

## China and CCP are inseparable

Written by Chin Heng-wei 陳恆偉

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A regular talking point of the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) critics is the need to separate "China" from the CCP and adopt a stance that is "anti-CCP," rather than "anti-China."

However, this is an abstraction that avoids the fact that the People's Republic of China government is the legally recognized government of China, meaning that the critics are hiding behind an image of China of their own making.

In his speeches, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has taken a different view, drawing a clear line between the CCP and China's population. He said that the US cannot blindly take an unyieldingly tough attitude toward China, but should communicate with its people and help give them strength, adding that Chinese and the CCP are as different as night and day.

Pompeo is seeking to incorporate the Chinese into the US' encirclement of the CCP. This might be at the suggestion of Pompeo's principal China policy adviser, Miles Yu (余英).

Yu, who was born in China, would inevitably have complex personal feelings toward China.

However, his former compatriots have been quick to disown him.

Pompeo has said that the US has pursued an erroneous China policy for the past 25 years. Two-and-a-half decades ago, Washington tried to bring China in to the ranks of the free world based on liberal values.

The thinking was that once China's middle class reached a critical mass, the country would inevitably democratize. Paradoxically, the more the US invested in China, the more closely the capitalists and the middle class, created as a result of that investment, embraced the party. Washington policymakers' wishful thinking proved to be wide off the mark and the US ended up nursing a viper in its bosom.

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Would US President Donald Trump's policy of separating China from the CCP actually work?

Interestingly, on July 9, Harvard University's Ash Center published a study, titled *Taking China's Pulse*, for which it conducted eight surveys in China between 2003 and 2016, gathering data from 32,000 respondents.

According to the survey's findings, in 2016 a record 93.1 percent of respondents expressed satisfaction with the central government.

Since the survey's publication, many people have questioned whether the CCP had a hand in it.

Cai Xia (蔡霞), a "second-generation red" and former professor at China's elite Central Party School and member of the CCP's "liberal" faction, who fled to the US, has said that the Harvard survey appears suspect.

There is a reason why the Chinese public supports its government: Where there is fertile earth, trees will grow.

As Chinese writer Hu Shi (胡適) wrote: "The CCP did not leap out from a cave."

Reporting by the New York Times has revealed that behind Chinese President Xi Jinping's (習近平) hardline approach to ruling the country are a coterie of authoritarian theoreticians and policymakers. After Xi took over as leader, he began to denigrate the fundamental building blocks of liberal societies such as universal human rights and the separation of powers.

The Mao Zedong (毛澤東)-era policy of "overtaking Britain and catching up with the US" once again became a benchmark.

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One of the most penetrating catchphrases to emerge from Xi so far has been: “Sorry, the goal now is not Westernization, but the great rejuvenation of the Chinese people.”

Another example is the German documentary film *A German Life*, released in 2016, which documents the life of Brunhilde Pomsel, a former secretary, stenographer and typist for Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels, aged 105 at the time of the interview.

During the course of the interview, Pomsel said: “I don’t feel guilty ... unless you’re going to accuse the whole German people of helping that government come to power.”

Separating Nazis from Germans is difficult; likewise, it is problematic to detach the CCP from Chinese.

US historian Carl Becker wrote: “Democratic government is a species of social luxury” that is reliant on material conditions and wisdom for its success.

China seriously lacks the values of the Enlightenment — proof of this is everywhere: Chinese Premier Li Keqiang (李強) in May admitted that 600 million Chinese are living on a monthly income of barely 1,000 yuan (US\$147.26 at the current exchange rate).

Chinese intellectuals and politicians still blindly argue that liberal democracy is on the wane, that China is on the rise and that it will bring on a new era.

Last month, the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) said it is not seeking to improve relations with either the US or China at the expense of the other.

KMT Chairman Johnny Chiang (蔣經國) is also reported to have said that the party is to seek “value” in its relations with the US and China.

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In truth, you cannot put a cigarette paper between the KMT's "values" and those touted by the CCP under Xi.

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Translated by Edward Jones

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