



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 15, 2020

No Mention of China's Human Rights Violations During Trade Deal Signing

Missing during the self-congratulatory  handshaking that accompanied the signing of the Phase One trade deal on Wednesday was any mention that China remains one of the worst offenders of human rights in the world, if not in all of human history. It wouldn't have been politic to bring up such a sordid subject. One wouldn't want to spoil the mood. For the millions suffering from human-rights abuses and violations in China, the silence was deafening.

A week ago, the Congressional-Executive Commission on China [issued its report](#) on those abuses, stating that "the human rights and rule of law conditions in China continued to worsen this past year." The 24-page report expounded and expanded on those abuses:

During its 2019 reporting year, the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (Commission) found that the human rights situation has worsened and the rule of law continued to deteriorate, as the Chinese government and Party increasingly used regulations and laws to assert social and political control.

The Chinese government continued its crackdown on "citizen journalists" who report on human rights violations, with mainstream Chinese journalists calling conditions in China an "era of total censorship."

The abuse of criminal law and police power to target rights advocates, religious believers, and ethnic minority groups also continued unabated, and reporting on such abuses became increasingly restricted.

China's communist leaders have no compunction over controlling the behavior of their citizen/serfs by surveilling them and incarcerating potential troublemakers in concentration camps:

The Chinese government has become more efficient in the use of advanced technology and information to control and suppress the people of China.

Nowhere is this more of a concern than in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), where the Commission believes Chinese authorities may be committing crimes against humanity against the Uyghur people and other Turkic Muslims.

Over the past year, Chinese authorities have expanded a system of extrajudicial mass internment camps in [Xinjiang]. Although the true number of detainees has not been publicly reported, experts estimate one million or more Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Hui, and others currently are or have been detained and subjected to abuse and forced labor in mass internment camps.

The report called for sanctions against Chinese officials, such as President Xi Jinping, who are responsible for these violations and concluded: "Rising authoritarianism in China is one of the most important challenges of the 21st century.... U.S. foreign policy must prioritize the promotion of



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universal human rights and the rule of law in China.”

There was not one word about this report or China’s abuses during Wednesday’s ceremonies. It just wouldn’t have been seemly.

When Ken Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch (HRW), attempted to enter Hong Kong on January 12 to hold a press conference about its latest report, “China’s Global Threat to Human Rights,” he was denied entry. Said Roth, “I had hoped to spotlight Beijing’s deepening assault on international efforts to uphold human rights. The refusal to let me enter Hong Kong vividly illustrates the problem.”

The problem? The problem is that any dissent or attempted exposure of those abuses and violations will be met with sanctions. Just ask Daryl Morey, general manager of the Houston Rockets NBA team, who tweeted his support for Hong Kong protestors. On October 4 he tweeted: “Fight for freedom, stand with Hong Kong.”

The roof fell in on Morey. The Chinese Basketball Association suspended all cooperation with his team, while CCTV5, the sports channel of China’s top state broadcaster, announced it would no longer air Rockets’ events on state television.

Right behind were Li-Ning Company (which makes sportswear) and Shanghai Pudong Development Bank, which said they were severing relations with his team over his comments. Within days, all 11 all official Chinese business partners of the NBA suspended ties with the league

In a microcosm, what Morey experienced is the desired end result of China’s using every means at its disposal, including advanced technology and its insinuation into the communications culture of its enemy, to keep the truth about its abuses from being told.

That war against the truth has been waged by China for years. The result, said Human Rights Watch, is a “perfect storm” — a “powerful centralized state, a coterie of like-minded rulers, a void of leadership among countries that might have stood for human rights, and a disappointing collection of democracies willing to sell the rope that is strangling the system of rights that they purport to uphold.”

That would include the United States and the current administration. Written before the glad-handing and congratulatory lauding over the signing of Phase One that took place in Washington on Wednesday, HRW was blunt: “U.S. President Trump has been more interested in embracing friendly autocrats than [in] defending the human rights standards that they flout.”

In Washington on Wednesday, the silence over China’s egregious and accelerating human rights abuses was deafening. Silence is assent and the voices of those in agony were silenced instead.

Photo: AP Images

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