



**RED
DRAGON
MENACING**

Red Dragon Menacing III(4)

On CCP's All-Out Aggression Against Humanity

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Is Beijing Weaponizing Your DNA?



A digital representation of the human genome at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City on Aug. 15, 2001. Each color represents one the four chemical components of DNA. (Mario Tama/Getty Images)

Why is a US DNA-processing firm sharing Americans' DNA with China? The answer is staggering.



James Gorrie

Writer

December 6, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary

If you've had a COVID-19 test, there's a good possibility that the folks in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) have your DNA.

If so, they probably know more about your health and DNA vulnerabilities than you do. The implications of that are disturbing, to say the least.

The company contracted to conduct the COVID-19 tests is Fulgent Genetics, a nationwide DNA sequencing and disease testing firm. According to the firm's website, its stated mission is, "developing flexible and affordable genetic testing that improves the everyday lives of those around us."

Apparently, we are to believe that Fulgent Genetics is here to improve all of our lives.

Deep Ties to China

On Nov. 29, the Office of the Sheriff of Los Angeles County posted a letter to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. That letter stated that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department would not be participating in the COVID-19 testing with Fulgent Genetics.

The letter explained that the Federal Bureau of Investigations' (FBI) Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate had warned Sheriff Alex Villanueva's office of the risk that DNA samples, from the COVID-19 tests that Fulgent Genetics was to provide, would "likely be shared with the Republic of China."

Villanueva also said at a press briefing that "Fulgent had strong ties with BGI, WuXP, and Huawei Technology, all of which are linked to the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, the People's Republic of China State Council and are under the control of the PRC."

Questions Abound

Several questions come to mind. Who or what is the Fulgent Genetics corporation?

Why would an American company wish to provide American DNA samples?

Why on Earth would China even want DNA samples from Americans?

For what purpose?

How many American DNA samples do they have already?

And most importantly, what does our DNA have to do with the FBI's concern with weapons of mass destruction (WMD) from China?

The answers to these and other questions on the stuff of dystopian worst-case scenarios are discussed below. But first, some background on Fulgent Genetics.

Who Is Fulgent Genetics?

The firm was founded in 2011 by Ming Hsieh, chairman of the board of directors, president, and chief executive officer, and James Xie, chief operating officer. Hsieh has served as a trustee at Fudan University in China since 2011. Xie received his Bachelor's degree in engineering from Chongqing University in China in 1987. Perhaps not surprisingly, both men have deep ties to China.

And apparently, Fulgent has been sharing Americans' DNA from coast to coast with China. As noted in Villanueva's statement, it's not the only PLA proxy company engaged in harvesting Americans' genetic material. There are others as well, and millions upon millions of people's DNA from America and many other places in the world have been sent to China.

This is where things get very dark in the weapons of mass destruction department. China wants to create a biowarfare WMD that targets your DNA.

A New, Dark Era of Biowarfare Is Here

Biowarfare isn't a new thing; it has been used throughout history. In the 4th century B.C., Scythian archers infected their arrows by dipping them in decomposed bodies. In the 14th century, the Tartars catapulted plague-infected dead bodies into the lines of their enemies at the siege of Kaffa. And in World War II, the Imperial Japanese Army bombed Chinese cities with plague-laden fleas.

But these "old school" forms of biowarfare are child's play compared to the latest DNA-based bioweapons technology that leverages artificial intelligence (AI) and genomics. We are entering a new and very risky era.

Biowarfare and DNA Manipulation

Just as AI and genomics enable DNA manipulation to help the human body fight all kinds of diseases, this same technology can also be used to create unique pathogens that only impact specific people. DNA-specific weapons can target a race, a gender, or even a family or individual with a specific DNA structure.

This isn't just a possibility—it's a probability, if not already a reality. What's more, at least in theory, there's no blowback to DNA-specific bioweapons because they harm only people with specified DNA characteristics. China's access to Americans' DNA is unquestionably a national security concern.

US Versus China in 'Death Race 2035'

Some estimates say that the winner(s) of the bioweapon arms race will be determined by the year 2035. It may well be much sooner. In the race to create highly effective, targetable, and lethal biological weapons, the United States and China are neck and neck. Both nations have invested big money in AI and genomics. Each wants to take the lead in creating these super DNA-based bioweapons.

Like all arms races, whichever nation develops the ability to launch a biological attack without fear of blowback will be in the power position. Not a happy picture, but it's reality.

But just being able to launch a deadly, highly targeted or even WMD bio attack isn't enough. The survival of a nation also depends on its ability to defend against one. Like nuclear retaliation strategy (second strike capability) is meant to deter a first strike, a nation's biowarfare retaliation ability may be a critical factor in deterring such attacks.

Unfortunately, *AI and genomics make creating potentially thousands of genetically-modified lethal pathogens easy*. On the flip side, immunizing whole populations, or even a small number of people, against thousands of newly-created pathogens is impossible; at least at this moment.

Biowarfare Technology Goes Viral

Predictably, the rapid spread of information itself is a problem. The internet has made it impossible to contain most secrets. If a technology exists, for the right price, it will be made available to the bad guys. Or, in the case of the PLA and Chinese scientific community, it will be developed and—if current experience with the CCP virus is an indicator—deployed in full.

This reality does not bode well for limiting the access and use of a new and dangerous bioweapons by China, or any other adversaries of the United States. If Fulgent and others are helping China develop DNA-targeted pathogens against Americans, there are no easy answers to such a threat, nor are there any good ones. But seizing all materials, data, and assets, and *prosecuting such firms would be a start*.

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https://www.theepochtimes.com/is-beijing-weaponizing-your-dna_4134462.html

Countering Chinese Communist Party Propaganda



A group of 16-year-old youths try to distribute Chinese Communist Party propaganda in Flushing, New York, on Aug. 10, 2013. (Milene Fernandez/Epoch Times)

Cultural icons are becoming a not-so-secret weapon in the propaganda wars



Stu Cvrk

December 7, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary

The Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) propaganda campaign is well-funded and highly coordinated. It's time for some coordinated pushback from unexpected quarters.

An increasing number of Americans and others are becoming aware of the highly-coordinated propaganda campaign being waged by the CCP against America and the world.

The campaign is multi-pronged, including pronouncements by Chinese leader Xi Jinping, repetition by Chinese “wolf warrior” diplomats in the world’s capitals, and relentless repetition by Chinese state-run media. An element of the latter’s modus operandi is to frequently quote obscure Westerners—including academicians, journalists, members of left-wing think tanks, former pro-China government officials, politicians, and even people on Beijing’s payroll—to ostensibly give credence to, and reinforce, the false narratives being conveyed by the CCP-controlled media.

Examples of ongoing CCP propaganda campaigns include the following:

- China was not the source of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.
- China’s strict lockdown procedures defeated the virus—a model for the world.
- Chinese leadership is benevolent—a “shared future” on CCP terms.
- The United States is a failing country (in all respects).
- Taiwan is part of China.
- China–U.S. moral equivalence.
- China is the future; the United States is the past.

The Chinese propaganda machine is a well-funded monolith that is relentless in propagating these narratives, and it simply doesn’t deviate from its messages, apparently believing in the adage attributed to Josef Goebbels, Adolf Hitler’s propaganda minister:

“If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, and thus by extension, the truth is the greatest enemy of the State.”



The front page of a Chinese newspaper in Beijing on June 21, 2019. (Wang Zhao/AFP via Getty Images)

How to counter the CCP's lies and overwhelm the Chinese propaganda with the truth?

That's a difficult proposition for the democratic nations of the world, whose very essence is toleration of dissenting opinions (and bald-faced lies) and a plethora of voices across the political spectrum. A coordinated response among governments, let alone by the chattering and political classes, is virtually impossible, especially when some of them are pro-CCP to begin with.

It is doubly difficult when the United States—the “leader of the free world,” as the old Cold War euphemism goes—is led by an administration in which some members have alleged ties to China (as noted [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)).

It may seem to be an insurmountable task, but there is a way to cut through the thick CCP fog—and that is to exploit cultural icons to convey the real truth. It is no secret that Western culture is dominated by the left: Hollywood, academia, the music industry, sports figures, and the legacy media. These people dominate social and regular media discussions and have millions of followers, particularly among the younger generations, and thereby exert a large influence on cultural topics.

That said, there is an increasing number of erstwhile left-of-center cultural icons who are breaking with the synergistic CCP and leftist narratives to speak out in matters of personal conscience (and about the obvious).

Like all communists and garden variety leftists, the Chinese communists are highly susceptible to truth in the form of humor, parody, satire, irony, sarcasm, and the simple exposure of blatant hypocrisy. A few celebrities and sports figures are showing how it is done in recent weeks. The following are some examples.

Joe Rogan

The CCP message to the world about controlling and containing the spread of COVID-19 is lockdowns and vaccines. Nary a word about the effectiveness of early treatment with a variety of available and inexpensive antiviral therapeutic drugs. The Western media and political elites have been echoing that narrative for 20 months.

Enter Joe Rogan, long-time actor, comedian, color commentator for Pay-Per-View’s Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), and podcaster with millions of fans and followers on Instagram and other social media. Rogan has not gotten COVID-19 vaccinations or boosters, despite contracting the disease back in August.

He announced on his first podcast after his recovery in September the unthinkable: “We immediately threw the kitchen sink at it: all kinds of meds. Monoclonal antibodies, ivermectin, Z-pack, prednisone—everything.”

And he didn't stop there, as he has been taking on the U.S. legacy media that condemned him for taking "a horse dewormer" and destroying theirs and the CCP's narratives.

Fox News reported that "Rogan grilled CNN's chief medical correspondent Dr. Sanjay Gupta over his network's coverage of ivermectin during a tense exchange on 'The Joe Rogan Experience,' forcing Gupta to admit his colleagues shouldn't have said what they said."

With Rogan breaking the dam on ivermectin, perhaps many of his followers have subsequently learned the media's "horse paste" claim is pure nonsense, given that over 3.7 billion human doses of ivermectin have been administered around the world since 1987, with only a handful of adverse effects.

Rogan is one more example of the effectiveness of early treatment of COVID-infected people.

Aaron Rodgers

Aaron Rodgers is a quarterback for the Green Bay Packers football team, a former league Most Valuable Player (MVP), a Super Bowl MVP, and arguably one of the best quarterbacks in the National Football League (NFL). He is a marquee player for the NFL, which regularly advertises his fame to attract more fans.

That would be the same NFL that has strict vaccine rules for all teams, which is entirely consistent with Beijing's COVID-19 narrative.

Turns out Rodgers not only didn't get vaccinated, but he also chose to treat a mild COVID-19 infection with therapeutic drugs, including ivermectin, and even discussed doing that with Joe Rogan, to the horror of woke sports commentators like Mike Florio.



Boston Celtics center Enes Kanter Freedom wears basketball shoes bearing his political message during the first half of an NBA basketball game, in Boston, on Dec. 1, 2021. (Charles Krupa/AP Photo)

Enes Kanter Freedom

The National Basketball Association (NBA) has been kowtowing to the CCP for three decades in order to promote the NBA in China (and make a ton of money in the process, of course, via a multibillion-dollar partnership that involves media rights, streaming, merchandise sales, and others).

The CCP doesn't like criticism and received a public apology from Houston Rockets star James Harden in 2019 after the Rockets' general manager, Daryl Morey, expressed support for Hong Kong's pro-democracy protesters in 2019.

Fast forward to October 2021 where Enes Kanter, star center for the Boston Celtics, has criticized China for improper treatment of Chinese minorities, particularly in East Turkestan (Xinjing). He has also criticized shoemaker Nike for its ongoing "silence on

injustice in China,” and has worn customized shoes with the words “Modern Day Slavery” and “No More Excuses” written on them, in a continuing protest.

