

Chairman Gallagher Opening Remarks
Remarks at Tibetan National Uprising Day outside the PRC Embassy
3.10.23
as prepared for delivery

In February 1959, Chairman Mao Zedong spied trouble on the horizon in Tibet. Instead of fretting about loss of life, Mao salivated.

“The more chaotic [the situation] in Tibet becomes the better; for it will help train our troops and toughen the masses. Furthermore, [the chaos] will provide a sufficient reason to crush the rebellion and carry out reforms in the future.”

A month later, on this day 64 years ago, Mao got his bloody wish.

Peaceful demonstrators surrounded the Dalai Lama’s residence, protecting the young teenager until he was able to flee.

You all know what happened next. The People’s Liberation Army shelled them with heavy artillery — along with the most important monasteries in Lhasa, striking at the soul of the Tibetan people.

Ultimately, thousands of Tibetans were killed—just the beginning of the brutal repression of Tibet.

I don’t need to tell anyone here this story. But it’s important we keep saying it. Again. And again. I’ll come back to why.

We’re here today to remember the bravery Tibetans demonstrated back in March of 1959.

Courage in protecting their spiritual leader. In fighting for their freedoms, their identity, their culture, their history.

But today is not just about the past. It's also about the present.

The same group that bombarded Lhasa 64 years ago is still in power today and they have not changed one bit.

The CCP is still duplicitous. Still power-hungry. Still bloodthirsty. And where they trained their artillery on Lhasa in 1959, today they train their weapons on the Lhasa, the monasteries, the Tibet in people's minds.

The nice word for this is "Sinicization." The real term, according to the Dalai Lama himself, is "cultural genocide." 1 million Tibetan children separated from their parents. Sent to colonial boarding schools where their culture is forbidden. Forced to speak only Chinese. To leave their religion and customs behind. The CCP is interfering in the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, disrupting monastic education, and wresting complete control of Tibetan Buddhism into Party hands.

The Party knows what they're doing is reprehensible. That's why foreign journalists are banned, foreign visitors are kept to a trickle, and speech so heavily policed that many are afraid to speak to family members outside China.

Last week, Radio Free Asia reported that a Tibetan woman was arrested simply for sending a text message to someone outside of Tibet.

The CCP is turning Tibet into an open air prison, just like they did in Xinjiang.

Why? Because they think that if they can cut Tibet off from the world for long enough, Sinicize the population, then the world will forget about Tibet.

That's why we need to keep repeating what happened.

On behalf of the United States Congress, our message to the Chinese Communist Party is this:

We will not forget.

You can destroy buildings. You can jail innocents. You can separate children from their parents.
You can surveil and harass and torture and even kill.

But you will not succeed in your cultural genocide.

We know who you are.

I see so much courage in front of me today.

I see people who know the true, brutal face of the CCP and are still willing to risk standing up,
and speaking out.

When you do, you stand up for Tibet. But you also stand up for the Uyghurs, the Mongolians, the
Hong Kongers, and the Taiwanese

You stand up for every person subjected to the vicious control of the Chinese Communist Party.

You stand up for all of us — every person who believes in freedom, and self-determination, and
human rights.

Because of your bravery the world is finally waking up to the CCP's threat. And together, we
will push back. Together, we will work to end cultural genocide.