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Our Mission

Quaestus is a student-led journal presenting ideas about Liberty, Faith, and Economics from a Christian perspective in

R U G H U W R S U R P R W H K X P

Our Vision

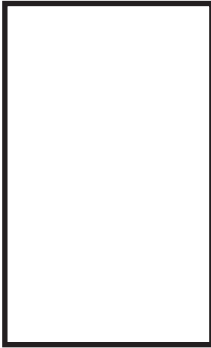
We aim to inspire the next generation of Christian thought and leaders by addressing global issues with sound

P R U D O D Q G H F R Q R P L F S

* R G E O H V V H G W K H P D Q G V D L G ' % H I U X L W I X O D
in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth."

Genesis 1:22

Editorial Board



Business and
Marketing Editor

Anna Young
Class of Fall 2024

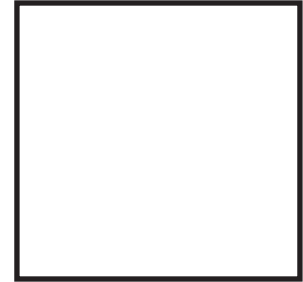
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w/ MBA
Chicago Medical
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Publication
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Harrison Hulse
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Applied Theology
& Theological
Languages

So... What is Quaestus?

Because it will be most conducive to clear communication, I'm going to take this opportunity to be somewhat informal. Quaestus (kway-stus) is basically a group for students who want to get people to

Speaker Series - Spring 2023

Event Title
Freedom and its Enemies

Speaker Name
Speaker Title

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Quaestus Journal Interviews with Ukrainian-American Concordia University Students

Transcribed by: Natalie Bodnar

After introducing themselves, Anton and Maksym discussed how their lives have changed since the war began and how their families prepared for evacuation. Anton shared, "Being brutally honest, my life has...gone downhill since the beginning of the invasion...my personality changed to some degree...[and] life in general in 8 NUDLQH KDV E HFRPH GLI ; F X O N W I N G S A N D E I F E D E R V A T T @ T H E S I B I R I N G S , [M Y L F A M I L Y R E A L I Z E D T H A T T H I S W A S P E R I C U L O U S A N D W E H I D O U R N E I G H B O R S W H O H A D A C E L L A R U N D E R G R O U N D , A N D W E H I D T H E R E W H I L E T H E R E W E R E B O M B I N G S A N D ... T H E R U S S I A N T R O O P S W E R E L A N D I N G I N T H A T A I R P O R T ... T H R E E D A Y S L A T E R I T W A S L I V I N G H E L L F O R M E B E C A U S E I H A D V H H Q D G R] H Q 5 X V V L D Q K H O L F R S A B O V E M Y H E A D A N D E V E N D R O N E S . I S A W O N E D A Y A G U R Q H ^ 2 > L W @ Z D V A \ L Q J R Q W R S [I T] W A S S C O U T I N G T H E A R E A . T H E O N L Y G O O D T H I N G W H I C H I P E R S O N A L L Y S A W , W H I C H G A V E M E H O P E A N D ... [a] W I L L T O ... L I V E , W A S T H E A S P E C T T H A T I S A W A [P L A N E I U R P @ . L H Y , W \ V D ; J K W H U M H V P R P H Q W , U H D O L] H G W K D W Z H K I D O U S A N D P R O T E C T I N G U S ; O N F E B R U A R Y 27 ... M Y E U R W K H U D Q G , S U H V V X U H G R X U b e c a u s e w e k n e w t h a t i f w e d i d n ' t r u n a w a y ... w e c o u l d ' v e d i e d . T h a t ' s r e a l i t y . W e c o u l d ' v e b e e n d e a d [r i g h t n o w] ... w e r e a l i z e d i t ' s n o w o r n e v e r ... l u c k i l y , w e p a c k e d o u r b a g s a s q u i c k l y a s p o s s i b l e . W e l e f t a l o t o f s t u f f [b e h i n d] ... w e r u s h e d t o t h e c a r , w e s p e d t h r o u g h a l l t h e w a y t o L v i v ... i t w a s a h u g e r i s k f o r u s b u t a t l e a s t w e a r r i v e d l a t e i n t h e e v e n i n g . N e x t m o r n i n g I w a s o n m y f e e t a n d I d e c i d e d t o g o t o a v o l u n t e e r i n g c e n t e r b e c a u s e I k n e w t h a t w a s t h e r i g h t t h i n g t o d o ... w e [U k r a i n e] n e e d h e l p r i g h t n o w , a n d [v o l u n t e e r i n g] w a s a d i r e n e e d . I t w a s [o v e r a l l] a t e r r i b l e e x p e r i e n c e , a n d I c a n ' t u n d e r s t a n d w h a t p e o p l e h a v e g o n e t h r o u g h . S o , t h i s i s m y s h o r t s t o r y a n d b a c k g r o u n d ... m a y b e M a k s y m w a n t s t o a d d m o r e . "

MXVW À\ LQJ ULJKW DERYH P\ KH couldn't understand who it was, but it turned out it was Russian helicopters...I saw missiles. They started shooting back and forth."

