



AFPC Hosts Dinner for Chinese Supreme Court Justice

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Related Expert: Herman Pirchner, Jr.

On January 27, AFPC hosted a dinner for a six-person Chinese delegation led by PRC Supreme Court Justice Vice President Tao Kaiyuan. The dinner was held at the historic Dolley Madison House which, like the White House, is located on the small Lafayette Park.

Madame Tao traveled to the U.S. on a speaking tour to articulate new judicial reforms in China and to seek input from American judges, lawyers, and Congressman. The Chinese Communist Party's 4th Plenum of the 18th Party Congress focused on strengthening the rule of law through the institution of new checks and balances including recording the intervention of officials in pending cases. Because officials who put pressure on judges will be held accountable for every intervention (e.g. did they do it for financial reasons, etc.?) it is thought that judges will now operate with more independence.

There are two judicial systems in China, a standard judicial system and one that is run by the Communist Party. The Party based system is stricter than the standard system and judges (who are almost all Party members) are held to a high standard of Communist Party discipline.

However, because most of the Judges in the standard system are Party members, it is unclear how the judicial system can remain insulated and avoid undue political influence from the Party when rulings are made. In addition to the six delegates from China and two representatives from the Chinese Embassy in D.C., dinner guests included: Judge Doug Ginsberg, Senior Judge (and former Chief Judge), U.S. Court of Appeals; Judge Loren Smith, U.S. Federal Court of Claims; Amb. Richard McCormack, former Under Chinese Secretary of State; Dr. William Schneider, former Under Secretary of State and DOD Science Board Member; and, Hon. David McIntosh, former U.S. Congressman and Federalist Society Vice Chairman. Mr. Herman Pirchner, Jr., AFPC President; Dr. Christopher Manion, AFPC Board Member; and, Ms. Jane Kober, AFPC Board Member were among seven AFPC staff and Fellows in attendance.