
My Short March Through China

Gary Rosen

OF THE WAYS one might choose to visit China for the first time, traveling with a delegation of American journalists, as I did in September, is not ideal. In addition to the usual frustrations of group touring, there is the burden of being “media friends,” as our Chinese hosts liked to call the nine of us (six from newspapers like the *Los Angeles Times*, *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, and *Boston Globe*, two from magazines, and one from a Texas television station). Our primary job was to attend official meetings—that is, to sit at long tables in dreary conference rooms, listening to bureaucrats run through their talking points and repeat the Delphic slogans (“peaceful rise,” “harmonious society,” “putting people first”) with which the Communist party makes known its priorities. If we were lucky, the bureaucrats spoke English; often, we had to endure line-by-line translations. Though the standard tourist stops were also on our itinerary—we wandered the Great Wall and the Forbidden City, sampled the shopping bounty of Shanghai, cruised Hong Kong’s Victoria Harbor—free time was scarce. Leisurely exploration was not on the agenda.

But such travel has its advantages, too, especially in terms of access to the Chinese government, an organism notoriously closed to outsiders. One co-sponsor of our trip was the East-West Center, a Honolulu-based education and research institute

funded primarily by the U.S. government and involved in various kinds of foreign-policy wonkery and trans-Pacific bridge-building. The other co-sponsor, the Better Hong Kong Foundation (BHKF), is a very different sort of enterprise.

When *Fortune* ran a cover story in 1995 entitled “The Death of Hong Kong,” arguing that the British colony’s handover to China in two years would make it a “global backwater,” the adverse publicity caused a panic among local business interests. Some of the savvier tycoons—many of them with substantial investments on the mainland—launched the BHKF in order to provide a brighter picture. In the common parlance of Hong Kong politics, the foundation is “pro-Beijing”: it has friends in high places and the standing to ask them for favors. As one member of our group, a writer who covers Asia for the *Economist*, told me about our itinerary, “Meetings like this are no easy thing to get.”

For the Chinese government, every visitor, even the casual tourist, represents an opportunity to make a positive impression—to let the world know of China’s progress under the sage guidance of the Communist party. But American journalists fresh off the plane are potential troublemakers and have to be handled with special care. Predisposed to criticize government policy and to distrust official pronouncements, they have to be brought around gently to the desired image of a dynamic, prudently modernizing China. There are several ways to

GARY ROSEN is the managing editor of COMMENTARY.

try to shape the experience of “media friends” so as to bring about this result: through flattery and bonhomie, with creature comforts and small luxuries, and, most of all, by regulating the sort of contacts they make during their short stay.

To be on the receiving end of such treatment is no bad deal, I can attest; my two-week trip was a pleasure in many ways and, for a China neophyte like myself, an extraordinary education. But I was often reminded of Paul Hollander’s *Political Pilgrims* (1981), the cold-war classic about the manipulation of wide-eyed Western intellectuals who visited the Communist bloc. Today’s China is not the Soviet Union or Castro’s Cuba, and none of us was a credulous fellow traveler. But we, too, were subjected to what Hollander called, in his memorable phrase, the “techniques of hospitality.”

THE VAST hall for passport control at the Beijing airport is about as efficient at processing visitors as any that I have encountered. With Olympic banners and countdown clocks all over the capital, the Chinese are making sure that they can handle international travelers whose idea of “One World, One Dream” (the ubiquitous slogan for the 2008 games) includes certain standards of service. The last order of business for a passenger getting his passport checked and stamped is to register a snap opinion of his experience: a console lights up with two green happy-face buttons (“very good” and “satisfactory”) and two red frowny-face buttons (“slow” and “poor service”). I cheerfully pressed the first.

Having collected our luggage, refreshed ourselves with coffee and green-tea “lattes” from Starbucks, and acquired some yuan (mine from a handy Citibank ATM), we emerged into the main arrival hall, where we were immediately greeted by Mr. Huang. Huang Liming, as his business card informed us, is the deputy director of the Europe, North America, and Oceania division of the information department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A gregarious, quick-witted man, with previous stints not only at the Chinese embassy in Baathist Baghdad but as a visiting scholar at Stanford’s Hoover Institution, he would be our constant companion while on the mainland. Mr. Huang was our government minder.