"I also lived near an airport...where the largest airplane in the world, Mriya, was located at that time...it got destroyed because of the bombings and it fell into the Black Sea. [my family realized that this was serious and we hid our neighbors who had a cellar underground, and we hid there while there were bombings and...the Russian troops were landing in that airport...Three days later it was living hell for me because I had VHHQ D GR]HQ 5XVVLDQ KHOLFRS above my head and even drones. I saw one day a GURQH^2>LW@ZDVÀ\LQJ RQ WRS [it] was scouting the area. The only good thing which I personally saw, which gave me hope and... [a] will to...live, was the aspect that I saw a [plane IURP@ .LHY ,W\VD ;JKWHU MHV PRPHQW ,UHDOL]HG WKDW ZH KI DOUS AND PROTECTING US; ON FEBRUARY 27...MY EURWKHU DQG , SUHV VXUHG RXU because we knew that if we didn't run away...we could've died. That's reality. We could've been dead [right now]...we realized it's now or never... luckily, we packed our bags as quickly as possible. We left a lot of stuff [behind]...we rushed to the car, we sped through all the way to Lviv...it was a huge risk for us but at least we arrived late in the evening. Next morning I was on my feet and I decided to go to a volunteering center because I knew that was the right thing to do...we [Ukraine] need help right now, and [volunteering] was a dire need. It was [overall] a terrible experience, and I can't understand what people have gone through. So, this is my short story and background...maybe Maksym wants to add more."

obviously it's not a real country. [Despite false] claims [of being] a 'democratic republic,' it's not a real country...I can say that throughout all our [historical] relations with Russia, the Soviet Union, the Russian Empire, that [particular] side of the globe was always trying to capture our country [Ukraine] through different ways—

of their claims—but it's a very weak argument, and it contradicts itself sometimes because all the people in Ukraine have the same exact rights, so it doesn't matter where you're located. In my opinion, it's a political issue...and Russia wants to see their leaders in Ukraine—and not the ones that we have chosen as the people. In my perspective, there are two lessons to be learned. I'll tell you one of them: genocide is not a form of tool to UHVROYH DQ\ FRQÀLFW²LW MXVW forbid anyone to ever see this—and the second lesson...is that not a single nation in the world should resolve other nations' political interests by SRZHU >5HVROXWLRQ RI FRQÀLFW individually within the nation by themselves.”

Maksym expanded on how he has witnessed religious freedom being ~~lost~~ ^{jeopardized} by this war: “I have been working for the Institute of Religious Freedom in Ukraine for a little over a year now so everything that I am going to say now...is less of an opinion and more of a factual statement. I will provide material to back [up] what I am saying. I have a report that was released MXVW ODVW PRQWK DQG , ZLOO will be able to get [the report] by contacting the organizer of this event [Dr. Niederjohn]. This report...lists the attacks on religious freedom in Ukraine by Russia. I wanted to share a couple of facts and stories.

Ukraine is one of the most pluralistic and free countries in terms of religious freedom. No

before—it is happening on occupied territories such as Kherson, Zaporozhia, Donetsk, Luhansk right now—they are persecuting Jehovah's Witnesses, which are allowed to freely practice their religion in Ukraine—but if Russia takes over, [they would be persecuted] and some of them would be sent to jail, just for their beliefs.

I can give you another personal example. So, people are being tortured...at this moment, [corrupt] Russians are torturing someone, and they have been [doing so] since the war began and even no exceptions. Nobody makes an exception for a pastor. In the report that I am sharing, there are personal video testimonies of over ten people whose site was attacked, or how they [themselves] were assaulted by Russian forces. [To share a personal example] my church...is based in a Kiev suburb, and we have our rehabilitation center in...a village northeast of Kiev...The center was attacked at the very beginning of the war. It was late February or early March, and the pastor, who is the head of the center, he was imprisoned, tortured, and kept in a sewer pit for several days. This is...a man who is familiar to me...I don't know him personally, but my grandparents know him personally...so he was sitting in that sewer pit; this is a very famous story. It has [reached] many Ukrainian outlets; and again, it is in [my] report, along with his video testimony. [While in the pit] he [the pastor] heard people being tortured and executed on the surface [above him]. He was left alive by a miracle. (V V H Q W L D O O \ W K H 5 X V V L D Q off; they left him in...a barn...This is just one of many stories.

