. Water seems to be gentle and weak, so many people do not respect it. They fool around in the water, and even more people end up drowning. (Later on, this exchange was published in the August, 1996 issue of "The 90s," a Hong Kong magazine.) The Chinese Communist leaders are deeply cognizant of the fact that their political power is entirely based on the fear of the masses. Consequently, if they are to preserve their own rule, they must keep the people in fear. That means they cannot seem warm or enlightened in front of the masses. If the people feel the authorities are kind or enlightened they will dare to speak out, saying things they would never have dared otherwise. The more they dare to speak out with demands they would not have dared offer otherwise, the greater the pressure and the challenges become facing the authorities. The authorities must invest a great deal of energy if they are to repress (if indeed they are able to do so). At the end, their image may be even more severely tarnished. Hu Jintao showed his true face of cruelty the moment major power was within his grasp. His primary goal was to maintain and consolidate the power of intimidation by force and the effect of fear that the autocratic Chinese government had enjoyed since "June 4." By so doing, he would then nip any unrest in the bud. There was no need to use force or violate any taboos on killing. Everything Hu Jintao has done since taking office has been the cause of widespread disappointment in him on the part of the outside world. It has also given people the impression that he has not gone overboard in any way. However, in reality, that is precisely the effect he wished to achieve by implementing this sort of strategy.

After Hu Jintao took office, he reiterated time and time again his concern for disadvantaged groups. Many people mistakenly thought that Hu would permit events that would safeguard the rights of these groups, but that simply wasn't the case. For example, Li Boguang, a PhD in law from Beijing, has helped peasants to guard their rights, always within the dictates of current law. Not long ago, he was detained by the local government on suspicion of fraud (he recently made bail and is currently awaiting trial). This proves that while it's not necessarily true that Hu Jintao's regime was not thinking of shrinking the huge disparity between rich and

poor to some extent, of putting the brakes on corruption to some degree, and of improving the lot of disadvantaged groups a bit, they absolutely do not permit the people to initiate any open group action or to stand up to defend their own rights. The authorities can partially satisfy the material needs of the people, but the thing they fear most is that the people might thus obtain the ability to engage in independent group activity. Additionally, the authorities also refuse to implement a true rule of law, in which everyone is equal before the law. This is because they know full well that the existing allocation of wealth is based on a huge injustice that is essentially illegitimate. The gap between rich and poor in China is unique in that it is not a product of history or of the market but is mainly due to power. In China, the poverty of the poor exists in large part because the products of their labor have been appropriated by those in power. The wealth of the rich is in large measure due to their use of power to steal the prosperity created by others. The moment that the people are able to argue strongly based on law and rationality, the moment they have the ability to band together to make a stand, they will absolutely no longer be satisfied with a tad more aid to the unemployed or a small additional subsidy for the poor. They will first demand that the group of people who used power to first become rich turn over the property they plundered, and there may very well be a day of reckoning for privileged rich privatization that will threaten the autocratic government itself. Naturally, this is not the wish of the Hu Jintao regime. As a result, the so-called "concern for the disadvantaged" touted by Hu Jintao's regime is in reality no more than a desire to employ "controlled oppression" and to maintain "continued squeezing."

Yes, on the surface it seems that the intelligentsia are very active in today's China. On the Internet, even in the official media, discussion certain public issues is quite open and even quite lively. Some dissidents express themselves without fear, and nothing happens, they sit at home, quite well. But what I must bring to your attention is the principle being implemented by authorities in China today, that principle is "all people are not equal before the law." When the authorities handle issues related to expression and speech, there is no single standard measure used. The standards vary by person, by time, and by place. When the authorities oppress the intellectuals, they often consider a multitude of factors, such as; do you have any position within the establishment? Are you known internationally? What's your social network of "connections" like? And so on. We cannot draw the conclusion based solely from the situation of a few well-known dissidents that freedom of speech in China has expanded greatly. Again, we cannot forget that the means the Chinese Communists use to squash freedom of speech have taken on many forms over the years. For example, during the Anti-Rightist movement only a handful of the over 500,000 Rightists were actually imprisoned and sentenced, some Rightists were fired from their jobs and sent to the countryside to do manual labor. Some were demoted, had their salaries cut, or were forced to move to other posts. Some Rightists were permitted to show their faces in the official media to say a word or two. The situation today is the same.