It was through his good offices that most of our sessions in Beijing and Shanghai were made possible. With an eye to the stories about China lately in American headlines, our schedule included top officials at: the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection, and Quarantine (AQSIQ); the State Environmental Protection Agency; the

Beijing Olympic Organizing Committee; the National Development and Reform Commission; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Shanghai branch of the Bank of China; the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences; the Shanghai World Expo 2010; and the Development Research Center of the Shanghai Municipal Government. Thankfully, a few non-governmental sessions also found their way on to our schedule. We spent a too-short hour with journalism students at Peking University, met the editors of Sohu.com (one of China’s leading Internet portals), and had lunch sessions with representatives of two prominent Hong Kong-based property developers in Shanghai, where we also toured a General Motors plant.

For our hosts, the purpose of the trip was twofold: to highlight China’s astonishing economic growth and, at the same time, to assure us that growth was not the government’s only concern. On the first count, they had nothing to worry about. Being impressed by the economic spectacle of Beijing and Shanghai does not require much in the way of encouragement. One might have an abstract sense of the scale and density of China’s hyper-development, but seeing it on foot or from the window of a minibus is another thing altogether. The massive, anonymous glass-and-steel office towers and concrete apartment blocs simply go on forever, and the traffic is a heart-stopping game of chicken, with bicycles, “trishaws,” and motorized carts flowing heedlessly into lanes of overloaded trucks and speeding Buicks and BMW’s. This is the ground-level view of a decade-and-a-half of roughly 10-percent annual growth in GDP, a period during which hundreds of millions of Chinese have been lifted from poverty.

Nor is it all urban bleakness. With the approach of the Olympics (and the media spotlight it will bring), beautification has become a priority in Beijing, and greenery, flowers, and roadside landscaping are unexpectedly common. The colossal “bird’s nest” stadium that will be the main Olympic venue is a dramatic, playful piece of architectural sculpture, and several of the other new sports facilities are similarly stylish. Some commercial complexes, like the sleek Tsinghua Science Park, where Sohu.com shares office space with the likes of Google, Microsoft, and Sun Microsystems, would look at home in Palo Alto. In Shanghai, we visited Xintiandi, an upscale shopping and restaurant district built not by demolishing the old neighborhood—the usual Chinese practice—but by renovating several blocks of handsome, traditional *shikumen* (stone gate) houses.

AS FOR the harsher consequences of the country's breakneck growth, our Chinese interlocutors were ready to acknowledge problems and open to the need for reform—at least so long as we steered clear of political fundamentals. Li Changjiang, the minister of AQSIQ (the product-safety agency), insisted that the toxic pet food and lead-painted toys that had caused such a flap in the U.S. were anomalies. Only a small fraction of Chinese exports were “substandard,” he said, but “we will dedicate 100 percent to solving that 1-percent problem.” His agency had already launched a “rectification campaign” that would monitor the supply and manufacturing chains “from A to Z.” To drive home his point, Mr. Li escorted us down the hall to a room where an array of real-time video feeds—some from factories, others from border crossings, several using infrared detection—demonstrated his agency's (alarming) capacity for surveillance.

Not to be outdone, the officials who greeted us at the State Environmental Protection Agency listed, as far as I could tell, every international environmental agreement that China has signed and every domestic anti-pollution measure that it has adopted in recent years. In a warm, airless conference room, a stern woman from the policy division spoke to us about the draft laws on water pollution of the Standing Committee of the People's Congress, about “green credits” and newly instituted fines, about the eighteen categories of information that will be made available to the public as part of a “special information-disclosure mechanism.” As I fought to keep my eyes open, I even recorded in my notebook that “the central government has made a schedule for the closing of certain alcohol- and paper-making factories.”

Still more disarmingly, officials often spoke of their desire to bring China up to the highest international standards. We were constantly reminded that, despite its recent progress, China is “still a developing country,” and that it has much to learn from the U.S. and Europe. This was no idle compliment. The best translator we encountered had a master's degree in international relations from Cambridge; one economist had a Ph.D. from Rice, another from the University of Pittsburgh. An uncannily American-seeming professor of journalism at Peking University had earned her doctorate in communications at, it turned out, the University of Iowa, and the students in her class were themselves hoping to study overseas. A pro-Beijing political activist in Hong Kong cited his degrees from Stanford right on his business card. In China, as in the

rest of the world, the American university system still commands respect.

