

It's all about Control - November, 2021

Merriam Webster defines Control as meaning to exercise restraining or directing influence over; or to have power over. As a noun, the definitions include the power or authority to guide or manage, or the regulation of economic activity especially by government directive, as in price control or rent control.

Three years ago, before COVID, my wife and I had the opportunity to take a wonderful but exhausting four week tour of China with the Smithsonian Institute, and I want to share with you a few hopefully interesting and sometimes disturbing examples of CONTROL being exercised in this hugely important country. This paper will end with a my personal beliefs on what this all means for how our United States should think about and act regarding China in the future.

I want to be clear that this reflects only my personal observations, impressions and thoughts. There are undoubtedly many in our Literary Club who have more China knowledge and experience than do I. What I have are strong impressions about where China has been, where they are going, and relative strengths I believe give China some definite advantages versus our democratic systems in terms of achieving desired results efficiently and effectively. With the clear potential to have major negative consequences for us unless we develop a coherent and consistent long range strategy and plan to thwart China's ambitions.

I will be sharing five examples of CONTROL as exercised in China: one about controlling borders; the second about controlling something from nature; the third about seizing control of an adjacent country; the fourth about controlling one's own body; and the final a bit about how the Chinese system of government and education controls its own citizens, the opposite of how, at least in theory, our citizens exercise control over government here in the U S of A.

Let me start with some most basic facts to refresh what you may already know, but probably haven't thought about recently, just for perspective.

In terms of geography China is almost exactly the same size as the United States, 3.7 million square miles versus 3.6 million square miles.

But while the US and China have the same geographical size, that match disappears when you look at populations. China currently has 1.4 BILLION people where we have less than one quarter that many, at roughly 330 million plus or minus a count of how many people are cascading illegally across our borders every month.

While it occurred at very different points in history, both the US and China were built through expansions along their primary river systems, ours the Mississippi and Colorado, theirs the Yangtze and Yellow. But there is one important difference. Our rivers flow from the watersheds within our borders, but 90 percent of the water in the Yangtze and Yellow Rivers originates

not from within China itself, but from glaciers and snowmelt from the mountains of Tibet. More about Tibet later, but given it provides the bulk of all the fresh water flowing into China, it is not too hard to see how important Tibet has been and is today to China's development.

Finally, the United States and China are the two largest economies in the world by a huge margin, accounting for about 40% and 34% of total world Gross Domestic Product respectively in 2018. But the Chinese economy is growing much faster than ours, from being only about 11% the size of the US economy in 1960 to being roughly 75% of our size today.

So we have two countries about the same geographical size, China with hugely more people and an economy only three quarters the size of the US today but growing at a rate that suggests that economic difference could well disappear within the lifetimes of most in my audience today.

But I have focused this paper not on size itself, rather on how control has been exercised in China, on both micro and macro levels. I present a variety of examples to demonstrate how the Chinese have established and enforced control over its vast lands and populations and even over one of its wonders of nature.

Let's start in ancient history, which in the case of China has been documented for over 4,000 years, the longest written record of any modern civilization. And let's first talk one of the most visible examples of establishing control in China.

Let's talk about Walls.

While everyone may have seen pictures of what is universally known as the Great Wall of China, until you have done some research and actually been there to witness it for yourself, I would suggest it is impossible to comprehend the magnitude of this monumental construction.

The Chinese had been building walls for CONTROL since before starting their written history, as a way for individual city-states to protect themselves from each other. But with the founding of its first country-wide dynasty some 4,000 years ago, wall building took on dimensions that remain unparalleled even to today.

The Xia, having conquered all the surroundings Chinese kingdoms, brought them together in relative peace after centuries of internecine warfare. But they discovered they then had vast numbers of soldiers with little soldiering to do - always a bad idea. And they recognized they still had threatening groups of mostly nomadic peoples, primarily Mongols, living and nomading above their historical northern borders. They needed to defend against these barbarians.

Herein arose a brilliant idea. Connect the walls around the various city-states into a primary defensive bulwark against one and all outsiders, a truly great wall, and deploy the still huge but less busy military forces to manage and man this effort.

And connect the walls they did.

Here are some things you may not know. The Great Wall is actually the collective name for the series of fortifications joined together, rebuilt, added to and maintained by many dynasties all the way up through the Ming Dynasty, that ruled until the mid 1600s. By the time the Ming were finished, the primary East to West wall was about 5,500 miles long. This compares to our United States being only 2,700 miles wide, or less than half as wide as the primary Great Wall is long.