At this point I should mention that when the outside world assesses the degree of freedom of speech in China, it quite often focuses on how many people have been arrested or imprisoned. Without a doubt, a shocking number of dissidents have been locked up in China, a number that puts China in first place in such matters. However, this is but one standard by which we assess the amount of freedom of expression and the plight of intellectuals in China. First I want to say that precisely because there is still no freedom of the press in China, the outside world does not have an accurate figure on the number of dissidents in prison there. The figures the world gets are usually greatly understated. Second, another point that must be made is that the number of dissidents in custody isn't really as important as it might seem at first blush. Nations that arrest smaller numbers of dissidents do not necessarily have a more serious lack of freedom of expression than nations that arrest many. At times, the situation may be quite the opposite. We all know that traditional autocratic governments use investigation and punishment after the act to control freedom of speech. When the media does not get government approval on articles or news it puts out, then the chances greatly increase that articles or news items not favored by the government will become known to the world. Moreover, it also greatly increases the difficulty the government faces in penalizing the articles or news items it does not like. This results in the government being unable to cover up its oppression and makes its evil deeds obvious. But Communist autocracy doesn't work this way. The Communist Party takes a preventative approach before anything even happens. The Communist Party government not only has its book and newspapers supervisory structures in place (such as propaganda offices at various levels), but also, quite simply, has a direct hold on all the media. Party faithful are sent out to lead the defense effort. This is tantamount to a double layer of insur-

ance. Under these circumstances, opinions or news items that displease the Party have no chance of making it to the media. And there is no need to run out and lock up the occasional minnow that manages to elude the net. The only thing needed is to mobilize Party sanctions and administrative sanctions, which are generally enough to resolve the problem. Doubtless the advent of the Internet has made control more difficult, particularly when users can post articles on their own, and it's almost impossible to censor in advance. Accordingly, the Chinese government has established the largest network surveillance system in the world. On the one hand, screening programs search for "sensitive" words and phrases, while on the other hand the instant any writings with a "dangerous bent" are detected, they are immediately erased. If necessary, the poster of the content can be found and punished afterwards. As a result, in a country that undertakes this sort of rigorous before-the-fact preventive actions, the government has no need to lock up too many dissidents. In reality, of the dissidents the Chinese government has in prison at present, quite a few were brought in for issuing articles or placing news items either on the Internet or in the foreign media. This is a benefit accrued from today's high technology and from being opened up to the outside world. If it were not so, these people would not even have the opportunity to "commit a crime," and the government would very likely catch fewer of them. If we liken the traditional model of autocracy and its treatment of free expression to killing people or butchering children, then the Communist autocracy's methods are not limited to killing people and slaughtering babies but also include abortion and contraception. The effects of this oppression are not only more severe and far-reaching; they are also more insidious and more apt to fool people.

On the surface, the yardstick used as a measure for the control of free speech by the authorities is broader than before, with the standards not only looser than those of the Mao era but also as loose as or even looser than those of the 1980s. But this doesn't mean enlightenment on the part of the authorities. It should be said that it is a number of other factors that are creating this situation. First and foremost is the impact of the 1989 democracy movement. During that movement, tens of thousands of people took to the streets shouting "We want democracy, we want freedom!" The butchery of the June 4 incident caused the common people to be even more incensed. Throughout China, people of both high and low status began to curse the Communist Party in untold numbers. No matter what means the authorities adopt, they are unable to completely return the hearts of the people to their former cramped and limited space. As a result, the government was forced to turn a blind eye to many expressions of opinion that are outside the "norms." Second we have the breakdown of the international Communist fraternity and the bankruptcy of Communist ideology. This includes the economic reforms promoted by the authorities themselves, in which, theoretically, they overturned the golden rules of theory that they themselves had enshrined. This provided the opportunity for all sorts of other ideologies to have their moment in the sun. At the present stage, the Chinese Communist authorities are still working hard to put together a new ideology, doing their utmost to find a theme and striving in vain to once more unify thought. However, their efforts are falling short and they have been forced to turn to largely defensive principles. This means that in the current phase, when the Chinese Communist authorities are controlling speech, they are largely looking not at whether something that is said is in line with the official ideology, but rather thinking about whether it poses a direct challenge to the current regime. This provides relatively more space for other thought and speech. Also, with the June 4th massacre as their landmark, the Chinese Communist government has lost the traditional support of belief. It has been transformed into a rule of naked violence. Violent rule means negative indifference toward government by the people; it means widespread cynicism; and in today's China, the power of thought and speech to appeal lags far behind the force these carried in the 1980s. This has increased a certain type of immunity on the part of the authorities to resist criticism. Violence does not care much for people's criticism. That is because violence is forced upon people without the need for the consent of a third party. You yell about what you want, and I'll comply about what I like. What can you do to me? Simply put, the authorities have become even more shameless ("I'm a rogue, who should I fear?") so the "degree of tolerance" for dissidents has, on the contrary, increased. However, at the same time, the authorities have adopted a more straightforward means of implementing oppression than they previously had regarding speech they simply cannot tolerate. In the past, officials who toed the Party ideological line were all recognized by the entire Party as having theoretical authority (in more cases, the tone was personally set by the "Great Leader"). It was said that only they could accurately discern what conforming speech was and what was not. At that time, if the authorities wanted to crack down on some type of opinion, they would always take care to cobble up some

