Freedom and Democracy Are Universal Values That Apply to Chinese People As Well

An Evening Chat with Mike Pompeo: A Message to the Chinese People

TRANSCRIPT

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The video is available: https://youtu.be/UOtWZKF8MS8

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Michael R. Pompeo:

Hello, Mike Pompeo here, speaking from the Hudson Institute’s China Center. Today, I want to talk about an idea that resonates with Americans and with the Chinese people: Freedom and democracy are universal values. One of my predecessors as Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams, said it well: “The truths of the Declaration of Independence are not limited by time or place…They may be subdued, but they can never be suppressed. They are truths at Constantinople and Peking…at Charleston and at Philadelphia.” Constantinople is now Istanbul. And Peking is now Beijing. But these truths still hold.

And there’s a figure from history who shows us how universal freedom and democracy really are: The Chinese scholar P.C. Chang. Chang adapted Mulan for the stage. He came to the United States on a scholarship and was one of the best students at Columbia University. Chang helped write the Universal Declaration of Human Rights after World War II.

His contributions showed that ideals like life, liberty, and security are cherished in China, too. That’s why brave Chinese students demonstrated as a part of the May 4th movement, and at Tiananmen Square again in 1989. Why Liu Xiaobo published his Charter 08 Manifesto on the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration. Why Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Falun Gong devotees, and hundreds of millions of others pray in secret in China, even as their government tries to shut them down.

And every day, the amazing people of the sovereign, democratic country of Taiwan remind us what a free Chinese people can accomplish – if given the chance. All people have unalienable rights–no matter who they are, or where they live. Today, the CCP may subdue and suppress. But these things are still true.