Can you see it from space? With the naked eye, probably not. But definitely with binoculars. And for me, the actual construction of the wall, how and where it was built, is even more impressive than its length.

First, this magnificent structure was built not along the easy to access valleys, but rather straight up and over the mountains along its tortuous journey. It travels along the very edges or ridges in its path, such that any attackers would have to climb at least a steep slope and often severe rock faces just to get to its base.

On our visit to the wall a couple of hours outside of Beijing, having climbed a steep stone staircase and peered hesitantly over the edge of the wall there, we were looking down seemingly unscalable cliffs literally hundreds of feet high. Most daunting if you were a would be attacker.

And this is not just a simple one stone thick structure. The construction completed by the Ming Dynasty varies somewhat by location, but on average the “friendly side” stands 15 to 30 feet above the ground and the structure itself is 20 feet thick at the base, tapering inwards to a top about 16 feet wide. And this is not one wall but actually two outer walls constructed of brick and stone; then filled between with loose stones, rubble and earth. On top of this filled-in space, the builders laid a smooth path 12 feet wide so the crown of the wall would allow commanders to readily move troops to wherever they might be needed across even the roughest terrain.

Further, this was not just one long basic wall, but one that included a series of roughly 25,000 defensive fortifications including guardhouses, castles, gates and forts. There were watchtowers every 200 yards, with fire and smoke signal towers every 10 miles. When fully manned, each watchtower provided shelter and living quarters for 36 soldiers, translating to roughly one and a half million fighting men just to staff the wall itself.

All of this wall building was designed to ensure CONTROL over their borders, to protect themselves against the hordes who were forever trying to invade their country.

Sound like the current wall building exercise on our border with Mexico? And where did this all come out in the end, so we might learn any lessons to reapply here? Beginning in the mid 16th century, after completing this seemingly impenetrable structure, a series of peasant rebellions shook the Ming dynasty. Eventually the Ming emperor actually invited the Mongols, their

most feared northern neighbors, to help reestablish control over his own country.

So the gates to the wall were thrown open, and the Mongols came through unopposed. No visas required, no background checks, no limits on numbers of immigrants. And is so obvious on hindsight, of course the Mongols actually came through with plans of their own, and having been given a free pass in, soon took over control of the entire country. Thus marks the end of the last Chinese Dynasty. Hmmmm, maybe border control security COULD be important.

But enough about using walls for controlling borders.

Second in this paper about exercising CONTROL in China, after walls, I want to talk about a millennia-old and hugely successful Chinese program to establish CONTROL over a part of nature itself. To me, it would be impossible not to spend a few minutes on something that has enthralled emperors and Kings for centuries and been instrumental in opening up China to the Western world. Something which begins with an insect cocoon and even today something highly cherished by almost all who are lucky enough to experience its richness.

That something is silk, which I would bet every club member has lovingly worn, maybe even is wearing this evening, or at least has enjoyed touching on others.

Chinese lore has it that the wife of the Emperor who ruled part of China sometime around 3,000 BC was enjoying the afternoon

with her handmaidens in their garden when something fell from an overhanging tree and plopped into her hot tea. On fishing this something out of her cup, she found an oval shaped cocoon about two inches long of some unknown insect which had apparently been living overhead. Initially startled as one might expect, she and her ladies became ever more intrigued when the cocoon began to unravel in that hot tea, with one end of a tiny filament being too enticing to ignore.

With nothing better to do that afternoon, remembering that there were no televisions or cell phones to provide entertainment in those olden days, the ladies began pulling on that tiny thread and were amazed to find they could do so for minutes and minutes, and MORE minutes. They were able to unroll the entire cocoon into one long strand - one very tiny strand which was not only thin but extremely strong. It didn't break for all their pulling.

Lights went off in these ladies heads, and they soon gathered and unravelled more cocoons, and began twisting several of the strands into what we now know as the first threads of pure silk.

This lady is often referred to as The Goddess of Silk and is credited not only with discovering the basic silk threads origin in those cocoons, but also with developing the first agriculture of farming mulberry trees upon which her silkworms would thrive.

Even today, the production of silk follows the same process it did 5,000 years ago. It all starts with the now domesticated **Bombyx** mori which one should not be surprised to learn means "silkworm moth of the mulberry tree". As do most insects,

these grow through four distinct stages of development: egg, larva, pupa and adult. The adult stage is the silkworm moth. The larval stage is the caterpillar, the silkworm.