Kanter is from Turkey and became a U.S. citizen on Nov. 29 while changing his last name to “Freedom.” Can he be cloned a few thousand times?

Celebrities Against Cancel Culture

The CCP publicly promotes “diversity.” Diversity is an intrinsic characteristic of the world, said East China News Service—while privately funding and supporting the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in the United States in order to undermine American society, and the country, in general.

The three leftist activists who founded BLM—Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi—“all work for front groups of the Freedom Road Socialist Organization ... [which] is a hereditary descendant of the New Communist Movement inspired by Chinese dictator Mao Zedong,” according to think tank Capital Research Center. Not a coincidence, as they are also connected to the Chinese Progressive Association, which is a group that has deep ties to Beijing.

Some celebrities are speaking out against “diversity” and the associated cancel culture being promoted by BLM. One of those is Brian May, the lead guitarist for the rock band Queen, who has declared that Queen “would not have been able to be born in the form the world has known it in today’s world, due to the influence of ‘woke’ culture,” according to the Post Millennial.

Other celebrities speaking out against the cancel culture include Alec Baldwin, Johnny Depp, JK Rowling, Gina Carano, Rose McGowan, and Matthew McConaughey.

Perhaps these celebrities and others are influencing public opinion polls, which show a significant decline in support for BLM and the cancel culture over the past year, as noted by the New York Post.



Peng Shuai of China poses with her trophy after winning the singles final match against Alison Riske of the US at the Tianjin Open tennis tournament in Tianjin on Oct. 16, 2016. (STR/AFP via Getty Images)

Peng Shuai

Lastly, leveraging Chinese cultural icons works wonders in silencing CCP propaganda, too. Last month, Chinese tennis champion Peng Shuai accused Zhang Gaoli, a former vice premier and member of the CCP Politburo Standing Committee, of sexual assault. Since then, the CCP has scrubbed all mention of Peng and censored any discussion of her accusations.

Peng has become a lightning rod for outrage directed against the Chinese regime around the world, with pressure being exerted on China by the Women's Tennis Association and others, and the WTA announcing last week the suspension of all tournaments in mainland China and Hong Kong due to concerns over Beijing's treatment of the tennis star.

Through Peng, Chinese censorship, persecution, and the lack of personal freedom in China is being exposed to the world.

Conclusion

Countering the CCP's gargantuan propaganda enterprise is difficult but possible, and Western cultural icons are increasingly becoming leaders in breaking through the communist lies. Counter-propaganda is an element of deterrence, as confronting Chinese lies results in educating people on the truth and empowering Western leaders to take diplomatic and concrete actions to deter Chinese aggression.

Western celebrities have millions of fans and followers who amplify the criticism of Chinese actions, as well as help destroy CCP propaganda narratives. Much more of that is needed!

Stu Cvrk retired as a captain after serving 30 years in the U.S. Navy in a variety of active and reserve capacities, with considerable operational experience in the Middle East and the Western Pacific. Through education and experience as an oceanographer and systems analyst, Cvrk is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, where he received a classical liberal education that serves as the key foundation for his political commentary.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/countering-chinese-communist-party-propaganda_4136752.html

Will China's 'String of Pearls' Stretch From the South China Sea to the Atlantic?



China's aircraft carrier, the Liaoning, sailing with other ships holds a "live combat drill" in the East China Sea, in a show of force by Beijing's burgeoning navy in disputed waters that have riled neighbors, on April 23, 2018. (AFP via Getty Images)



Richard A. Bitzinger

December 8, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis

Fifteen years ago, it was fashionable to speak of China's emerging "string of pearls": a chain of bases, ports, and other maritime facilities stretching from the South China Sea, through the Singapore-Malacca Straits, across the Indian Ocean, and on to the Red Sea.

If not directly owned or controlled by China, this network-of-access would permit the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), the naval arm of the Chinese military, to become a more or less permanent presence in the Indian Ocean. As a result, the PLAN could secure China's access to some of its most important sea lanes of communication (SLOCs), safeguarding the critical flow of energy supplies—particularly crude oil—from the Middle East, and protecting China's trade routes to Europe.

Until quite recently, however, there was no such "string of pearls." Indeed, to many, the whole idea was a flight of Western imagination.

It has gotten a lot less imaginary lately. Over the past decade, as part of Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China has undertaken a network of maritime projects—deepwater harbors, container shipping facilities, and other infrastructure developments that are expanding China's economic and trade presence in the Indian Ocean. China has funded and built ports in Colombo and Hambantota, in Sri Lanka; in Gwadar and Karachi, in Pakistan; in Sittwe, Burma (Myanmar); and the Seychelles.

Moreover, Chinese companies, particularly the shipping giant Cosco, have stakes in several commercial ports all along the eastern and western coasts of Africa, as well as the Maldives.

This rise of Chinese economic activity in the Indian Ocean has naturally brought in the PLAN. As the PLA's official English-language news website put it, "the PLA's responsibilities today have gone beyond the scale of guarding the Chinese territories," requiring it to "protect China's interests anywhere in the world. Overseas military bases will provide cutting edge support for China to guard its growing overseas interests."

While the PLAN may not yet possess a coherent constellation of "bases and places" stretching across the Indian Ocean, it is increasing more than ever before its presence and activities in the region. The PLAN maintains surveillance facilities in Pakistan and Burma, while its ships have access to a number of ports and naval bases in the Indian Ocean for resupply.

More importantly, China's first overseas base was its naval facility located in Djibouti, a small country on the horn of Africa situated at the southern entrance to the Red Sea.

Established around five years ago, this PLAN “logistical support facility” contains a 1,120-foot-long pier (big enough for China’s aircraft carriers) and is home to around 1,000 to 2,000 military personnel.



Chinese People’s Liberation Army personnel attend the opening ceremony of China’s new military base in Djibouti on Aug. 1, 2017. (STR/AFP via Getty Image)

This base in Djibouti may soon be joined by another PLAN facility on Africa’s west coast. A recent article in the Wall Street Journal reported that the U.S. intelligence community is increasingly concerned that China intends to establish a naval base at Bata, Equatorial Guinea. Bata already possesses a deepwater port constructed by a Chinese company.

If true, then the PLAN could have its first permanent military presence on the Atlantic Ocean, giving Chinese warships direct access to the United States’ eastern seaboard.

Given China’s emphasis not only on expanding international trade and commerce, but on increasing its political clout globally, it is not surprising that Beijing is attempting to strengthen its ability to project sustainable power farther and farther beyond its territory.

According to James Holmes of the U.S. Naval War College, China is increasingly “taking its cue” from Alfred Thayer Mahan, the pre-eminent sea power theorist of the late 19th century. According to Mahan, sea power rests on three pillars: factories at home and markets abroad; navies and merchant fleets; and naval stations based along important sea lanes to support those fleets. Put in its simplest terms, that amounts to commerce, ships, and bases.

Hence the appeal to China in expanding its control of global trade, as embodied in the BRI and its sea-based subsidiary, the “Maritime Silk Road.” This strategy also accounts for China’s interests in expanding and modernizing the PLAN and making it a “blue-water navy.”

The third element of the Mahanian stratagem requires a string of naval bases, or at least base access. This is why Djibouti is so important. It is strategically located near some of the world’s busiest shipping lanes, controlling access to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. It also serves as a key refueling and transshipment center, and is the principal maritime port for imports from and exports to neighboring Ethiopia.

Expanding the PLAN’s network of port access in friendly countries, along with genuine naval bases on both coasts of Africa, is very much in keeping with 19th century arguments that “the fleet follows the flag,” that is, that naval forces go forth to protect a nation’s global commerce and its shipping.

China’s growing global military footprint initially may have been the result of its expanding international economic and commercial interests. Increasingly, however, geostrategic and great-power aspirations are outstripping economics. Like the United States, China wants to be a global superpower, with a world-girdling presence, and these ambitions are driving its new string-of-pearls basing schemes.

Consequently, one should not be surprised to see China attempt to establish military bases, or at least access agreements, far beyond its shores. This would likely include forts and airfields in Central Asia, and leased or rented naval bases along the Indian Ocean. More critically, the PLA could seek to establish more bases on the African continent or, perhaps, even in Latin America (Venezuela is a likely prospect).

In such cases, economics would not so much lead as it would reinforce China’s military globalization efforts. A “string of pearls” would become a chain of iron.

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International Studies (RSIS) in Singapore, and he has held jobs in the U.S. government and at various think tanks. His research focuses on security and defense issues relating to the Asia-Pacific region, including the rise of China as a military power, and military modernization and arms proliferation in the region.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/will-chinas-string-of-pearls-stretch-from-the-south-china-sea-to-the-atlantic_4143741.html

Pax Americana Unravels at the Feet of China



A group of naval vessels from Russia and China conduct a joint maritime military patrol in the waters of the Pacific Ocean, in this still image taken from video released on Oct. 23, 2021. (Russian Defence Ministry/Handout via Reuters)

Beijing and allies erode the peace in East Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and East Asia



Anders Corr

December 9, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis

The news is coming fast and hard of peace and stability eroding globally in a manner that benefits Beijing's attempts at global destabilization to make a path for its increasing control.

As the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) seeks to break apart the American-led order, including that of the United Nations that Washington developed after World War II, Beijing makes the destabilized countries—previously free, sovereign, and independent—more easily digestible into a new and emerging Chinese-led global order.

The CCP will repurpose, not destroy, the U.N. bureaucracy while disposing of its ideals of freedom, diversity, and democracy. But first it needs to destabilize and reorient the global geography of sovereign states that America spearheaded and protected from the 1940s to the present.

Beijing's destabilization of international politics depends upon coordinated action by its allies.

China's ally Russia is building troops opposite Ukraine for an invasion. Those troops appear to be growing toward a massive 175,000-person army. This destabilization of East Europe distracts some of the global public's attention from Beijing, which is being freed to more easily attack Taiwan. Analysts predict that Putin could be ready for an invasion by early 2022, but the West is so frequently surprised by authoritarian powers, including Putin's invasion of Crimea, that we should prepare ourselves for an even earlier surprise attack.

Iran and its allies, including most importantly China, are stronger relative to the United States and allies than they were in 2015 when the first Iran nuclear non-proliferation pact was agreed. Since then, Beijing increased its influence in Tehran, including by purchasing 700,000 barrels of Iranian oil in 2018 when Washington reimposed sanctions. A friend in need is a friend indeed.

Expect the terms of future Iranian nuclear negotiations to be worse for America and allies, which could lead to no new agreement, or tip Israel into preemptive war against Iran to stop it going nuclear. An Iranian-Israeli war would likely pull in the United States and Saudi Arabia, a major distraction for not only America but our allies. Iran, one of the biggest supporters of global terrorism, would likely increase this asymmetric strategy of

terrorism, where it has an advantage, and the Chinese regime could then more easily attack Taiwan without serious repercussions due to the geopolitical confusion that ensues.

North Korea's Kim Jong Un is resisting U.S. and South Korean calls for a formal end to the Korean War, has collapsed nuclear talks with the United States, and refused talks with the South. The latter's Roman Catholic leader, Moon Jae-in, is so desperate for peace that he is turning to Pope Francis for help. The chances of the Pope changing Pyongyang, which relentlessly persecutes believers and is ruled by a family that likens itself to gods, is worse than zero. A Papal intervention could make things worse, for example, by Kim using a visit to burnish North Korea's image.



ballistic missile launched from a submarine in North Korea, on Oct. 19, 2021. (Korean Central News Agency/Korea News Service via AP)

The CCP is leading this rogue's gallery of nations and directly threatening war against democratic Taiwan. Xi Jinping is openly planning to take control of the island democracy during his tenure as General Secretary of the CCP. Meanwhile, new Chinese national security and data laws are being implemented that have extraterritorial effect, meaning that laws made in Beijing apply in New York City, for example.