A lot of pastors—they are tortured—to force them to cooperate with Russian authorities. So, Russians are trying to explicitly use faith and explicitly use churches and other religious L Q V W L W X W L R Q V D V W R R O V forcing their leaders into submission. And this is all documented and proven; again, I am not mistaking anything...these stories aren't even [by] Z R U G R I P R X W K L W \ V D O O Y you can personally see [and read] for yourself. I'm not going to list more brutal examples here but they're all [in] the report. Over 270 religious buildings and churches were damaged since the

beginning of the war—damaged or destroyed. Many...beautiful Orthodox churches, which were [standing] for centuries, were destroyed. An interesting fact is that the biggest number of destroyed churches and religious sites as belonging to the Orthodox Church of...So Russians are destroying even their own churches of their R Z Q U H O L J L R Q 7 K H \ G R Q \ W F D U any faith cannot freely practice their religion; they are persecuted by Russia...if they are just regular practitioners, they will be probably restricted in their meetings. Their houses of worship may be X V H G D V D \ U L Q J S R V L W L R Q D Q they will be subjected to death threats, torture...some of them have been...executed for refusing to cooperate...you...break, and this strategy usually has been used [for leaders] to sign documents for either break or you just never get out alive, and that is a reality...and this has been happening not only since February 24 but actually since 2014. It's just that the scale has been multiplied one-hundredfold since the beginning of the full-scale invasion."

Arsenii then spoke of America's position L Q W K H Z D U V D \ L Q J ^ , \ O O E H F I always knew that countries were inherently egoist...I didn't expect anyone to help...I've experienced the same [thing] when we were A H H L Q J ' R Q H W V N L Q L W Z D Y me to read all the stories that, ok, they [other countries] are all really concerned with the situation, [that they] will impose some sanctions. But still, these sanctions are just to cover that point that 'We at least did something.' That's the reason why I didn't expect anyone to act—literally...maybe some Baltic countries because they are also interested in keeping...their borders safe...because as you can...understand, if Ukraine fell, I think no one would stop a power country... My opinion of the U.S. and its neighbors D Q G countries changed a lot because although military expenses are super high, they are skyrocketing... but still it's not that full support that could be given to us. From a Republican perspective, I'm still thankful for any drone, any vehicle, any dollar that is given to Ukraine, and that's why, yeah, my opinion dramatically changed.

As for NATO, obviously they are not

make...certain standards, guidelines...economic regulations...It doesn't mean that we shouldn't focus on that vision, or pursue it, or just neglect

deeper and more subtle ways that Russia affects people's minds. There...is Russian propaganda that doesn't look like Russian propaganda, and that's the most dangerous type of...Russian propaganda because...there is propaganda that is manned to just make you question something, make you uncertain about some facts that are presented, for example, by the Ukrainian side...there can be articles or opinions, which say, 'Maybe Ukraine should just give Crimea away to Russia to end the war.' And this sounds like an opinion...like it is a brainstorming for peace...Not all people who spread Russian propaganda even know they are doing so.

For example, Elon Musk has been tweeting a rhetoric which is heavily pro-Russian from our point of view as Ukrainians, in the past couple of days. And, of course, I'm not saying that Elon Musk is paid off by Russia, that would be ridiculous...what I'm saying is that people who believe in Russian propaganda...those people, they spread it [the propaganda] with or without intent. For example, Elon Musk said, 'If Ukraine makes another referendum on the occupied territories, that's maybe the way to solve [the war],' and... this is Russian narrative. While [a statement like W K L V R Q H @ P D \ V R X Q G Q H X for Russians. And again, it is a thin line; I'm not saying Elon Musk has been paid for by Russians, I'm not saying he consciously wants to support Russia; what I'm saying [is] that, unconsciously, by making this statement that to him and many other people, [this] may seem like just an opinion, he is spreading the Russian narrative...Many of his statements are grounded on Russian narratives not on...history...It's those subtle manipulations, Z K L F K P D \ V H H P Q R W V L J Q L in isolation, they [aren't]; but when you look at [these statements] and they come together, you see that Russia keeps...trying to control the narrative...They are successful even if they made just a couple people doubt, 'Well, is that really genocide?'—that's what they want, that's it."

Arsenii added, "I'm really into psychology; and also, one of the topics I'm really...interested [in] is propaganda...I have quite a personal story...as I said, my grandparents lived in Donetsk. My grandad—he is one of the smartest men I've ever seen...if I'm not mistaken, he was...head of

safety at one of the coal mines...he still reads tons of books...after the war started, obviously [the] Russian propaganda machine started working 120%...I was just astonished at the statements he was making...He was making to me—his grandson—these statements about Nazi people in Kiev, [also] that there are biochemical laboratories in Ukraine...this struck me to the deepest of my heart...and I started to research. So, how average propaganda works—there are three types of L Q I R U P D W L R Q W K D W D Q \ S U R S D J is a total lie; second, is...grayish information [such as] a half-lie, half-truth; the third type of information is truth...basically what they do is they take a semi-truth, they take truth, then they distribute it [and propose it] that way; and people believe in it...So [for example] if I take just these 20 photos [of 20 Neo-Nazis in a city of 5 million] and make one photo appear in one separate news article for 20 days in a row, then...[an audience is] seeing for 20 days in a row, Neo-Nazis in that city, .. and that [is] how [a people can be] manipulated. So, [a] propaganda machine, unlike Russian military, is very good and is very intelligent, and we shouldn't underestimate it."

