

# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

## Hong Kong Is Still Free; China Can Be

James Freeman

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It's looking like a bad day for the communist bullies of Beijing. Despite the best efforts of the Chinese dictatorship, the people of Hong Kong remain free. And even on the Chinese mainland some brave souls are asserting their basic liberties.

A new report helps explain why Hong Kong protesters are so courageous in demanding that the Chinese government keep its promise to allow citizens of the former British colony to enjoy the rights they have long enjoyed. Hong Kongers have more to lose from oppressive government than almost anyone in the world.

The latest Human Freedom Index rates Hong Kong as the world's freest economy and third most free country overall. The U.S. ranks 15th and China checks in at an abysmal 126th, 12 spots behind Russia. The index is co-published by the Cato Institute, the Fraser Institute in Canada and the Liberales Institut at the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom in Germany.

The season of protests has helped push Hong Kong into its first recession since the financial crisis. But a recent rally in Hong Kong shares suggests that this great jewel of the world economy has not suffered irreparable damage.

Meanwhile citizens of the former colony are sharing the message of freedom well beyond their borders today. In Busan, South Korea, China has defeated Hong Kong 2-0 in a regional soccer tournament, but the Hong Kongers in attendance remain unbowed. The Journal's Eun-Young Jeong reports:

The protest chants would have rung familiar on the streets of Hong Kong. "Fight for freedom! Stand with Hong Kong!" they shouted...

When the Chinese national anthem, the March of the Volunteers, played before the game, dozens of Hong Kong fans booed and turned their backs to the field. Some held up their middle finger. One man held up a banner that read "Hong Kong is not China," and was approached by security guards to take it down.

As soon as the game started at Busan Asiad Main Stadium, the Hong Kong fans belted out "Glory to Hong Kong" in Cantonese, a song that has become the protesters' de facto anthem.

Over on the Chinese mainland, the communist government's effort to expand its control over all institutions of society is meeting some resistance. Strange as it may sound to American ears, university faculty and administrators are pushing back against politicized education. The Journal's Philip Wen reports from Beijing:

Amendments to the charters of three Chinese universities that place absolute adherence to Communist Party rule over academic independence have provoked heated online debate and prompted some prominent academics to raise concerns amid a backdrop of tightening ideological control on China's campuses.

References to academic independence and freedom of thought were stripped out of the charter of Shanghai's prestigious Fudan University, long-considered one of the country's most liberal academic institutions.

Substituted were references to "serving the governance of the Communist Party" and "dedication to patriotism," according to a notice posted on the website of China's Ministry of Education...

"If we do not speak out today about such a blatant challenge to the bottom line of education and academic ethics, I am afraid we will never have the chance," said Lu Xiaoping, vice-president of the literature school at Nanjing University—another university whose charter was rewritten—in a Weibo post on Wednesday that was... later deleted. Shaanxi Normal University, in northwestern China, was the third university to have its charter altered.

Mr. Wen adds that "footage purportedly of Fudan students gathering in a university cafeteria to sing the school anthem circulated on Chinese social media on Wednesday afternoon. The lyrics include the reference to 'academic independence and freedom of thought' once enshrined in the university charter."

Communist party strongman Xi Jinping says China's university campuses should become "strongholds of the party's leadership." Faculty resisters may not be able to draw much inspiration from their U.S. academic counterparts. But liberty advocates in both China and Hong Kong are surely an inspiration to millions of Americans.

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*Bottom Stories of the Day*

**Corey A. DeAngelis@DeAngelisCorey**

It's actually way worse than that.

It was not a journalist.

It was Robert Pianta - dean of UVAs Curry School of Education.

[https://twitter.com/jbmcgee/status/1207307075748950016 ...](https://twitter.com/jbmcgee/status/1207307075748950016)

**Josh B. McGee@jbmcgee**

This is a very common misconception, but also very easy to check. @EdNCES publishes constant dollar figures going back to 1919. Pretty damning of @washingtonpost journalist.

[https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d18/tables/dt18\\_236.55.asp?current=yes ...](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d18/tables/dt18_236.55.asp?current=yes)

[https://twitter.com/DeAngelisCorey/status/1207299595186950144 ...](https://twitter.com/DeAngelisCorey/status/1207299595186950144)

Other Than That, The Story Was Accurate

The Washington Post makes an interesting editing choice on an op-ed by Robert Pianta, dean of the University of Virginia Curry School of Education and Human Development. "The one education reform that would really help? Giving public schools more money," reads the

headline. The secondary headline of the piece reads, “The one thing we haven’t tried in the past 30 years is sufficiently investing in our schools.”

Then the text of the piece begins: “Correction: An earlier version of this piece stated that, adjusting for constant dollars, public funding for schools had decreased since the late 1980s. This is not the case. In fact, funding at the federal, state and local levels has increased between the 1980s and 2019.”

I Found This Article All By Myself

“Men Call Their Own Research ‘Excellent’,” New York Times, Dec. 17