Case in point: the Wall Street Journal got a warning on Dec. 5 from the Hong Kong government that the newspaper was in violation of the National Security Law for an article the Journal wrote about, regarding the breakdown of what little democracy Hong Kong had after Beijing's takeover.

But the Chinese military is already operating far afield from East Asia, and seeks new military bases in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the Middle East and Equatorial Guinea on the Atlantic coast of Africa. These will augment its already-existing base in Djibouti. The UAE halted construction when the United States discovered it and confronted the UAE government, but Equatorial Guinea is resisting similar diplomatic overtures. The CCP's plans for an Atlantic naval base in Equatorial Guinea continue.

A Chinese military base on Africa's east coast will put it within striking distance of the American East Coast, increasing pressure on Washington to buckle to China's military threats in the future. Expect Beijing to seek other military bases, overt and covert, in the 100 commercial ports it has already constructed around Africa. These are a threat to global shipping through the Mediterranean and around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, and will put Beijing in greater control of the oil and shipping resources of the Middle East.

The magnitude, quantity, and speed of geopolitical change is so enormous due to Beijing's increased economic power, diplomatic assertiveness, and military aggression, that the threat of war is increasing substantially. America and its former world order, wrongly thought to be unipolar after the breakup of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, is at a moment of truth.

We must draw red lines and accept the increased risk of war with not only China, but its allies Russia, Iran, and North Korea—or give into a slow erosion of American and allied democratic power globally. Without the protection of the United States, democracy, freedom, peace, and civilizational diversity could soon be a thing of the past. This dire truth must now be confronted. There is no time to lose, because time is on Beijing's side, and Beijing's side is that of totalitarianism.

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https://www.theepochtimes.com/pax-americana-unravels-at-the-feet-of-china_4142821.html

The Next Sneak Attack



Marines stand at attention as the sailors render honors to the USS Arizona Memorial during the 80th Anniversary Pearl Harbor Remembrance on Dec. 7, 2021. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Jeremy Lemmon Jr.)



Morgan Deane

December 11, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary

As Americans honor Pearl Harbor, they must be aware of the potential for another one. The Chinese regime's history and doctrine favor sneak attacks.

The United States recently celebrated the 80th anniversary of Pearl Harbor. Americans should take a moment to consider why surprise attacks happen and how a Chinese sneak attack might appear. There is a theoretical basis, followed by recent history and doctrinal statements, that suggest Americans should be concerned, though not panicked, about a potential sneak attack.

History

As I've discussed before, China has a history of preemptive strikes since 1949. Its neighboring countries received one. The Chinese communists (Chicom) attacked American forces in Korea in 1950. A few years later, they seized islands that belonged to Taiwan—in what is now called the Taiwan Crisis. It was only the timely intervention of American forces in the Taiwan Strait that prevented the Chicom from seizing the rest of Taiwan. Just a few years after that, the Chicom sought to readjust its borders with India in a short offensive strike in 1962. They targeted their allies, the Soviet Union, in 1969. In this case, there was another border dispute, and the area was militarized by both sides when Chinese commandos preemptively seized disputed islands in the Ussuri River.

Finally, the Chicom fought a short but inconclusive war with Vietnam in 1979. Again, this was an offensive preemptive strike that ended with China confirming the transfer of key territory along its border. In addition to actual wars, the Chicom have used force to intimidate their neighbors in the South China Sea.

In short, the Chinese regime has often fought offensive wars with each of its neighbors by utilizing a key strategic signature. There would be a great deal of tension where it claimed territory was unjustly stolen from China. It often initially assumed a defensive posture, but then used preemptive offensive strikes at the operational and tactical level to achieve victory. Then it defended the territory and waited for a ceasefire. This was seen most recently in the border skirmish with India last year.

Theory

As I discuss in my book, "Decisive Battles in Chinese History," there is a strain of preemptive thought going back to Sun Tzu's (also "Sunzi") warnings. His writing is the

most accessible of Chinese military thought, and it suggests that an overwhelming attack that induces a psychological collapse of the enemy is a preferred form of warfare. Sun Tzu admonished that the “highest realization of warfare is to attack the enemy’s plans.” And “subjugating the enemy’s army without fighting is the true pinnacle of excellence.”

When the army unleashes its plan, it should be successful and as easily victorious as a torrent of water unleashed from a dam, a bolt released from a crossbow, or a stone rolling down a mountain. He concludes that “one who knows the enemy and knows himself will not be endangered in a hundred engagements.”

One of the problems with the “Seven Military Classics” and Sun Tzu’s “The Art of War” is that, much like the Bible, it is a collection of writings that have been redacted over time that can be used to support different positions. There are also many competing authors with different and sometimes directly contradictory theories about warfare. This leads to a good deal of debate about the exact nature of Sun Tzu’s advice, but this still has influence in modern Chinese thought.

The Chinese regime has not forgotten this heritage in its modern objectives and training manuals. Mainland China’s National Defense emphasizes “rapid assaults” using a variety of orthodox and unorthodox methods, such as cyberattacks or using new technology in drone swarms. U.S. defense analysts warn that the “PRC [People’s Republic of China] continues to pursue [the ability] to fight and win short duration [conflicts].” The first principle of the Chinese Air Force is securing initiative through offensive operations.

Next Attack

There is a theoretical basis for the attack supported by China’s recent history. But what might that look like in the next war?

This conflict could look like several different things. Using the new “carrier killing” and hypersonic missiles launched by more advanced fighters, the Chicomps could overwhelm and surprise American forces, such as the U.S. Seventh Fleet stationed in Japan.



Chinese military vehicles carrying DF-21D anti-ship ballistic missiles, potentially capable of sinking a U.S. Nimitz-class aircraft carrier in a single strike, drive past the Tiananmen Gate during a military parade in Beijing, China, on Sept. 3, 2015. (Andy Wong/Pool/Getty Images)

The launching of hundreds of missiles within mere minutes to a theater with forces at fewer alerts than those in the South China Sea could be decisive. The new risk-averse public led by an administration in Washington that clearly doesn't want war, and refused to do much against Russian aggression in Ukraine, could then prompt Beijing to look for a quick settlement and resolution. This essentially means that China would win a conflict in one strike. Like the advice of Sun Tzu, the attack would show a knowledge of Chicom forces, American disposition, and the ability to deliver a quick, stunning blow that "attacks the mind" and the enemy's plans (for example, by striking a ship in port), and could win a war without a single soldier firing a bullet.

In a fictional global war of 2030, the attack would begin after tension in the South China Sea through the Chinese regime's malware and cyberattacks at the stroke of midnight on Black Friday. Mainland Chinese supercomputers then black out American satellites: U.S. countermeasures, such as drone strikes, fall harmless into the sea as their navigation systems are corrupted. Starting to panic, the U.S. Navy tries to

counter-attack, but launch codes on Zumwalt-class Destroyers tasked with destroying the enemy's satellites no longer work.

The U.S. Navy then has difficulty sailing through the narrow passages in the South China Sea without its navigational computers. By this point, the Chicom start sending missiles to knock out communication satellites and ground the high-tech fighters, like the F35 that rely on complex data. With American fleets rudderless, flights grounded, and communication in disarray, Russia and China assume direct control of disputed territory across the world. And by the time the United States gains its war footing, it is presented with a fait accompli from the Chinese regime. Again, using new and unexpected technology, the Chicom cripple the United States in a lightning war that subjugates the enemy army without fighting, and without a single death.

Conclusion

We must keep in mind that the United States has significant advantages in technology, training, and countermeasures to the above strategies that suggest a need to avoid overstating the Chinese advantage. But the Chicom have a recent history and doctrine of preemptive attacks that make it worth considering and preparing for.

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https://www.theepochtimes.com/the-next-sneak-attack_4146994.html

Beijing Threatens Congress



Light from the morning sun illuminates the Capitol in Washington on Dec. 3, 2021. (J. Scott Applewhite/AP Photo)

SENATOR SCHUMER'S BILL MAKES BEIJING SEE RED



Milton Ezrati

December 13, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis PDF

While Chinese leader Xi Jinping and U.S. President Joe Biden have talked (albeit remotely) about improving relations between their two countries, a new Sino-American battle has started.

On one side is the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress (China's rubber-stamp legislature), others in Beijing, and China's Ambassador to the United States, Qin Gang. On the other side are Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) and many in the U.S. Congress.

The issue is Schumer's massive U.S. Innovation and Competition Act (USICA). The senator has put it forward as a cudgel with which to beat China on trade, technology, and cybersecurity attacks, among other things. The Chinese side has made it clear that if this bill becomes law, Beijing will retaliate.

Schumer's massive bill (2,276 pages) passed the Senate in June 2021. It has yet to pass the House of Representatives. It very much reflects the growing anti-China sentiment in Congress, on both sides of the aisle, and gathers under its umbrella several smaller bills that had already been introduced. Prominent among these are the Endless Frontiers Act, originally put forward by Sen. Todd Young (R-Ind.), and the Meeting the Chinese Challenge Act, originally put forward by Senators Sherrod Brown (R-Ohio) and Pat Toomey (R-Pa).

The composite bill, not surprisingly, has a great variety of provisions. Among them, it would insist on "buy American." It would ban to the extent legally possible the purchase of Chinese-made drones and electric vehicles, and forbid any government server to connect to a Chinese social network such as TikTok. It would include measures to thwart cybersecurity attacks on any U.S. government agency and mandatory sanctions in response to any Chinese cybersecurity attacks, as well as any state-sponsored thefts of intellectual property and technology. It is estimated to affect some \$250 billion in trade and economic activity generally.

Beijing has vowed to retaliate should the bill become law. China's Foreign Affairs Committee has described the USICA as an attempt to "contain China's development under the banner of innovation and competition." Though Beijing has yet to divulge how it would retaliate, few doubt, given its actions in the past, that it would hesitate to do so. Few, however, expect tariffs.

After the strains China suffered during the 2019 "trade war" between China and the Trump White House, the last thing Beijing wants is to move matters in that direction. And given the tough line taken by U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai in her recent

talks with Vice Premier Liu He, Beijing knows that Washington could take that path again. China hands suspect that Beijing's response would target exports of parts needed by domestic U.S. manufacturers.

While the nature of the threats remains vague, China's Washington embassy has swung into action. Ambassador Qin Gang has expressed his outrage and that of his government. He has identified some 260 bills in Congress that he describes as having "negative China content." He has summed them up, singling out the USICA, as an attempt to "hijack China-U.S. relations and gravely damage America's own interests." He has also marshalled his staff to lobby (threaten?) all U.S. firms of significance, but especially those that already have interests in China, to defeat Schumer's bill and other pieces of legislation like it.

All this anxiety may go nowhere. The bill still waits a vote in the House, and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi has yet to indicate when or even if such a vote will take place. Congress has a great deal of business to complete, so this issue may wait quite a while to get her attention, much less the attention of Biden.

Indeed, should it pass the House and arrive at the president's desk, there are no assurances that he will sign it into law. He has at times talked tough on China, but its wide range of provisions could easily run afoul of other administration initiatives or important cabinet secretaries. Still, it does seem as though Congress has the proverbial bit in its teeth when it comes to China, and with the mid-term election looming in 2022, all politicians will take note of the public's clear anti-China feeling.

