

Washington's Hand Behind Anti-China Riots in Hong Kong

The escalating and increasingly violent protests in Hong Kong, a capitalist enclave in southern China, are routinely referred to in Western media as a “democracy movement.” In fact, from the outset, the protests have been instigated, advised and funded by U.S. imperialism, fueled by virulent anti-communism and directed against the People’s Republic of China (PRC), of which Hong Kong is a special autonomous region (SAR). See “Hong Kong: Defeat Pro-Imperialist Riots With Revolutionary Workers Mobilization,” in *The Internationalist* No. 57, September-October 2019; and “Hong Kong ‘Democracy’ Riots: Pro-Imperialist, Anti-Communist, Fascist-Infested” in this issue for further information and analysis. Here we detail how this “astroturf” (fake grassroots) movement has been remote-controlled from Washington.

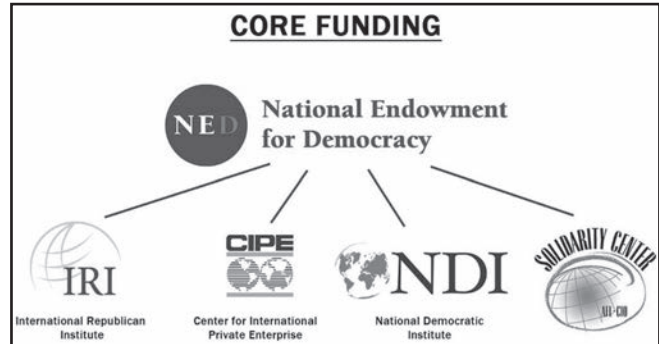
U.S. imperialism has sought to “take back” China ever since the 1949 revolution led by the Communist Party that threw out the imperialist puppet Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist Party (Guomindang, or GMD). Hong Kong has been a pivot for imperialist subversion, both under British colonial rule up to 1997, and since then exploiting its “one country, two systems” autonomous status within China. A key conduit has been the **National Endowment for Democracy** (NED), a U.S. government agency set up in 1983 by Ronald Reagan to fund “non-governmental organizations” (NGOs) and other opposition groups after the covert financing of political parties and pro-imperialist trade unions by the Central Intelligence Agency was exposed in the mid-1970s. The NED has pumped millions of dollars into Hong Kong-based anti-China “civic society” groups over the years.

The leaders of this vehicle for imperialist subversion and mayhem are fairly candid about their role. The NED’s first chairman, Allen Weinstein, told David Ignatius of the *Washington Post* (22 September 1991), “A lot of what we do today was done covertly 25 years ago by the CIA.”¹ Ignatius called the NED the “sugar daddy of overt operations.” Working through these “overt operatives” the NED has, according to its own accounting, funneled over US\$27 million into China just in the last five years, much of it through Hong Kong, for such things as “strengthen grassroots NGOs.” In 2019, this agency of U.S. penetration budgeted US\$448,000 for Hong Kong-specific operations, along with US\$3.8 million for China general projects, \$515,000 for Tibet, and \$1.2 million for Xinjiang and other Uighur operations.²

The current protests began over the pretext of a bill introduced in the Hong Kong Legislative Council last March by the pro-Beijing Hong Kong government of chief executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor that would have permitted the

¹ *Washington Post*, 22 September 1991, quoted in Bill Blum, “Trojan Horse: The National Endowment for Democracy,” in Blum, *Rogue State: A Guide to the World’s Only Superpower* (2005).

² This is roughly the same as for 2018, except for a doubling of the funding last year of Uighur organizations. See <https://www.ned.org/wp-content/themes/ned/search/grant-search.php>.



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U.S. funding is often channeled through conduits.

extradition of criminal suspects to mainland China and elsewhere. Immediately, there was tumult in the LegCo by various opposition legislators from parties referred to locally as “pan-democratic.”³ Chief among them are the **Democratic Party** founded by Martin Lee Chu-ming and the **Civic Party** of Alan Leong Kah-kit, along with the **Labor Party** of Lee Cheuk-yan. All three have long been backed by the U.S., both directly by the NED and through its affiliates, notably the **National Democratic Institute** (NDI), run by the U.S. Democratic Party, **Freedom House**,⁴ and the AFL-CIO “**Solidarity Center**.”⁵

- **Martin Lee** of the Hong Kong Democratic Party received a 1997 NED “Democracy Award.” In June 2001, Lee met with Nancy Pelosi in her first term as speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, seeking support from the U.S.