sort of reason, to show that they had a basis for their actions. Quite often the offending speech was trotted out and shown to everyone so that the masses could judge it and criticize it jointly. But now, today's guardians of ideology don't need to trouble themselves overly much. If they say ban, it's banned; if they say wipe it out, it's wiped out; and if they say "arrest him," he's under arrest. They don't need to give any reason. Sometimes they don't even need to issue formal paperwork. It can all be done with a single phone call, avoiding all the other formalities. Today, the Chinese Communist authorities control over speech is in no way truly looser than it was in the past.

Beijing Film Academy Professor Hao Jian once gave this explanation. He said, "We definitely know when we can strike the table in anger and speak with the force of justice behind us. We also know when we have to stay quiet about things we are perfectly clear on and keep our lips sealed. We do something else that's even scarier, we go for the underbelly, picking the softest, easiest targets and making a great deal of noise for justice and truth, but in fact it is all a sham. We also know when to say what so that we can get right to the top for a nod of approval and what will enrage everyone. For myself, I've perfected this sort of calculation to a fine art. And it's already become a part of my subconscious." This statement can help us understand the extent to which pretense flourishes among the intellectuals of today's China.

Long-term oppression produces very negative results. Up until the 1990s, there were still quite a number of dissidents in China who dared to speak out that held high posts within the system. For example, some held posts in Party media organizations, higher research institutes or in famous universities. Some were even in leadership positions. They had more chances to speak out and faced less risk. As the years went on, there were constant purges, and fewer and fewer of this kind of person remained. What's more, the party authorities stepped up their control of the media, and liberal intellectuals all over felt their situation worsen. In these circumstances, dissenter activities still hold on tenaciously among the people, but it's very difficult for them to develop any further.

In direct opposition to the early hopes of many Chinese and Westerners, the economic reforms and economic development in China have not put China on a pathway to freedom and democracy. On the contrary, reform and development have become the main reason the authorities use to cling to one-party rule and deny freedom and democracy. From Li Peng and Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, leaders have taken China's successful economic development as their basis to justify the crackdown on June 4th as necessary and right. They use it to show that a one party autocracy is necessary and right. In reality, China's privatization reforms not only were not aimed at setting down a foundation for democratization; they were actually aimed at throwing up more obstacles to democracy. The privatization and reform in China, if the truth be told, was nothing more than officials using their power to misappropriate resources that originally belonged to all the people. This sort of privatization reduces the "transaction cost" to a minimum, making it far quicker and more effective than privatization accomplished with democratic participation. However, such reforms are necessarily of the type that can never be approved by the people. The great blocs who profit immediately from all this are those who are most in fear of democracy and most stoutly oppose it. That is because these officials know very well that if they open the door to free democracy, they will not only lose their monopoly on political power but also, very possibly, will be called out by the people on charges of economic corruption.

In today's China, the Mao era is water under the bridge, and there is no going back. Even the ruling blocs themselves are not willing to go back to the days of Mao. China today must concern herself with something that seems even more old-fashioned, but which could be an even more persistent type of oppression: that of rule by people who believe in no "ism" but wield enormous power, and are determined to use every means at their disposal to preserve it.

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