

Trump Signs Hong Kong Human Rights Act; Allegations of Police Mistreatment; Teen's Call to Action for Uyghurs Goes Viral; Seasonal Sparkle Lights Up Europe. Aired 1-2a ET

CNN CNN NEWSROOM 1:00 AM EST

November 28, 2019 Thursday

Copyright 2019 Cable News Network All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Domestic

Length: 5755 words

Byline: Rosemary Church, Paula Hancocks, Lynda Kinkade

Guests: David Rennie

Highlight: China's government is lashing out at the United States after U.S. President Donald Trump signed legislation to support Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement. Beijing accused the U.S. of bullying behavior that meddles in China's internal affairs. Hong Kong is just starting to clean up the Polytechnic University that protesters occupied for weeks. A so-called safety chain made up of police, psychologists and government officials is clearing the campus of dangerous items. At first it just looks like a teenager giving online advice on TikTok about makeup. But then she has another much more serious message. Across Europe, the days are getting shorter but the lights are getting brighter as the continent decks itself out in seasonal sparkle.

Body

[01:00:00]

ROSEMARY CHURCH, CNN INTERNATIONAL ANCHOR: Hello and welcome to our viewers joining us from all around the world. I'm Rosemary Church. Coming up on CNN NEWSROOM. A big boost, the U.S. backs Hong Kong's pro-democracy protesters with a new human rights law and Beijing is not happy.

A big cut, Donald Trump slashes funding for NATO just days before he said to meet with U.S. allies in Europe. And a big lead, a new poll shows Boris Johnson's Conservatives on track to win a significant majority in next month's election.

Glad you can be with us. China is furious over a new U.S. law that embraces Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement. Beijing's foreign affairs ministry has issued a blistering statement accusing the U.S. of bullying behavior in enacting the legislation and has summoned the U.S. ambassador to launch its disapproval.

The new law allows for U.S. sanctions in response to human rights violations against Hong Kong citizens, and it requires an annual review of Hong Kong's special status. But the U.S. President said he won't enforce parts of the law where it interferes with U.S. foreign policy.

Mr. Trump justified his action in a statement saying this. "I sign these bills out of respect for President Xi, China, and the people of Hong Kong. They are being enacted in the hope that leaders and representatives of China and Hong Kong will be able to amicably settle their differences leading to long term peace and prosperity for all."

Trump Signs Hong Kong Human Rights Act; Allegations of Police Mistreatment; Teen's Call to Action for Uyghurs Goes Viral; Seasonal Sparkle Lights Up Europe. Air....

Well, CNN's Steven Jiang joins us now live from Beijing. Good to see you again, Stephen. So how surprised was China by this us move?

STEVEN JIANG, CNN SENIOR PRODUCER: They really saw this one coming, Rosemary, given the veto-proof majority of this bill had passed both houses of the U.S. Congress. So I think they realized that President Trump's hands were tied.

And that's probably also why within hours of this bill becoming law in the U.S., at least four different Chinese government agencies have issued very harshly-worded statements really voicing their strong protests over this move echoing what Chinese officials have been saying for weeks, especially in the last few days.

Now, this according to the Chinese government has only reinforced the notion in the many people here that the U.S. is the biggest black hand behind the chaos in Hong Kong with its ultimate aim being to destroy Hong Kong's prosperity and stability, and to contain the rise of China on a global stage.

And here is what the foreign ministry said in its statement, and quote here. "This act will only further expose the malicious and hegemonic nature of U.S. intentions to the Chinese people, including our Hong Kong compatriots. And the Chinese people will only stand in greater solidarity. The U.S. attempts are bound to fail."

And as we mentioned within the last hour, the foreign ministry here also said they have summoned the U.S. Ambassador to China, Terry Branstad, basically giving him another dressing down and warning that the U.S. should not enact this law or really suffer unspecified consequences. Rosemary?

CHURCH: So Steven, how might this impact sensitive trade negotiations currently underway with the United States?