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https://www.theepochtimes.com/beijing-threatens-congress_4152657.html

G7 Must Get Tougher Against Coordinated Aggression by China and Russia



Beijing and Moscow are closely allied and moving quickly in Eastern Europe and Asia



Anders Corr

December 13, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis

The G7 group of the world's wealthiest democracies met recently and denounced Russian troop movements that appear to be gearing up for an invasion of Ukraine.

The group of democracies warned Moscow of "massive" economic consequences if Russian troops invade the Eastern European democracy more than they already have.

What the G7 did not mention on Dec. 12 is likely coordination between Moscow and Beijing, which increasingly train their military forces together. Beijing has significant influence over Moscow due to Russia's reliance on China as an export market for Russian oil and gas.

Russian troop movements are grabbing public attention when the bigger strategic threat is the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and its control over the world's biggest economy and one of the world's most powerful militaries.

Beijing could be encouraging Moscow in its territorial aggression in order to distract the West from the bigger threat of the CCP's growing power. Nobody knows. What is certain is that Beijing is doing next to nothing to discourage the aggressive excesses of its allies, including Iran and North Korea.

The CCP's leadership of the world's rogue dictators, not to mention its human rights abuse and territorial aggression, has divided the G7—with Japan, Germany, and Italy taking a weak position on Five Eyes proposals for a unified G7 diplomatic boycott of the Olympic games, for example. The Winter 2022 Olympics is scheduled for Beijing, and a diplomatic boycott is the least the G7 could do.

Even Washington continues to allow Chinese companies to list without the same reporting requirements as businesses from other countries, including the United States. This puts Chinese companies at an advantage over U.S. companies. Only on Dec. 2 did the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) even require U.S.-listed Chinese companies to disclose state ownership. Much more is needed.

In addition to this low-hanging fruit, the types of economic consequences imposed against Russia, if it invades Ukraine, should also be made against China for its continued illegal claims and occupations of the entire South China Sea. That sea is roughly equal in size to all of India.

Finally, Beijing should face severe economic consequences for its triple genocide against Uyghurs, Tibetans, and Falun Gong. But instead, U.S. sanctions are piecemeal against individual officials and companies.

Because of China's more powerful economy, the G7 countries are likely worried about the economic effects of sanctions to themselves, and so are making the ethically and strategically indefensible choice to continue empowering Beijing through relatively unmitigated free trade with the world's most powerful dictatorship.

At least there is some growing recognition of the CCP threat, however. According to Reuters' reporting on Dec. 12, "While Russian President Vladimir Putin keeps the West guessing over Ukraine, it was the might of Chinese President Xi Jinping that garnered the long-term strategic focus" at the G7 meeting.

British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said to reporters that "We have been clear at this meeting this weekend that we are concerned about the coercive economic policies of China."



Banners are displayed at the Chinese Consulate in San Francisco to condemn the Chinese Communist Party on China's National Day on Oct. 1, 2020. (Ilene Eng/The Epoch Times)

An official who attended the talks told Reuters, there were "very, very intense discussions especially on China."

Reuters described Russia as the "tactical" focus on talks, while China was recognized as the longer-term "strategic" threat.

According to a U.S. State Department official who spoke with Reuters, “It’s tremendous that there’s such a focus on the Indo-Pacific here.”

More specifically, the situations in Hong Kong, Xinjiang, Taiwan, and Lithuania were discussed by the foreign ministers in attendance.

Officials said that “There was serious discussion about G7 coordinated action to counter China over disinformation and to support countries snared in what critics cast as China’s global debt-trap web,” according to Reuters.

In June, the G7 scolded both China and Russia for what could be increasingly coordinated forms of aggression, which now arguably includes Iranian designs on Iraq and Syria, and North Korean nuclear weapons proliferation.

But talk is cheap.

In June, China responded that “small” groups like the G7 no longer rule the world.

Of course, the G7 never sought to “rule the world,” instead seeking to fulfill the U.N. principles of 1945 and 1948, according to which autocracies would gradually evolve into sovereign democracies that respect each others’ borders and trade freely.

The CCP’s allegation that the G7 seeks to rule the world is a Freudian slip that reveals more about its own hegemonic ambitions, proven by Rush Doshi in his book of this year, “The Long Game: China’s Grand Strategy to Displace American Order.”

To stop this illiberal end, the G7 should stop talking and start doing, by becoming a powerful and democratic counterweight to the growing power of China and Russia. To do so, it must move more quickly and decisively.

Russia was kicked out of the group, then the G8, after its 2014 invasion of Crimea in Ukraine. China should also be ejected from international organizations for its attempted takeover of the South China Sea and human rights abuse.

The United States is supposedly leading on the China issue, with the largest European economies and Japan dragging their heels. According to Reuters, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is in Southeast Asia this week in an attempt “to forge a united front against China in the Indo-Pacific.”

But Blinken and his boss, President Joe Biden, are moving far too slowly to effectively contain Beijing. If the United States and the G7 do not act more quickly, expect an eventual Chinese hegemony on a global level to be a done deal.

Anders Corr has a bachelor's/master's in political science from Yale University (2001) and a doctorate in government from Harvard University (2008). He is a principal at Corr Analytics Inc., publisher of the Journal of Political Risk, and has conducted extensive research in North America, Europe, and Asia. His latest books are "The Concentration of Power: Institutionalization, Hierarchy, and Hegemony" (2021) and "Great Powers, Grand Strategies: the New Game in the South China Sea" (2018).

https://www.theepochtimes.com/g7-must-get-tougher-against-coordinated-aggression-by-china-and-russia_4153710.html

With China, Russia, and Iran, US Needs to Show Political Will



Military vehicles carrying hypersonic DF-17 missiles travel past Tiananmen Square during a military parade in Beijing, China, on Oct. 1, 2019. (Jason Lee/Reuters)



Conrad Black

December 14, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary

As Winston Churchill famously said, “No war would have been easier to prevent than this one.” (World War II).

No one seriously anticipates war between the United States and China or Russia, in the sense of a declared war to be conducted until one side surrenders, but the deterioration of relations with those countries could be stopped.

Because of Hitler’s endless acts of bad faith and compulsive aggression and the barbarous incivility of Japan’s sneak attack on Pearl Harbor and throughout the Pacific area, a war of total victory, at least on the Allied side, ensued.

It is true that Stalin would have made a separate peace with Hitler, and implausibly resurrected the Nazi-Soviet pact which Hitler had violated by hurling 200 divisions into Russia with no warning and no claimed provocation. But Stalin would only have done so if he had concluded that the Western allies were not serious about opening a second front and ensuring the ultimate defeat of Germany. He was not prepared to conduct total war with Germany for the delectation of the Anglo-Americans.

What we have now with China and Russia are distinctly different cases of countries aggressively seeking greater influence in the world and particularly on their own borders, and steadily flexing their muscles while seeking to avoid arousing the United States and its bedraggled alliances to a confrontational response.

China is a vastly more serious challenge than Russia. It has already accomplished the greatest feat of economic self-elevation of any nation in history. Of course, that accomplishment has been very uneven. Premier Li Keqiang recently said 600 million Chinese live on less than 1,000 yuan (\$157) a month. At the same time, enormous wealth is concentrated in the hands of well-placed Communist Party members. Economic growth has been gained at the cost of extreme environmental degradation, and it has been accompanied by extensive human rights violations and the creation of a police state more comprehensive than any heretofore imagined.

It is the only country that at times in its past was one of the world’s greatest nations and descended into disorganization, weakness and foreign condescension and revived from such a state of vulnerability to become a great power in the world again.

The much vaunted “Open Door policy” of the United States towards China 125 years ago was really just an open door to permit the United States to join Japan and the European powers in the exploitation of a prostrate China.

When Mao Tse-tung won the Chinese Civil War in 1949 and occupied Beijing, he uttered the famous words “China has stood up.” So it has, but as Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said in an interview last week it is also true that “China is not 10 feet tall.”

China is not remotely as strong a country as the United States and the current apparent narrowing or even elimination of superior American power and influence as China seeks to undermine and surpass it is a function of disparity of leadership and governmental cohesion.

Because of the fanatical obsession of the bipartisan political establishment in the United States to defeat and evict Donald Trump and his followers and his policies, a coalition was formed for that purpose that was so broad that it included extremist anti-American elements generally grouped under the rubric of “wokeness,” and specifically including African-American extremists seeking massive transfusions of outright Dane geld to compensate them for what Mr. Lincoln called “the bondsman’s 250 years of unrequited toil,” the legacy of slavery.

These elements have explicitly threatened, “there will be riots, there will fire, and there will be bloodshed” if they don’t get all they want, (the recent words of Black Lives Matter’s New York leader, Hawk Newsome.) To the extent that these extremists are denied anything, the response is the reflexive charge of “racism.”

This anti-Trump coalition suffered from trying to bridge traditional centrist Bush-McCain-Romney and anti-Trump Republicans all the way out to the large swath of the media, the Academy, Big Sports, and Hollywood who are overtly anti-American, and from there on out to a significant minority of white-hating African-Americans.

The governing coalition is a Tower of Babel that has great difficulty achieving a consensus on anything, a condition aggravated by the apparently declining powers of concentration of President Joe Biden. Biden was only chosen by the Democratic party elders after faltering in the early primaries, to avoid the apparently unelectable alternative of the outright socialist Senator Bernie Sanders.

Biden has a long history of being pro-Chinese and that is without factoring in the generous and highly inappropriate payments that the Biden family have received from China for unspecified services.

These are entirely temporary circumstances but they have emboldened the Chinese to tear up the treaty it had subscribed over Hong Kong with the United Kingdom, one of the world’s most respected nations, and it has not shown any disposition to relax what

amounts to a long-term genocide against their Uyghur minority, constant persecution of all religions, or to engage in aggressive military skirmishing in the Himalayas with India, to make absurd claims of the South China Sea as territorial waters, and to threaten to abrogate the 1972 Shanghai agreement with President Nixon. That agreement asserted the principle of a united China including Taiwan, but with assurance that China would not try to reunify China coercively, and that the U.S. would not encourage the complete separation of Taiwan from China.

The facts remain that China, compared to the United States, is resources-poor, chronically aged (because of their insane one-child policy), has no political institutions that function well and are trusted inside or outside China, and no statement or number published by the People's Republic that can be believed. It is well advanced to becoming the most technologically totalitarian regime in history, with the ability to locate every single person in the country within a few minutes.

It remains a corrupt regime with all the long-term instabilities of dictatorships, made more complicated by the fact that it purports to be a communist society while promoting state and monopolistic capitalism.

The importance of Defense Secretary Austin stating that the United States would not be intimidated by the relentless bellicosity of the Chinese over Taiwan is encouraging. The United States appears to have fallen behind China and Russia in hypersonic missiles and to have failed to produce adequate defenses for its aircraft carriers, but these deficiencies can be made up quickly and can be substituted for in other areas where the United States remains superior.

As Mr. Churchill said of World War II, all that is required is to convince the Chinese that attempted coercive absorption of Taiwan will lead to unjustifiably costly consequences, not excluding an attack on what would be a very vulnerable invasion force plodding across 130 miles of open water.

It is a much different and simpler problem with Russia, which has a GDP smaller than Canada's and could not conduct a general war in Ukraine against serious opposition for very long. As with China and Taiwan, there is some truth to the Russian claim that Ukraine is not really an independent state. It was a part of Russia for about 200 years and its ethnicity is a not fully homogenized melange of foreign influences.

