II. Human Rights

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Liu Xiaobo’s Death in July 2017

Imprisoned writer Liu Xiaobo—an advocate of democracy and non-violent political reform and China’s only Nobel Peace Prize laureate—died of liver cancer on July 13, 2017, in Shenyang municipality, Liaoning province, on medical parole. In the nine years prior to his death, he spent one year in pretrial detention and nearly eight years in prison on the charge of “inciting subversion of state power” for his coauthorship of the political treatise Charter 08 and several essays critical of the Chinese Communist Party and government. Granted medical parole on June 26, 2017, Liu remained under official surveillance at a hospital in Shenyang, serving his 11-year prison sentence, until his death. Liu’s political activism dated back to the 1989 Tiananmen protests, for which Chinese authorities imprisoned him for 21 months; Liu subsequently served 3 years of reeducation through labor from 1996 through 1999 for criticizing government policies. Before his final detention in December 2008, Liu was a prolific essayist and poet and active within Chinese democracy and writers’ advocacy communities.

International media outlets, human rights organizations and proponents, representatives of foreign governments, the UN human rights commissioner, among others, expressed concern and censure regarding the Chinese government’s treatment of Liu Xiaobo and his wife, the poet and artist Liu Xia. Condemnation focused on Chinese authorities’ denial of Liu’s request to receive medical treatment outside China and restrictions on access in the hospital for Liu’s family. In the hospital, Liu reportedly wrote the forward to an unpublished collection of Liu Xia’s photography, but it is unknown if he was able to speak openly about his conditions and medical treatment in prison, his political and familial concerns, his wishes with regard to his burial, or any other matters while under official surveillance. The government and Party continued to isolate Liu Xia in extralegal confinement after her husband’s death, a condition that Chinese authorities imposed on her starting in October 2010 when the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced that it would award the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize to Liu Xiaobo, despite ongoing calls for her release.

Observers commented on the combination of propaganda and control in the limited Chinese media coverage of Liu’s illness and death. The Party-run English-language media outlet Global Times, together with other government and Party actors, engaged in an “all-out government propaganda effort to counter domestic and international criticism,” according to Radio Free Asia. An academic group in Canada that studies censorship reported Chinese censors deleted text and images about Liu Xiaobo sent via the instant messaging tool WeChat before content reached intended recipients. Individuals who sought to commemorate Liu’s death in China faced government harassment, including at least nine detained by authorities in Guangdong, Fujian, and Liaoning provinces.
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International Standards on Freedom of Expression

The Chinese government and Communist Party continued to restrict expression in contravention of international human rights standards, including Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. According to the ICCPR—which China signed but has not ratified—and as reiterated by the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, countries may impose certain restrictions or limitations on freedom of expression, if such restrictions are provided by law and are necessary for the purpose of respecting the “rights or reputations of others” or protecting national security, public order, public health, or morals. An October 2009 UN Human Rights Council resolution declares restrictions on the “discussion of government policies and political debate,” “peaceful demonstrations or political activities, including for peace or democracy,” and “expression of opinion and dissent” are inconsistent with Article 19(3) of the ICCPR. The UN Human Rights Committee noted in a 2011 General Comment that restrictions on freedom of expression specified in Article 19(3) should be interpreted narrowly and that the restrictions “may not put in jeopardy the right itself.”

Freedom of the Press

International non-governmental organization Reporters Without Borders again ranked China among the five worst countries for press freedom in its annual Press Freedom Index. The Chinese government continued to be one of the worst jailers of professional and citizen journalists, with estimates of individuals in detention or imprisoned ranging from 38 to approximately 100.

POLITICAL CONTROL OF THE NEWS MEDIA

The government and Party continued to prioritize control of the press and media outlets for “maintaining social and political stability, and in advancing [the Party’s] policy goals.” Party General Secretary Xi Jinping and state media continued to stress the “principle of Party character” (dangxing yuanze) in the media, echoing Xi’s highly publicized statement in February 2016 that the news media “must be surnamed Party” (bixu xing dang). At a November 2016 meeting with the All-China Journalists Association (ACJA), Xi urged media workers to “embody the principle of Party character,” and “be reliable for the Party and the people.” The ACJA expounded on Xi’s November speech in the Party’s theoretical journal Seeking Truth, describing the function of “supervision by public opinion” (yulun jiandu)—an official phrase debuted in 1987 to give the media some scope to hold officials accountable in the public interest—as a form of positive, mainstream propaganda to pacify the public. In a Xinhua report of the ACJA meeting, a senior China Central Television executive declared positive news reporting and “supervision by public opinion” are not contrary to each other. Moreover, the government has encouraged, and in some cases paid, social media users to post positive comments about the government and Party to influence public opinion.
based researchers have estimated these types of social media comments to number around 448 million per year.46

