

State of Mankind

How much do you know?

Excerpts from

How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World

(144)

When a branch of China's state-run broadcaster was established in London, nearly six thousand people applied for ninety positions that required reporting news from China's perspective. The CCP encountered an enviable problem: too many applicants. [5] People's eagerness to work for the CCP's mouthpiece reflects the decline of the Western media industry and the threat that the CCP's foreign propaganda poses to the world.

The World's Largest Propaganda Machine

Mao Zedong once demanded that Xinhua News Agency "control the earth and let the whole world hear our voices." [6] The CCP is now able to achieve what it could not achieve in the past.

After the 2008 financial crisis, Western media faced their own financial and business crises. The CCP seized the opportunity to deploy its "great external propaganda" campaign. The People's Daily, China Daily, Xinhua News Agency, China Central Television

(CCTV), China Radio International (CRI), and other CCP mouthpieces set up newspaper boxes, radio stations, and television stations around the world.

Chang Ping, former news director of the major Chinese newspaper Southern Weekend, said that since 2009, the Chinese regime allocated 45 billion yuan (US\$6.52 billion) to the “national strategy for external propaganda in public relations and publicity.” According to Chinese media sources, the 45 billion yuan was only a small part of the total expenditure that had been publicized.[7] BBC estimated in 2016 that the CCP spends \$10 billion a year on propaganda.[8] In March 2018, the CCP integrated CCTV, CRI, and China National Radio to establish the China Media Group, also called Voice of China, led by the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. It has become the largest propaganda machine in the world.

Xinhua rented a giant billboard in Times Square in New York City to advertise the Communist Party. In 2016, the CCP changed the name of CCTV overseas to CGTN (China Global Television Network).

The CCP’s foreign propaganda attempts to advance with the times. Overseas stations implement a localization strategy, recruiting mainly local reporters and presenters. A photo of Xi

Jinping's video interview with CCTV stationed in the United States shows that 90 percent of the journalists are not Chinese. [9] The content of the programs is transferred from China to foreign countries, and the reporters are hired locally. China's state-run media thus produces local packaging in the target country — using local faces and voices, but spouting the Communist Party's thinking and conflating the CCP with China. It uses locals abroad to spread the CCP's stories and the CCP's voice — not China's true stories and not the voice of the Chinese people.

This is the character of the CCP's external propaganda push. The CCP also provides scholarships to younger generations of international journalists, including in the areas of food and education, so they can get trained or study in China, and at the same time be instilled with the CCP's view of journalism.

Along with the economic colonization of Africa, CCP media has also reached all corners of Africa. The China-based television and media group StarTimes Media Group is now operating in thirty countries on the African continent and claims to be “the fastest growing and most influential digital TV operator in Africa.” A taxi driver in Uganda said, “More and more Africans understand Chinese society by watching contemporary Chinese TV dramas.”[10]

CCP propaganda has largely been unsuccessful due to a lack of credibility. However, making foreign media the spokesperson of the CCP's media, ruthlessly attacking the media and individuals who criticize the CCP, and forcing everyone to support the CCP are all part of the recipe of the CCP's external propaganda campaign.

Turning Media All Over the World Into Xinhua News Agency

In 2015, the foreign ministers of ten countries condemned the CCP for building artificial islands in the controversial South China Sea. At this time, a radio station in the Western suburbs of Washington, D.C., sounded a different note. Not only did it not mention the CCP's reclamation activities, but it claimed that external forces had attempted to fabricate the facts and aggravate tensions in the South China Sea.[11] This station, called WCRW, voices a great deal of content expressing the position of the CCP — and curiously, it runs no advertising. Its only customer is a Los Angeles company, G&E Studio Inc., itself 60 percent controlled by China Radio International (CRI) in Beijing. G&E has at least fifteen similar stations running in the United States, covering not only Washington, D.C., but also Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Houston, Honolulu, Portland, and Vancouver, among others.

