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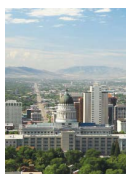
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Friday, 12 August 2011 01:00

Here Comes China's Journalism

Written by [William F. Jasper](#)

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The Little America Hotel in downtown Salt Lake City was abuzz with activity and excitement when your reporter arrived on July 14 for the opening of the U.S. & China Trade, Culture & Education Conference 2011. Throngs of Chinese delegates and journalists packed the lobby, while still more delegates from the People's Republic of China (PRC) disembarked from limousines and tour buses at the hotel entrance. The scene was much the same across the street at the hotel's pricier corporate sister, the Grand America Hotel, which served as the main venue for the National Governors Association Annual Meeting and U.S.-China Governors Forum.

My first order of business was to pick up my press credentials for the Trade, Culture & Education Conference, which was being sponsored by the American & Chinese Friendship Promotion Society. Unfortunately, I arrived at the credential room a few minutes too late; the man in charge had closed up and departed for the afternoon, taking the press badges with him. Mine would be available the next morning, in time for the main events, his assistant assured me. In the meantime, the assistant said, since he had seen my name on the list of officially approved journalists, I could use the press badge of Le Yeng, a Chinese journalist who had not shown up, to get into the afternoon's remaining events.

My new identity, with "Le Yeng" prominently displayed on the press badge hanging from my neck, elicited more than a few quizzical stares and comments from the Chinese visitors, providing a humorous reprieve to a journalistic experience that otherwise proved to be very frustrating. The folks at the American & Chinese Friendship Promotion Society apparently had not gotten the memo from the communications office of the National Governors Association (NGA) that I was *persona non grata* at the U.S.-China confab.

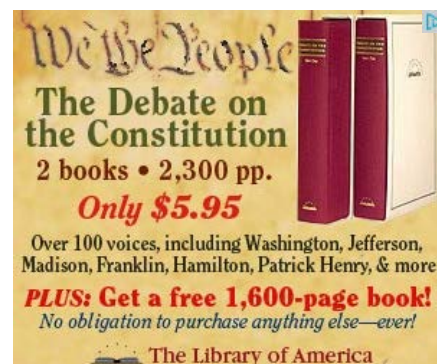
Krista Zaharias, the NGA's senior press secretary, had informed The New American prior to the U.S.-China Governors Forum that we were being denied press credentials for the NGA event because our articles "are written with an 'editorial point of view' rather than in an objective manner." My colleague Sam Antonio, correspondent, photographer, and online video producer for Liberty News Network, was also denied access and credentials. Neither Zaharias nor her boss, NGA communications director Jodi Omeare, would reconsider the decision to exclude The New American and Liberty News Network. Neither would they confirm that, while they were barring us from the forum for alleged failure to be "objective," they were approving credentials for Chinese "journalists" who slavishly toe the line set out by the Central Propaganda Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC). "We don't give out that information," Zaharias told this reporter.

Jodi Omeare was similarly tight-lipped about who the "objective" reporters and news agencies were that she was approving to report on the Governors' summit. "That is private information we don't release," Omeare said. This reporter reminded her that the NGA is a public organization composed of elected public officials, supported by dues paid for by state taxpayers as well as federal grants paid for by federal taxpayers, discussing important public policies affecting all of the people, and that the people have a right to know what is happening there — unfiltered by journalists selected because they will reliably retail to their audiences the talking points put out by her office. I reminded her also that this is an important First Amendment issue concerning freedom of the press. "I don't need to be lectured about the First Amendment or freedom of the press by you," Omeare stated curtly. "This conversation is over. Goodbye." Click!

Neither Zaharias nor Omeare would confirm or deny that the reason for excluding The New American from the conference might have been this reporter's recent cover story ("China: The New Investment Savior?," May 23, 2011) that was highly critical of efforts by many U.S. Governors to solve their states' economic woes by cozying up to Communist China's state-run corporations, many of which have notorious records for human rights abuses, espionage, and patent and copyright violations.

In spite of being shut out of the official NGA proceedings, The New American and Liberty News Network decided to go to Salt Lake City anyway and report from the sidelines. As it happened, we were able to get a room at the Grand America Hotel, mingle with many of the NGA participants, and schedule interviews with Governors outside of the NGA's official hotel conference rooms. In addition, we enjoyed access to the U.S. & China Trade, Culture & Education Conference, which included activities that involved Chinese and U.S. Governors, who were squirmed back and forth between the Grand America and Little America hotels by their Sherpas and security

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details.