Anton related, "CNN, BBC, ABC News—their coverage quite educate with a lot of the information being delivered...much of the information was delivered by reporters right W K H U H R Q W K H E D W W O H ħ H O G understand that what's going on—and I also watch and read international news, though mostly I watch [and read] Ukrainian news...in U.S. and maybe other nations, [people] don't get more details. They get the overall story—and get some portions...of it—but the reality is there [are] additional details that only the citizens are going to know...because there's always censorship, that's one aspect you should understand but again, the coverage, was pretty spot on—it was accurate, it wasn't manipulated, it wasn't changed, it wasn't somehow...repackaged...We also have to understand that [the war] has been prolonged for D O R Q J S H U L R G R I W L P H ² W K H L Q of Russia on Ukraine—and international and Ukrainian mass media...keep getting insight regarding the current situation in Ukraine, which is also a 'thank you' and a positive aspect which should be taken into consideration."

Arsenii spoke from his personal experiences living in Germany, sharing, “I found a bucket full of teeth...that were just [torn] off by someone who was torturing the citizens of military, and obviously, such a moral disgust... would not be a part of [a] CNN article, for example...When we were leaving Ukraine, before we moved to Germany, I [had] been living for one month in Hungary, and as you may know... is pro-Russian...and you may also have heard that Germany is...supportive...[A] statement that is true for both Hungary and Germany is that...average citizens [in these nations] show tremendous support to anyone who is there and is Ukrainian... [However] there is fake information that comes from the governmental control of media... it’s mostly not what the people say but what governmental authorities say.”

Maksym added, “I want to make just one example...As you know recently there have been...so-called referendums...referendums were meant to show that it is the will of the people of the Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson, and Zaporozhia regions, to join Russia. And, of course, they were a joke, just like any election held under Russian control with their votes being...97, 98, 99%. I don’t know why they didn’t go over 100; probably their computer was broken. I want to give an example of coverage. So, Reuters, which is one of the biggest media outlets out there—they posted this on September 27, and then they edited it, but I saved the article because I knew they were going to edit it. But this is how a lot of people got their ‘Big Majority Said To Favor Joining Russia in First Vote Results on Future Occupied Ukraine’ was maybe Reuters head...had a day off...because they have just ironically written in a headline of one of the biggest news outlets in the world—without any notes that the referendums are fake, that they are not to be believed—they just throw that a big majority is said to favor joining Russia and they called it a vote. They didn’t call it a so-called referendum or...worthless paper[s] being

wasted at gun-point, which it actually was. They called it a ‘vote,’ and this is what I mentioned about subtle Russian propaganda; this is how it something; you just call fake referendums a ‘vote;’ you just say that people are really in favor, and this is all it takes. They edited it later, they deleted the Tweet, but...a lot of such mistakes can be seen that are made by Western media. Sometimes those mistakes seem less of a mistake and more of an intention...”

Arsenii warned, “When I moved to Germany and I obviously lost everything that I had because we were living in a host family with my family for a month. Living in someone’s house, as you can understand...doesn’t feel so good. I realized that my inner happiness level—it remained the same... In Kiev [before the war] I had everything but just didn’t value it: the thing is, when everything is cool and everything is great...that is how our psychology works...What I still see in America from my point of view [is that] you [Americans] are really concerned with some topics that come to the point of discussion just because everything is great in America...I compare that situation with my situation...[with] what we have in Ukraine, and I realize that...people in developed countries—like Germany, like America, like Canada—they have to embrace what they have right now—that they don’t have a war on their landscapes, they have a good medical system...and just enjoy the state you have right now and embrace it; don’t fall out inside the nation due to some small troubles that to be concerned with more basic needs [such as] being safe, being healthy, and being in a good country—and just...respect what we have right now.”

Maksym likewise prepared a closing statement, declaring, “Freedom is something you freedom will always decay and die out. With that, is a constant struggle. Our legendary heroes and defenders fought for freedom in the 14th century; our great-grandfathers fought for freedom in 1940s and 1950s; our parents fought for freedom

Taiwan—Security and Freedom

Transcribed by: Ben Dubke, Senior Editor

We'll talk today about Taiwan. I've spent time in China and Taiwan, and I'll bring you some of that perspective. The subtitle for this talk could be "How did we get into this mess?" The national security problem we have faced since 1949 is a policy the United States adopted called strategic ambiguity. The idea of strategic ambiguity is that