³ “Havoc in Hong Kong Legislature Over Extradition Bill,” *New York Times*, 12 May 2019.

⁴ Freedom House is a U.S. government-funded “NGO” set up in 1941, which ever since the end of World War II has been a prime purveyor of Cold War anti-communism. In the 1960s it supported the U.S. war on Vietnam under Democrat Lyndon Johnson while criticizing Martin Luther King Jr. for his opposition to the war. In the 1970s it highlighted “Soviet dissidents,” notably the U.S. collaborator Andrei Sakharov, and apologized for the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile. In the 1980s Freedom House was a main propagandist for the anti-Soviet, Polish nationalist Solidarnosc pseudo-union and was central to the U.S.-backed contra war on Sandinista Nicaragua. Since the 1989-92 counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc, Freedom House has been a key piece in U.S. machinations in Ukraine and Venezuela, while particularly targeting Cuba and China.

⁵ Also known as the American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS), the Solidarity Center is the international operations arm of the main U.S. labor federation. While inside the U.S., the AFL-CIO acts as a normal union (i.e., with a sellout leadership that politically subordinates the workers to the capitalist Democratic Party), internationally it is nothing but an arm of U.S. imperialism. It continues the work of the infamous American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) in funding “labor” opposition to leftist and populist regimes at odds with Washington. It is overwhelmingly funded by the U.S. government via the NED, and its representatives work closely with (or frequently are) CIA agents.



Alan Weinstein, founder of the NED, spills the beans.

Congress and the Clinton administration.⁶ In late 2014 he was prominent in the Occupy Central protests or "Umbrella movement" in Hong Kong. Shortly before that, Lee spoke at an April 2014 NED forum in Washington on "Why Democracy in Hong Kong Matters," laying out the agenda of the movement that broke out a few months later.⁷ Lee is the son of a GMD general who fled to Hong Kong after the 1949 Chinese Revolution.

- **Alan Leong**, chairman of the Civic Party, was one of the main speakers at conferences in January 2010 and November 2010 on "Hong Kong Political Reform" co-sponsored by the NDI as part of its "Developing Political Parties" program.⁸ Together with former party leader **Audrey Eu Yuet-mee** and current party leader **Alvin Yeung Ngok-kiu**, the three Civic Party chiefs are leading lights of the Hong Kong Bar Association and intimately involved in the Centre for Comparative and Public Law (CCPL) at Hong Kong University, whose projects (including "Design Democracy Hong Kong") have been funded by the NDI and NED.
- **Lee Cheuk-yan**, the founder and perennial leader of the Hong Kong Labor Party, is also head of the anti-communist **Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU)**, which has received millions of dollars from U.S. conduits. In response to charges that Washington was funding key actors in the 2014 Umbrella movement, the U.S. government broadcaster Voice of America (23 October 2014) brazenly reported: "HKCTU released a statement ... saying it has received \$540,000 in financial support from Solidarity Center, another NED core grantee, over the past seven years."⁹ In 2018, the NED reported that it granted \$200,000 to the Solidarity Center and \$155,000 to the NDI for work in Hong Kong.¹⁰

The NED has received a good deal of attention, but its publicly announced grants of \$6 million annually are only the tip of the iceberg. According to a Congressional Research Service bulletin, *U.S. Assistance Programs in China* (January 2016), the U.S. spent another \$13.5 million on China "democracy" and "rule of law" projects in 2015 alone, while the State Department reports that this yearly funding rose to \$23 million in 2018. The CRS notes, that

⁶ https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09HONGKONG985_a.html

⁷ <https://www.ned.org/events/why-democracy-in-hong-kong-matters/>

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/HongKongPoliticalReformSeries/?fref=nf>

⁹ <https://www.voanews.com/east-asia-pacific/voa-exclusive-us-democracy-group-rebuts-hong-kong-meddling-allegations>

¹⁰ <https://www.ned.org/region/asia/hong-kong-china-2018/> Quoted in "American Gov't, NGOs Fuel and Fund Hong Kong Anti-Extradition Protests," *Mint Press*, 13 June 2019.