JIANG: That is an interesting question given how President Trump and President Xi both want to see a so-called phase one deal in the near future. But there are signs actually. There were signs in the past few days that the Chinese government is really trying to separate these two issues.

Remember, as recently as Tuesday, top trade negotiators from both sides actually held a phone call, during which they had said they reached a consensus on resolving their disputes and they agreed to maintain communication on the dealing with the remaining issues.

So that's probably a good sign in terms of trade talks that both the leaders want to see progress and see results. Now, of course, President Xi would probably have to deal with domestic backlashes over this Hong Kong deal. But given the political system here, it is a one-party dictatorship. He probably has the power and the capacity to deal with internal critics to push through trade negotiations. Rosemary?

CHURCH: Steven Jiang with that live report from Beijing, many thanks. Well, Asia's financial markets have now had a chance to digest the new U.S. law on Hong Kong. As you can see stock exchanges in Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Seoul are old trading slightly down.

Mexico is pushing back after President Trump said he's planning to designate some drug cartels as terrorist organizations. Mexico's president says foreign involvement is not a solution.

[01:05:31]

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ANDRES MANUEL LOPEZ OBRADOR, PRESIDENT, MEXICO (through translator): I only need to say cooperation, yes, intervention, no. (END VIDEO CLIP)

CHURCH: Not only does this move have political ramifications, there is an economic impact as well as Kylie Atwood reports.

Trump Signs Hong Kong Human Rights Act; Allegations of Police Mistreatment; Teen's Call to Action for Uyghurs Goes Viral; Seasonal Sparkle Lights Up Europe. Air....

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

KYLIE ATWOOD, CNN NATIONAL SECURITY REPORTER: President Trump is going to designate Mexican drug cartels as a terrorist organization. Now, the White House is not providing any details tonight as to when this designation is actually going to happen. And State Department spokesperson said that they are not going to discuss deliberations or potential deliberations with regard to any new designations.

But this move would have a significant impact both financially and legally for any U.S. persons that are involved with these drug cartels. Now President Trump has had this on his mind. He asked, actually, the administrator of the Drug Enforcement Agency about this potential designation earlier this year.

Now, the director of the DEA said that they didn't think it was necessary, that they had all of the things necessary to take on the drug cartels. But did say that there was a necessity in communicating more effectively, working more effectively with foreign governments on this.

But President Trump is clearly decided that he wants to go forth with this plan. Kylie Atwood, CNN, Washington.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

CHURCH: Well, the Trump administration can claim victory in its effort to force NATO members to pay more for the Alliance. A deal is expected at the upcoming summit that will see the U.S. reduce its contribution to the cost for maintaining NATO headquarters and have allies contribute more.

The direct budget is separate from contributions toward defense. President Trump has long complained about European allies not paying their fair share. CNN's European Affairs Commentator Dominic Thomas discuss the effect the cut will have.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

DOMINIC THOMAS, CNN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS COMMENTATOR: The impact on the Transatlantic Alliance has been devastating ever since President Trump was elected. Not just the Transatlantic Alliance, but the European Union. We know that he's not funded these multilateral international organizations.

In this particular case, the talk about the funding is a little bit more complicated to the extent that he's talking about the contribution to the general budget rather than specifically to the question of shared defense and so it's a little bit muted in that regard. But yet again, as Donald Trump heads to an international meeting, he makes these inflammatory comments. And the irony of it, of course, is that NATO has become so crucial and so absolutely, you know, in need of extra financial contributions precisely to fend off what they see as an increasingly bellicose Russia.

