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.@thocpodcast is of course correct from a historical point of view. But, there are a lot of moving parts and the whole “pull up the draw bridge” China strategy is evolving and new implications arising weekly. <https://t.co/mMNvtWftDH>

Most Chinese don't have the same degree of global mobility Westerners do so don't assume it as a default norm or something they are entitled to. Westerners suddenly not having what the average Chinese never had doesn't, on the face of it, seem like it a big deal to most of us

It's now almost as difficult for a 22yr old NYC waitress to visit China as it is for her Beijing counterpart to visit NYC. Foreigners find the degree of global access most Chinese live with, when applied to them, intolerable and therefore bad policy that must be unsustainable.

From a Western point of view- global access was good- the foundation of civilization, the degree of access on-demand they enjoyed corresponded to when their countries were most powerful.

For everyone else, a bunch of white people in ships showing up- not always a good thing.

But, as @thocpodcast correctly points out, trying to stop it usually caused more harm than good- which gets into our somewhat psychotic complex about being bullied. "But that was when China was weak, now China stronk". So plenty of people think "this time will be different".

Cui bono? A lot of people benefit from limiting access to China and interactions with the West- the elite in particular.

When emphasis on English education for Chinese children was reduced, and then extracurricular English tutoring was all but eliminated the elite were unaffected

Fluent English is an incredibly valuable skill. On top of most professional skills, it can easily triple or quadruple your salary. By putting English education out of reach of most Chinese, an effectively state-enforced monopoly on it was given to China's wealthiest citizens.

So to whatever extent China is "cut off", it's only cut off for some- “Access for me, but not for thee”. Making English language education the exclusive domain of the privileged who can afford to send their kids overseas, is already firmly solidifying generation wealth transfer.

Also, Chinese simply have no remote work culture. We use Wechat but we don't use video chat very effectively or any of the other tools that allow for global collaboration in the West. We're used to foreigners showing up, going to trade fairs, touring factories, and placing orders

As previously discussed, in the absence of that direct contact the gap between what Chinese companies are making, and what the overseas markets want to buy has continued to widen. Unless we get better at collaborating remotely- yes we really do need foreigners getting off planes.

So yes- obviously China cutting itself off from the world will have a cost, but I think it's important to decenter the impact it has on foreigners in that conversation- most of what we hear about are the inconvenience of lengthy quarantines or the difficulty of tourism for them.

For me, I'm far more concerned about the class warfare elements, how it is already exacerbating the wealth gap, and undermining what fragile meritocratic traditions we have by allowing the children of the wealthy to both circumvent the Gaokao and get English language education.