WKH 8QLWHG 6WDWHV FDQ PDLQWDLQ ÀH[LELOLW\ ZKLOH

WKH , QGLDQ 2FHDQ DQG SDUW security service that in many ways, looks like the military.
an incredible military-economic juggernaut.
: KHQ KH UHWXUQH G WR & KLQD IU China also has a great desire and they have for a very long time for a buffer state. I
LW ZDV GHFLGHG WKDW WKH outside forces was too great, that it outweighed
WKH EHQH ; WV DQG WKH HP Southeast Asia, places like Burma, Vietnam, and
down and closed the borders. Many people in North Korea. They have mapped out a policy they
top Chinese leadership today realize that was a FDOO WKH 3 ; U VW LVODQG FKDLQ
mistake and are determined never to make that believe that region is Chinese sovereign territory.
mistake again. When they strategize, their goal is to push the
United States (militarily primarily, but any
\$ PHULFDQ LQAXHQFH RXW RI WK

Another aspect of Chinese foreign policy is that China has an interesting ability to initially appear non-threatening in every statement and diplomatic action, and then they engage in some heavy doses of realism. Then, when there's a serious pushback from the United States or United Nations, they will try to convince the world that they are a victim of Western imperialists. It's a fascinating and genius method if you can pull
LW RII <RX ; U VW DSSHDU QRQWKUHDWHQLQJ WKHQ \RX
engage under the table with massive levels of aggression, and when pushed, you then claim to be the victim of the very people you engaged the aggression upon. So we are witnessing in China a very aggressive form of nationalism, especially
GXULQJ WKH DGPLQLVWUDWLRQ RI 3UHVVLGHQW ;L

The problem the Chinese government (KDV DQG WKLV FRXOG EH DPSOL ; HG JUHDWO \ RYHU WKH
Taiwan issue) is their ability to dial up the fury, rhetoric, and propaganda, and their tendency to unleash the Chinese people into rampages. We saw this, for example, when the United States mistakenly bombed the Chinese embassy in Serbia during the Clinton administration. The problem is that each time China does that, they dial it up. They've had very little success in dialing it down without the use of force. If you look at Taiwan, China could easily dial up the rhetoric to cause a furor in China about the Taiwan situation. I question whether on that issue they would be able to dial it back. One thing the news doesn't report is the massive amount of civil unrest in China. We don't even know the full extent of uprisings, especially in the interior. Inside the interior of China (roughly 70% of the country), the uprisings and unrest get so out of control that China must call in what they call "the people's armed police." It's not the army or the police, but a militarized

security service that in many ways, looks like the military.
China also has a great desire and they have for a very long time for a buffer state. I
They think the buffer state should probably be in Southeast Asia, places like Burma, Vietnam, and North Korea. They have mapped out a policy they believe that region is Chinese sovereign territory. When they strategize, their goal is to push the United States (militarily primarily, but any One of China's policies that has been very

independence. Their base of support tends to be in the rural areas and the younger demographic. They do not believe the status quo is tenable. In their view, Taiwan must become an independent, democratic country that can make independent, democratic choices and ally itself with the West, in particular the United States.

7KH ¿UVW FRQWHDWZHQ HOHFWLRQ LQ
was in 1996. That election was very interesting
EHFDXVH &KLQD ¿JXUHG WKDW WKH 1DWLRQDOLVW 3DUW\
candidate, Lee Teng-hui, would win. On the

systems” solution to Taiwan in 2017. They said to
we will not alter your lifestyle, domestic political
situation, press freedoms, or assembly freedoms
for 50 years. On foreign policy and defense,
you will acquiesce to us, but not in domestic
affairs.” Those of us who had an alternate view
immediately said, “There is no way they’re going
to keep this promise,” because how could they
allow a free market, democratic Hong Kong
within a totalitarian, communist dictatorship? It
makes no sense, but dollar signs and yuan signs
prevailed, and people said, “This is great, we have
a formula now: one country, two systems.”
Then China went to Taiwan and said, “This can
work. We’re doing this with Hong Kong.” For a
few years people thought it might be true, so the
we’ll hang our hat on.” Then in the last few years,
things in Hong Kong have gone off the rails,
exactly how you could have predicted if you had a
realistic view of Chinese policy. What could have