Communist China's Goebbels Brigades

We were quickly able to confirm what the NGA's Zaharias and Omear would not: They had indeed granted media privileges to scores of Chinese "journalists," who literally swarmed over many of the Governors' events. Veteran news photographer Sam Antonio experienced first-hand the aggressive nature of China's propagandists, getting bumped, butted, and camera-slammed by PRC photographers as he photographed NGA chairman Christine Gregoire at a meeting with Chinese leaders at the opening of the U.S. & China Trade, Culture & Education Conference at the Little America Hotel. "First I got an elbow in my ribs, then a camera lens slammed into my ear," Antonio said. "These guys are incredible; they're probably afraid they'll get demoted or penalized if they don't get the shots their Communist Party bosses want."

Referring to the Chinese journalists as propagandists is not to engage in polemical hyperbole; it is merely to state objective fact. All of Communist China's journalists are trained, licensed, monitored, and disciplined by the Central Propaganda Department of the Communist Party of China, the General Administration of Press and Publication (GAPP), and/or the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT). In her 2009 book, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*, Professor Anne-Marie Brady has admirably documented the structures and mechanisms through which China's Communist Party overlords control news, information, communication, thought, and opinion in the land that Mao built. Additional important background on the ubiquitous brainwashing and thought control exercised by China's rulers can be found in the Freedom House report *Speak No Evil: Mass Media Control in Contemporary China* by Ashley Esarey, or in Richard McGregor's new book, *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers*, or on the websites of the press freedom organization *Reporters Without Borders* and the *Congressional-Executive Commission on China*.

In January of this year Reporters Without Borders reported that the PRC's Central Propaganda Department had issued new directives requiring all Chinese journalists to go through a new six-month program aimed at stamping out deviationist thought. Presumably, all of the Chinese "journalists" accredited by the NGA for the Governors' summit are graduates of the Central Propaganda Department's program. The reporters, editors, photographers, and videographers from *China Daily*, China Central Television (CCTV), Phoenix TV, Xinhua News Agency, and other state-run media outlets represented at the NGA are no more journalists than were Joseph Goebbels' Nazi propagandists in Hitler's Reich. Yet the Chinese Goebbels brigades were treated as bona fide reporters by the NGA and welcomed by the Obama administration for a post-summit briefing by Reta Jo Lewis, Special Representative for Global Intergovernmental Affairs.

China Daily is one of the PRC's main transmission belts for Communist Party-approved propaganda, both within mainland China and throughout the world. Stacks of *China Daily* newspapers especially prepared for the Salt Lake forum were strategically placed throughout the Little America and Grand America hotels for the participants and guests. Despite its notoriety as a propaganda organ, *China Daily* is significantly more honest than most of the American media on one very important issue: unabashed use of the "C" word. It is common practice for American politicians (Republican and Democrat) and reporters to omit the word "Communist" when referring to the PRC's Communist Party officials, so as to avoid evoking any negative feelings that are (justly) attached to China's totalitarian ruling elites. Thus, typical U.S. media reports simply refer to CPC officials as "Party Secretary" so-and-so. Not so with *China Daily*, which proudly trumpets every new triumph of its Communist Party leaders. The widely distributed issue of China Daily (July 15-17) featured a full-page broadside declaring in large print (in Chinese and English): "China Daily USA Congratulates the First China-US Governors Forum, Welcomes Governors and Distinguished Guests from China, including: Zhao Hongzhu, Secretary of Zhejiang Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China."

Throughout the NGA's Salt Lake City conference, visitors to the *China Daily* online edition would see (and can still see) the prominent red flag with the yellow communist symbol of the hammer and sickle beside many of the stories about the Governors confab. Clicking on the symbol takes one to *China Daily's* webpage dedicated to the "90th Anniversary of the Communist Party of China." Festooned with more hammers and sickles and other CPC iconography, it features numerous stories glorifying Communist China's founding demigod Mao Zedong and praising an alleged resurgence of "patriotic" support by the Chinese people for the leadership provided by the Communist Party.