And yet the more President Trump undermines this organization, the more one could argue President Putin is emboldened by this, and the more NATO needs these particular funds. So yet again, as he heads on an international trip, the trip will be surrounded with controversy and with negative expectations as to the outcome of what would be the 70th anniversary of this incredible organization.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

CHURCH: NATO observes that anniversary at next week's annual summit. A series of potentially damaging reports for Donald Trump's personal attorney. The Washington Post and New York Times are reporting that Rudy Giuliani was trying to strike personal business deals with Ukrainian officials at the same time, he was pressing them to investigate Mr. Trump's political rival. CNN Reporter Kara Scannell details the allegations.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

KARA SCANNELL, CNN REPORTER: According to these reports, they were draft proposals. One was -- would have paid Rudy Giuliani's for \$300,000. Another proposed draft would have paid Giuliani's for \$200,000. And

Trump Signs Hong Kong Human Rights Act; Allegations of Police Mistreatment; Teen's Call to Action for Uyghurs Goes Viral; Seasonal Sparkle Lights Up Europe. Air....

according to the reports, at least one of those contracts would have involved Rudy Giuliani working for the Ukraine's Ministry of Justice, helping them root out and find some money that they alleged was stolen.

So, you know, Rudy Giuliani, though, has said that none of these contracts had actually been executed. His attorney told me that Giuliani was not paid by the Ukrainians or by Yuriy Lutsenko, that is the top prosecutor and one of the people that Giuliani was in talks with.

Now, all of this though, does raise questions about how many hats for the Giuliani is wearing at one time, conflicts of interest. He is the President's personal attorney trying to advance his interests in the Ukraine. At the same time, he's considering taking up the Ukraine's interest for them.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

[01:10:13]

CHURCH: As these problems mound for Rudy Giuliani, President Trump is now distancing himself from his personal attorney. It's a tactic Mr. Trump has used before when other allies face legal trouble as Tom Foreman reports.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE) TOM FOREMAN, CNN CORRESPONDENT: A key question in these impeachment proceedings has to be this. How much did Donald Trump know about and direct what was happening in Ukraine, and how much was this a case of his people taking it upon themselves to do these things? And his lawyer is right in the middle.

DONALD TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Well, you have to ask that to Rudy. But Rudy, I don't even know.

FOREMAN: President Trump is putting distance between himself, his personal attorney Rudy Giuliani, and all the accusations of dirty dealings abroad. Never mind that Trump specifically told the Ukrainian president in that now-infamous phone conversation, "I will have Mr. Giuliani give you a call." Now, he says of Giuliani.

TRUMP: No, I didn't directed him, but he is -- he is a warrior. Rudy is a warrior. Rudy went, he possibly social media. But you have to understand, Rudy has other people that he represents.

FOREMAN: It's a familiar pattern. Trump praises his allies and friends effusively right up until they get into trouble. Then he suggests he never knew them that well and certainly not what they were up to. Take his previous personal lawyer Michael Cohen for to the years worked hand in glove.

MICHAEL COHEN, FORMER LAWYER OF PRESIDENT TRUMP: They say I'm Mr. Trump's pit bull, that I am his -- I'm his right-hand man.

FOREMAN: But when Cohen came under intense legal pressure about campaign funds and payments to women allegedly involved with Trump, charges that would eventually land Cohen in prison, suddenly Trump seemed to know nothing about what his lawyer had been doing.

TRUMP: You have to ask Michael Cohen.

I haven't spoken to Mike on a long time.

He's a weak person and not a very smart person.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Have you talked to President Trump in the last week or two?

FOREMAN: Cohen's successor, Giuliani, insists he and Trump are tight.

GIULIANI: You can assume that I talked to him early and often.

Trump Signs Hong Kong Human Rights Act; Allegations of Police Mistreatment; Teen's Call to Action for Uyghurs Goes Viral; Seasonal Sparkle Lights Up Europe. Air....

FOREMAN: Amid the allegations, Giuliani was making a sneaky end-run on official U.S. foreign policy. Giuliani tweeted, the investigation I conducted concerning 2016 Ukrainian collusion and corruption was done solely as a defense attorney to defend my client against false charges. But that doesn't say Trump ordered it. And the Acting Chief of staff's assessment --

MICK MULVANEY, ACTING WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF: It's not illegal, it's not impeachable. The President gets to use who he wants to use. Still, Trump is leaving room for doubt that he was using Giuliani or aware of his actions.