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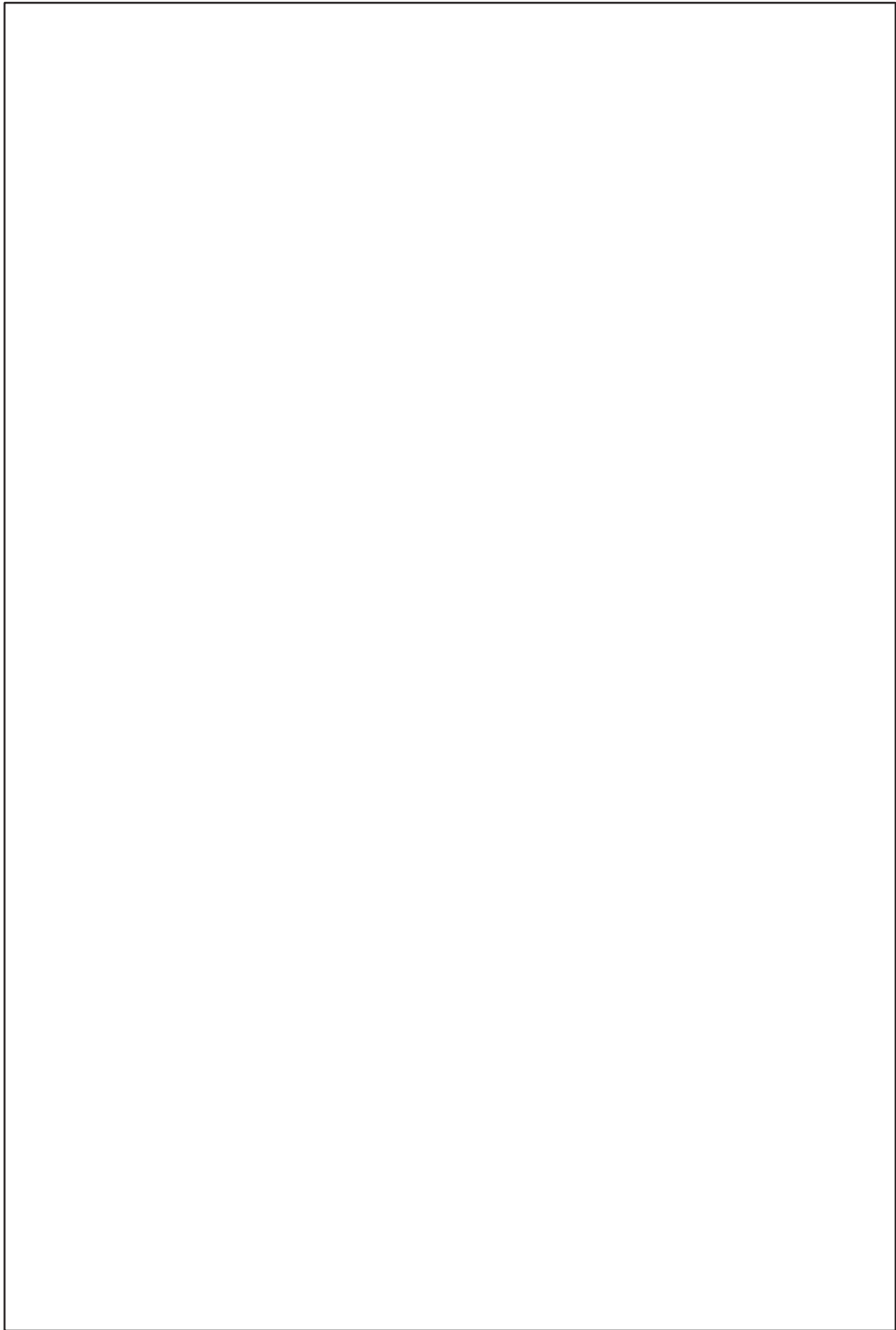
left the American Institute in Taiwan. To some degree, you could call this a game, but it was all part of the delicate dance to avoid problems with mainland China while maintaining a de facto relationship with Taiwan.

Another thing about the

An Indomitable Spirit: “The Hong Konger”

%\ +DUULVRQ +XOVH 3XEOLFDWLRQ (GLWRQ

“We must show that liberty is not merely one particular value but that it is the source and condition of most moral values. What a free society offers to the individual is much more than what he would be able to do if only he were free. We can therefore not fully appreciate the value of freedom until we know how a



February 23, 2023 • 11:00am -3:00pm

BUSINESS MATTERS 2023

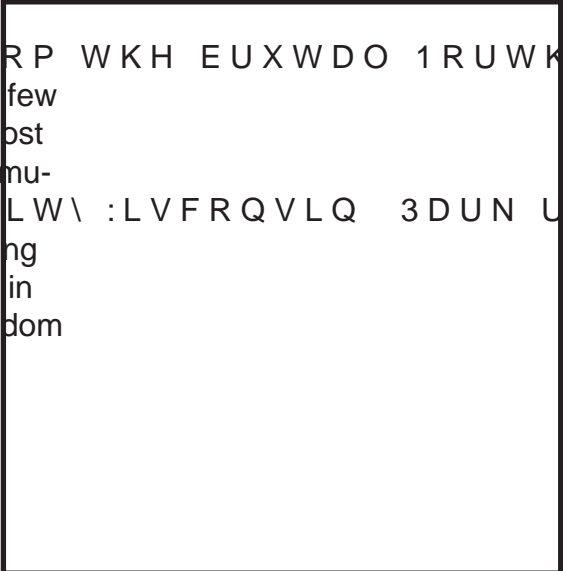


To the Students of Concordia (Yeonmi Park)

Transcribed by: Isaiah Mudge, Editor-in-Chief

<HRQPL 3DUN D GHIHFWRU IURP WKH EUXWDO 1RUWK .RUHD
communist state, has lived through experiences that few
people of any age will ever know—and from which most
will never recover. In this speech she gave to the comu-
QLW\ RI &RQFRUGLD 8QLYHUVLWLW\ :LVFRQVLQ 3DUN UHWHOO
her story in gripping detail and cautions those listening
against the different kinds of tyranny she witnessed in
North Korea and the seeds of similar erosions of freedom
that she sees here in the United States.