There may be as many as 10 million Ukrainians who would rather be Russians and if that is the case, it should be addressed by a genuine referendum. As most of the Russians in Ukraine live on the Russian border, the natural solution would be to allow

Russian Ukraine to join Russia and the balance of Ukraine to join NATO and the European Union, and then for Ukraine to accept and discharge the consequent obligations to behave like a sophisticated and accountable Western democracy, a level of administration Ukraine has not approached.

Exacting such a compromise will take more agile and purposeful leadership than is now found in Washington, and it will also take some resuscitation of Germany from its current status, in Nixonian terms, as the “pitiful helpless giant” of all Europe.

All that is required is a little firmness, not the strong point of the palsied Biden regime. This will require increasing the delivery of sophisticated armaments to Ukraine and Taiwan. It may also require, since the talks with Iran appear to have broken down, to stop this insidious Iranian pursuit of nuclear weapons by a conventional military strike that destroys their program. These measures will be enough peace-through-strength to keep a lid on the world until the next American presidential election produces a more purposeful administration.

Conrad Black has been one of Canada’s most prominent financiers for 40 years and was one of the leading newspaper publishers in the world. He’s the author of authoritative biographies of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Richard Nixon, and, most recently, “Donald J. Trump: A President Like No Other,” which has been republished in updated form. Please follow Conrad Black with Bill Bennett and Victor Davis Hanson on their podcast Scholars and Sense.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/with-china-russia-and-iran-us-needs-to-show-political-will_4156614.html

China Makes Economic Inroads in America's Backyard



Chinese-chartered merchant ship Cosco Shipping Panama crosses the new Agua Clara Locks during the inauguration of the expansion of the Panama Canal in this undated file photo. China is continuing its push to displace U.S. influence in the region, and already has put parts of the Panama Canal under its control. (Rodrigo Arangua/AFP/Getty Images)

Beijing's influence grows in Latin America and the Caribbean



Antonio Graceffo

December 14, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis

Through investment, trade, and diplomatic coercion, the Chinese regime is steadily expanding its influence into America's backyard—Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) became one step closer to isolating Taiwan when Nicaragua recently announced that it switched diplomatic allegiance from Taipei to Beijing. This leaves Taiwan with only 14 allied nations. Its strongest ally, of course, is the United States. The CCP seeks to displace the United States as the world leader even in its own backyard, in Central and South America and the Caribbean.

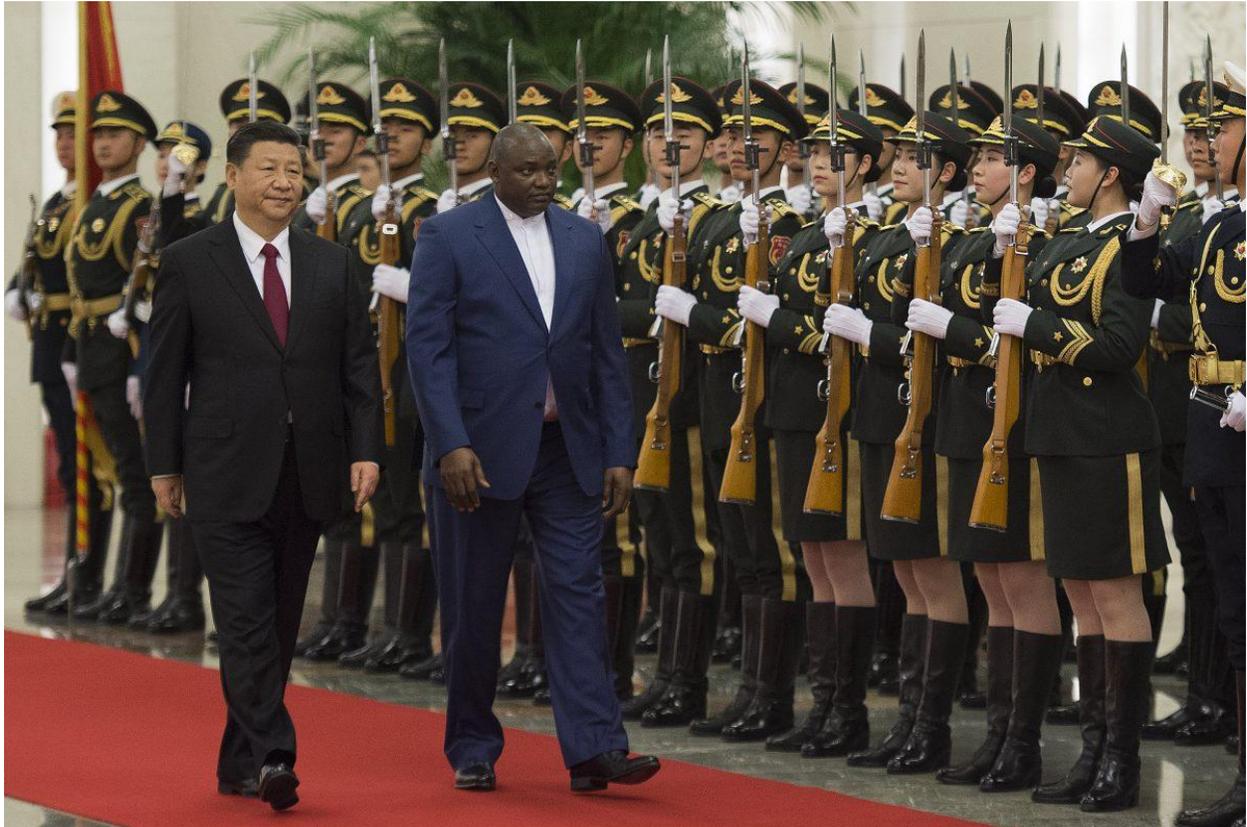
Currently, China leads in trade with Africa and parts of Asia. China is still lagging behind the United States in the Americas, but the gap is steadily closing. In 2009, Chinese investment only accounted for 4 percent of new projects in Latin America. By 2019, the number had increased to 6.8 percent. The United States, by contrast, accounts for about 22 percent of all financing. In some countries, however, Chinese investment is more prominent. China only began investing in Chile five years ago, but has become the nation's number one source of capital.

China's share of mergers and acquisitions in Latin America was 2.4 percent in 2009, but had grown to 16.3 percent in 2019. This places China second only to the United States. Trade experienced a similar growth pattern. In 2000, China's trade with the region was \$16 billion. Now it is over \$400 billion.

During the turmoil of leftist revolutions in Latin America, in the 1980s, a number of LAC countries switched diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China, including Bolivia, Nicaragua, and Uruguay. Nicaragua switched in 1985, and again in 1990 and 2020. Other LAC countries switched for financial and political reasons, such as the Bahamas in 1997, Dominica in 2004, Grenada in 2005, Costa Rica in 2007, and El Salvador 2018.

The United States handed over the Panama Canal to the Panamanians in 1999, and the Panama Canal Zone ceased to be U.S. territory. In the same year, the Chinese firm Hutchison-Whampoa was granted the right to operate ports on both the Atlantic and Pacific sides of the Canal. Panama was the first country in LAC to sign on to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Even before Panama's recognition of China, Beijing had won contracts to have container ports on the Canal run by Chinese state-owned companies.

Between 2008 and 2016, China and Taiwan had a truce on courting Latin American and developing countries to switch their recognition. The African nation of Gambia had offered to switch recognition to Beijing, but China refused, observing the truce. When pro-independence candidate Tsai Ing-wen was elected as Taiwan's president in 2016, China accepted Gambia's offer. In addition, Sao Tome and Principe, another small African nation, switched its diplomatic allegiance to Beijing in the same year.



Gambia's President Adama Barrow walks with Chinese leader Xi Jinping during a welcoming ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Dec. 21, 2017. The two countries re-established diplomatic relations in 2016. (Nicolas Asfour/AFP/Getty Images)

Countries that switched their allegiance from Taiwan to China received incentives such as loans, investments, infrastructure, roads, sports stadiums, clinics, and access to the Chinese market. Costa Rica, for example, obtained its sports stadium immediately after switching to China in 2007.

In 2017, Panama severed diplomatic ties with Taiwan. Just before the change, China Landbridge Group began construction on the Panama Colon Container Port on Panama's Margarita Island, a \$1 billion deepwater port and logistics complex.

Then-President Juan Carlos Varela kept the decision secret, only notifying the United States within an hour before the official announcement.

One year later, Chinese leader Xi Jinping visited Panama and the two countries signed 19 cooperation agreements regarding trade, infrastructure, banking, tourism, education, as well as an extradition treaty.

In 2018, the Dominican Republic and El Salvador also switched allegiance to Beijing. The Dominican Republic was offered a \$3.1 billion package of investments and loans for infrastructure projects, freeways, and a natural gas power plant.

Before the switch, the Dominican Republic was already China's second largest trading partner in the region, with trade of \$2 billion. By 2020, trade between the two nations had increased to about \$2.4 billion, with the Dominican Republic running a severe trade deficit with China of nearly \$2 billion.

Taiwan's remaining friends in the Americas include Belize, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Meanwhile, 19 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have joined China's BRI. Additionally, Beijing has signed a "strategic partnership" with 10 other nations in the region.

Switching diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China often means a cut in aid from the United States. The CCP, however, are so adept at writing checks that the loss is hardly felt. To increase U.S. influence in the Americas and to counter the CCP, the United States must have meaningful engagement with the LAC countries, helping them to increase their GDP. In 2013, then-Vice President Joe Biden said that the United States might be interested in joining the Pacific Alliance as an adviser. The alliance is a trade pact between Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru.

The United States, along with the other Group of 7 nations, are planning the "Build Back Better World" program, an infrastructure funding vehicle for developing countries that would compete with the BRI.

While Taiwan is losing diplomatic ties in LAC, the United States is strengthening its support for Taiwan, even stationing U.S. soldiers on the island—under both the Trump and Biden administrations. The Chinese regime is definitely gaining ground, but the United States retains its primacy in the region—in particular, when it comes to the Panama Canal.

The importance of the Panama Canal has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the United States has pushed for reshoring or close-shoring of supply chains. The United States remains the primary user, accounting for 66 percent of the cargo. China, by contrast, accounts for only 13 percent of Canal traffic. However, China is the largest user of the Colón Free Trade Zone.

The United States is still ahead, but U.S. foreign policy needs to be targeted at countering CCP encroachment in the Americas.

Antonio Graceffo, Ph.D., has spent over 20 years in Asia. He is a graduate of Shanghai University of Sport and holds a China-MBA from Shanghai Jiaotong University. Antonio works as an economics professor and China economic analyst, writing for various international media. Some of his books on China include "Beyond the Belt and Road: China's Global Economic Expansion" and "A Short Course on the Chinese Economy."

https://www.theepochtimes.com/china-makes-economic-inroads-in-americas-backyard_4154515.html

Chinese Synthetic Narcotics Networks in Post-NATO Afghanistan



Afghan farmers harvest opium sap from a poppy field in the Gereshk district of Helmand province on April 13, 2019. (Noor Mohammad/AFP via Getty Images)

Transferring Mexican structures, operational mechanics, and quietly accelerating risks



Ryan Clarke

December 14, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis

In recent years, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has directly supported, facilitated, and has exerted strategic control over the development of the Chinese pharmaceutical industry, a substantial portion of which is centered in Wuhan city.

The CCP has had the overt intention for China to become “the pharmacy of the world” with leading positions across the full spectrum, from pill manufacturing to personal protective equipment exports. One by-product of this broader central planning exercise has been the development of synthetic narcotics that are produced in pharmaceutical-grade factories with the associated economies of scale, thereby enabling stable supply and low prices. One key Chinese product is fentanyl-laced heroin, a combination of a (mostly) legal opiate, fentanyl, with the proscribed substance of heroin. The current most data-rich example of this is the triangular dynamics between China, Mexico, and the United States.

Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, one Mexican drug cartel, the Nueva Generación (or New Generation), has achieved ascendancy over a myriad of other well-armed and violent drug trafficking cartels operating in Mexico. Subject matter experts have largely attributed the exponential rise of the Nueva Generación cartel to its control over Mexico’s Pacific ports, thereby enabling it to monopolize the supply of key precursor chemicals from China, and Wuhan in particular.

Can the ‘Mexico Template’ Be Transferred to a Post-NATO

Afghanistan?

In addition to supplying precursor chemicals and other related inputs for the manufacture of fentanyl-laced heroin, territory controlled by the Nueva Generación cartel (as well as other cartels) now host multiple Chinese-operated, pharmaceutical-grade factories that produce synthetic narcotics for illicit export to the United States, but also increasingly for consumption in Mexico and Latin America.



Boxes carrying a total of more than 3,100 pounds of illicit drugs seized at the southwest border in San Diego, California, on Oct. 9, 2020. (U.S. Customs and Border Protection)

This production process can be classified as semi-skilled as the labor force requires some basic skills to mix compounds, operate a pill press, and ensure basic quality control and facility safety standards. Even modest quality road networks and/or smaller regional airports provide sufficient transportation infrastructure to enable this business to occur, as cargo shipments are relatively lightweight and do not require much space. However, these factories are fairly energy intensive and require a consistent power supply, often in remote areas that are not connected to the Mexican national grid. As such, the Chinese management of these factories have developed and validated sophisticated remote power solutions to ensure uninterrupted continuity of operations.

In Mexico, Chinese drug trafficking syndicates—which cannot operate independently without the CCP—have clearly demonstrated the ability to navigate through high-levels of multi-directional and often unpredictable violence and corruption, critical national infrastructure shortfalls, the COVID-19 pandemic, and a myriad of other challenges. This has enabled them to establish control over the majority of the synthetic narcotics industry in Mexico, from production of precursor chemicals to shipping, to onshore manufacturing. At present, distribution of these synthetic narcotics within the United

States is outsourced to Mexican cartels as well as American criminal organizations, with the Mexico-based Chinese syndicates often receiving a share of the American-generated profits.

While different in some respects in terms of human terrain, the various operational risks and challenges posed by Mexico share a remarkable number of similarities with a country such as Afghanistan. However, it is clear the Chinese synthetic narcotics trafficking syndicates have solved these various problems by using a “Mexico Template” that can be readily transferred to Afghanistan with some modifications.

It should be noted that rates of incidence of violent crime, acts of terrorism, kidnapping, group-on-group violence, and other related security events in Mexico are either equal to or even exceed Afghanistan on a per capita basis. The years 2020 and 2021 have been widely assessed to be the most dangerous period in Mexico’s entire independent history dating back to 1810.

Afghanistan’s Potential As the Next Major Chinese Production Site

Given the ability of Chinese synthetic narcotics syndicates to effectively graft themselves onto and direct relevant activities of the Nueva Generación cartel and others, it can be reasonably assessed that they could replicate their model with the various Taliban and/or other warlord factions in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is characterized by rough terrain and perennial instability, thereby making opium the ideal agricultural crop for many Afghan farmers.



Afghan farmers harvest opium sap from a poppy field in the Gereshk district of Helmand province on April 13, 2019. (Noor Mohammad/AFP via Getty Images)

The illicit revenues of opium, which enabled the Taliban to survive the American-led NATO occupation of the country, is now funding the Taliban's rise and has permeated all aspects of the licit Afghan economy. Opium poppy is an ideal wartime crop in that it requires very little water, fertilizer, or other expensive inputs. Despite marketing themselves as devout religious warriors, the Taliban control the full spectrum of these activities, from production to modest manufacturing (into heroin) and domestic distribution.

This relatively controlled structure, in many ways, mimics what Chinese synthetic narcotic syndicates have integrated into, and layered on top of, in Mexico. In addition, much of Afghanistan's higher value opium/heroin market activities occur in several southern provinces such as Kandahar, Uruzgan, and Helmand that are under the direct control of the Afghan Taliban's core leadership group and strongest factions. Similar to the Nueva Generación example, Chinese syndicates have the option to partner with these Afghan syndicates to bring new, more profitable products to the country for export, namely synthetic narcotics such as fentanyl-laced heroin, among others.

Near-Term Trajectories: Quietly Accelerating Regional and International Risks

In the Afghan case, Chinese syndicates do not run material risks of friction by simply trying to take another slice out of the pie, but rather they would be bringing capabilities that would dramatically increase the size of the overall pie for everyone. This method has worked well in Mexico and all available evidence suggests that it is likely replicable in Afghanistan. Afghanistan has the labor force, basic road and air infrastructure, and enough structural coherence under the Taliban for Chinese syndicates to operate synthetic narcotics factories in Afghanistan for regional export. This would represent a development that would have major implications for all of Afghanistan's neighboring countries and beyond.

It is also possible that Chinese syndicates would directly link Afghanistan into its already-established Mexican supply chain. Subject matter experts note that the natural strains of Afghan opium produce more potent heroin than the natural Mexican strains, and that production costs in Afghanistan would be lower as well. If this occurs, a new supply chain would emerge that involves that production of lower cost and higher potency Afghan opium that produces synthetic narcotics in domestic factories, while also simultaneously exporting raw materials (for example, opium/unrefined heroin) for value-add inputs, like fentanyl, in Chinese-run factories in Mexico.

These economies of scale would drive further substantial efficiency gains and push prices down, thus making these narcotics even more widely accessible. Critically, it would also render this network less vulnerable to decapitation as there would be diversified market access and contingency-based redundant production facilities and distribution networks in two very different geographies.

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https://www.theepochtimes.com/chinese-synthetic-narcotics-networks-in-post-nato-afghanistan_4153754.html

Don't Be Distracted by the Ukraine, the Main Event Is China



A Chinese PLA J-16 fighter jet flies in an undisclosed location in a file photo. (Taiwan Ministry of Defense via AP)



John Mills

December 16, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary

We're barely re-learning what's going on in the Ukraine and Neocon megaphone Republican Senator Roger Wicker has already charged to the ramparts and declared the need for nuclear strikes on Russia regarding the Ukraine border tensions with Russia.

I'm not sure I ever have seen such a bellicose statement based on such little information and likely lame intelligence community assessments. I would suggest Senator Wicker has made a teensy bit of an inappropriate jump to a conclusion that has immense gravity. I think many would support the tenet or imperative that United States leaders be more restrained and reserved with comments on first use of nuclear weapons.

I'm a former career member in the uniformed military and senior civil service in the U.S. Government, with almost 40 years of service from the height of the Cold War to today's Great Power showdown with China. I've been in combat, cold war, and deterrence operations. Some of it was with conventional units, some with special operations, and some as a senior staff officer. I fully embrace President Donald J. Trump's declaration of putting an end to forever wars advanced by the swamp. At first, I didn't understand the full gravity and meaning of the comment by DJT, but I after a while, the depth and meaning of the "Forever War" moniker sunk in. Trump was right (again).

There are many in the beltway that root for forever wars with no purpose and no defined outcome. And to be clear—Trump is not an isolationist. America First is not isolationism. It advocates deep engagements with foreign partners who must, however, share in the burden. Senator Wicker's comments are not America First—they are a dangerous step backward.

If Biden and the swamp were serious about Putin and China, they'd unleash the three core strengths of America to bankrupt Russia and deter China. Using the Energy, Food, and American Dollar Instruments of American Power would quickly squelch Russian and Chinese Adventurism and allow the American military to properly posture for deterrence (and action if necessary).

A Post-Olympic Surprise by China?

China's accelerated mimicry over the last year of the American Military Sealift Command and the National Defense Reserve Fleet were the key indicators I have been waiting for to see if China was serious about demonstrating the ability to generate and

project force. The key operative expression is the obscure term, “Joint Logistics Over the Shore (JLOTS).”

Sorry to sound like such a Joint Staff and Office of the Secretary of Defense planner wonk but demonstrating JLOTS is the red flag and alarm bell. Where did China learn the JLOTS concept? Did they once again break and enter Department of Defense and Intelligence Community networks? Was this another dastardly and horrendous Office of Personnel Management Breach where Chinese National Security Agency equivalents broke into U.S. Government networks?

The answer: No. They simply surfed the internet, searched, found, studied, and mimicked the American naval JLOT documents. I’ve said this before, I’ll say it again – the Chinese intelligence community reads and studies everything we put out. So maybe we should put out documents that are meant to mislead the Chinese military planners. Just a thought.

The last year has seen an acceleration of public Chinese JLOTS demonstrations, a sharp rise in Chinese naval warship construction, a fervor over new silo construction for nuclear missiles, and a quickening pace of large-scale challenges to Taiwan airspace by swarms of Chinese combat aircraft. The Chinese military is feeling it’s oats and is building confidence in operational art. China is moving far beyond a “parade” military, to a military that can generate and project force afar—a rare operational art that only America has demonstrated over and over.

The key question now is when will this Chinese operational art be translated into action, action, action as Steve Bannon likes to quip? I think a time of immense danger is in the immediate aftermath of the withering Winter Olympics in Beijing that wrap up in late February 2022.

Totalitarians revel and relish in the propaganda opportunity of an Olympics. It makes them feel good about themselves. Sochi was a brilliant cover for Putin’s 2014 initial invasion of the Ukraine. Perhaps Putin might warm up the Ukraine immediately after the Beijing Olympics to distract the world, which would be brilliant double cover for China striking to the East. The Chinese seem to prefer probing southern Taiwan and the Taiwan-Philippine’s gap to the open Pacific. China now is in desperate need of chips from Taiwan, so I assert China is looking far beyond Taiwan if China initiates conflict.

90 Days to 'De-Woke' the U.S. Military

The American military is large, well trained, well equipped, and has deep operational relationship with several key powers in Asia to include Japan (which likely explains China's preference to stay away from the northern approach to Taiwan), Australia, India, Canada, South Korea, and European nations like the United Kingdom and France who are also projecting naval force into the zone of possible conflict.

The U.S. military is incredible, but appears to act like King Theoden from the Lord of the Rings trilogy, under the cancerous spell of Woke-ism and Critical Race Theory. We have about 90 days—let's hope that Grima's spell on the U.S. military and the rest of America is broken soon.

Colonel (Ret.) John Mills is a national security professional with service in five eras: Cold War, Peace Dividend, War on Terror, World in Chaos, and now—Great Power Competition. He is the former director of cybersecurity policy, strategy, and international affairs at the Department of Defense. ColonelRETJohn on GETTR, Daily Missive on Telegram.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/dont-be-distracted-by-the-ukraine-the-main-event-is-china_4162024.html

Drifting Toward a Catastrophic American Defeat



A giant portrait of Chinese leader Xi Jinping is carried atop a float at parade to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party's ruling at Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China, on Oct. 1, 2019. (Kevin Frayer/Getty Images)



Newt Gingrich

December 16, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary

The United States is drifting toward a catastrophic defeat.

I am talking about a defeat which will eliminate our freedom and permanently subordinate America to Communist China and its demands for absolute control and obedience.

You may think this vision is alarmist, but look at the Chinese Communist Party's control of Hong Kong, abuses in Tibet, and Uyghur genocide in Xinjiang.

For that matter, look at the giant, wealthy American companies that already kowtow to the Chinese Communist Party's demands and adjust their language and behaviors to placate Beijing.