"due to political sensitivities in China," for these programs, the U.S. "does not openly disclose the names of its grant recipients." And these are only the publicly announced figures.

U.S. sponsorship of anti-China organizations isn't just something in the past. Shortly before the pandemonium in the Hong Kong legislative council last May, the "United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission," issued a statement denouncing the extradition bill, saying it "could create serious risks for U.S. national security and economic interests" and "increase the territory's susceptibility to Beijing's political coercion and further erode Hong Kong's autonomy."¹¹ The USCESRC is a bipartisan (Democrat and Republican) Congressional body set up in 2000 as China was in the process of joining the World Trade Organization to investigate "national security implications" of U.S.-China economic relations. Every year it issues a huge report pushing for confrontation with China. The 2018 report states:¹²

"China's state-led, market-distorting economic model presents a challenge to U.S. economic and national security interests. ... "In light of China's increasing reach into Hong Kong, some observers argue the territory is losing the unique characteristics and legal protections that make it important to U.S. interests. ... "Members of Congress, the Administration, and the business community have already begun taking bipartisan steps to address China's subversion of international order."

Following the May 7 USCESRC denunciation of the Hong Kong extradition bill, the NED invited several Hong Kong leaders to Washington where on May 14 it held an event on "New Threats to Civil Society and the Rule of Law in Hong Kong."¹³ The delegation included U.S.-financed "democrats" Martin Lee and Lee Cheuk-yan (see above) as well as **Nathan Law** Kwun-chung, the former secretary general of the Hong Kong Federation of Students. Law was a top leader of the 2014 Occupy Central protests and that year met in Washington with Nancy Pelosi and U.S. vice president Joe Biden. Law was also the founding chairman of *Demosistō*, a "localist" Hong Kong party that that was formed in 2016 on a program calling for "self-determination" and "sovereignty" for the territory, meaning separation from China.

In early June, protest against the extradition law moved into the streets. Initially it was fairly tame, led by lawyers from the Progressive Lawyers Group, Law Society and Hong Kong Bar Association, all of them closely associated with the NED-funded CCPL. But by mid-June, a decision was made to escalate the movement, with a mass march of reportedly up to 2 million people. This demonstration was called by the **Civil Human Rights Front** (CHRF), a coalition of various groups aided by the NED. In addition to the Democratic, Civic and Labor parties and the HKCTU, all NED-financed, one of the main components of the Front is the **Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor**, which according to the 2014 VOA article cited above receives a direct subsidy of US\$150,000 a year from the NED.

The CHRF's former convenor was **Johnson Yeung Ching-**

¹¹ https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Research/USCC%20Issue%20Brief_HK%20Extradition%20Bill.pdf

¹² <https://www.uscc.gov/files/000895>

¹³ <https://www.ned.org/events/new-threats-to-civil-society-and-the-rule-of-law-in-hong-kong/>



At May 2019 National Endowment for Democracy forum in Washington, Democratic Party leader Martin Lee (second from left), Labor Party leader Lee Cheuk-yan (second from right) and Nathan Law (right) call for U.S. support to protests.

yin, who was deputy secretary general of the Hong Kong Federation of Students (HKFS) during the 2014 “Umbrella” protests and was also a Hurford youth fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy, which described the HKFS as “a platform for youth engagement in social action.” The current convenor of the CHRF is a member of the League of Social Democrats (LSD), a bourgeois populist party whose most prominent spokesman is **Leung Kwok-hung**, known as “Long Hair,” who has a penchant for Che Guevara t-shirts and is often falsely labeled a Trotskyist (see box page 26).