Starting at the beginning, individual silkworm moths mate, and lay some 300 to 400 eggs at a time. In an area the size of a computer screen, 100 moths would deposit some 40,000 eggs, each about the size of a pinhead. The female then dies, the males shortly thereafter.

But who cares, because these tiny eggs quickly hatch into larva, which we call caterpillars or now, silkworms, each about a quarter of an inch long. These silkworms are placed on a cloth bed and fed a large amount of chopped fresh mulberry leaves, their ONLY food. Over their first month, they eat almost continuously, consume fifty thousand times their weight in mulberry leaves, grow more than 10,000 times in size to two and a half to three inches in length and develop silk glands making up 25% of their body weight.

These human raised silkworms are next transferred to a frame or shrub in a rearing house. Once there, they begin excreting a viscous liquid through a literal hole in their heads into one long, continuous filament, rotating their bodies in a figure 8 movement some 300,000 times over the next three to eight days, spinning their silk cocoons. All while morphing into silkworm moths and emerging to mate and begin the cycle again.

Under ideal conditions, as developed by the Chinese agribusiness folk over the past 5,000 years, the entire life-cycle from egg to caterpillar to cocoon to moth and back takes two to three months, and new generations of eggs or new cocoons of silk can be harvested three to four times a year. Which, for those mathematically inclined, means the eggs of even one moth, carefully tended and fed on the leaves of forests of mulberry trees, could produce hundreds of millions of new silkworm cocoons within a few years.

OK, so now there are lots and lots of cocoons of silk. The next step is to heat and soften the cocoons with boiling water, steam or hot air, and begin to delicately and carefully unwind them, reeling in the filaments from four to eight cocoons at once, sometimes with a slight twist, to create a single thread of raw silk.

At this point one might wonder how long a single filament from one cocoon might be, and unless you are studying this in fifth grade science, I would guess most would come up way short in their answers. The correct answer is that each filament and each resulting single silk thread is roughly one kilometer long, or longer than a football field. Pretty impressive, I think.

One might also wonder what happens to all those silkworms whose cocoons have been boiled and unravelled. Wonder no longer. The poor boiled silkworms are then unceremoniously eaten, as the Chinese let no tasty protein go to waste. Yum.

It takes the filament from about 100 **cocoons to make a tie**, 500 for a blouse, 1,000 for a man's shirt, 2,000 for a lady's dress and 3,000 to 4,000 for those heavy **silk kimonos you have seen in pictures**. Remembering that most of the growing of the cocoons, and most of the finding of the ends of the initial fibers from cocoons and getting those fibers started onto unwinding machines is done by hand, one can easily imagine how much labor is involved, what the cost of production must have been and still is. But one thing China has is lots of cheap labor then and still today, so this has been no issue.

Bet you didn't appreciate all that went into that Literary Club tie or the silk briefs you may be wearing, let alone your significant other's silk dress or those silk sheets that carry you to dreamland each night.

BODY CONTROL

But enough about silk. After building walls to control its borders and controlling nature to make silk, as a third example of establishing control in China, I feel the need to spend a few minutes discussing personal bodily control and the need for same when traveling in China. I do this through describing what are commonly called washroom facilities in our civilized Western culture, but which are dramatically different and often totally lacking in China.

When in our United States and needing what is politely called a bio break, one rarely faces anything more daunting than a line between quarters of a football game or between acts at the

theater. So none of our kinda sophisticated Smithsonian travel group was at all prepared for what we faced in China.

Nothing seemed unusual at our arrival airport in Beijing or in our initial hotel, which was as well equipped as any I have visited over years of US and European travel. But from our first day trip into the Chinese countryside, the shocks and revelations came fast and furious. In China, the restrooms are not called bathrooms or loos, but rather, translated into English, they are called squats. And for a very good reason. No toilets, no seats, just holes in the floor. Same for everybody, boys and girls.

For the boys, doing number one, this is no big deal. We can unzip and pee down a hole just fine. But for the ladies, unaccustomed as our Western group was to such a practice, this difference in toilet facilities caused no small amount of initial confusion and consternation, followed by dismay, then outrage, before realizing there were no alternatives and moving along to acceptance - the fourth stage of so many multistage processes.