International experts have cautioned that media serving “as government mouthpieces instead of as independent bodies operating in the public interest” are a major challenge to free expression.47 In the case of the government and Party’s ongoing crackdown on human rights lawyers and advocates that began in and around July 2015, official print and television media outlets broadcasted forced confessions of human rights lawyers this past year.48 State- and Party-run media outlets The Paper, Legal Daily, and Procuratorial Daily published an almost identical article under different bylines on December 16 and 17, 2016, that ascribed a litany of criminal offenses to Jiang Tianyong,49 a lawyer disbarred in 2009 in connection with his rights defense efforts.50 On March 1, 2017, the Party-run media outlet Global Times published an article about Jiang that alleged he fabricated the torture claims of fellow rights lawyer Xie Yang.51 On March 2, Phoenix TV, a Hong Kong-based station, reportedly broadcast a video of Jiang admitting to this allegation.52 Chen Jian’gang, one of Xie Yang’s defense lawyers, repudiated the Global Times article and the Phoenix TV broadcast and affirmed his role in transcribing Xie’s claims in the course of three meetings.53 [See Section II—Criminal Justice and Section III—Access to Justice for more information on Xie Yang and Jiang Tianyong as well as developments in other cases of human rights lawyers and advocates detained as part of the July 2015 crackdown.]

CENSORSHIP OF NEWS WEBSITES, HARASSMENT OF JOURNALISTS

Pervasive government and Party control and censorship contributed to the shrinking space for journalism and public debate.54 The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) observed that “the Communist Party of China . . . targeted the last few so-called ‘liberals’ in the media” in 2016, demonstrated by the closure of the reform-minded journal Yanhuang Chunqiu;55 the suspension of Consensus, a website known for open discussion and commentary;56 the shutdown of the economic think tank Unirule’s website;57 and the two-month suspension in October 2016 of Caixin news articles for republication in other news media.58 The government’s punitive action against Caixin was for its alleged “problematic guidance” (daoxiang wenti)59 in covering the opposition of some lawyers to revised administrative measures for law firms, which prohibited lawyers from using media outlets to publicize their cases.60

The Party regularly issues propaganda directives to control Chinese news media through the Central Propaganda Department and its lower level bureaus. Censored topics include Tibet, Taiwan, and Falun Gong, as well as coverage of “sensitive” political anniversaries and events, such as the anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen protests and their violent suppression.61 This past year, some of the official censorship directives reposted to the U.S.-based website China Digital Times62 targeted Liu Xiaobo’s medical parole63 and reports on natural disasters,64 public health,65 and pollution.66 In June 2017, the Central Propaganda Department reportedly ordered Chinese news media not to report independently on a landslide in Sichuan province; journalists reportedly received government press
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releases upon which to base their reports. An international journalists’ consortium selected nine investigative news stories published in domestic Chinese media outlets in 2016 that illustrated a range of public interest reporting. China Digital Times, however, posted official censorship directives for at least three of those news articles or their subject matter.

In spite of government-imposed censorship, media experts have pointed to a “semipolitical” sphere, in which some Chinese journalists continued to cover “...pertinent social issues such as official accountability, gender equality, and social welfare, amongst others.” Another commentator remarked that the “highly personal” focus of this form of reporting may “strip many articles of their larger, possibly charged, political contexts.” For example, two Party-affiliated media outlets, Beijing News and Sixth Tone, reported on the case of a man forced by local family planning authorities in Yunnan province to undergo a vasectomy in February 2017. Beijing News published an interview with the man without additional analysis of the incident. While Sixth Tone noted the government’s “strict birth control measures since the 1980s...” it emphasized local “unorthodox family planning practices,” rather than examining national family planning policy more broadly. [For more information on this case and the implementation of population planning policy, see Section II—Population Control.]