TRUMP: He's done a lot of work in Ukraine over the years and I think -- I mean, that's what I heard.

FOREMAN: In short, the President pardons the Thanksgiving turkeys, but impeachment still running hot, many political analysts say it looks like he may yet be preparing a side dish of scapegoat. Tom Foreman, CNN, Washington.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

CHURCH: To Britain now where a new opinion poll is a good news for Boris Johnson. Research group YouGov says the Prime Minister's Conservative Party is on course to win a majority of 68 seats, a total of 359, while Labour would end up with just 211. Two years ago, YouGov accurately predicted a U.K. hung parliament.

Weather advisories across the United States, in some parts drivers are being told to stay off the roads, and others the road is hard to find, on one of the busiest travel weekends of the year. The latest forecast when we return.

Plus if it gets too windy in New York, those big balloons at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade may have to sit this one out. We'll have the details for you.

[01:15:30]

DEREK VAN DAM, CNN INTERNATIONAL WEATHER ANCHOR: What do you do after record breaking November snowfall? Well, you go sledding of course. You make the most of it, right? That's what this individual did in Denver, Colorado. Serious amounts of snow blanketing the Rockies over the past 36 hours. And guess what, there's still more to come. In fact, the entire western portions of the U.S., very active, several rounds of cold weather and precipitation moving from California, right into Utah and Colorado.

But the East Coast is also getting some major impacts as well as we head into Thanksgiving, of course, a national holiday across the U.S. Strong cold front moving off the New England coastline. That is going to allow for a few showers and snow showers for the higher elevations. But lots of wind associated with this so we could see some travel delays especially on the roadways. I-95, running north to south across that region. Lots of traffic impacted by this weather.

Look at the slew of winter storm alerts that are in place over the western parts of the country, another round of precipitation. We're going to be measuring snowfall in feet across Utah and into southwestern sections of Colorado and some precipitation over spreading Des Moines, Iowa as well Chicago but that will be in the form of rain. There's a snowfall forecast for the western U.S. making the ski resorts happy.

Three degrees for Chicago today. 10 degrees for New York. 16 near Atlanta. Happy Thanksgiving, everyone.

CHURCH: Rescue teams in Albania are still searching for survivors of Tuesday's powerful earthquake. Workers were able to free a boy trapped in the rubble in one town. They use their hands to dig him out of a collapsed building near the quake's epicenter. The death toll rose to 30 on Wednesday, the defense ministry said 650 people have been injured and 20 are still missing.

Rain is forecast for Thursday which could hamper search and rescue efforts. People in Port Neches in Texas have been ordered to leave their homes after massive explosions at a chemical plant rock the city and nearby

Trump Signs Hong Kong Human Rights Act; Allegations of Police Mistreatment; Teen's Call to Action for Uyghurs Goes Viral; Seasonal Sparkle Lights Up Europe. Air....

communities on Wednesday. About 24 hours after the blast the fire is still burning. Officials say there's no threat to human lives but exposure to the burning chemicals can cause irritation.

Firefighters are battling the flames with remote controlled water cannon and a curfew is in place. At least three plant employees have been injured. In Santa Barbara, California right now it looks like anything but a happy thanksgiving for the folks trying to cope with what's known as the cave fire. The flames have scorched more than 36 square kilometers and only 20 percent contained. But there is at least a little good news, rain is expected to move through Santa Barbara and there's even the possibilities of some snow at the higher elevations.

On a record number of people are taking to the skies and the roads this Thanksgiving weekend in the United States but their plans could be disrupted by bad weather across the country. The west is being pounded with snow and that storm system is heading east. Meanwhile, 32 states in the U.S. are under some sort of weather advisory. And for more details, I want to turn to our meteorologist, Derek Van Dam who's been studying this very closely.

[01:20:01]

CHURCH: What an incredible map there. So many affected.