(adapted from In Order to Live Yeonmi Park's
autobiography)



Hello everyone, good evening[...]
I'm so honored that you came out here,
to see me and hear my speech. I was in college a
few years ago and I remember every Thursday I'd
be excited to get done with my classes. Now that
you're here it means so much to me [...] There's
a saying I wrote [in my book] that there are two
things that I'm most grateful for. First that I was
born in North Korea, and number two, that I
escaped [...]

The reason why I'm so grateful to have
been born in North Korea is that if I was not
born in that darkness, if I was not born in that
oppression, I would not have known how unique,
how amazing, how miraculous it is to be in this
free country. And if I had stayed in North Korea,
I would have been executed by 2007, when I was just a mere 13 years
old. I just turned 29 and people tell me I'm young.
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ending of my life. Most people do not make it to
even after 50. So how can I not be grateful for
being born there and coming here? I was hearing
about how this forum is about civil discourse and
freedom of speech, and that reminded me of the
ZDV JURZLQJ XS LQ 1RUWK .RUHD
remember [...] was my mom telling me, "Don't
even whisper," because birds and mice could hear

me. She said that the most dangerous thing I have
in my body was my tongue. If I said one thing
that was wrong in the eyes of the regime that was
bad, they were not just going to kill me only. They
were going to kill three generations of my entire
family. What they say is, "kill the entire root."
That's the cost of having a tongue and practicing
the freedom of speech in North Korea.

I was born in 1993, in the northern part of
North Korea, and I went to school like you guys. I
went to school, but I never even saw a map of the
world. I did not hear about biology or anything,
the only thing I heard about was how amazing my
dear leader was, and how powerful he was. And
the other things they taught me was how horrible
the American bastards were. So, it's so surreal for
me to be here now, standing on this stage in front of so
many bastards. But I was brainwashed to think
that if I saw them, I would have to kill them, but
now I'm here. I just became an American bastard; I
became American this year.

I remember seeing my textbook in school,
it went like this, "There are four American
bastards are there left to kill?" So
I remember at 10 years old, 15 years old, everything,
they teach us, even the music, like sports [...]
Everything that education in North Korea does is
to brainwash. And helping us to not realize what a

horrible, oppressed country [we] are really living in.

So, when I was 13 years old it came to food. The reason why North Korea is poor is not because we're like Haiti or Africa, it's because the regime chose to starve us. So, for instance, there are a lot of people saying, "Why are these North Koreans so poor?" The reason is, if our tummy is full, we're going to start thinking about what the meaning of life is, what's out there, why our lives are not better. But if we are constantly starving, the only thing that we are allowed to think about is meal, you're going to die. Hunger means death in North Korea. So, most of the days growing up

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guys so much I'm giving you my son," that's Kim Jong-un—he's like Jesus Christ—his body dies but his spirit returns forever. And that's how he

university [students] who were wearing like I don't know \$100 yoga pants and drinking these green juice cups detox things, I don't even know. And they're vegans! They chose to eat like North Korean people [...] I was so offended. They were eating this rabbit food, like salad. I ate this plant in North Korea because I was starving, and they were eating this plant and paying like ten to twenty bucks and they're telling me how they're so oppressed. And I was really shocked, like maybe there's some mental disease spreading in America you know? I cannot fathom, and then I was starting [to tell] them my story, you know, actually maybe with all the problems America has, still, this is the best country we've ever gotten DV KXPDLW\ \$QG WKH\ ZHUH brainwashed." Telling a North Korean that I'm brainwashed by white men again.

And then of course there's a constant threat that I have to respect the students [by] conducting in the code we have, I need to make sure that students can have a safe place. Safe places not from being raped or being hit by other people, it's emotional safe space. Like where people cannot hear anything that upsets them or offends them. And then in class, like I just learned English a few years ago before coming to America by watching Friends TV show, and then suddenly in this lecture room every single class the professors were asking our pronouns. Some of them are Ze, like, I mean there are 50 something different pronouns. I just learned English by watching friends, there's no "they" in there, right? There's only "she" and "he." So of course I messed that up, it's not bad intention, I just don't know how to incorporate "they" as a pronoun yet back then. And then there was a "they," Justin, I called him, "him," even WKR XJK KH V WKH\ 37KH\ LV JHQGHU AXLG GRHV QRW know what he is. And then I called "him," so they come after me crying, I make they feel not safe.