Figuring out how one might use this simplest of toilet facilities, which had no toilet, in a coordinated fashion without soiling clothes or soaking shoes was apparently a real challenge. Comments about how the locals must have developed extraordinary thigh strength and coordination to relieve themselves civilly brought smiles all around. After a while.

And the absence of toilets was only our ladies first cause for dismay, followed quickly by a second - they discovered there was not only no toilet, but also no toilet paper or any other such

wiping substrate. Their dismay was multiplied. To be fair, while none of our group recalled his caution, our guide swears he had mentioned the need to bring toilet paper if desired. Oh well. The ladies soon apparently became adept at using their facilities, they brought along toilet paper as desired, and the complaining and smug smiles from the males in the group soon ended.

Until one of the last days. On that day, we all ended up in stitches when one of the ladies came back laughing about signs in a fancy squat outside in Shanghai.

On the female side, exiting from one of their loos that actually had a couple of toilets next to the requisite holes in the ground, our ladies described a Chinese woman looking at a sign which showed a toilet with someone standing not on the floor but on the edges of the toilet SEAT, AND with a big red slash across that figure demanding to NOT stand on the toilet to use it. That poor lady was trying to decide what exactly she was SUPPOSED to do with that odd looking appliance we call a throne and was apparently not the first to grapple with that confusion.

At the same facility, we men were laughing at a sign at one of holes in the floor on OUR side that had several bars at various heights on the walls from which one in need could hang for balance. Our guide translated the lettering on that sign to say OLD man's squat. Made sense to us.

In China, having CONTROL of your body in the restrooms is very important.

Walls, silk, squats. I now turn this paper to how China has exercised CONTROL over neighboring geography with my understanding of how China has seized control of Tibet.

If anyone has the opportunity to go to China, I would strongly urge them to extend their trip to Tibet. Tibet sits in the heart of Asia, right between China and India. For centuries this mysterious Buddhist kingdom was locked away in the mountains of the Himalaya, and has exercised a unique hold on the imagination of the West.

Tibet has been called the real Shangri-La, the forbidden land and the holy land of your innermost desire. Before the 1950s, Tibet was largely isolated from the rest of the world. It maintained a unique cultural and religious community, centered around its Tibetan Language and Tibetan Buddhism. Little effort was made to even communicate with outsiders, and economic development was minimal.

Everything changed after 1950, when Mao's Chinese seized control, drove the Tibetans' spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, and some 100,000 of Tibet's finest into exile and began to systematically dismantle much of the Tibetan cultural and historical heritage. Mao was determined to exercise absolute CONTROL in this country on its western border which, as I mentioned earlier, itself controlled the founding waters of China's two river systems.

When the Chinese initially flung open its doors to the West, Tibet lay in ruins. But by the mid-1980s, China had built a new airport in the capital city Lhasa and a cross mountain super highway system connecting Tibet with its new master country, reducing the time for a truck trip from days to hours. China built a high speed train line to bring in resources and not incidentally carry out mined raw materials; and most importantly China began flooding Tibet with Chinese immigrants.

Official Chinese figures show that from 1950 to 2007, the Tibetan population increased from 1.2 million people to almost 3 million people. You would be correct to assume virtually all of that increase were Chinese immigrants, who brought with them the now predominant Chinese language and culture. And of course, Chinese government and policies. All Tibetan children are now educated in Chinese as the primary language; all Tibetan stores must now have Chinese in larger lettering and above their Tibetan names; all official business is conducted in Chinese.

My guess is all remaining signs of Tibetan culture beyond what China uses as museum pieces for tourists will be totally eliminated within another generation. Now THAT is CONTROL.

Leaving Tibet, I want to turn to how China actually built its system to CONTROL the education and even the thinking of its own huge population for maximum advantage; with a couple of examples of how China's ability to exert total control over its

citizens and all commerce gives it some appreciable advantages over our Western way of doing things.

In establishing its internal CONTROL system, I believe there are three key ingredients: racial and ethnic hegemony; educational consistency; and daily enforcement of government policy.

Starting with ethnicity, we learned that over 90% of the population of China today is ethnic Han Chinese, with no minority having meaningful political or economic influence. Current events like the internment for reeducation of several million non-Han Muslims in northwest China is only further confirmation that this government has very little interest in building ethnic diversity.

The strength of Chinese ethnic cohesion has been multiplied exponentially by a disciplined education system designed 4,000 years ago. As with the Great Wall, that first Emperor realized the need to manage his tribally diverse population with its multiplicity of languages and cultures. For perspective, even today linguists believe there are almost 300 languages and dialects spoken within China's borders, and not having some consistent way to communicate would be MOST inefficient.