VAN DAM: Yes. There it is. There's the 32 states impacted by some sort of advisory or warning today. Of course, coinciding with some of the busiest travel times of the year. All you really need to know about this weather map is that it equals travel headaches for anyone in the United States or traveling to the U.S. Lots to talk about. And I want to show you this video because this is what we mean.

At least authorities what they mean when they say avoid traveling at all costs, especially with winter weather and the most amount of people on the roadways. There was a 60 to 70 car pileup on I-80. This is outside of Spokane, Washington. Incredible amount of damage to the vehicles there. And fortunately, no serious injuries but that we are tracking a number of storms across the U.S., we've highlighted them here.

And of course, this is really incredible on how it's impacting to the East Coast. The Mid Atlantic, some of the bigger cities, D.C., Philly, as well as New York. And of course, when you see wind advisories and warnings coinciding with travel holiday weekend, that's going to mean delays and cancellations at the airports over 150 cancellations on Wednesday alone. Now, it's Thursday, of course, being Thanksgiving in the U.S.

And you can see some of the expected travel delays along the East Coast and into the Southwest, where rain and snow is moving in across the region. And of course, the winds will really start to pick up and howl across the New England coastline. And that is going to coincide. Well, you guessed it with the Macy's Day Parade. And I want to talk about just quickly when they hoist up those balloons in downtown Manhattan.

These are the criterias that prevent them from actually allowing those balloons to fly if there's wins over 37 kilometers per hour and that could happen. Rosy?

CHURCH: Wow. All right. We'll see what happens there. Derek Van Dam, many thanks.

VAN DAM: Yes.

CHURCH: Appreciate that. What a mess. Well, if traveling is the Thanksgiving ritual for many Americans, you heard it from Derek, so too is gathering in front of their televisions or at the actual parade to watch the annual Macy's parade in New York. That as CNN's Brynn Gingras tells us windy weather could ground some of the parade's most beloved features.

BRYNN GINGRAS, CNN CORRESPONDENT: A million people from all over the world come out to see the inflation of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade balloons. Now it's starting to rain here, so there's a little bit of a dispersing of the crowd but what an incredible scene here. And you can see that most of these balloons are already blown up. We got the Cat in the Hat right here, we got Pikachu further down.

Trump Signs Hong Kong Human Rights Act; Allegations of Police Mistreatment; Teen's Call to Action for Uyghurs Goes Viral; Seasonal Sparkle Lights Up Europe. Air....

Now the big question everybody usually asks is, are these balloons going to fly? There's two numbers you have to keep in mind. 23 miles per hour sustained winds or 34-mile per hour wind gusts. Those are what the NYPD, New York Police Department track during the entire parade to make sure these balloons are flying at a safe level. So they have the ability actually to raise the balloons higher up or bring them lower down to make sure that they are actually walking the parade route at a safe level.

And they even have NYPD representatives walking with the Macy's day balloon handlers along the entire parade route keeping track on machines in their hands of the wind gusts. Making determinations really minute by minute. So, the big question really won't be answered until Thanksgiving Day. But certainly, that is the big question that people are still even asking as they're watching the inflation still occur.

So awesome, awesome experience, even though it's raining here in New York City. But still, this is a family tradition that we've learned from many people all around the country come to see every year. I'm Brynn Gingras in New York for CNN.

CHURCH: And we'll see what happens there. So Twitter is putting on hold a plan to purge accounts that have been inactive for six months. The social media giant had announced it would delete inactive accounts to free up users' names. But after realizing that would eliminate posts from people who are dead, Twitter plans to introduce a new way to memorialize accounts and will not remove inactive accounts before this feature is introduced.

Well, coming up. Protesters have all left Hong Kong's Polytechnic University after occupying it for weeks, but thousands of protesters have been arrested labeled as rioters. Plus, Beijing is angry, the U.S. has officially embraced Hong Kong's prodemocracy movement. We will explain how this could affect relations between the two counties. Back in just a moment.