In November 2018, Leung (along with Nathan Law) attended a conference in Taiwan sponsored by the **Taiwan Foundation for Democracy**, which was set up in partnership with the NED and its president Carl Gershman, of the Cold War anti-communist Social Democrats USA.¹⁴ At the conference, “Long Hair” denounced China as a “new imperial power” and declared that neither the GMD nor the other major Taiwanese party could adequately fight the Chinese Communist Party. And last summer, Leung Kwok-hung was the lead speaker at a rally promoting the reactionary, anti-communist Falun Gong sect. He was quoted in the *Epoch Times* (21 July 2019) praising the “steadfastness” of this well-financed counterrevolutionary outfit.¹⁵

The Cultivation and Care of Imperialist Puppets

U.S. imperialism puts a great deal of effort and money into cultivating and training its bought-and-paid-for “democratic activists.” At the May 14 Washington event, Lynn Lee, the associate director of the NED’s Asia program, observed, “Hong

¹⁴ For more on these social-democratic Cold Warriors, see the article “‘Democratic Socialism’ in the Service of U.S. Imperialism,” in the Internationalist Group pamphlet, *DSA: Fronting for the Democrats* (February 2018).

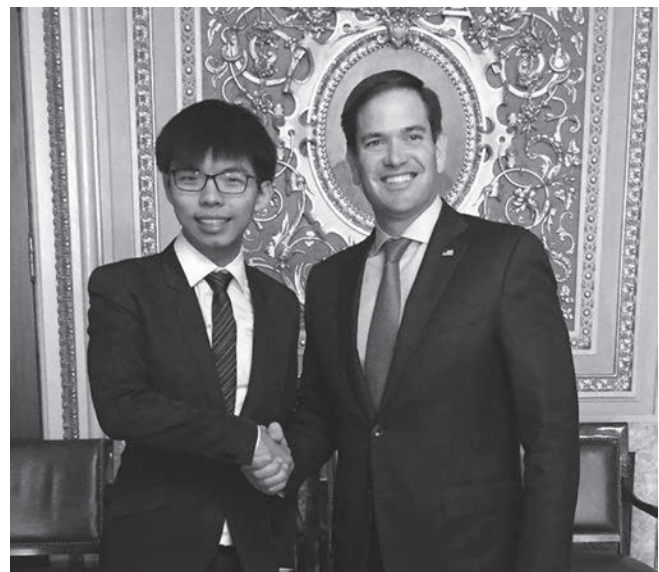
¹⁵ https://www.theepochtimes.com/hundreds-of-falun-gong-practitioners-in-hong-kong-commemorate-20th-anniversary-of-chinas-persecution_3010365.html

Kong is a very strategic place for many of us.” Indeed. Nathan Law responded, “We need some more support in terms of the international level.... Hong Kong as an information hub, as a safe harbor, it’s the forefront of the clash of two values, of authoritarian values and liberal values.” He called on the “international community, the free world” to back the opposition to the extradition law. (Back in 2017, at a “World Movement for Democracy” Assembly held at NED headquarters in Washington, Law received a “Democracy Courage Tribute” from this NED front group.)

In early 2018, a group of U.S. congressmen led by right-wing

Republican senator Marco Rubio nominated Nathan Law along with two other former student leaders of the Umbrella movement, **Joshua Wong** Chi-fung and **Alex Chow** Yong-kang, for the Nobel peace prize (named after the Swedish cannon manufacturer Alfred Nobel) for seeking to “bring political reform and self-determination to Hong Kong.” At age 17, Wong became the teenage poster child of the Occupy Central protests and was lionized by imperialist media and politicians. He was nominated for *Time* magazine’s Person of the Year in 2014, labeled one of the “world’s greatest leaders” by *Fortune* magazine in 2015 and is the star of a Netflix documentary,

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Facebook / Joshua Wong

Joshua Wong with Republican senator Marco Rubio in November 2016. Immediately after election of Donald Trump, Wong was brought to Washington to lobby for China-bashing “Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act.”

Leung Kwok-hung (“Long Hair”) – Hong Kong Social Democrat in the Service of Imperialism

Perhaps the best-known Hong Kong self-proclaimed “socialist” activist promoting anti-China “pro-democracy” protests is Leung Kwok-hung, frequently referred to by his nickname, “Long Hair.” Often falsely identified as a “Trotskyist,”¹ he is a former member of the Hong Kong Legislative Council, was prominent in the 2014 Umbrella movement and is the main spokesman for the League of Social Democrats. “Longhair” is no socialist, much less a supporter of the revolutionary Marxist program of Lenin and Trotsky. His main role, in fact, has been to give a “left” cover to bourgeois anti-China movements, from the current “anti-extradition” protests to the sinister counterrevolutionary sect Falun Gong.