And so does the U.S. itself as a beacon of modernization. At the National Development and Reform Commission, the deputy director-general for “economic system reform” told us proudly (if implausibly) that “there is no big difference between China and the U.S.” with regard to property rights and private ownership. “We have learned a great deal from Western countries,” he said, “and look forward to more assistance from your side.” An official at the Bank of China sounded a similar note: “I know that you are from the United States, the most developed country in the world, so I hope you will help us with your suggestions.”

FOR A GROUP of American reporters, attending such meetings day after day creates a peculiar psychological dynamic, one very different from an ordinary journalistic setting. Our sessions typically lasted an hour and followed a tightly scripted protocol. We would enter with business cards in hand, distribute them to anyone of prominence who greeted us, sit for a presentation, and then, time permitting, ask a few questions. At the conclusion of every session, one of us would rise to thank our speaker and to present a small gift from the group (a light-up pen gizmo from the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, a *Seattle Times* baseball cap, etc.) and a plaque from the Better Hong Kong Foundation. Finally, we would all gather around for a group photo to commemorate the happy event.*

Regularly treated like representatives of the U.S., we could not avoid the feeling that, whatever our professional responsibilities, part of our job was to act as goodwill ambassadors. We were eager to make a positive impression, to show the right mix of curiosity, appreciation, and politeness. When Mr. Huang pointed out this or that Chinese achievement, our inclination was to praise it, as if wanting to let the Ministry of Foreign Affairs know that, yes, we really did like the country. Above all, we did not wish to give offense or to confirm our hosts' preconceptions about American “China-bashing.”

This spirit of diplomatic courtesy was encouraged, too, by our gratitude for a range of amenities. The tedium of serial meetings with Beijing bureaucrats was made more endurable by our stay at the lovely Kuntai Royal Hotel—complete with spa and gym, tiled pool, satellite TV, marbled bath-

* Samples of these and other photos from the trip can be found on the website of the Better Hong Kong Foundation: www.betterhongkong.org/eng/?section=gallery.

rooms, and large, luxurious beds. Generous conviviality also brought relief from our packed schedule. Qin Gang, the chief spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, welcomed us to Beijing with a thirteen-course dinner. In Shanghai, we lunched at the private clubhouse of Vincent Lo, the Hong Kong-based developer of Xintiandi, listening to pitchmen from his company while we enjoyed beautifully presented haute cuisine and his private-label Bordeaux. Our stay in Hong Kong began with a cruise to nearby Lamma Island, for seafood alfresco, aboard the yacht of Ronnie Chan, another luminary of the Hong Kong real-estate world and the chairman of the Better Hong Kong Foundation. Though absent for that outing, the affable, opinionated Chan—a U.S. citizen, pal of Henry Kissinger, and fixture at Davos—hosted a dinner for us the next night at the chic China Club.

The goodies that our hosts and sponsors lavished on us were not enough to buy our fealty, but the first-class treatment did provide a subtle counterweight to the less agreeable aspects of our tour. Pollution was a constant subject of our casual banter. The dense haze in Beijing was painful to breathe during our first two days, and several of us developed mild respiratory ills; only heavy rains finally cleared the air of the oppressive particulates. Nor could we get over the abominable water quality, even at our high-end hotels, where turning on a tap would release a mildly sulfurous, sometimes brownish flow.

More troubling, as the trip went on, was the almost comical defensiveness of Mr. Huang, whose assignment seemed to be shielding our eyes from any sight that might possibly reflect badly on China. On one occasion, as we waited in the sparkling, modern lobby of the Bank of China, we witnessed a shouting match between a delivery woman and a security guard. When one of us asked Mr. Huang to shed some light on the dispute, he was annoyed: “Why are you not looking at the architecture, the beautiful building?” Amused by this reflex, a prankster in our group, from the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, told Mr. Huang that he had spent his free time the previous evening among beggars on the street, including a man covered with burns who claimed that “the secret police did this to me.” The spoof deeply alarmed Mr. Huang: “You’re not going to write about this, are you?”