Several Chinese journalists and media outlets argued for the protection of journalists’ physical safety, government accountability, and guarantees of their right to report on events in the public interest following incidents of physical violence against and obstruction of journalists on assignment this past year. In December 2016, township-level police in Qiqiha'er municipality, Heilongjiang province, reportedly beat up two journalists from the official media outlet China Education News who were investigating whistleblower allegations about a local school’s lunch program. Beijing News demanded accountability from local officials for the violence against its reporters during a February 2017 report on a fire in Beijing municipality, noting that information on major emergencies is in the public interest. Xinhua reporters demanded accountability in the face of official obstruction when they attempted to report on the case of a teenager who may have committed suicide or been bullied to death in April 2017 at a school in Sichuan province.

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<th>Criminal Prosecution of Citizen Journalists</th>
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<td>Given the heavy government censorship of official and market-oriented media outlets, citizen journalists in China are a key source of information on labor protests, petitioning the government for redress of grievances, and other rights defense efforts. According to Chinese Human Rights Defenders, the detentions this past year of the founders of websites that featured citizen journalist reports demonstrated the government’s drive “to criminalize those who document human rights abuses and advocate for better human rights protections.”</td>
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### Criminal Prosecution of Citizen Journalists—Continued

- **Lu Yuyu, founder of “Not the News.”** In August 2017, the Dali Municipal People’s Court in the Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan province, sentenced citizen journalist Lu Yuyu to four years in prison on the charge of “picking quarrels and provoking trouble.”86 The same court reportedly released his collaborator and girlfriend **Li Tingyu** on bail sometime after holding a closed trial for her on the same charge in April 2017.88 Lu began documenting mass incidents, such as labor protests and strikes, across China in 2011; he and Li posted their work to Chinese and international social media platforms under the names “Not the News” and “Wickedonna.”89 During Lu’s trial in June 2017, Lu rejected the prosecution’s accusation that he had fabricated information about mass incidents, emphasizing his aim to document history and make it available for public access.90

- **Liu Feiyue, founder of Civil Rights & Livelihood Watch website.** In November 2016, authorities from Suizhou municipality, Hubei province, detained Liu Feiyue, editor of the human rights website Civil Rights & Livelihood Watch (CRLW),91 arresting him in December on the charge of “subversion of state power.”92 Radio Free Asia reported that authorities added the charge “illegally supplying state secrets or intelligence for an overseas entity” in August 2017 to the case against him.93 CRLW has reported on a range of human rights violations in China, such as protests and demonstrations by petitioners and military veterans, and on the forcible commitment of individuals without mental illness to psychiatric facilities as a “stability maintenance” tool.94

- **Huang Qi, founder of 64 Tianwang website.** In November 2016, public security authorities from Sichuan province detained Huang Qi, the founder of 64 Tianwang, and subsequently arrested him in December on the charge of “illegally supplying state secrets or intelligence for an overseas entity.”95 Based in Chengdu municipality, Sichuan, Huang previously served prison sentences for posting articles about the violent suppression of the 1989 Tiananmen protests and Falun Gong,96 and for aiding the parents of children who died when poorly constructed school buildings collapsed during the 2008 earthquake in Sichuan.97

- **64 Tianwang volunteers.** A number of volunteer citizen journalists for 64 Tianwang98 were detained this past year or served prison sentences. In September 2016, authorities in several locations in China detained five 64 Tianwang volunteers who planned to report on the G20 Summit in Hangzhou municipality, Zhejiang province.99 In June 2017, authorities criminally detained one of these volunteers, **Yang Xiuqiong,** for disclosing information about Huang Qi’s case.100 In the cases of two additional 64 Tianwang volunteers, authorities in Zhuji municipality, Zhejiang, reportedly released Yang Dongying on November 5, 2016, upon her completion of a sentence of one year and six months related to her criticism of local police.101 **Wang Jing** continued to serve a four-year sentence in Jilin province related to her 2014 64 Tianwang report on a self-immolation incident at Tiananmen Square, despite multiple requests for medical parole due to brain cancer.102
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Challenges for Foreign Journalists

Several international organizations issued reports on the difficult working conditions for foreign journalists in China, including PEN America (September 2016), the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of China (FCCC, November 2016), and the International Federation of Journalists (January 2017). These reports detailed a range of methods used by the Chinese government to restrict and harass foreign journalists, including, as PEN America noted, “physical abuse, physical and online surveillance, denying or threatening to deny reporters’ visas, restricting reporters’ access to certain areas of the country, and harassment of sources and news assistants.” Selected cases from this reporting year included the following:

- **Detention.** In September 2016, local officials reportedly briefly detained foreign journalists covering protests in Wukan village, Lufeng county, Shanwei municipality, Guangdong province. Plainclothes public security officers reportedly assaulted several journalists from Hong Kong media in Wukan and detained them for five hours at the Lufeng Public Security Bureau before expelling them from Lufeng.