Falun Gong (a/k/a Falun Dafa) is a reactionary U.S.-based cult which sees evolution as a communist plot, calls for the execution of homosexuals, holds that “mixed-blood” children go to hell, and that women’s suffrage is a sign of societal decay. With the support of the imperialists, Falun Gong has amassed an extensive and influential media empire (its flagship paper is the *Epoch Times*) and entertainment operation (the Shen Yun dance company), spreading anti-communism in Hong Kong and the Chinese diaspora around the globe. Leung Kwok-hung has repeatedly spoken on Falun Gong platforms.

“Long Hair” is also enamored of Liu Xiaobo, who was jailed and awarded a Nobel Peace Prize for his role in writing the pro-imperialist anti-communist manifesto “Charter

¹ He was a founder and main leader of the Revolutionary Marxist League which from 1975 to its dissolution in the mid-late 1980s was affiliated with the United Secretariat led by Ernest Mandel.



Leung Kwok-hung (“Longhair”) speaking at event celebrating the pro-imperialist counterrevolutionary Liu Xiaobo.

08,” modeled on Charter 77 of anti-Soviet Czech dissidents. Charter 08 calls for an “economic system of free and fair markets,” and “the transfer of state-owned enterprises to private ownership” – i.e., to restore capitalism. Its signatories include leaders of the Hong Kong Democratic Party, the Civic Party and the League of Social Democrats, among others, and of course “Long Hair” himself.” Liu Xiaobo (who died in 2017) was an open supporter of colonialism, saying: “It took Hong Kong 100 years to become what it is. Given the size of China, certainly it would need 300 years of colonization for it to become like what Hong Kong is today. I even doubt whether 300 years would be enough.”

Liu’s perspective was summed up in his statement that “to choose Westernization is to choose to be human.” And his preferred means of “Westernizing” is also clear: “The free world led by the U.S. fought almost all regimes that trampled on human rights.... The major wars that the U.S. became involved in are all ethically defensible.” The love of U.S. imperialism displayed by Joshua Wong and other youthful Hong Kong protest leaders, promoted by U.S. rulers, reflects the views of their mentors, from the suit-and-tie bourgeois politicians like Martin Lee to Che Guevara t-shirt-wearing fake leftists like “Long Hair.” Leung who not only defends (in the name of “free speech”) Benny Tai’s call at a Taiwan anti-communist seminar for a breakup of China after a counterrevolution, but himself spoke at a Taiwan government-funded, imperialist sponsored anti-communist meeting.

So what else is new? That’s what social democrats do. ■



“Long Hair” at meeting of Taiwan government-funded, NED-sponsored “democracy” foundation.

Wikipedia



Jimmy Lai, publisher of *Apple Daily*, bankroller of 2014 “Umbrella Movement,” at neoconservative Foundation for Defense of Democracies during July 2019 visit to Washington to drum up support for Hong Kong “anti-extradition” protests.

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Joshua: Teenager vs. Superpower in 2017. All with ample backing from the top level of U.S. imperialism.

In September 2015, Joshua Wong was brought to Washington to receive an award from the NED subsidiary Freedom House, along with Martin Lee and **Benny Tai** Yiu-ting, hailing them as “three generations of Hong Kong democracy leaders.” Tai is an associate professor of law at Hong Kong University, who in 2013 wrote an article on “Civil Disobedience’s Deadliest Weapon” and a year later initiated the Occupy protests. He was for a number of years a board member of the NED-funded Centre for Comparative and Public Law and a regular speaker at NED-sponsored events. In 2018, Tai spoke at a seminar of the Taiwan Youth Anti-Communist Corps foreseeing Hong Kong “going independent” as part of a break-up of China following the end of the “dictatorship” (i.e., counterrevolution).¹⁶

