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NBA's Moral Relativism Is Repugnant

By Matt A. Mayer

In the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution, Thomas Jefferson famously wrote: "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union." With slavery throughout the South, Jefferson consciously didn't state our Founding Fathers were establishing "a perfect Union," just more perfect than what they had as a colony of England. Too often today, critics of America forget our country is a work in progress.

It goes without saying that all countries have stains in their historical tapestry. We are human and, as such, fallible, as free will allows us to listen to the "better angels of our nature" on our right shoulder or the devil sitting on our left shoulder. Our history unequivocally shows that, thankfully, our leaders have listened to the angels, as we've made America a "more perfect Union" each passing decade.

From the elimination of slavery to women's suffrage, from the Civil Rights Movement to the broad acceptance of gay marriage, and from fighting wars to free non-Americans from the yokes of socialism, communism, and fascism to welcoming tens of millions of immigrants to our shores to start a new life full of hope and opportunities, the American story is one of great progress and a constant effort to make our country even greater. The United States is an exceptional nation.

Unlike America in which most of our stains are well behind us, what is happening in China today to the Uighurs shocks the conscious. Additionally, China's mass repression of free speech and censorship, as well as its efforts to break Hong Kong's freedom and unlawfully expand its territory in the South China Sea, is unparalleled in modern times among nations expecting acceptance by the world's democracies.

That reality is what makes the National Basketball Association's, Golden State Warrior Coach Steve Kerr's, and LeBron James's cowardice in standing up to China repugnant. Moreover, Kerr's faulty equivalence to America's gun violence is like comparing the Holocaust that exterminated six million Jews and another eleven million other undesirable humans to the lynching of African-Americans that resulted in nearly 5,000 deaths from 1882 to 1968 according to the Tuskegee Institute. The problem with Kerr's comparison goes beyond mere scale, as China's actions are official government policy executed by government soldiers, whereas the lynching of African-Americans, like gun violence today, were done by evil and mentally disturbed individuals acting in their own capacities.

I suspect Kerr knows that his comparison was plain wrong, but he, along with the rest of the NBA, finds himself caught

between the profits generated by China's one billion fan base and his past outspoken criticism of all things in Trump America. No one, including me, would be criticizing Kerr or other sports and entertainment figures if they had the courage to voice their human rights concerns consistently. Instead, they attack America freely, but go silent when real money is on the line.

Imagine what impact Kerr, James, and the other Left Coast America critics could have on China and other rogue regimes if they spoke truth to power. Imagine who in China and other downtrodden places would be inspired by their words to fight back. History recorded the massive impact President Ronald Reagan had in inspiring the millions caught behind the Iron Curtain with his forceful denunciation of the Soviet Union. His words at the Brandenburg Gate in 1987 spread like fire among the East Germans caught behind the Berlin Wall.

The Berlin Wall fell and the Soviet Union collapsed within a couple of years. Words, indeed, matter.

So, if you don't want to just shut up and play or act, fine. Just make sure your courage doesn't suddenly fade when your tough words could impact your livelihood. More importantly, when your courage disappears, don't then impugn America and its 320 million citizens by making a false comparison between truly despicable government actions impacting millions and America today.

America may not be the perfect Union yet, but it is a far, far better place than China. No American should ever forget that regardless of who is the president.

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