[01:28:07]

CHURCH: Welcome back to CNN NEWSROOM. I'm Rosemary Church. I want to check the headlines for you this hour. The U.S. is moving to cut its contribution to NATO's direct budget. It currently pays about 25 percent of the cost of running the headquarters. That will be cut to 16 percent and other members will pay more. The direct budget is separate from the much larger defense budget.

In the U.K., a new poll says Boris Johnson's Conservative Party is headed for a majority in next month's general election. Two years ago research firm YouGov accurately predicted a hung parliament. Now it says the Tories are on course to win a 68-seat majority when Britain goes to the polls on December 12. China's government is lashing out the United States after U.S. President Donald Trump signed legislation to support Hong Kong's prodemocracy movement.

Beijing accused the U.S. of bullying behavior that meddles in China's internal affairs. This concerned the new U.S. law could jeopardize sensitive trade negotiations now underway between China and the United States. Meanwhile, Hong Kong is just starting to clean up the Polytechnic University that protesters occupied for weeks. A so-called "safety team" made up of police, psychologists and government officials is clearing the campus of dangerous items such as petrol bombs and corrosive liquids.

Officials believe no more protesters are on campus, more than 1000 were arrested when they left and there are allegations of police mistreatment. Paula Hancocks has our report.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PAULA HANCOCKS, CNN INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: More than 1100 people were detained and processed by police leaving Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The scene of violent clashes a week and a half ago.

[01:30:02] HANCOCK: The scene of violent clashes a week and a half ago, the site of a subsequent siege by police who labeled anyone inside a rioter -- a charge which carries up to ten years in prison.

Trump Signs Hong Kong Human Rights Act; Allegations of Police Mistreatment; Teen's Call to Action for Uyghurs Goes Viral; Seasonal Sparkle Lights Up Europe. Air....

The arrests include three human rights observers who say they were wrongly arrested as they were there in an official capacity documenting events.

JENNIFER WANG, RIGHTS EXPOSURE: They patted us down, this was on the street. And they said they were arresting us. They zip-tied us with plastic ties behind our backs and they led us on to the bus.

HANCOCKS: When asked what these allegations, police told CNN they don't comment on individual cases but always respect the dignity, privacy and rights of detainees.

The human rights observers say once the police knew their jobs, they became verbally abusive, chanting at them for their occupation and for being foreigners -- one British, one Chinese-American.

ROBERT GODDEN, CO-FOUNDER, RIGHTS EXPOSURE: A bit of an obvious point, but I mean it's worth pointing out that when you are arrested, you are still innocent. And when you're in detention and you have not been charged of something, you should be treated as an individual. That was not the impression we got.

HANCOCKS: They say they were held in a police station parking garage with more than 100 others sitting on a wooden chair, not allowed to move around or speak.

Wang says she was only offered water and no food for almost 24 hours. She says she later posted bail. More than 5,800 protesters have been arrested since the protests began in June according to police, more than 900 have been charged.

Lawyers were advising those inside Poly U about their rights before they surrendered to police. Some find the blanket label of rioter problematic.

LINDA WONG, BARRISTER, ERIK SHUM'S CHAMBERS: You need to prove that what they have done, ok? Why they were here? What they were doing at the time when the riot took place. You can't say when there is a riot and because you are there and then you take part.

HANCOCKS: Police say anyone that believes they were mistreated can lodge a complaint. Thousands now face an uncertain future as they wait to hear if they will be charged, cautioned or exonerated.

Paula Hancocks, CNN -- Hong Kong.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

CHURCH: Well, for more insight on this and the relationship between the United States and China, we are joined from Beijing by David Rennie. He is the Beijing bureau chief for "The Economist". Good to have you with us. DAVID RENNIE, BEIJING BUREAU CHIEF, "THE ECONOMIST": Hello.

CHURCH: So China -- very angry with the United States over this new human rights legislation that backs Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement. And has already issued a statement accusing the U.S. of bullying but what might China's next move be in response to this?