Benny Tai’s specialty working with the U.S.-backed CCPL has been designing “democratic” strategies to increase the political leverage of anti-Beijing forces by combining street action with exploiting Hong Kong’s electoral laws inherited from British colonialism, which greatly distort voting results. In 2017, Tai launched Project Storm to win a majority of the District Council seats. He accomplished this last November when the main pro-Beijing party, DAB got 17% of the vote, the most of any party, and as much as the two main anti-Beijing parties combined, but the DAB got only 21 seats, while the Democratic and Civic parties together got 123 seats.¹⁷ No

¹⁶ <https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/2139698/hong-kong-government-shocked-occupy-leader-benny-tai>

¹⁷ The pro-Beijing Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (DAB) received 492,042 votes. Result: 21 seats. The anti-Beijing Democratic Party (“pro-democracy”), the second-largest party, won 362,275 votes. Result: 91 seats. The Civic Party, the third-largest, got 141,713 votes. Result: 32 seats.

doubt, along with NED cash, U.S. experts on election manipulation helped out in this exercise in “Design Democracy Hong Kong.”

The biggest single bankroller of protests in Hong Kong has been media mogul **Jimmy Lai** Chee-ying, the publisher of *Apple Daily*, the territory’s second-largest newspaper (and largest in Taiwan), and owner of Next Digital. His media offerings combine racy tabloid material and virulent anti-communism. Lai fancies himself the “head of opposition media” and is often described as the “Rupert Murdoch of Asia,” referring to the Australian media tycoon who owns the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post* and Fox News in the U.S., the *Times* of London, *The Sun* and Sky TV in Britain, and hundreds of other media outlets. In 2014 Jimmy Lai financed, publicized and braintrusted Occupy Central, while pouring US\$1.2 million into the coffers of anti-China parties and politicians.¹⁸

This past summer Jimmy Lai was in close touch with the Trump administration to get backing for the Hong Kong protests. According to *Bloomberg News* (10 July), the Hong Kong media mogul “met with National Security Advisor John Bolton on Wednesday, after meetings earlier this week with Vice President Mike Pence, Secretary of State Michael Pompeo and Republican Senators Ted Cruz, Cory Gardner and Rick Scott.... The succession of meetings appeared calculated to send a message of support from the administration for protests that have wracked Hong Kong in recent weeks....” Lai has also

¹⁸ A well-researched article, “Behind a made-for-TV Hong Kong protest narrative, Washington is backing nativism and mob violence,” by Dan Cohen in the online magazine *The Gray Zone* (17 August 2019) cites leaked e-mails published by the *South China Morning Post* (22 July and 4 August 2014) showing that Lai gave US\$637,000 to the Democratic Party and US\$382,000 to the Civic Party, as well as US\$115,000 to the Hong Kong Civic Education Foundation and Hong Kong Democratic Development Network, both co-founded by Rev. Chu Yiu-ming, who in turn co-founded Occupy Central together with Benny Tai. Lai also spent US\$446,000 on Occupy Central’s 2014 unofficial referendum.



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Democratic speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi with Joshua Wong at press conference, 19 September 2019, when the Hong Kong protest leader testified before Congress.

financed **Anson Chan** Fang On-sang, the former Hong Kong chief secretary hand-picked by British imperialism, who in March of last year traveled to Washington to meet with Pelosi and Pence asking for U.S. intervention over the extradition bill.

Hands-on Management of Washington's Pawns

Beyond the funding, awards and junkets, the leaders of the recent Hong Kong protests have directly appealed to the U.S. to aid the “pro-democracy” (anti-China) camp. The U.S. flags that have been prominent in demonstrations and the call to “President Trump, Please Liberate Hong Kong” have gotten a lot of media attention. This was the work of the Hong Kong National Party, which has been banned by the Hong Kong government for advocating independence from China. But the focus of the direct appeal to U.S. imperialism has been to push for the “Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act,” to impose sanctions on pro-China Hong Kong officials. Barely a week after the election of Donald Trump as president in November 2016, Joshua Wong was brought to Washington by Republican senators Rubio and Tom Cotton to re-introduce this bill.