MY OWN provocations took a different form. Feeling compromised by my status as a “media friend” (and slightly guilty about our travel perks), I made it my job to ask contentious ques-

tions. At Sohu.com, I pressed the website’s managing editor to describe how censorship worked: “What specific words are you required to block—Tibet, Tiananmen, explicit references to sex?” The poor woman shifted nervously, glanced at Mr. Huang, and said with an uncomfortable laugh, “Let’s talk about sex,” adding that her company’s goal was “to build a harmonious society.”

The Beijing Olympic Organizing Committee, as one might expect, was the slickest operation we encountered, its shiny glass-and-steel headquarters emblazoned with the names of corporate sponsors and filled with young people who looked as if they had just walked off the campus of NYU. The committee’s spokesman, Sun Weide, wanted us to know how much progress had been made in preparing for the games, particularly on the crucial issue of pollution. Thanks to a range of measures, he informed us, two-thirds of the days in Beijing now had “good air quality.” As he spoke to us in a glass-walled conference room, the smog outside was so thick that nearby buildings were visible only in outline. “Is this a ‘good’ air day?” I asked, pointing toward the street. Without missing a beat, he replied, “it takes an expert to determine that.” (Apparently embarrassed by this answer, he later sent an e-mail telling us that, in fact, the day registered at an unacceptable level on the air-pollution index.)

Mr. Sun was more categorical, however, about the sort of non-athletic activities that would not be welcome during the Olympics. The games are “a celebration of sports,” he said, “not a political convention.” When I asked him what would happen if protesters wished to speak out about Taiwan or the human-rights situation in China, he said that “the public-security apparatus would decide what is appropriate,” noting (without apparent irony) that “this is how it is done in every country.”

Our most memorable session took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where we met with Liu Jieyi, the director-general in charge of Sino-American relations. A smooth-talking diplomat whose previous postings included time in New York with the Chinese mission at the UN, Mr. Liu spoke about China’s efforts “to play a constructive role in dealing with global problems,” its desire “to work for peaceful as opposed to military solutions,” and so forth. Not eager to hear more of this boilerplate, I asked him how he explained to audiences in the U.S. and Europe why rule by the Communist party was still legitimate, especially at a time when most of the world had accepted democratic accountability and no one, least of all in China, still believed in Marxism.

Briefly ruffled by the question, he went on at some length, and delivered a remarkable answer. It turns out that the Communist party of China does not rule alone. Indeed, there are “eight other parties, all with representatives in the People’s Congress,” where “democratic supervision and collective decision-making” prevail. No party in China, he emphasized, “can exercise power unchecked.” As for Marxism, its true meaning concerns achieving a “balance between economic growth and social factors.” It contains “no dogma,” and requires only that its adherents pay strict attention to “the actual conditions of a country, its changing dynamics.”

THIS LESSON done, we moved on to other matters until it was time for a final question. Someone asked (well, it was me again) how Mr. Liu could reconcile his presentation of China’s peace-loving ways with Beijing’s clear position that, if Taiwan were to declare independence, the mainland would invade—a threat made more credible by its arms build-up across the Taiwan Strait and its provocative military exercises in recent years. Mr. Liu did not like my use of the word “provocative.” In the first place, he said, “You should phrase your questions with more respect.” More to the point, he rejected the underlying premise: “China has a population of 1.3 billion people, including the 23 million people of Taiwan. It is not for them to decide their own status.”

None of this was exactly surprising, since it adhered closely to long-standing Chinese policy. What was surprising, as we shook hands and prepared to leave, was Mr. Liu’s insistence that his remarks were entirely off the record. This was news to us. All of our sessions, unless restricted in some way beforehand, were explicitly *on* the record, and we had been busily taking notes, with our tape recorders in plain sight. Liu Jiyei, in all his worldliness, was perfectly aware of what we were doing. Out of pique at my impertinence or perhaps because he did not like having lost his cool, he wanted the interview to go away.

This task fell to Mr. Huang, who called us together in the lobby once we were back at the hotel. “I need you to tell me that you won’t report about this,” he said. “It is best to respect the host; that is the international practice.” Pressure had plainly been brought to bear on him, and several in the group, feeling that they had no particular use for Mr. Liu’s words (and not wishing to jeopardize our sponsors or future trips), said they were unlikely to write about the session. Others, myself included, were less accommodating. One member of the

group explained that she would find it hard to continue with the tour if the rules were continually changed after interviews. “We are not Chinese journalists,” she told Mr. Huang, “and this smacks of censorship.”