- **Harassment.** A BBC correspondent and crew faced at least two incidents of harassment and manhandling while trying to interview an independent candidate for a local election in Beijing municipality and a petitioner in Hunan province in November 2016 and March 2017, respectively.

- **Surveillance.** A Los Angeles Times reporter described tight surveillance of foreign journalists on a government-organized tour in 2016 to Tibetan autonomous areas of Sichuan province, noting: “Everything was recorded. The foreign journalists recorded the tour guides, and the Chinese reporters recorded the foreign ones. The shadowy men recorded us all.”

- **Blocked access.** The government also continued to block online access to the New York Times, Bloomberg, Reuters, the Economist, and Time, as well as to YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. The U.S. company Apple removed the New York Times application (app) from its stores in China in December 2016, reportedly at the request of Chinese authorities.

Chinese citizens continued to be at risk of sanctions for speaking with foreign journalists. The April 2017 judgment against human rights lawyer Li Heping cited his having spoken with foreign media as one of several activities that allegedly “subverted state power.” Radio Free Asia reported that following its article in March 2017 on petitioning activities by a group of private school substitute, and kindergarten teachers, security authorities had “chats” with some of the teachers, surveilled their phone calls and social media posts (blocking some messages), and threatened detention if the teachers spoke with foreign reporters again. The threat of retaliation, moreover, has resulted in a chilling effect: According to PEN America, Chinese expert sources were “less willing to share information or opinions with foreign media for fear of government reprisal.” Specific examples of reprisals reported on during this past year included the following:
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• **Imprisonment.** In November 2016, the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region High People’s Court upheld a 19-year sentence against Zhang Haitao, an electronics salesman and rights defender, for “inciting subversion of state power” and “stealing, spying, buying and illegally supplying state secrets or intelligence for an overseas entity.” Zhang criticized the government’s ethnic policies, among other issues, in his online writings and interviews with overseas news media.

• **Detention.** Tashi Wangchug remained in pretrial detention on the charge of “inciting separatism” for his efforts to promote Tibetan language education in Yushu (Kyegudo) city, Yushu (Yulshul) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai province. In March 2016, authorities arrested him on the “separatism” charge due to his contact with New York Times journalists whose two articles and a short documentary about him were published in the New York Times in November 2015.

• **Travel denial.** In March 2017, security authorities in Qianyang county, Baoji municipality, Shaanxi province, reportedly refused to issue a passport and Hong Kong-Macau travel permit to Lu Dongli, a long-time petitioner, due allegedly to his activities connected to the July 2015 crackdown on human rights lawyers and legal advocates and for speaking with foreign reporters.

• **Dismissal.** In April 2017, the Chinese Academy of Governance, a training institute for government officials in Beijing, removed a retired professor from an expert committee at the institute for presenting “flawed viewpoints” during interviews with foreign media in 2016.

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Intensifying Government and Party Control of the Internet and Social Media

CENSORSHIP

The government and Party employ methods to implement Internet and social media policies aimed at controlling the flow of information in order to, as one expert said, “guide the narrative in the direction that the state determines.” Reports this past year identified an intensification of control over the Internet and social media platforms, attributing it, in part, to the upcoming 19th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party. The PRC Cybersecurity Law took effect on June 1, 2017, giving online censorship “the weight of law,” according to the Wall Street Journal. Also in June, the Cyberspace Administration of China reportedly ordered the closure of 90 entertainment and gossip social media accounts, purportedly to bring the service providers into compliance with the Cybersecurity Law and “ensure political security.”

Social media providers in China play a major role in carrying out censorship as required by the government’s legal and regulatory requirements. The chairman of Weibo, a Twitter-like social media platform, reportedly stated that Weibo had been censoring fake news for years following the news that the U.S. company Facebook had taken steps to stop the spread of misinformation. The domestic company Tencent shut down 45,000 WeChat accounts
for a six-month period—approximately September 2016 through February 2017—allegedly for rumor-mongering, though some WeChat group facilitators speculated that Tencent closed their groups because of politically sensitive content.\textsuperscript{133} [For more information on the PRC Cybersecurity Law, see Section III—Commercial Rule of Law.]

