



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on May 21, 2018

China Now Leads the World — at Bullying

China has made known that it wants to be the world's premier power, and it already leads in one area: bullying. The latest example is GAP clothing retailer, which just issued a groveling apology to Beijing for releasing a t-shirt emblazoned with an "erroneous" map of China. The "error" was omitting Taiwan, parts of Tibet, and certain South China Sea islands — all places that Beijing fancies part of its territory.



The kicker is that, apparently, the shirt wasn't even being sold in China. In fact, it was photos of the garment taken in Canada's Niagara region that attracted the Chinese attention after being circulated online. This reflects a little known phenomenon: Through economic bullying, China is influencing markets well beyond its borders.

The *New York Times* [reports](#) on the Gap story:

Gap, which is based in San Francisco, called the shirt an "unintentional mistake" that had been marketed in select overseas markets and said that it "respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China." The retailer, which opened its first store in China in 2010 and now has more than 300 stores in Asia, said that the garment was pulled from shelves and that related products in the Chinese market were destroyed.

Photos of the shirt that circulated on Weibo had been taken at an outlet store in Canada, according to the accompanying post. Gap, in its apology, said it was investigating what went wrong with the shirt and thanked customers and the government for their "attention and support."

But Gap is just the latest company to be cowed. As *Time* [points out](#), "[Delta Air Lines](#), hotel operator Marriott, fashion brand Zara are among businesses that have apologized to China for referring to Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Tibet as countries on websites or promotional material. Mercedes-Benz said sorry for quoting the Dalai Lama on social media. The Tibetan spiritual leader is reviled by Beijing."

Delta wasn't the only airline targeted, however. The *New York Times* again: "This month, the Trump administration accused the Chinese government of engaging in '[Orwellian nonsense](#)' for ordering 36 airline companies to remove from their websites references to Taiwan, Macau and Hong Kong as separate countries. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded by suggesting that for foreign companies, deferring to Chinese preferences for geopolitical categorization was a [price of doing business](#) in the country."

And there you have it. China has the world's second-largest economy and the most potential customers, 1.4 billion, and it wields this carrot like a cudgel. "You have to pay to play," is the message, the payment being obeisance to Beijing's agenda.

China has an advantage in this, mind you, being a tyrannical regime. While all nations have some trade barriers, the United States is an open society. But China can ban a business with practically the wave of a hand under its neo-fascist model.



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What did I just write? Let's have some truth in advertising here: China is not a "communist" state, though it thus bills itself. (In reality, there's no such thing as a "communist state" because, under Marxist doctrine, "communism" is the stage at which the state has disappeared.) China is not a socialist state, which is what most people think communism is: government ownership of the means of production. (This is why the USSR stood for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.)

China is a fascist state. While the nation instituted market reforms in 1978 and now defines itself, oxymoronically, as a "socialist market economy," this is an Orwellian lie. Rather, China conforms to the model fascism's main founder, Benito Mussolini, articulated thus: "All within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state." Business in China is largely in private hands, but the government has a hand in everything.

And, increasingly, even what's outside Chinese borders are within the Chinese state. Just consider our entertainment. As I [reported](#) in 2014, "Most movie-goers don't know it, but many of the films on which they spend American dollars have been filtered by Chinese censors — by Beijing's powerful State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT), to be precise."

I also provided an example: Did "it ever strike you as odd that the invaders in the 2012 remake of the 1984 film *Red Dawn* were from small, third-rate power North Korea and not, oh, let's say, from what could be [the next evil empire](#), China? It should."

"Because when *Red Dawn* was originally shot, the invaders were Chinese."

"The studio creating the film, MGM, digitally altered the movie in 2011 to make them appear as North Koreans."

As the *Los Angeles Times* [wrote](#) in 2012, "Chinese bad guys are vanishing — literally. Western studios are increasingly inclined to excise potentially negative references to China in the hope that the films can pass muster with Chinese censors and land one of several dozen coveted annual revenue-sharing import quota slots in Chinese cinemas."

Quoting an expert, the paper also relates, "'Hollywood these days is sometimes better at carrying water for the Chinese than the Chinese themselves,' said Stanley Rosen, director of the East Asian Studies Center at USC and an expert on film and media. 'We are doing all the heavy lifting for them.'"

More eye-popping examples are in my article, "[Forget North Korea: Watch Out for Chinese Censorship of Hollywood](#)."

American schools are doing some heavy lifting, too. After taking Chinese money, more than 100 American colleges and approximately 400 K-12 schools [have infused their teaching](#) with Chinese propaganda. This is [the handiwork of](#) Beijing's "Confucius Institute," which is overseen by a shadowy Chinese Ministry of Education tentacle known as "Hanban."

So the Chinese may not be interested in hanging capitalists — they themselves are as rapacious as they come. But we sure are selling them a rope that, increasingly, is placing us within the Chinese state.

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