

For months, I have called on Communist China to stop abusing human rights and live up to its commitment to respect Hong Kong's autonomy that it was promised during the handover in 1997.

I was the first Senator to travel to Hong Kong since the protests began, and witnessed firsthand the atrocities committed by Communist China in their ongoing effort to suppress freedom. I met with protesters and heard their stories — horrible and frightening stories of police brutality, threats against individuals and their families and mysterious disappearances. All of this is happening because General Secretary Xi a human-rights violator with no respect for individual freedom.

Communist China believes that in order for them to be stronger, America and other freedom-loving countries must be weaker.

The Global Times, [in their editorial](#), laid out, clear as day, Communist China's plan to crack down on Taiwan, saying, "if the US and Taiwan promote military and other exchanges, the mainland is bound to increase military pressure to make the Taiwan authority pay the price."

Let's remember: Taiwan has been a self-governing entity since 1949. It has never been a part of the Communist Party regime in Beijing. It has armed itself in its alliance with the United States for decades, and is a formidable power in the region. Taiwan has the ability to inflict serious damage on any aggressor, but Communist China wants to portray Taiwan as a rebellious province that is ignoring "the damage to Chinese national sovereignty."

Communist China should be very careful not to engage in veiled threats against U.S. allies. This is a threat not only to the people of Taiwan, but to the United States and our allies around the globe.

Thankfully, our nation was built on freedom and the United States won't back down in the face of tyranny. We never have and we never will. Communist China is framing the quest for freedom as "U.S. intimidation." That's laughable, but I hope they are intimidated. Communist China's neighbors will have no choice but to treat them as a serious threat that uses military force against a peaceful democratic power.

This could all end if Communist China and General Secretary Xi start respecting human rights, stop punishing people for their religion, stop stealing our technology and intellectual property, stop supporting ruthless dictators like Maduro, and stop militarizing the South China Sea. Until then, I'm interested to see how news outlets under the control of the Communist Party of China, like the Global Times, will keep trying to spin the fight for freedom as intimidation.