In May 2017, Wong was back in D.C. being shepherded around by Martin Lee, visiting the Heritage Foundation, the Washington offices of the *New York Times* and the *Financial Times*, and lobbying Congress for the bill. The main demand of the September 8 march to the U.S. Consulate in Hong Kong with dozens of stars and stripes flags flying was to pass the bill. And in October and November, the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate nearly unanimously passed this act, in what House speaker Pelosi called “day of great bipartisanship” in the Capitol. Despite the party-line divide over the impeachment of Donald Trump, both the partner parties of U.S. imperialism (including ostensible “democratic socialists” like Bernie Sanders and “The Squad” of freshmen Democrats in the House) can agree on bashing China.

And just in case anyone should seriously doubt that the Hong Kong protests are calling for U.S. intervention and that Washington is manipulating these puppets, officials of the U.S. consulate met privately with the leaders of the 2014 Umbrella movement and of the “anti-extradition” protests in 2019. In March 2016, Occupy Central leaders **Edward Leung** Tin-kei and **Ray Wong** Toi-yeung were photographed meeting with two consulate staffers in a Hong Kong restaurant,¹⁹ and in August 2019, Chinese media published a photo of Julie Eadeh, a “political officer” of the U.S. consulate, meeting with Joshua Wong and Nathan Law. Washington responded by denouncing Beijing as “thuggish” for publicizing this undeniable evidence of coordination between the protest leaders and the U.S. government.²⁰

Where Wong and Law were founders of Demosistō, which

¹⁹ <https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/1922922/not-some-kind-secret-meeting-hong-kong-indigenous-leaders>

²⁰ <http://www.thestandard.com.hk/section-news/section/21/210436/Joshua-laugh-at-collusion-claims>

called for Hong Kong “self-determination,” Leung and Ray Wong were leaders of Hong Kong Indigenous, a “localist” party which openly calls for independence from China. The *New York Times* (15 August 2019) noted that “Mr. Leung penned the slogan, ‘Retake Hong Kong, Revolution of Our Times,’ in 2016,” while running for a seat in the Hong Kong Legislative Council. That slogan became the watchword of the 2019 Hong Kong riots. The *Times* account also noted that Hong Kong Indigenous “began harassing mainland shoppers in what it called ‘retake’ actions. Hong Kong’s colonial-era flag became a banner of resistance in what at times became an ugly xenophobic campaign against mainlanders, with some Hong Kongers dehumanizing them as ‘locusts’.”

Liberate Hong Kong from Imperialism and Capitalist Exploitation

While the bourgeois media, Democratic and Republican politicians and almost the entire Western left have hailed the 2019 Hong Kong riots, what we have laid out here in considerable detail demonstrates conclusively that virtually every group and every leader of these anti-communist protests has been on the take from U.S. imperialism and/or up to their necks in Washington’s machinations promoting counterrevolution in China.

Western imperialists have long yearned to “take back” China, and Hong Kong is the focal point of U.S. intrigue. The PRC is the product of the 1949 Chinese Revolution, which by overthrowing capitalism in the most populous country on earth represents a historic gain for humankind. While the anti-communist Hong Kong protests in 2014 and 2019 have aimed at separating (“retaking”) Hong Kong and ultimately overturning the revolution, the League for the Fourth International defends the bureaucratically deformed Chinese workers state against counterrevolution from without and within, calling on the working class to oust the sell-out Stalinist bureaucracy that undermines the revolutionary gains and to replace it with genuine workers soviet democracy. Hong Kong’s autonomy under the watchword of “one country, two systems” is a betrayal, the embodiment of the vain search for “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism, which is now blowing up in Beijing’s face.

As revolutionary Marxists, defenders of the Bolshevik program of Lenin and Trotsky, the LFI denounces the counterrevolutionary Hong Kong protests and their imperialist sponsors. We call to end the special status of this capitalist outpost, to expropriate the entire bourgeoisie (not only the Jimmy Lais but also the Jack Mas and other pro-Beijing millionaires and billionaires, in Hong Kong and the rest of China) and to fully integrate Hong Kong into the PRC. We seek to build a Chinese Trotskyist party on an internationalist program to defend the gains of the 1949 revolution and to extend them, fighting for the revolutionary reunification of China through socialist revolution in Taiwan, and taking forward the fight for international socialist revolution across the globe to put an end to the oppressive system of capitalist imperialism once and for all. ■