I feel like, this is the end of civilization at this point, I mean, if you cannot pick that one word, and you think your life is ending and WKHQ OLYLQJ LQ WKLV QDQFLDO KXE RI ODQKDWWDQ P\ IULHQGV ZRUNLQJ IRU WKH QDQFLDO LQVWLWXWLRQV they're the investment bankers [...] they're having a very, very good career and they're winning in this free market system and they all go to therapy

DOO GD\ ORQJ \$OO WKH\ UH VH the best therapist, and my agent was telling me 3 <HRQPL \RX UH WUDXPDWLJHG a therapist." So of course, as a North Korean, in North Korea by the way we don't have word for stress. Do you know why? Because how can you EH VWUHVHG LQ D VRFLDOLVW

The regime simply [removed] words like "oppression, stress, gay, freedom, human rights," it's exactly what George Orwell writes in his book: doublespeak. If you do not know the word that means you do not understand the concept. And that's why it scares me right now that there's so much force in America trying to control the speech and what words we can say and what words we cannot say.

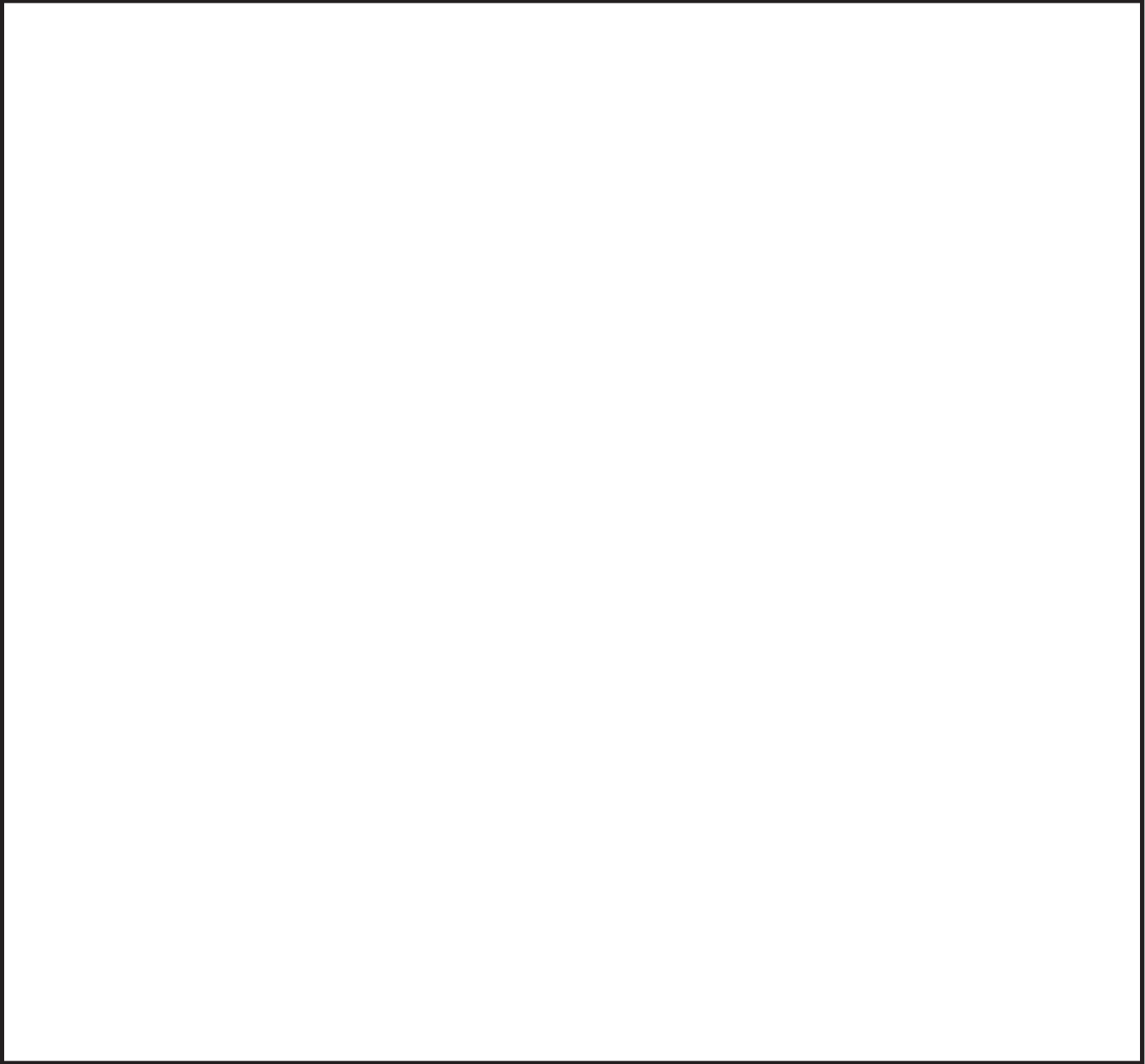
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often I get this question from people: “Why do I have to care about human rights? Why do I have to care about people [...] suffering in China and North Korea?”

I actually work with a lot of animal rights activists people at the UN, and a lot of other

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