Citizen Lab, an information technology and human rights research center based in Canada, published findings on content filtering of social media platforms WeChat and Weibo, observing a high level of flexibility and speed in response to issues and events deemed politically sensitive.\textsuperscript{134} Liu Xiaobo’s death;\textsuperscript{135} the names of human rights lawyers, including many of those ensnared in the July 2015 crackdown;\textsuperscript{136} and information about the Kalachakra, a major Tibetan Buddhist teaching convened by the Dalai Lama in India, were among the range of keywords, keyword combinations, and images filtered by censors during this reporting year.\textsuperscript{137} The consequences of the censorship are serious, according to Citizen Lab: in the case of the rights defenders, international advocacy via social messaging “fail[s] to reach domestic audiences in China due to information control practices.”\textsuperscript{138} Restricted access to information about events like the Kalachakra effectively constrains Tibetan Buddhists’ religious freedom and right to freedom of movement and assembly.\textsuperscript{139}

\textbf{CLOSING DOWN ACCESS TO VPNS}

The Chinese government took aggressive action\textsuperscript{140} during this reporting year to limit online users’ attempts to circumvent the Chinese government’s censorship hardware and software—its “Great Firewall”\textsuperscript{141}—by means of virtual private networks (VPNs) to access to prohibited websites and social media platforms.\textsuperscript{142} These efforts included a notice in January 2017 from the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) requiring government approval for VPN service providers in China\textsuperscript{143} and the publication by the Chongqing Municipality Public Security Bureau in March of administrative punishment guidelines for improper corporate or personal VPN use within Chongqing, a province-level municipality.\textsuperscript{144} Commentators raised concerns that these regulatory efforts “effectively [put] most of the country’s providers of VPNS in violation of the law.”\textsuperscript{145} According to Bloomberg News, MIIT authorities moved to prohibit individual use of VPN technology, directing state-run telecommunications companies in July to block such access by February 2018.\textsuperscript{146} MIIT refuted Bloomberg’s report via The Paper, asserting it had not issued a directive toward that goal; rather, the targets of its January 2017 notice were VPN service providers lacking official approval.\textsuperscript{147} In a similar vein, a provincial branch of the Cyberspace Administration of China contacted five e-commerce platforms in August, warning them to stop selling illegal VPNS.\textsuperscript{148} In the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), authorities took criminal measures against VPN users: Fei Chang Dao, a blog that monitors freedom of speech in China, reported the case of Tian Weigu, whom authorities in Kuaitun city, Yili (II) Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture, XUAR, sentenced to three years’ imprisonment on the charge of “inciting ethnic hatred” after he circumvented the government’s censorship technology to post
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comments on external social media platforms. In another case from the XUAR, in October 2016, police in Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture reportedly detained an individual for downloading VPN software, referring to it as "violent and terrorist software." [For more information on this case, see Section IV—Xinjiang.]

Punishing Citizens’ Free Expression

The government and Party continued to violate international standards on the right to freedom of expression, in part by using laws and regulations to prosecute speech the government finds politically sensitive. In addition to the Party and government censorship mechanisms used to control official narratives discussed earlier in this section, the Commission observed judicial and legislative developments this past year that aimed to protect the Party and government’s version of the “national historical narrative.” In October 2016, the Supreme People’s Court (SPC) released four civil law model cases about the purported libel of several World War II and Korean War era figures, commenting that the protection of heroes’ reputations and honor are linked to “core socialist values” and the protection of the public interest. SPC President Zhou Qiang subsequently urged provincial high people’s court presidents at a January 2017 meeting to “develop judicial interpretations for cases that harm the reputations of heroes and historical figures; to protect leaders and heroic martyrs according to law; and to resolutely defend the Party and People’s Liberation Army’s glorious history.” In March, the National People’s Congress passed a code of civil law, which took effect on October 1, 2017; the law contains a provision to impose civil liability on those who harm the “names, portraits, reputations and honor” of heroes and martyrs. This provision was a late addition to the draft civil code, reportedly in reaction to one of the model cases.

