

Behind the anti-China protests in Hong Kong

written by Scott Scheffer
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Protesters hold a placard featuring U.S. President Donald Trump and U.S. flags as they take part in a march at Victoria Park in Hong Kong, Sunday, July 21, 2019. Photo: AP/Vincent Yu

Calm has been restored at the Hong Kong International Airport on August 15. For two days previous, a violent mob touted by the U.S. and British imperialist press as “peaceful protesters” had occupied the airport and all flights were cancelled.

During the two-day siege, they had beaten two men into unconsciousness. The first victim is a journalist for the Chinese news outlet, Global Times. His hands and feet were bound and he was tied to a luggage cart while he drifted in and out of consciousness and the ‘protesters’ blocked emergency medical personnel for four hours.

Another man, suspected of being a policeman from mainland China was also beaten into unconsciousness. A Hong Kong policeman was attacked, kicked and punched until he finally drew his weapon out of fear for his life. Many of the protesters flew American flags and held signs appealing to Donald Trump.

While media in the U.S. has continuously referred to the protests as “peaceful,” and to the Hong Kong authorities response as brutal, the reality is the opposite. In one of the earlier actions, a mob vandalized the Hong Kong legislature by spray painting all over the interior walls and smashing windows.

During another, a Hong Kong police station was attacked and lit on fire. Hurling bricks, gasoline bombs and defacing symbols of the Chinese revolution have been frequent. The initial reason for the protests was to demand that a proposed bill to institute an extradition treaty with the mainland, a routine law that exists in many countries, be revoked. The bill was allowed to die in the legislature, but the protests have continued, and their true anti-communist character is now much clearer.

One protester reported to the New York Times how she was [inspired by the “anti-Russian protests in Ukraine in 2014,”](#) which led to the rise of a fascist government.

The current wave of protests have gone on since April, but grew in size and frequency in June and July. Numerous organizations with close connections to, and funding by, the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy have been happy to agitate against the ‘One country – two systems’ agreement. [The NED is a de facto arm of the CIA.](#)

But the anti-China protests are not the whole story. Western media have ignored Hong Kongers who oppose the U.S.-backed protesters. The Hong Kong Free Press reported on an August 17 of pro-Beijing rally of almost a half million in central Hong Kong.

In the working class North Point neighborhood hundreds rallied at the Hong Kong Federation of Fujian Associations on August 10 with a message that anti-China protesters are not welcome in their neighborhood.

Hong Kong was seized from China in 1842 by the British in the first of the “Opium Wars,” fought by the British empire to impose the opium trade on China. For over a century China was ravaged by drug addiction and imperialist exploitation.

In popular parlance before the revolution, the very name of China was synonymous with hunger.

Since China’s 1949 revolution threw out the imperialists and began the task of building a socialist economy, drug addiction, homelessness, illiteracy, hunger and joblessness are distant memories. [Some 800 million people have been lifted out of poverty in recent decades in what the UN acknowledges as a stunning achievement by any standard of social progress.](#)

In the late 1980s, China allowed capitalist investment, in part to ameliorate the

effect of U.S. sanctions. While basic industry has remained in the hands of the state, led by the Chinese Communist Party, a capitalist economy has grown rapidly alongside socialism.

While the party still exercises a great deal of control over capitalist enterprises, the existence of big capitalists as part of Chinese society is far from without risk.

After negotiations that lasted well over a decade, Hong Kong was repatriated with China in 1997 as a semi-autonomous region. By agreement, capitalism is to operate freely until 2047.

Class divisions have actually deepened much more dramatically in Hong Kong than on the mainland, where living standards continue to improve. One part of the Hong Kong population has evolved into a very rich strata of capitalists.

Hong Kong's geographic proximity to mainland China has enabled its growth as a center for finance capital and a leader in global shipping. Hong Kong has among the highest percentage of billionaires in the world.

But the working class has sunk deeper into poverty with the elderly and children enduring the worst poverty rates.

Separating Hong Kong from China has been a focus of an imperialist campaign ever since the 1997 repatriation.

Keeping Hong Kong separate has been important to the U.S. operations against



China for decades.

“Hong Kong was our listening post.”

One former CIA agent even admitted that

Not all U.S. meddling in Hong Kong has been behind the scenes. Chinese officials have expressed anger that the U.S. State Department has openly and arrogantly met with leaders of the turmoil. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo himself met with long-time anti-China activist Martin Lee in early May. On August 8, [a U.S. diplomat stationed in Hong Kong was photographed meeting with protest organizers in the lobby of a luxury hotel.](#)

China Daily made a detailed report, [“Who is behind Hong Kong protests?”](#) It gives China’s view of the events and points to the U.S. connections between NED and protest organizers. As the China Daily report shows, this connection was confirmed by former Reagan administration official and Hudson Institute senior fellow Michael Pillsbury, whom Trump refers to as the world’s leading expert on China: “We have also funded millions of dollars of programs through the National Endowment for Democracy ... so in that sense the Chinese accusation is not totally false.”

[An editorial in the mainland publication People’s Daily Online](#) summed up: “The radical protesters intend to force the central government to give up governance over Hong Kong ... and give the city back to the Western world. ...

“The Chinese government will never allow extreme opposition and the West to pull Hong Kong into the anti-China camp, nor will it allow the city to slip into long-term chaos or become a base for the West to subvert China’s political system.”