After pressure from China, Disney removed an episode of "The Simpsons" from its streaming services in Hong Kong over a reference to the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. Nike and Coca-Cola lobbied against legislation to ban imports of goods made with forced labor in China. JPMorgan Chase has expanded its business in China—despite known, serious data security and national security risks. And remember the turmoil when Houston Rockets General Manager Daryl Morey tweeted support for democracy in Hong Kong. The NBA and players went into a tailspin of shameless apology and censorship on China's behalf. It was disgusting.

Some American billionaires have made so much money in collaboration with Communist China that they prioritize padding their pockets over American values and national security interests.

Similarly, a defeated America would be subordinated to the Chinese Communist dictatorship. Our words, behaviors, and institutions would constantly be molded to appease the paranoid dictatorship in Beijing.

Despite the extraordinary consequences of defeat, the American system is gradually drifting into a national security system that will clearly lose a major war with Communist China.

Don't take my word for it.

Major American military leaders are already sounding alarms.

As The Epoch Times reported this month, U.S. Space Force Gen. David Thompson warned that, “China could overtake the United States in terms of space capabilities by 2030 if America doesn’t speed up its development.

“The fact [is] that in essence, on average, they are building and fielding and updating their space capabilities at twice the rate we are. ... If we don’t start accelerating our development and delivery capabilities, they will exceed us. And 2030 is not an unreasonable estimate.”

Despite this growing threat in space, when Vice President Kamala Harris chaired the administration’s first meeting of the National Space Council this month, there was not a single military issue discussed.

Beyond the rising vulnerabilities in space (and generals have reported that Russia and China engage the United States in space virtually every day) there is also a general crisis of our defense capabilities.

As Business Insider reported “The US military is changing the way it fights after it ‘failed miserably’ in a war game against an aggressive adversary who knew its playbook.”

Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. John Hyten warned in a July conference: “Without overstating the issue, it failed miserably.”

Hyten explained that the wargame, which simulated a conflict with China over Taiwan, involved an adversary which had studied American conflict and warfighting for two decades. As he put it the fictional China “just ran rings around us. They knew exactly what we were going to do before we did it, and they took advantage of it.”

The real Communist China has similarly studied our military strategies, “with probably even more focus, with larger numbers,” Hyten warned. As he put it, we have to make serious changes because our ability to overmatch rival powers including China was “shrinking fast.”

Admirals who have led the American Pacific military commitment have also been vocal about the failure of our current systems.

According to The Guardian, now retired Admiral Philip Davidson, who was the 25th Commander of the United States Indo-Pacific Command, said in March that a serious fight over Taiwan could come in the next six years.

“I worry that they’re [China] accelerating their ambitions to supplant the United States and our leadership role in the rules-based international order ... by 2050,” Davidson said

When retired four-star Admiral James Stavridis was interviewed by the Asahi Shimbun in June about his new novel, “2034: A Novel of the Next World War,” he reinforced the sense of growing Chinese capabilities.

“When I began writing the novel, it was set in the middle of the century, roughly 2050. But the more I researched and the more I applied my analysis to the situation, the closer the date was set. Many of my friends, very senior officers in the military, both active duty and retired, and senior policymakers have complimented me on the book. Still, they have said, ‘You wrote a great novel, but you’ve got one big thing wrong. And that is the date.’ Many believe that the date of a U.S.-China confrontation will be sooner.”

As a final example of American vulnerability, James Kitfield reported in Yahoo News in March on a highly classified simulated conflict with China which started with a Chinese biological weapon attack, continued with a massive invasion disguised as a routine exercise, and culminated with devastating missile strikes against our Indo-Pacific bases and warships and Taiwan itself. Needless to say, America lost that one, too.

The National Defense Authorization Act, which is now passing through Congress, simply does not address the scale of change we need to ensure America could defeat China militarily.

The Pentagon and intelligence community’s distracting focus on creating a woke force rather than a war-winning force is further weakening America.

We need a full-blown investigation into the requirements for victory over China—and a commitment to undertake every reform needed in defense, education, capital markets, supply chains, manufacturing, and other areas to ensure American safety and freedom.

Anything short of a complete rethinking of our capabilities and the challenge of the Chinese Communist Party’s system-wide effort to become the world’s dominant superpower may well lead to our defeat in a much shorter time than anyone thinks possible.

Our freedoms and our physical safety are at stake. This should become a major focus for 2022 and 2024.

From Gingrich360.com

Newt Gingrich, a Republican, served as House speaker from 1995 to 1999 and ran as a presidential candidate in 2012.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/drifting-toward-a-catastrophic-american-defeat_4161701.html

China Seeks Financial Decoupling on Its Own Terms



The seal of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) at its headquarters in Washington on May 12, 2021. (Andrew Kelly/Reuters)

The US and EU should ensure that democratic capital does not follow



Anders Corr

December 17, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis

The rising competition between the United States and China is creating so much tension on Wall Street that Chinese companies listed in the United States are starting to retreat to Shanghai and Hong Kong rather than surrender their data to U.S. regulators.

In early 2021, the New York Stock Exchange delisted China Telecom, China Mobile, and China Unicom in compliance with a U.S. executive order that banned U.S. investment in Chinese military-linked firms.

But some Chinese companies are leaving the United States, or not listing in America, at the direction of Beijing. The latter hopes to keep its corporate data secret from U.S. regulators and investors, and in the long term to move finance from New York, London, and Tokyo to Shanghai and Hong Kong, where the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has more control.

The process is already well underway. A Dec. 15 report noted that David Loevinger of the TCW Group predicts that most Chinese companies listed in the United States will delist and “gravitate back to Hong Kong or Shanghai” by 2024.

Alibaba, JD.com, Baidu, NetEase, and Weibo have already dual-listed in Hong Kong.

“I think for a lot of Chinese companies listed in U.S. markets, it’s essentially game over,” Loevinger told CNBC. “This is an issue that’s been hanging out there for 20 years.”

Didi, the Chinese ride-hailing company, went public in New York for \$4.4 billion in June, and within six months announced plans to delist and move to Hong Kong. Company shares dropped precipitously. Didi supposedly did so due to pressure from Chinese regulators over concerns about U.S. access to Didi’s data, including personal information about Didi customers in China. But in the process, it got away with what should be considered highway robbery.



An American flag is pictured in front of the logo for Chinese ride-hailing company Didi Global Inc. during the IPO on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) floor in New York on June 30, 2021. (Brendan McDermid/Reuters)

Loevinger said: “I just don’t think China’s government is going to allow U.S. regulators to have unfettered access to internal auditing documents of Chinese companies. And if U.S. regulators can’t get access to those documents, then they can’t protect U.S. markets from fraud.”

The moves could have a positive effect—due to stricter U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) requirements and a new cautionary signal to investors—of protecting them against Chinese companies that refuse to reveal the financial data that all other companies are required to disclose according to SEC reporting requirements.

Chinese company removals to China would discourage U.S. and other investors from capitalizing Chinese companies that will empower a country that is self-admittedly seeking to expand its dictatorial powers into one of global hegemony.

But the danger is that some U.S. and international investors will follow Chinese companies, and their outsized and possibly Ponzi-ish returns, to Hong Kong and Beijing.

The response of The New York Times to the Didi delisting was that “American investors will still have little trouble handing over their money to Chinese companies, but it will have to be on China’s terms.”

Once investments are in China-listed shares, the CCP could more easily capture them through capital controls such as reinvestment requirements that ensure that profits are not repatriated outside of China.

The transparency risk for investors in China will stay high, since Chinese companies will continue to not disclose their financial details. And the authority of the U.S. government—in particular the SEC—will be undermined because Beijing will have again successfully refused to play by the rules.

Captured capital will deprive the United States and allies of taxes, revenues, and investors who will become increasingly beholden—politically as well as economically—to Beijing. These investors will then be useful conduits for political influence in Washington, Brussels, and Tokyo in the service of CCP interests globally.

The question that arises—due to American and allied investors who, true to type, are chasing returns in China with little if any regard for their national security implications—is whether laws should be strengthened against investing in adversaries such as China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea.

The question also arises as to what should be done about the approximately \$2.3 trillion in institutional and state pension fund investments in China. Is it possible to require investors to liquidate these positions and invest elsewhere? Will Beijing make this impossible through capital controls? If so, can U.S. and allied courts make investors whole by attaching Chinese assets internationally?

These are all policy questions that the United States and allies must take more seriously. The longer we wait, the more we invest in communist China, increasingly to the point where it becomes too big to fail. At that point, America—and with it, democracy globally—will have lost.

Anders Corr has a bachelor's/master's in political science from Yale University (2001) and a doctorate in government from Harvard University (2008). He is a principal at Corr Analytics Inc., publisher of the Journal of Political Risk, and has conducted extensive research in North America, Europe, and Asia. His latest books are "The Concentration of Power: Institutionalization, Hierarchy, and Hegemony" (2021) and "Great Powers, Grand Strategies: the New Game in the South China Sea" (2018).

https://www.theepochtimes.com/us-china-capital-controls_4161114.html

Beijing Uses Police and Security Training to Infiltrate Foreign Countries



Paramilitary police officers patrol in a shopping area on the closing day of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) in Beijing on May 27, 2020. (Greg Baker/AFP via Getty Images)



Antonio Graceffo

December 17, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis

Beijing is exporting its brand of justice around the globe through a series of law enforcement exchanges and by offering training and equipment.

In 2011, the government of Ecuador installed a countrywide Chinese-designed surveillance system, financed by Chinese loans in exchange for oil. Today, crime is still rampant, but the police and internal intelligence community can monitor anyone they wish.

With the brutal crackdowns in Hong Kong and the most advanced digital surveillance technology control measures in Xinjiang, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is an expert in exploiting public security forces for the means of repression.

Under Chinese leader Xi Jinping, the CCP's control over civil society has expanded, with the creation of the Central National Security Commission and the National Supervision Commission, as well as the increased use of technology as a tool of social control. The Central National Security Commission reports directly to the CCP and is tasked with "overall national security" guarding against both external and internal security threats. Additionally, one of the primary reasons for the creation of the security commission was to improve intelligence sharing across military, intelligence, and public security apparatuses.

The CCP's 2015 "Military Strategy" white paper stated that the security of China is linked to the security of the world. And this has been China's justification for extending the reach of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the Ministry of State Security (China's spy agency), and the People's Armed Police beyond China's borders.

These government agencies are not only trying to secure China's safety by combating terrorists and criminals, but also furthering Beijing's surveillance and intelligence-gathering capabilities. Additionally, the CCP is using police training and material aid as a form of diplomacy, to co-opt foreign governments, to win friends, and to place pro-China officers in high positions in foreign security forces.

Beijing is working to position itself as an international security partner, while expanding the mandate of its own security forces, as well as facilitating espionage and intelligence gathering. Over the past 15 years, the CCP has steadily expanded the overseas security role of the PLA through participating in peacekeeping, disaster response, and counterterrorism operations around the world.



Chinese soldiers stand at attention during Peace Mission-2016 joint military exercises of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in the Edelweiss training area in Balykchy, Kyrgyzstan, on Sept. 19, 2016. (Vyacheslav Oseledko/AFP/Getty Images)

Another white paper on China's military strategy outlined the extra-territorial mandates of the PLA, such as protecting China's overseas interests, emergency extractions, and support for national economic development. The paper also called for the PLA to strengthen international security cooperation in geographic locations where China is heavily invested.

The Public Security International Cooperation Work Conference of 2017 similarly called for the "internationalization of public security work," as well as the establishment of an international "law enforcement security cooperation system with Chinese characteristics."