This past year, authorities took punitive action against Chinese officials, journalists, writers, publishers, and university professors, including disciplinary action, job termination, detention, and imprisonment for speech critical of President and Party General Secretary Xi Jinping, former leader Mao Zedong, and political campaigns and events of modern Chinese history. A scholar observed that the sensitivity around criticism of Xi Jinping and the Party reflects “a leadership worried about political agitation and social unrest as disruptive reforms advance.” Fei Chang Dao posted the court judgments of citizens sentenced to prison terms related to political opinions shared on social media platforms on the charges of “picking quarrels and provoking trouble” and “defamation.” In April 2017, a court in Shandong province sentenced long-time petitioner Wang Jiangfeng to two years’ imprisonment on the charge of “picking quarrels and provoking trouble” after sharing material within two private social media chat groups that allegedly “seriously disparaged the individual reputations of Mao Zedong and Xi Jinping.” An ethnic Korean rights advocate Kwon Pyong (Quan Ping) “disappeared” on October 1, 2016, shortly after posting online a photo of himself wearing a T-shirt that allegedly mocked Xi Jinping. Authorities in Yanji city, Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, Jilin province, later indicted Kwon on the charge of “inciting subversion of state power.”
Notes to Section II—Freedom of Expression


4 Liaoning Prison Administrative Bureau, “Liu Xiaobo Approved for Medical Parole Due to Illness” [Liu xiaobo yin bing bei guizhun baowai juji], 26 June 17.

5 Dui Hua Foundation, “Liu Xiaobo Granted Medical Parole,” 26 June 17. Dui Hua Foundation noted that, under Chinese law, “[i]t is not correct to say that the prisoner granted medical parole is ‘free,’ nor is it correct to say that the prisoner has been ‘released.’ The prisoner is still serving his/or her sentence, albeit in a location other than the prison itself.”


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25 Masashi Crete-Nishihata et al., “Remembering Liu Xiaobo,” University of Toronto, Munk School of Global Affairs, Citizen Lab, 16 July 17.


33 UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 34, Article 19, Freedom of Opinion and Expression, CCPR/C/GC/34, 12 September 11, para. 21.


37 David Bandurski, “The Making of a Good Party Reporter,” University of Hong Kong, Journalism and Media Studies Centre, China Media Project, 3 January 17.


39 All-China Journalists Association, “Diligently Work at Being a Media Worker on Whom the Party and People Can Rely” [Nuli zuo dang he renmin xinlai de xinwen gongzuozhe—xi jinping zongshuji zhongyao baoxiao], Xinhua, 7 November 16.


41 All-China Journalists Association, “Diligently Work at Being a Media Worker on Whom the Party and People Can Rely” [Nuli zuo dang he renmin xinlai de xinwen gongzuozhe], Seeking Truth, 31 December 16. See also Wu Jing and Wang Sibei, “Xi Jinping: Be Reliable News Media Workers for the Party and the People” [Xi jinping: zuo dang he renmin xinlai de xinwen gongzuozhe], Xinhua, 7 November 16.


43 All-China Journalists Association, “Diligently Work at Being a Media Worker on Whom the Party and People Can Rely” [Nuli zuo dang he renmin xinlai de xinwen gongzuozhe], Seeking Truth, 31 December 16. See also Wu Jing and Wang Sibei, “Xi Jinping: Be Reliable News Media Workers for the Party and the People” [Xi jinping: zuo dang he renmin xinlai de xinwen gongzuozhe], Xinhua, 7 November 16.

44 Wu Jing et al., “Be a Reliable News Media Worker for the Party and the People—Hugely Enthusiastic Responses Among News Workers to General Secretary Xi Jinping’s Important Speech” [Zuo dang he renmin xinlai de xinwen gongzuozhe—xi jinping zongshuji zhongyao jianghua zai guangda xinwen gongzuozhe zhong yi qin renlie fangxian], Xinhua, 8 November 16.

45 China’s Information Controls, Global Media Influence, and Cyber Warfare Strategy, Hearings of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 4 May 17, Testimony of Xiao Qiang, Adjunct Professor, Director, School of Information, University of California, Berkeley, and Founder and Chief Editor of China Digital Times. 2. See also Mary Gallagher and Talu Miller, “Can the Chinese Government Really Control the Internet? We Found Cracks in the Great Firewall.” Washington Post, Monkey Cage (blog), 21 February 17.

