

Chairman Gallagher Opening Remarks
CCP Propaganda and Censorship Roundtable
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A strange thing has been happening in Beijing. A bridge keeps disappearing.

From search engines. From maps. And, the Chinese Communist Party hopes, from people's minds.

To understand why we need to go back to October 13th, 2022, three days before the Twentieth Party Congress.

One brave man, a nobody in China, climbed onto Sitong Bridge over Beijing's Third Ring road and decided to take on Xi Jinping at the height of his power. He unfurled a banner that gave voice to millions censored in China:

We don't want lockdowns, we want freedom;

We don't want lies, we want dignity;

We don't want Cultural Revolution, we want reform;

We don't want dictators, we want elections;

We don't want to be slaves, we want to be citizens

The courageous Chinese patriot was soon arrested. But not before he lit a spark. Tens or hundreds of millions read his words as they spread on social media

Censors blocked phrases such as "courage", "bridge" "brave man" and even "Beijing". Sitong Bridge itself vanished from Baidu's map app.

Pictures of “Bridge Man”’s banner, as he came to be called, spread around the country via iPhone’s AirDrop function. Or they did until Apple disabled AirDrop within China, kneecapping the protests. It was an act of unthinkable corporate cowardice, yet it failed to mollify Beijing. The CCP recently banned the iPhone from government offices in China.

Too often American companies have been happy to help the CCP fight their most powerful enemy: the truth. Censorship is the CCP’s shield and propaganda their sword.

Chinese propaganda is no less a tool of expansion than the BRI or the People’s Liberation Army. Designed not merely to promote a message but to establish sovereignty over people’s minds.

From the lowliest Tiktok user whose content is censored through algorithms to the NBA executive forced to apologize for speaking out for the people of Hong Kong. They become the CCP’s subjects.

The party seeks to influence coverage through inducements and threats, like denying visas to academics and journalists. The goal is to promote self-censorship.

Beijing has deployed a "50 Cent army" army of trolls to flood internet discussion on social media.

The CCP wants Xinhua to become a one-stop-shop for wire content in much of Asia, Africa and Latin America.”Content” to the CCP, means propaganda.

The CCP has sought control of overseas Chinese language media, which outside the United States and Britain is almost wholly in the hands of Pro-CCP voices.

Perhaps the greatest success the CCP has enjoyed has been with the American entertainment industry.

After the 1997 release of *Seven Years in Tibet*, Beijing banned all Sony pictures from the Chinese market. The ban was dropped only after senior executives undertook an apology tour and the company lobbied for China to join the WTO.

By then the ban had fulfilled its purpose. Today companies like Disney bend over backwards to avoid portraying the CCP in a negative light.

When I went to Hollywood earlier this year I asked a group of producers and executives, people not normally known for keeping quiet on social justice issues,

what they would say if asked in public whether there was a genocide going on in Xinjiang. They said they would not answer that question.

The CCP's has successfully instilled fear in many of America's richest and most influential figures. I witnessed this in New York just this week when Wall Street

Titans would only meet with us under condition of anonymity, like they were in the witness protection program, for fear of angering China.

The party will not be satisfied until it wields the power to accomplish globally what it did to the brave protestor on Sitong bridge. But Bridgeman's words will turn out to be more powerful: "We don't want lies. We want dignity."