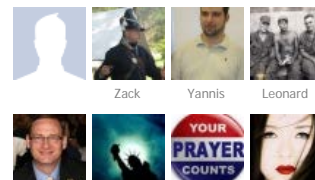
One of *China Daily's* principal propagandists is Li Xing, who is chief editor of the U.S. edition of *China Daily* and assistant editor-in-chief for the newspaper worldwide. According to her online biography, Li Xing received her M.A. in journalism in 1986 from Stanford University and has been working as a reporter/writer for 30 years at *China Daily*. It was your correspondent's good fortune to run into her as she left the NGA's major event at the University of Utah's Rice-Eccles Stadium. She was more than happy to be interviewed by me and confirmed that "dozens" of her Chinese media colleagues from major cities across the United States were inside covering the events from which The New American and Liberty News Network had been excluded. Additionally, she noted, dozens more Chinese media representatives had come as part of the entourages brought by China's communist provincial Governors.

Hail China's Communists

Li Xing excitedly pointed out that she had written the cover story for the issue of *China Daily* that I was holding, the one quoted above with the congratulations to CPC provincial chairman Zhao Hongzhu. The same issue also carried two stories quoting CPC officials singing the praises of human rights in China, and editorial that was simply excerpts taken from a speech by the Vice President of the Supreme People's Court hymning the glories of China's justice system.

As heavy-handed and clunky as the CPC's central propaganda department is, it has been making great strides in developing an ear for presentation that will be more accepted by Western audiences. Li Xing and her comrades at *China Daily*, CCTV, and other state propaganda organs undoubtedly can thank advisors such as Robert Lawrence Kuhn for that progress. Dr. Kuhn, author of the hagiographic *The Man Who Changed China: The Life and Legacy of Jiang Zemin* and many other books, is a longtime advisor to the government of China, as well as advisor to corporations doing business in China. He is also a senior advisor to CCTV and Xinhua News Agency and appears regularly as senior international commentator on CCTV News, which is broadcast worldwide and throughout China. In addition to being a regular contributor to *China Daily*, he writes for Bloomberg, *BusinessWeek*, *Forbes*, and *Chief Executive* magazine, and is a frequent commentator on China for CNBC, Bloomberg, and BBC World Service.

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In other words, Kuhn is a paid propagandist for China, and certainly one of its most important. He has profited handsomely from this relationship. In an astounding interview with *China Daily* entitled "**China 'best served' with CPC at the helm,**" published on June 23, just a couple weeks before the U.S.-China Governors Forum, Dr. Kuhn argues in favor of the Communist Party maintaining its monopoly of power in China.

"Politically, I believe that at least for the current times China should continue with its one-party CPC rule," Kuhn told *China Daily*. "I am impressed," said Kuhn, "by the strong meritocracy of the CPC, whose leaders are highly intelligent, extremely well educated, and have wide-ranging experience."

"There can be no progress without stability," insists Kuhn. "Political stability requires a one-party system, which itself requires limitations of certain political rights, such as assembly, and restrictions of media freedoms, namely, political debate."

As abhorrent as Dr. Kuhn's views in favor of totalitarian "stability" are, and as totally anathema as they are to the principles enshrined in our Constitution, they nonetheless seem to be in sync with those embraced by the National Governors Association. After all, dozens of propagandists from *China Daily*, CCTV, and Xin-hua News were given accreditation by the NGA. It is probably safe to say that Dr. Kuhn would have been welcomed as a paragon of objectivity (not to mention a celebrity of rock star proportions) at the NGA conference.

Zhejiang Communist Party Secretary Hongzhu told *China Daily* that the summit exchange was "direct, practical and effective." According to *China Daily*, billions of dollars in trade deals were signed. It quoted Secretary Hongzhu:

"In the past, I could only meet one governor at a time, and now I have met so many of them here," [Zhao Hongzhu] told reporters on the sidelines of the forum.

"Most importantly, the forum will help enhance exchanges with private companies."

The so-called private companies from Zhejiang were expected to make about 40 deals — worth a reported \$4.2 billion — during this visit to the United States. More deals were inked with the Chinese delegations that fanned out after the summit to visit Texas, Maryland, Indiana, and New Jersey, and other states.

The details about these deals are still very murky; there is no indication that any of the selected "journalists" (Chinese or American) that were accredited by the NGA for the forum asked any penetrating questions about the sweetheart arrangements among the U.S. Governors, corporate leaders, and Chinese Communist Party officials. Although U.S. politicians, businessmen, and journalists frequently justify their collaboration and fraternization with their PRC counterparts with claims that they are prodding China toward greater openness and "democratization," it should be evident that just the opposite is happening: Our political, business, and media leaders are more and more adopting the repressive, opaque, and corrupt practices of China's Communist Party elites.

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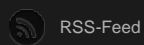
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