So it was decided to enforce one single WRITTEN language with which to conduct all official business. And it was done. At the same time, the Emperor recognized the need to find the best and the brightest from across his Empire to manage it. The system that was developed became the backbone of the

educational and government service operation for the next couple of millennia, until the overthrow of the last dynasty by the Communists in 1950.

That educational system worked something like this. Except for direct descendants of the imperial family, about the only way to escape poverty and achieve a position of wealth and influence anywhere in the empire was through entering and excelling in a universal testing program that began almost at birth. Any male could enter that testing from any part of the country, and success would lead to positions of prosperity not only for the successful candidate but for his family and heirs as well.

The numbers going through the testing regime was in the millions each year. Think of it as the standardize tests we all took in school, but much more difficult and demanding. Applicants spent their entire childhood and early adult lives studying for the final test, one where there was only a remote chance of passing. But as the only option available, an examination well worth attempting.

By the age of 3 or 4, children had to learn and be able to write the first 1,000 characters in the official Chinese alphabet, called the HANZI. Just for reference, this is only fifteen percent of the 7,000 characters in the list of generally utilized Chinese characters.

For the cohort who could pass the initial testing, by the age of 5 students had to demonstrate the ability to write the so-called 1,000 character classic, a series of 250 verses of 4 characters

each, with each character drawn perfectly and each character used only once. Any lapse in style or penmanship would lead to immediate dismissal.

By age 7 or 8, qualified student began attending village schools where for the next ten plus years they were taught the classics and philosophy. Rote memorization had extreme value, and the required ability to recite and defend the classics and Confucian philosophy began to ensure all students were fully aligned with the dictates of their rulers.

Finally, after additional years of concentrated study, tens of thousands of applicants from across the country were sent to regional capitals where they spent 4 to 5 days confined in tiny individual testing cells for their final exams. Exams that required writing memorized classical texts exceeding 400,000 characters in length, plus writing disciplined explanations and defenses of those classical writings in a compelling and politically correct fashion.

After days of waiting, the results were published. For the vast majority there was great disappointment, and a return to their villages for a life of farming or manual labor with minimal hope of advancement. Ever. But those few with the very highest scores had won the lottery. They were able to begin new lives of privilege and influence that would last not just for themselves but for their descendants as well.

The net result of this highly disciplined teaching and educational screening regimen was the building of a carefully controlled

monolithic bureaucracy that shared not only a common written language but a common philosophy and a common governing outlook that provided for absolute CONTROL by the national leadership, which until 1950 rested with the Emperor and his Imperial Court.

This way to success through the educational system changed a bit with the oh so bloody takeover by Mao in the 1950. At the small cost of only some 50 million killed or starved to death by that most revered leader and his merry band, the thousands of years of dynasties has been replaced by the The Communist Party of China.

Yes, no surprise, the Government of China today is Communist. There are not multiple political parties in China, only one and that party controls everything. And the way into that controlling hierarchy has changed but little from Dynastic days.

As explained to our group, only about 10% of Chinese people are Communist Party members. All party members are expected to not only follow, but to embrace and expound the party line, as dictated from Party headquarters in Beijing. These are the Chinese elite, those who truly CONTROL national priorities, CONTROL where resources are focused, CONTROL all news the people hear, CONTROL what goods and services the people may buy, CONTROL where everyone in the country may live or travel. So becoming a Party member is not only one but with few exceptions the ONLY path to personal and family advancement.

The primary and virtually only way to BECOME a party member today still starts with their rigid educational screening system, now funneling millions into a plethora of universities. There are over 20 million students currently enrolled in universities in mainland China and more than 7 million graduate each year. This is nearly double the number of university graduates in the United States each year, building one highly educated core for their future.

And to become a Communist Party member one must not only be one of those university graduates, but also one selected and nominated by several current party members for future membership. Those nominated are then placed on probation while immersed in 2 to 3 years of party indoctrination before being tested for understanding of, and compliance with, party philosophy. Only after successfully passing those tests for party fealty can they become full party members. So the ruling party maintains strict control over who get in, and thereby maintains its absolute control over the direction for the country going forward.

I am sure it is not quite this simple, but basically the central Communist party makes a plan and that plan gets driven down to the regions and implemented, without delay or meaningful protest. They do this starting at the national level, then cascaded through their integrated bureaucracy to the local level, against the objective of moving the entire country forward as quickly and efficiently as possible. Totally under control.