The Chinese Communist Party's mouthpiece, China Radio International (CRI), relies on a local company registered under

the name of a Chinese-American. With controlling shares, it uses local U.S. radio stations to promote CCP propaganda. The biggest benefit of this operation, and the apparent reason for it, is to conceal the role of the CCP. In order to maximally mislead the audience, listeners are made to feel that Americans themselves are expressing their support for the CCP.

In 2015, CRI ran thirty-three such stations in at least fourteen countries. By 2018, CRI had fifty-eight stations in thirty-five countries.[12] Because the control and operations are carried out through the use of local Chinese companies, it seems that democratic countries are helpless to do anything about the situation legally, although many people are unhappy with the Party's hidden propaganda. The CCP's external propaganda push has taken advantage of the loopholes in democratic societies. In the name of democracy, the CCP advocates for dictatorship and attempts to manipulate the audience into adopting its views by exploiting loopholes in the laws of free societies. Thus, in the name of democracy, it aims at destroying democracy.

The China Daily's inserts, which in Chinese are summed up with the phrase "making a voyage on a borrowed ship," are another important part of the CCP's external propaganda campaign. China Daily publishes a Chinese news insert in The Washington Post and uses a layout style that can give readers the impression that it's The Washington Post's content.[13] In addition to The

Washington Post, the CCP has struck similar deals with over thirty newspapers, including The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Daily Telegraph, and Le Figaro. The word “advertising” on the insert is placed in an inconspicuous location, and readers can easily mistake the material for the newspapers’ own content.

On September 23, 2018, the China Daily also inserted four pages of advertisements that looked like ordinary news and commentary in the local Iowa newspaper Des Moines Register. The material attacked the U.S. president, and some called it an attempt to influence the midterm elections.[14]

The Communist Party excels in controlling overseas Chinese media. Through coercion and enticement, the CCP has recruited a large number of Chinese-language media, including some founded by Taiwanese with a previously strong tradition of anti-communism. The CCP-sponsored World Chinese Media Forum is used as a platform to communicate the party’s instructions to Chinese media around the world. On September 10, 2017, the Ninth World Chinese Media Forum was held in Fuzhou. More than 460 overseas Chinese media executives from over sixty countries and regions on five continents attended the meeting.

An example of the impact of this media-control work can be found in the reporting of a California-based Chinese-language

media outlet that amplifies CCP propaganda in the Western press. During the CCP's Nineteenth National Congress, this media outlet's lengthy reports were almost identical to those published by official Party media.[15]

During the Umbrella Movement protests in Hong Kong in 2014, the Overseas Chinese Media Association controlled by the CCP, with more than 160 media members, urgently organized 142 pro-China media outlets in Asia, Europe, Africa, the United States, and Australia to publish the "Safeguarding Hong Kong Declaration" supporting the CCP's perspective. The extent and efficacy of the regime's media penetration overseas has surprised the outside world.[16]

Suppressing opposing voices is another aspect of CCP overseas propaganda operations. The Party threatens journalists who expose them with visa denials and other forms of harassment, leading them to self-censor. The result is that there are few global media corporations that take a completely independent stance on the CCP without regard to consequences imposed by the regime.

There are several ways a scoundrel might make others view him in a more positive light. One way would be to start from within, abandon evil, become good, and stop being a scoundrel. Other people would then over time naturally come to recognize the

transformation. The second way would be to begin exerting pressure on others, trying to brainwash them into not recognizing the scoundrel for what he is. Finally, a scoundrel might even mount the most audacious plan, and attempt to use manipulation, lies, gaslighting, and brainwashing to turn everyone else into scoundrels too. This would offer the greatest protection.

The CCP has used both the second and third methods simultaneously over decades. It employs a variety of large-scale propaganda activities to target foreigners, changing the minds of people to make them think that the CCP is no scoundrel at all. In some cases it's even able to pull them into the mire, turning them into scoundrels along with the Party. Through extensive investments and shrewd operations, the Party has now established a worldwide system for creating alliances, isolating enemies, and turning neutrals into sympathizers or scoundrels.

