

When Money Speaks, Justice is Silent

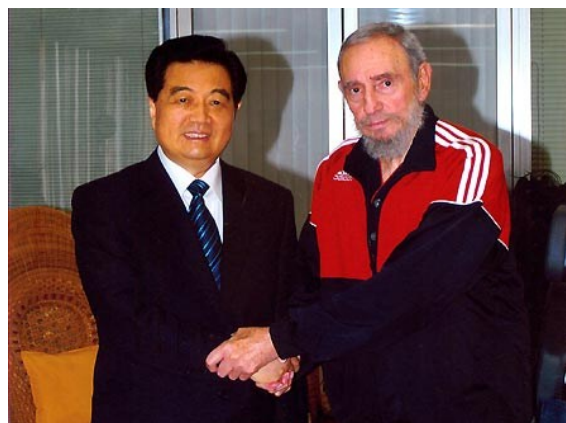
By Antony Ou*

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n late January this year, I was suffocated by the fact that China and Hong Kong were flooded by the news and images of the Sino-American meeting. I was fervently told in every detail that the Chinese President *Hu Jintao* (also the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party) has made a landmark journey since the visit of *Deng Xiaoping* in 1979. A shopping list of China is confirmed and announced: China will buy 200 Boeing 737s and 777s that worth 19 billion USD and 100,000 jobs will be created. Other contracts include: a railway contract for General Electric, Cummins involving a project of hybrid bus, and Honeywell, joint ventured with a Chinese company. All of these deals guarantee 235,000 US domestic jobs, and a 45- billion USD bill in total will be signed by the Chinese. China is incredibly rich. It is an economic miracle with more than 8% GDP growth over the last 20 years. It has created over 14 million jobs worldwide, and now China is becoming the saviour of the US economy [1]. Both eastern and western observers argue that China is peacefully rising and is becoming indispensable to the world economy.

The media never exhausts to provide minor specifics of the historical meeting: I was informed that President Obama had dyed his hair a week ago— it

was interpreted as a subtle expression to show his humblest and sincerest gratitude towards an authoritarian but rich leader. The media kept educating us that we are supposed to be happy, because Sasha Obama, the 9-year old daughter of the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, practiced Mandarin with *Hu Jintao* as a way to demonstrate the importance of Chinese language in the 21st Century. More than three hundreds of Confucius Institutes would definitely second such statement.



If *Hu* is a communist, why is he so rich?

Hail *Hu Jintao* of the Middle Kingdom. Welcome to the Free World.

"The course of love never did run smooth." Harry Reid, Democrat Senate majority leader, called *Hu Jintao* a "dictator" (He later backed off and shook hands with *Hu*). Ileana Ros-Lehtinen refused to go to the State Dinner, while Dana Rohrabacher condemned the Communist Party as a "gangster regime". Tough human rights questions were vigorously posed by reporters, including forced abortion, "one-child policy", Tibetan issues, and other human rights violations. *Hu* answered prudently, "a lot still needs to be done in China, in terms of human rights." All of these might have created some embarrassment. As Washington Post sarcastically remarked, "Who had the worst week in Washington? *Hu Jintao*."

However, these political "hiccups" never spoiled the evening and the following meetings of *Hu Jintao* and his 500-people-trading team. The State Dinner was a lavish one, with a "star-studded" guest list, including Henry Kissinger and Jacky Chan. Former US presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton were also invited. They were arguably the icons of human rights in America: Jimmy Carter is a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Bill Clinton was famous for his human rights talks with China during the nineties. Now, Jimmy and Bill were merely Democratic old chaps who had already lost their critical edges.

Moreover, just a month before the Sino-American meeting, Obama said, "Mr. *Liu Xiaobo* is far more deserving of this award than I was." Honesty can sometimes mean hypocrisy. After a month, he and his family became the welcoming host of the mysterious robotic-bureaucratic-technocrat, or more precisely, the Chinese Don. As the 2009 Nobel Prize winner, Obama may eventually receive the Confucius Peace Prize, since Confucius said, "He did not dislike to have his rice finely cleaned, nor to have his mince meat cut quite small." By serving Maine Lobster and dry aged rib eye, Obama should be rewarded for his hospitality during *Hu's* visit.