Knowing that I considered the material from the session valuable and might well use it, Mr. Huang pulled me aside several more times the next day to ask again that I “respect the host,” adding that if I did, “I would get better interviews the next time.” The threat in this, as reporters who cover China informed me, was that my future access might be limited; denying visas is a favorite tactic for punishing Western journalists who upset the authorities. But as I said to Mr. Huang, I was unsure that I would ever again report from China, and I could not relent on a key journalistic principle. Moreover, I felt obliged to tell him, his effort to suppress the story had *become* the story.

Mr. Huang continued to be civil to me after this, but our relationship lost its easy good humor. At one point, he urged me to get past my “cold-war thinking” and understand that China “is not a threat.” I assured him that I did not view China as another Soviet Union, and that I was impressed by the country’s economic and social progress. My worry, I said, was politics, and how the Communist party would respond to a process of modernization that it had initiated but over which it could not hope to maintain control.

FOR THE final leg of our trip, in Hong Kong, we left behind Mr. Huang and his colleagues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Better Hong Kong Foundation was now our exclusive guide, and its approach to selling us on the virtues of Beijing’s rule was more effective. Quite simply, we could see for ourselves how wrong *Fortune* had been in declaring Hong Kong “dead” with the arrival, in 1997, of “one country, two systems.” Though the flag of the People’s Republic now flies alongside the five petals of Hong Kong’s white-flower emblem, the “special administrative region” has retained its British-style liberties and governance, and is prospering as never before.

One obvious benefit of Hong Kong’s return has been an influx of consumers from the mainland, especially in search of Western luxury goods. As the chief government economist explained to us, “People from Hong Kong have always gone to Shenzhen [across the border in China] to buy fake Gucci and Prada. Now Chinese with money come here to buy the real thing. We spend \$200 there; they spend \$2,000 here.” Chinese companies have

also set up offices in Hong Kong so that they can get listed on the Hong Kong stock exchange and find world-class accountants, lawyers, and other professionals. Since 2003, the local economy has grown at a robust 7 percent a year.

And, of course, the economic relationship goes the other way as well. Hong Kong interests are deeply involved on the mainland. C.Y. Leung, a local real-estate-services magnate who is a top adviser to Hong Kong's chief executive (and who hosted an elegant lunch for our group at the exclusive Hong Kong Club), helped the Chinese launch their first "special economic zone" in the mid-1980's. Vincent Lo, whose company's hospitality we enjoyed in Shanghai, is often referred to as the "king of *guanxi*" (connections) because of his close ties with Chinese officials; his first big project, more than two decades ago, was a hotel built in partnership with Shanghai's Communist Youth League.

The chairman of Plaza 66, Ronnie Chan's premier property in Shanghai, neatly summed up the attitude of Hong Kong's elites. China, he told us, is like a "big toy," a place where you can make money much more easily than in the U.S. On the mainland, he said, "once you get permission for a project, you have permission—there's no guy on the planning board making trouble, no lawsuits, no environmental-impact statements." Democratic change in China, he warned us, would bring "chaos," not least in the form of a messy, unpredictable business environment.

As it happens, these same elites are also averse to the expansion of democracy and democratic procedures in Hong Kong itself. Though it was widely expected that Hong Kong would have universal suffrage for public offices within a decade of the turnover, Beijing has had unsurprising second thoughts, and its local supporters have followed suit. Ordinary citizens have some say in who governs them—they choose a portion of the legislative council and of the electors for chief executive—but most power remains in the hands of Hong Kong's notables, the wealthy, jet-setting businessmen whose photos fill the pages of a red-satin-covered commemorative book given to us by the local office of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its modest title: *Ten Years of Glory*.

THIS COZY, corporatist arrangement is, with obvious differences, the same system that has emerged on the mainland since China began the process of "reform and opening up." Capitalists, it turns out, can get along quite well with Communists, just so long as the latter do not take their pro-

fessed ideology too seriously. I asked C.H. Tung, the shipping tycoon hand-picked by Beijing a decade ago to serve as Hong Kong's first chief executive, if the Communist party was still Marxist. He smiled indulgently and said, "That is a question of definition, but the party really has done wonderful things for China."

