

To: The Economist (July 11, 2021)

Dear editor,

Chaguan's piece on the Chinese Communist Party's 100th birthday, "It works until it doesn't" (The Economist, July 3rd 2021), shows how western observers remain hopeless out of date in nailing its superiority to an ideology which is becoming increasingly hollow and lacking in credibility. How hypocritical to cite the American founding fathers' belief in the people's "inalienable rights". They were not extended to slaves, women and black people. Even now, legislation is being moved across many states in the US to restrict the voting rights of minorities. The US Supreme Court has upheld the changes to electoral rules approved by Arizona's legislature which many political scientists consider have "gutted" the Voting Rights Act 1965. Judicial independence in the US does not seem to be functioning in an objective and non-partisan manner as originally designed.

Every political system needs checks and balances, support of the people and the rule of law. The Chinese has its own concept of rule of law, pre-dating magan carta. The western legal and judicial systems have generally worked well, but not foolproof. The Apple Daily, whose proprietor and senior managers are charged with serious national security offences, do not stand for press freedom in Hong Kong. It has long been criticized for unethical conduct in media coverage, and suspected collusion with the US in fomenting unrest in Hong Kong, Its demise is welcome by many in our society. The facts will come out when the case comes before the courts.

The common people in mainland China, and those in Hong Kong, are never shy in expressing their views, as exemplified by the people's lively discussions in the internet. But people need to be managed, and their aspirations, material or otherwise, need to be met. Our government works tirelessly to meet our people's needs. The West should leave it to us to develop our own systems, in accordance with our unique circumstances, and not get on a high horse and lecture China, and Hong Kong, in Chaguan's words, like "high priests" spreading a religion.

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