

Chairman Moolenaar Opening Remarks

Committee Roundtable – The Future of Hong Kong: U.S. Policy Going Forward

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as prepared for delivery

Sometimes, amid all of the turmoil going on in the world, Americans wonder why they should care about Hong Kong.

Why should they care about what the Chinese Communist Party does thousands of miles away?

Why should we worry when the CCP imprisons its critics, silences free speech, and breaks its solemn promise to allow the people of Hong Kong to govern themselves under their own laws?

The answer is that the core values of the American people are at stake.

When the Chinese Communist Party breaks its word to respect the freedom of Hong Kong through one-country two-systems, it is breaking its word to the entire world.

The national security law that it pushed through, criminalized dissent about Beijing's claims to Hong Kong, and even placed bounties on American citizens for their advocacy for Hong Kong — it has made clear that CCP law applies to everyone, everywhere in the world.

These actions set up a stark contrast over the nature of society.

Does authority derive from the consent of a free people? Or does it derive from the abstractions of men like Karl Marx and Mao Zedong?

There is no First Amendment in China, no right to free speech, and no elections.

Our select committee was founded on the belief that freedom will be the victor and that there are God-given rights that our government must respect.

The Chinese Communist Party believes there are no rights endowed by our creator, only subjects.

In fact, Article 54 of the CCP's constitution declares that citizens "shall have the obligation to safeguard the security, honor, and interests of the motherland; they must not behave in any way that endangers the motherland's security, honor or interests."

Article 50 of the CCP's constitution then proclaims their law is global. If they consider you Chinese and you break Chinese law while living in the United States, they will come for you.

Even if you are an American citizen, like Joey Siu, who is with us today.

Joey was born in North Carolina and currently resides in the United States, but that makes no difference to the Chinese Communist Party.

The Hong Kong Police have placed a bounty of \$128,000 on her head. At a time when 600 million people in China survive on less than \$140 a month, the CCP chose to spend almost a thousand times that to silence a brave 25-year-old American who challenged their rule.

In 2019, Frances Hui, who also joins us today, committed an unforgivable sin in the eyes of Beijing.

She challenged their ownership over her city, her people, and her soul. She uttered the words "I am from Hong Kong, not China."

Those words were uttered not from Hong Kong, or China, but from Boston, Massachusetts, where Frances was then a junior at Emerson College.

They appeared in Emerson's student newspaper in a land protected by the American Constitution.

After that, Frances faced threats in Boston, including from a Chinese student who posted "Whoever opposes my greatest China, no matter how far they are, must be executed."

But despite this, Frances returned home to Hong Kong to fight for freedom.

She soon found herself persecuted for the words she had written for a student newspaper in America, and she had to seek asylum here in the land of the free.

Frances' still faces threats from agents of the CCP today, and it's because what scares them is the truth in her words.

The CCP says the Chinese people are unfit for democracy, and that everyone in the territory Beijing claims is Chinese.

Frances' crime was to point out that she, and millions like her, did not consider themselves Chinese but rather Hong Kongers.

It is the same reason the CCP silenced the city and people of Hong Kong as well. Not because "one country, two systems" had failed, but because if it succeeded there would be no need for the CCP.

Jimmy Lai understood the importance of truth and the threat it posed to the Chinese Communist Party.

For years, Apple Daily, which he edited, held Hong Kong officials to account for their corruption, while demanding the CCP abide by the promises it had made to Hong Kongers.

A devout Catholic, Jimmy challenged fellow believers like former Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam, and current Chief Executive John Lee, to speak out against the persecution of the Church and the imprisonment of Cardinal Joseph Zen.

For this challenge, Apple Daily was shuttered, its offices ransacked, and its editorial team persecuted. Jimmy was arrested nearly four years ago and is now on trial for sedition.

Jonathan Price is a member of Jimmy Lai's legal team. He is here today to speak for Jimmy, who is still imprisoned, and we look forward to hearing more from him shortly.

Some will say the battle is lost. Hong Kong has fallen to the CCP, and we need to accept the oppression of its new rulers. But I reject that.

Our Select Committee believes that that freedom will be the victor, and that our God-given rights of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness are inalienable rights for every person.

I want to now turn the mic over to Ranking Member Krishnamoorthi...