Tung's adulation is hard to stomach, especially as a historical matter, but he has a point. After decades of Maoist dogma, the Communist party, to its credit, did finally recognize the need to release the industry and entrepreneurialism of the Chinese people. Indeed, the party itself went into business, finding eager partners around the world. The results are plain to see in the dramatically higher living standards of Beijing, Shanghai, and the other cities frequented by Westerners. Visitors are carefully insulated from the uglier realities of today's China—widespread human-rights abuses, persecuted national minorities, crushing rural poverty, pervasive corruption, forced relocations to make way for highways, skyscrapers, and Olympic facilities—but the new prosperity itself is a palpable fact.

The flush times cannot last forever, though, and the Communist party has no other real claim to authority. As Tung himself discovered, after being forced from office in Hong Kong in the wake of an economic downturn and various political blunders, there is very little give in a political system so narrow at the top and so lacking in direct popular legitimacy. When the Hong Kong government failed to reflect the will of the people, they took to the streets in massive, unprecedented demonstrations.

It is Hong Kong's good fortune to possess, in addition to its corporatist elite, a vibrant civil society, the rule of law, and a free press; China has no such safety valves for the discontent of its people, no resilience in its politics. The echo chamber of today's Chinese regime—with its slogans and show trials, its claims of expertise and openness, its pretense of oversight and accountability—cannot do the work of pluralist democracy. As James Madison knew, an extended republic, even a "people's" republic, requires institutional checks and balances if it is not to devolve into a tyranny—or to remain one.

THE SESSION in China to which my thoughts have constantly returned was our brief visit at Peking University to talk with a group of undergraduates studying journalism. After they had answered a few questions about their career aims and Internet habits, I felt obliged to ask them about an obvious subject. "Back in 1989," I said, "many students from Peking University were involved in the

protests in Tiananmen Square. Some of them were arrested, others were killed. What do you know about all this? Do you discuss it? Do you consider it a good thing, a bad thing, or what?”

After some tittering and an awkward silence, they began to speak up, and they were not happy with me. A sweet-faced young man said that “some people in the West want to use [Tiananmen] to hurt the government,” though he also admitted that “we don’t have much information about it.” A woman in a yellow T-shirt with “Funky Monkey” printed across it asked why Americans “always focused on the past.” Another said that her mother had told her the demonstrations were quashed because otherwise China “would have broken up like the Soviet Union.” Still another girl, having done her homework, asked if we knew our own nation’s history of such events, and mentioned the 1970 shootings at Kent State.

Disappointed that we could not discuss these issues at greater length—and outside the hearing of their teacher and Mr. Huang—I was pleasantly surprised a few weeks after my return to the U.S. to receive an e-mail from one of the students, a junior named Yuan. She confirmed that the students had indeed been “prudent and cautious” in their remarks, but she also said, as I myself had gathered at the session, that their sentiments were genuine, especially in the face of questioning by foreigners. It is our “instinct,” she wrote, “to defend our country.”

More interesting to me, as we continued our e-mail correspondence, was learning about Yuan her-

self and her ambitions. Both of her parents had left their hometowns at an early age to look for jobs; her father is now the operations manager for the metals division of a large multinational corporation, and her mother works for a state-owned enterprise. Yuan’s great hope is to attend the journalism school at Columbia and to spend time in the U.S., the “dream nation,” though she has begun to wonder if it is really as “free and impartial” as she supposes. Her preoccupation while we were exchanging e-mails was the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), which she had just taken. Wanting to recover from the stress, she had “ordered a big pizza and shared it with friends while watching *The O.C.* [a Fox teen drama], then took the yoga class as usual.”

Thinking about Yuan and her friends—cosmopolitan, English-speaking students at China’s most elite university—I find it difficult to imagine that the People’s Republic will easily contain them. Some will undoubtedly be co-opted by economic opportunities, like much of China’s middle class; others will end up serving the Chinese state, perhaps in a role like that of Mr. Huang, practicing the “techniques of hospitality” on foreign visitors. But it seems just as likely that, following the lead of the previous generation, they will begin to ask why China, alone among the world’s great nations, cannot enjoy the full range of modern freedoms. Their protestations aside, they may yet have their own Tiananmen. If it comes to that, one can only pray that this time it turns out very differently.