RENNIE: Well China's got various options in terms of clearly it could stop sort of mixing itself with the trade war, although the conventional wisdom here in Beijing is that actually China wants a truce in the trade war so it doesn't have a strong, selfish interest in tying the Hong Kong question to the trade war.

It is important to note that, of course, really what Congress and now Donald Trump signing this law have done is issue a threat rather than directly punish China. It's more saying that for the moment Hong Kong still is treated as a very separate kind of semi-western enclave and therefore America has different trade rules and different immigration rules and treats Hong Kong as a very different place. But if China were to demolish that by sending in the troops, making China have complete control, and direct control of Hong Kong, then the law would basically take away with those privileges.

Trump Signs Hong Kong Human Rights Act; Allegations of Police Mistreatment; Teen's Call to Action for Uyghurs Goes Viral; Seasonal Sparkle Lights Up Europe. Air....

So that is all kind of a threat hanging over the Chinese government. So I think the anger that you're hearing from them is that they deeply resent the fact that that trade is now hanging visibly hanging over them.

CHURCH: Right. So you touched on the trade negotiations currently underway. And your sense is that this human rights legislation would not have an impact on that. That somehow China and the U.S. are going to keep that as a separate entity?

RENNIE: Well, it is complicated because you've got multiple kind of partners, haven't you? You've got President Trump who at certain times has seemed to indicate that he puts the trade war and getting a good deal for his farmers and his voters far above democracy in Hong Kong. He's actually been quite dismissive at times about the process in Hong Kong and called them riots which is the language that the Chinese government uses. And he has sometimes seemed to signal that he wasn't actually keen at all on this law.

The Chinese government would like to separate things. It wants to do a trade deal with Donald Trump that doesn't involve changing China's kind of way that it runs its economy and just involves buying off America by buying soy beans and things.

If left to their own devices, President Trump and the Chinese could probably do quite a quick and easy deal but then you have Congress and others weighing in about the more principled values-based arguments that Hong Kong raises.

CHURCH: And the U.S. president has said he won't enforce parts of this human rights law where it interferes with U.S. foreign policy.

[01:34:57] CHURCH: What does that mean exactly? Do you think that's his out when it comes to these sorts of issues like the trade negotiations?

RENNIE: Well, there's speculation here in Beijing that there's a bit of signaling involved in that. But it could also see some of the language that President Trump used when he spoke of signing this law as a gesture of respect for the Chinese President Xi Jinping which at one level is nonsense. It can't possibly be a gesture of respect for the Chinese president for threatening China with sanctions.

But I think what you are seeing is President Trump trying to signal that he is not entirely on board with this. So remember it was passed with a gigantic majority in both sides of the Congress. And so he didn't have a tremendous amount of options because even if he'd taken the nuclear step of vetoing this law there was enough support in Congress to override his veto.

So there is a sense that he was kind of forced into this and he's now trying to make the best of it.

CHURCH: So where do things stand in terms of the sensitive trade talks between the United States and China? There seems to be a sense that they are moving forward. What all do you know about that?

RENNIE: So you have to break it down into there is the short term threat of tariffs and more tariffs that President Trump will pile on the Chinese economy. And there, there is every reason for both sides to come to a truce and wind back some of those tariffs and try and have China buy soybeans and both sides would have something to gain from that.

But it's important to note that even if we do get to that kind of truce and it's probably now moved further off because of the politics of this Hong Kong dispute, even if that truce is done and some of the tariffs go away and try to buy his tons of soybeans, there is a much larger dispute about the way that China runs its economy.

It uses (ph) huge state subsidies. Sort of its model of state capitalism and whether that is really disrupting globalization. And there are plenty of people in the American system not including President Trump, who really want to have a gigantic kind of historic confrontation with China and try and force it to change its ways.

Trump Signs Hong Kong Human Rights Act; Allegations of Police Mistreatment; Teen's Call to Action for Uyghurs Goes Viral; Seasonal Sparkle Lights Up Europe. Air....