46 Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts, “How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, Not Engaged Argument,” Harvard Univer-
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sity, Faculty Page of Gary King, last visited 19 July 17, American Political Science Review (forthcoming), 34; China's Information Controls, Global Media Influence, and Cyber Warfare Strategy, Hearing of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 4 May 17; Testimony of Margaret E. Roberts, Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of California, San Diego, 2.


52“Global Times’ Slanders Jiang Tianyong for Fabricating Xie Yang’s Torture, Jin Bianlian Plans To Bring Lawsuit Against Authorities for Defamation” (‘Huanshi’ dihui jiang tianyong shexian weifa fanzui bei yifa caiqu xingshi qiangzhi cuoshi), The Paper, 16 December 16; Cai Changchun, “Jiang Tianyong, Suspected of Breaching the Law, Placed Under Criminal Compulsory Measures According to Law” (Jiang tianyong shexian weifa fanzui bei yifa caiqu xingshi qiangzhi cuoshi), Procuratorial Daily, 17 December 16.


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56David Bandurski, “The End of Consensus,” University of Hong Kong, Journalism and Media Studies Centre, China Media Project, 3 October 16; Tom Tsui, “China’s Consensus Net, a Website for Open Intellectual Discussion, Has Suddenly Shut Down,” Quartz, 3 October 16.

57“Chinese Liberal Think Tank Slams Beijing Censors After Website and Media Accounts Shut Down,” South China Morning Post, 24 February 17.

58David Bandurski, “Speak Not of Lawyers Speaking Out,” University of Hong Kong, Journalism and Media Studies Centre, China Media Project, 12 October 16; Caixin Online Temporarily Suspended for Two Months for Reporting With ‘Problematic Guidance’” (Caixin wang yin baodao “daoxiang wenti” bei zanting zhuanzai liang ge yue), Radio France Internationale, 11 October 16; China Digital Times, “Mintruth: Two-Month Ban on Republishing Caixin Content,” 11 October 16.

59Ibid. The government’s criticism of Caixin’s “problematic guidance” may be a reference to the “theory of guidance,” a government term from the 1990s that allowed space for market-oriented media but required “correct political guidance.” For the “theory of guidance,” see Qiao Mu, “Stuck in the Middle,” Oriental Daily, 13 February 17, translated in University of Hong Kong, Journalism and Media Studies Centre, China Media Project, 13 February 17.

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Internationale, 11 October 16; China Digital Times, “Minitrue: Two-Month Ban on Republishing Caixin Content,” 11 October 16.


67 Global Investigative Journalism Network, “Best Investigative Stories in China—2018,” 20 February 17. This reporting included The Paper’s March 2016 report about an illegal vaccine trade network based in Shandong province; Beijing News’ report in May 2016 that expressed skepticism of the official story about the death of an environmentalist; and Caixin media’s reports on a toxic running track at a school in Beijing municipality and a fraudulent weight loss product.


69 Beinopa and Recheng Fang, “China’s New Media: Pushing Political Boundaries Without Being Political,” Foreign Affairs, 12 October 16.

70 Bethany Allen-Ebrahimian, “China, Explained,” Foreign Policy, 3 June 16.


72 Sun Ruili and Li Jin, “Man Forcibly Sterilized in Zhenxiong, Yunnan: [I] Never Want To Go Back To That Place Again” [Yunnan zhenxiong bei qiangzhi jiezha nanzi: yi beizi bu xiang zai hui na ge difang], Beijing News, 14 February 17; Wang Lianzhang, “Chinese Father of Four Forced To Undergo Vasectomy,” Sixth Tone, 14 February 17.

73 Sun Ruili and Li Jin, “Man Forcibly Sterilized in Zhenxiong, Yunnan: [I] Never Want To Go Back To That Place Again” [Yunnan zhenxiong bei qiangzhi jiezha nanzi: yi beizi bu xiang zai hui na ge difang], Beijing News, 14 February 17; Wang Lianzhang, “Chinese Father of Four Forced To Undergo Vasectomy,” Sixth Tone, 14 February 17.

74 Bethany Allen-Ebrahimian, “China, Explained,” Foreign Policy, 3 June 16.

75 Wang Lianzhang, “Chinese Father of Four Forced To Undergo Vasectomy,” Sixth Tone, 14 February 17.

76 Ibid.


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