Brainwashing Through Culture, Literature, and Art

Cultural brainwashing is an important tool for the CCP's destruction of traditional Chinese culture. In recent years, the Party has advertised its commitment to restoring traditional culture, but as discussed in previous chapters of this book, this wave of supposed restoration of traditional culture has in fact left out the soul of tradition, replacing it with a fake version

infused with deviant Party culture. This has not only deceived the world, but has also further devastated traditional culture.

On top of that, in order to further influence the world, one of the key elements of the Party's external propaganda is to export so-called traditional Chinese culture as defined by the CCP, and to use traditional Chinese customs and practices to whitewash the CCP. This is another form of perception manipulation, or brainwashing. A typical example of this project is the Confucius Institute.

According to incomplete statistics, as of the end of 2017, the CCP had established 525 Confucius Institutes (targeting colleges and universities) in 146 countries and opened 1,113 Confucius Classrooms (targeting elementary and secondary schools).[17] The Confucius Institute's funds come from Hanban, which is affiliated with the CCP's United Front Work Department. The use of funds is supervised by personnel from the CCP's embassies and consulates. Confucius Institutes subvert important academic principles of autonomy and freedom of inquiry, aim to promote the CCP's version of events, distort the history of China, and omit the CCP's appalling human rights record. In some Confucius Institute classrooms, quotations of Mao Zedong are hung on the wall. On the surface, Confucius Institutes claim to teach Chinese culture, but in fact they promote communist doctrine and transmit Party culture.

In addition to offering cultural and language courses, Confucius Institutes also distort history and even organize protests against activities the CCP believes threaten its rule. For example, speakers have been invited who repeated CCP lies about Tibet. Others claimed the Korean War was triggered because the U.S. military bombed Chinese villages, and that the Party was forced to send troops.[18]

The U.S. Government's National Defense Authorization Act of 2019, adopted in 2018, includes a strongly worded condemnation of the CCP's attempts to influence U.S. public opinion, especially "media, cultural institutions, businesses, and academic and political groups." The Act explicitly prohibits any National Defense funds from being given to Chinese-language departments in U.S. universities where there is a Confucius Institute.[19]

From September to October 2011, Chinese authorities dispatched a song-and-dance troupe of three hundred performers to the Kennedy Center for the Arts in Washington, D. C., where the CCP staged its violent communist dance-drama Red Detachment of Women. In September 2016, in Los Angeles, a high-profile concert was held to commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the victory of the Red Army's Long March. At the same time, in Australia, the performance Red Songs Concert to

Commemorate the 40th Anniversary of Mao Zedong's Death was held at the Sydney and Melbourne city halls. Local Chinese organizations in Australia protested and were finally able to stop the show. In 2017, the CCP sent the Red Detachment of Women performance to Australia, and in 2018, staged another violent communist dance-drama, Red Guards on Honghu Lake, in Sydney and Melbourne.

When it comes to information warfare, the CCP's totalitarian regime occupies the high ground compared to democratic regimes: The Party blocks media from all democratic countries, but is able to insert its state-run media in democratic societies. The CCP prevents media from democratic countries from adding inserts to its media, but the CCP can insert its own content into the media from democratic societies, or it simply acquires them when convenient. CCP media serve the Party first and foremost, and Western journalists will never have executive roles. The CCP can, however, send its own undercover people into Western media or train foreigners into being mouthpiece reporters for the Party's media. As long as the West still regards the CCP media as legitimate, the West will continue to lose in the information war. In 2018, the U.S. Department of Justice ordered Xinhua News Agency and China Global TV Network to register as foreign agents in the United States. It was a correct step, but is still far from sufficient — the problem is the lack of reciprocity in the first place.

The CCP's foreign propaganda campaign is a major project aimed at globally reshaping the public's views on the regime, and has met with some results. The CCP spreads its noxious ideology through this propaganda work, and has severely misled people about the regime, its mode of operations, China's human rights situation, and views on communism in general.

From Chapter Eighteen

The Chinese Communist Party's Global Ambitions