That kind of dispute which involves tons of distrust and lots of angry kind of (INAUDIBLE) on both sides, that will persist even if there is a short term tariff truce.

CHURCH: David Rennie -- thank you so much for joining us from Beijing. Appreciate it.

Well, at first it just looks like a teenager giving online advice on TikTok about makeup. But then she has another much more serious message.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP) FEROZA AZIZ, VIDEO BLOGGER: Hi, guys. I'm going to teach you guys how to get long lashes. So the first thing you need to do is grab your lash curlers, curl your lashes obviously. Then you're going to put them down and use your phone that you're using right now to search up what's happening in China. How they get in concentration camps, throwing innocent Muslims in there.

Please be aware. Please spread awareness and yes. So you can grab your lash curler again --

(END VIDEO CLIP)

CHURCH: Feroza Aziz is a 17-year-old Afghan American. Her 40-second clip that criticizes the Chinese government for its detention centers which hold mostly Muslims has received more than 1.5 million views.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

AZIZ: I knew that as a Muslim and as an Afghan who saw my own people back in my country to suffer and for the other Muslims around the world to be oppressed by their religion, to see it happen in China at such a great magnitude, I knew I had to say something to spread awareness about this.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

CHURCH: TikTok is owned by a Beijing-based company. Aziz couldn't access her account for a time earlier this week and suspected censorship. TikTok denies banning Aziz and said it does not monitor content for politics.

Russian leader Vladimir Putin updating his look in 2020. His new calendar photos show him rubbing shoulders with other world leaders instead of fishing and hiking shirtless in the wild. We'll have the details next.

Plus, across Europe, the days are getting shorter but the lights are getting brighter as the continent decks itself out in seasonal sparkle. We've got some great pictures for you.

Stay with us

[01:39:13]

CHURCH: From candles to torches to thousands of fairy lights, Europe is getting its Christmas on.

CNN's Lynda Kinkade checks out some of the dazzling holiday sights.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

LYNDA KINKADE, CNN CORRESPONDENT: 'Tis the season to sparkle and the City of Light is doing it in style. The Champs Elysees in Paris is once again decked out in lights to kick off the holidays with 400 trees decorated with energy efficient bulbs.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: This is nice. It's the Christmas atmosphere in the city, a big city -- everything is bigger. It's great.

KINKADE: (INAUDIBLE) is also preparing for the festivities as the sound of accordion music, the smell of mulled wine waft through one of the oldest Christmas markets in France.

Trump Signs Hong Kong Human Rights Act; Allegations of Police Mistreatment; Teen's Call to Action for Uyghurs Goes Viral; Seasonal Sparkle Lights Up Europe. Air....

It was just a year ago that five people were killed in a terror attack here. Police have set up checkpoints and are patrolling the crowds with heavy weapons but shopkeepers say it has not affected their holiday spirit.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: We do what we usually do. We open quite peacefully. And we do hope that nothing is going to have another than business as usual. It is the festive season and we put things behind us.

KINKADE: It is beginning to look a lot like Christmas right across Europe. London's Kew Gardens is lit up once more with over a million lights glistening along a nearly three kilometer trail.

And the show stopping Christmas tree unveiled in Copenhagen adorned with 3,000 Swarovski ornaments.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: It is literally lovely. The lights are amazing. I can stay here all day long and stare.

KINKADE: A crystal clear sign that holidays are underway.

Lynda Kinkade, CNN.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

CHURCH: Very pretty. And if you are looking for the perfect gift this holiday season, Vladimir Putin's 2020 calendar is out. And in the carefully selected photos, you can see the Russian president sitting with world leaders or walking strategically in front of U.S. President Donald Trump.

It is quite a transformation from his past calendars which showed him shirtless, hiking, fishing and on horseback. The calendars have always been a way to showcase the Kremlin leader's carefully managed image.

And thanks for watching CNN NEWSROOM.

I'm Rosemary Church.

"WORLD SPORT" is next.

[01:43:42]

Load-Date: November 29, 2019