I last turn to a couple of examples of how China today uses money as a way to control the lives of its citizens, and it is very different from how money is used in the West.

First, in the major cities and increasingly throughout the country, China is implementing a system that gets rid of a great many of the West's built in financial inefficiencies in retail financial transactions. They are virtually eliminating the use of physical cash AND credit cards in favor of paying for everything using cell phone apps and QR codes.

A **QR code works** in the same way as a barcode at the supermarket but containing hugely more information. It combines a number of black squares and dots into machine-scannable images that can instantly be read using a Smartphone or in-store camera.

In China, on anything you want to buy, every item in a store - a pack of gum, a melon, a pair of shoes - on every bus, at every movie theater or event venue, there are QR codes. If you want that something, you simply click the QR code on or displayed next to it with your cell phone and the purchase is completed - pick up an item, click, and go. The money is directly taken from your linked bank account, and the transaction is completed.

Think of the efficiencies. No need for credit cards and their associated 2-3% processing fees, no need for ticket takers - just click your phone - no cash to keep secure and transfer to and from banks in Brink's trucks. Entire industries set up to handle cash and consumer credit become unnecessary and irrelevant.

And there is a second major difference in how things are bought and sold between our two countries. In China, there is essentially no credit available at the individual family level. Think about that - you actually need to control your spending to what you have in your linked bank account, or you can't make a purchase.

Now I am sure implementing this in the US would cause a seismic disruption in the short term, with particular whining by those who rely on credit for most of their monthly purchases. How can our huddled masses buy that new cell phone or those new sneakers, if they actually needed to have the money in hand before doing so.

The markets for burner phones and \$200 Nike shoes would certainly take a hit. We would have the lobbyists for the local check cashing and payday lending operations screaming to the heavens about this attack on their oh so righteous efforts to help the poor downtrodden folk who only want to buy milk and bread for their starving fatherless children, while charging them 15 to 30% monthly interest for payday loans. We would have the hyper liberals jumping out of the windows because who could expect people to actually have money before buying things. There ARE those who believe the US might do well to emulate this model of control over spending. I would include myself among that conservative group.

In conclusion, we observed that Chinese CONTROL has been and continues to be all pervasive. I have talked about walls to

control borders; about learning to control nature to deliver that beautiful silk; about how the Chinese built its controlling educational system and government bureaucracy; and a couple of examples of how having complete control allows China to dictate national and local priorities, cement the takeover of a neighboring country and dictate even day to day financial transactions efficiently and very effectively. I was truly impressed. And not a little intimidated.

Since our trip in spring 2019, I have become much more aware of all things China, and working to finish this paper with the attendant research leads me to want to briefly share a few learnings and warnings. My bottom line is that China has some significant operational advantages which will require us to rethink our country's global / commercial / open door approaches if we are to continue to be the global leader we have been for the last hundred years. I do not believe we should follow the Chinese model, by any measure. But i do believe we need to be aware of that model and more fully prepare to win despite some of its inherent advantages.

From what i have seen and read, China is continuing to build on a decades long platform to compete regionally and globally with greater speed, efficiency and effectiveness versus the US and all others. This platform includes a set of control processes carefully crafted and consistently executed on a national basis, with focus and without distracting dissent. A controlled process for maintaining their Han-specific ethnic consistency; a controlled educational process for screening, selecting and educating the best and the brightest - unlike our WOKE driven

system wasting vast amounts of educational energy on those who are not capable or seriously committed; a controlled process to generate technological expertise - whether internally or by pirating from others; a process to gain control of the surrounding oceans, existing global treaties and agreements be damned.

We in the US may not agree with or want to duplicate the processes or tolerate the level of control China has chosen to exert, or be able to marshal the discipline with which China's implementation is enforced across all their citizens. But we would be foolish to ignore the power such controlled process focus gives to our largest world competitor, and must ensure we continue to lead through innovation and commitment, and implement effective countermeasures or our status as the global leader will be increasing in jeopardy.

And on that sober note, this paper is ended. Thank you for your attention.

Primary Sources: Merriam Webster Dictionary; Great Courses - Understanding Imperial China; extensive interviews with Smithsonian travel staff; Wikipedia searches on multiple topics

Note to self: Papers should be 6,000 to 7,000 words, per GG Carey. This one is 5,952 words long.