Everyone knows that there was a famous empty chair in Norway prepared by the Nobel Peace Prize Committee for *Liu Xiaobo*— a prominent human rights activist and the Charter 08 drafter. He was sentenced under the name of "inciting subversion of state power" and will not be released until 2020 [2]. *Zhao Lianhai*, a former Food Safety worker and was later converted into an influential campaigner of the 2008 Chinese milk scandal— when thousands of children were suffered from toxic milk— many of them had medical conditions such as kidney stones and kidney failure, while some of them died. *Zhao* was sentenced to jail for two and half years for "disturbing social order". He was later granted a "compassionate release".

Where exactly are they now? Geographically, *Liu* is jailed in *Jinzhou* Prison of *Liaoning* Province, North-



For every Chinese, red symbolises luck, fortune and happiness. Mrs Obama obviously did a great job by following the ancient norm.

east of China, while *Zhao* is at an unknown hospital yet to be revealed. Metaphorically, other Chinese human rights activists, they are untouchables at no place of many heartless politicians of both East and West. When money speaks, justice is silent. China as a gross domestic human rights violator does not mean that the US should stop doing business with them. Similarly, the fact that the US is a gross overseas human rights violator does not mean that China should stop doing business with them. Business is business. The concept of Chinese "sovereign absolutism" works perfectly well when the world needs money.



Chen Guanzhong, a Hong Kong novelist who has lived in Beijing for ten years, has written a fiction named "*Shengshi*" (The Golden Age). The futuristic novel sketches a scene in the year 2013 in which every country except China suffers from a global financial crisis. China then becomes the only superpower— but a conspiracy is about to uncover. According to the story, the Golden Age of China can be summarized into ten principles. They have become the utmost important principles of the future China. The story makes me uncomfortable and apprehensive because it also partly reflects the reality of China of the 21st century. The ten principles are:



Zhao Lianhai's son wrote, "Papa come home."

- ◆ One-party democratic despotism
- ◆ Social stability according to the law
- ◆ Rule for the people under an authoritarian regime
- ◆ State-run market economy
- ◆ Fair competition directed by the Central Government
- ◆ Scientific development with Chinese characteristics
- ◆ Harmonious diplomacy with first priority of state interests
- ◆ Han sovereign and celebration of multi-ethnicity
- ◆ Post-western universalism
- ◆ Uprising of Chinese nationalism

One should be noted that many of these phrases are oxymorons, and in many occasions, they are mutually exclusive. However, when the principles are put into various political contexts, the terms such as "central government", "state", "authoritarian" and "one-party" will always be the trump cards over the others. Authoritarian states always portray themselves as "parents" who would rule "for" ones' own good. As Voltaire sarcastically remarked, "All is for the best in the best of all possible worlds." The nature of any utopian vision is that members of that society uncritically accept certain beliefs such as progress and prosperity; and they would forgo some values which they used to fight for: justice, human dignity, basic liberties and democracy. As a result, what remain will be homogeneity, control, manipulation, distrust and hypocrisy. **PR**

Notes:

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- 1) For details, please consult the following CESRAN article: Gokay, B. and D. Whitman (2011). "Crouching Tigers, Hidden Dragons." Retrieved 19 January 2011, from http://cesran.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1156%3Acrouching-tigers-hidden-dragons&catid=61%3Amakale-ve-raporlar&Itemid=79&lang=en.
- 2) For details, please consult the following CESRAN article: Ou, A. (2010, 10 December 2010). "Nobel Peace Prize: What does China Think?". from http://cesran.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1111%3Aconfucius-peace-prize-what-does-china-think&catid=65%3Amakale-ve-raporlar&Itemid=71&lang=en.