China conducted police training in Liberia in 2014. Foreign law enforcement officials are offered police training in China. The police academy in Shandong Province holds a yearly training course for African law enforcement officers. The Yunnan Police College, in Kunming, has a Chinese association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Law

Enforcement Academy, which provides free training and education to law enforcement officers from ASEAN. The Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau has cooperation agreements with 10 cities in Central Asia, and the bureau also hosts international police symposiums for foreign officers.

Beijing supports major Chinese manufacturers of cameras, video recorders, and security equipment, with tax benefits and loans from state-owned banks to fund overseas security projects. These financial incentives reduce costs, making it easier for Chinese security firms to win contracts in nations around the world. China is willing to sell this technology to repressive regimes.

Iran adopted the Chinese social credit system, in a bid to monitor and control the financial and social behavior of its citizens. In 2010, the country signed a \$130 million deal with ZTE, a Chinese partially state-owned tech company, to install a surveillance system on the government-managed telephone and internet networks.

In Africa, Huawei security technology is being used to spy on political opponents, undermining democracy. China and Bolivia signed a deal to build an integrated command and control system for subregional security, financed by Export-Import Bank of China. In Jamaica, China donated equipment to the police force. In Quintuco, Argentina, the PLA built a \$50 million satellite and space mission control station with international surveillance and listening capabilities.

In Ecuador, more than 3,000 public security officers, in 16 monitoring centers, review footage from 4,300 cameras as part of a video surveillance and control system set up by China. The footage is not only reviewed by the police, but is also sent to the nation's internal intelligence forces, which has a history of monitoring, threatening, and disappearing political rivals.

Chinese-made intelligence monitoring systems are now being used by 18 countries. Thirty-six countries have received China's training in "public opinion guidance." In addition to video monitoring, these systems allow security officials to track phones and some are now adding facial recognition features.

China's growing security cooperation in Africa and Latin America poses a threat to U.S. interests in those regions. Additionally, it undermines the quality of democracy, giving dictators better means to control their populace.

Antonio Graceffo, Ph.D., has spent over 20 years in Asia. He is a graduate of Shanghai University of Sport and holds a China-MBA from Shanghai Jiaotong University. Antonio

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https://www.theepochtimes.com/beijing-uses-police-and-security-training-to-infiltrate-for-eign-countries_4161229.html

Why China's 'Whole-Process Democracy' Didn't Qualify for the US-led Democracy Summit



A video wall displaying participants in the White House's Summit for Democracy stands in the South Court Auditorium in Washington on Dec. 9, 2021. (Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images)



Stu Cvrk

December 17, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary

Beijing's "whole-process democracy" is a Marxist euphemism that masks a communist dictatorship.

China has a burr under its saddle because it was left out of the Summit for Democracy convened by the Biden administration this past week. There has been a daily barrage from Beijing about the alleged divisiveness of the summit and the supposed shortcomings of the United States, including the following messaging from state-run media China Daily and People's Daily:

- The "sorry state" of U.S. democracy: "Just a week ago, the US was added to the annual list of 'backsliding' democracies for the first time by the Sweden-based International IDEA think tank."
- The Summit is selling a lie: "Far from spreading 'peace' around the world, the 'Summit for Democracy' will create monstrous new ideological divisions. It will be used as a stepping stone to divide the world even more catastrophically than the Cold War did."
- Democracy is "not the prerogative" of America: "Democracy is a universal right of all peoples, 'not a prerogative of a certain country or a group of countries,' and that democracy 'can be realized in multiple ways' and 'no model can fit all countries.'"
- The "summit for democracy" is anything but democratic: "Such a summit instigates hatred and divisions at a time when unity is the need of the hour, as the world is reeling under a raging pandemic, rising protectionism, and the mounting threat of climate change."
- Chinese think tank's report reveals truths about American democracy: "All believe that the U.S. should face its democracy issues, listen to the real voices of other countries, correct its wrongdoings both at home and abroad, and actually start to seek benefits for people in the U.S. and the entire world."
- What is "true democracy"?: "History and reality have fully proved that China's democratic model conforms to its own national conditions and is supported by the people. It is true and successful democracy that works."

The deluge of articles and commentary about the democracy summit in the Chinese media over the past couple of weeks has simply been incredible! The above list is just a sampling. Apparently, Beijing left uninvited stirred up a hornet's nest.

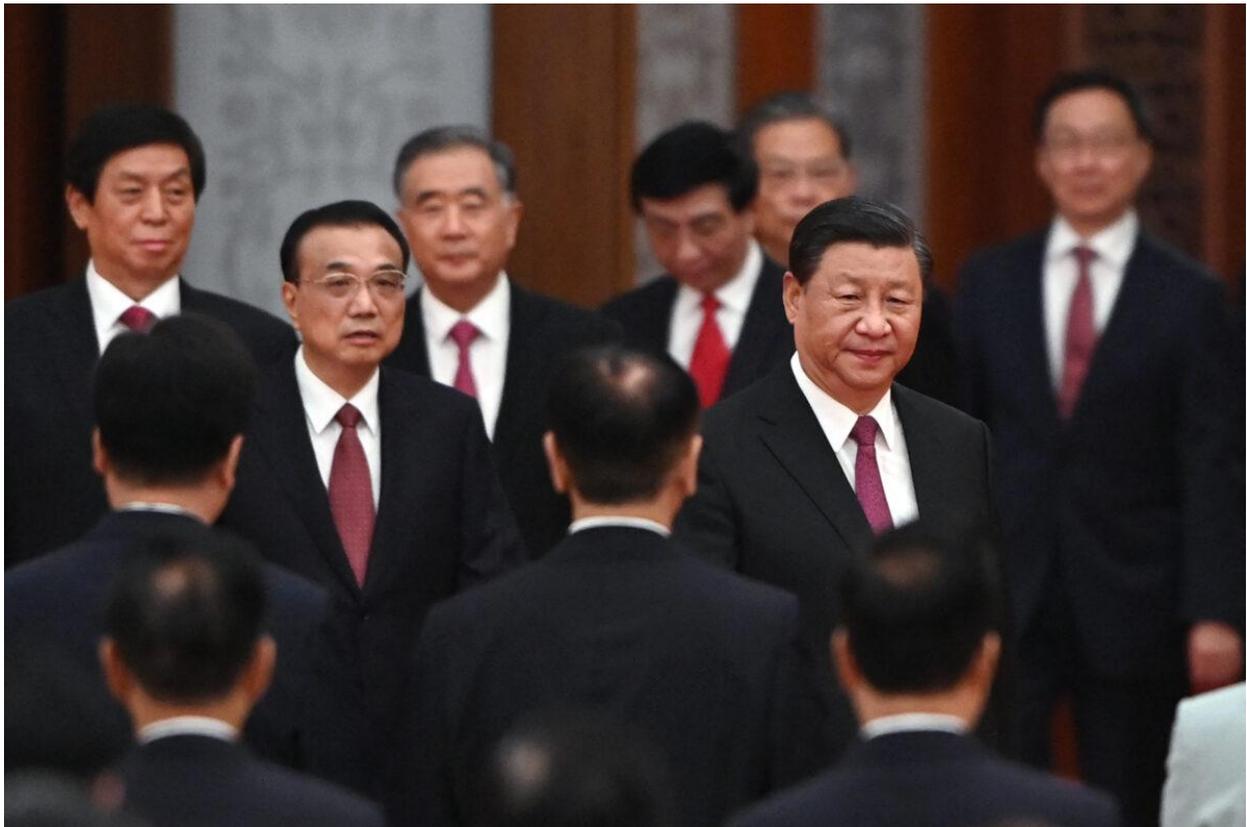
While it is quite understandable that Chinese communists do not understand what a real democracy consists of in terms of generally accepted principles around the world, there are at least two specific political reasons for the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) flood of crocodile tears:

1. Xi Jinping, Chinese diplomats, and Chinese state-run media have spent considerable time and resources propagandizing over the past several years that Chinese "whole-process democracy" puts China automatically on the list of democratic nations of the world. This is part of the CCP's political and psychological warfare campaign against its main adversary, the United States. And its absence at a summit attended by the world's democratic nations completely undercuts its propaganda investment on the subject.
2. Xi's absence from the summit also undercuts another major CCP propaganda theme—that the United States is in decline, and world leadership should be ceded to China's "New World Order" (with "Chinese characteristics," of course). Xi has been boldly and unilaterally asserting Chinese leadership in many nooks and crannies of human endeavors in recent years: quantum technology research, space exploration, military uses of space (hypersonic glide vehicles), artificial intelligence, social credit systems, total response to the SARS-CoV-2 virus and variants, digital currency, and much more. Not being able to pontificate in another international forum must have pricked his pride; hence, the flurry of negative articles about the summit in CCP-controlled media.

Let us dispense with the notion that Chinese "whole-process democracy" is any kind of democracy whatsoever. Xi frequently touts its supposed benefits, with this statement being typical: "People's democracy is whole-process democracy. Whether people enjoy democratic rights or not depends on whether they have the right to cast votes, as well as whether they have the right to constantly participate in everyday political activities. Besides having the right to democratic elections, it also depends on whether they have right to democratic decision-making, democratic management, and democratic oversight."

Xi obfuscates the truth, as all communists learn to do throughout their careers. In this instance, the key word in his statement is "people." The people to which he refers are the members of the CCP who are the "first among equals" at all levels of Chinese government—including national, provincial, prefecture, and county—all the way down to towns and villages. The so-called "party secretaries" outrank the government officials at every level of government.

What kind of democracy permits unelected members of the predominant political party in a nation to make and overrule all the key decisions at every level of government? How on Earth can Xi imply that non-CCP members can somehow “have the right to democratic decision-making”—and other similar nonsense—when only the CCP can pull the strings? What good does it do for the average citizen to “cast a vote” under these circumstances? And it is patently absurd to believe that the opinions of average Chinese citizens have any impact on Xi’s decision-making process whatsoever—unlike in almost all truly democratic nations—as he is not accountable to the will of the people at the ballot box. That is certainly not democracy as the rest of the world understands it!



Chinese leader Xi Jinping (right) arrives with Premier Li Keqiang (left) and members of the Politburo Standing Committee for a reception at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on the eve of China’s National Day on Sept. 30, 2021. (Greg Baker/AFP)

Furthermore, none of the major governing bodies at the national level in communist China are elected by the Chinese people.

- The rough equivalent to the U.S. Executive Branch includes the CCP’s seven-member Politburo Standing Committee that runs the country; the 25 members of the full Politburo that supersedes the Standing Committee when in

session; the five departments and seven commissions of the CCP Central Committee bureaucracy; the state president (the head of state); the cabinet-level equivalent of the State Council; the Central Military Commission that controls the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and adjunct military services; and the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) and National Supervisory Commission that are charged with "enforcing party discipline." All of the members are non-elected CCP cadres.

- The National People's Congress (NPC)—China's rubber-stamp legislature—approximates the U.S. Congress. NPC is made up of nearly 3,000 members who are "elected" by provincial-level people's congresses from among a list of names provided by the CCP. So much for the "democratic elections of national level representatives" in China! The NPC has the responsibility to maintain and change the Chinese constitution, which was dissected and determined to be non-democratic in operation in this commentary.
- The Chinese judicial system consists of a multi-layered court system that includes the national-level People's Supreme Court; Higher People's Courts for every province, directly administered city, and autonomous region; Intermediate People's Courts (similar to U.S. municipal courts); and Basic People's Courts located in rural counties or municipal districts. The average Chinese citizen has no democratic means to influence the judicial system. All judges are CCP members who are elected/appointed by the NPC and not accountable to Chinese citizens. No known judgments have ever been rendered against the collective (and arbitrary) interests of the CCP.

Are the above institutions the product of Xi's "whole process-democracy"? Just where is the "democracy" hiding in the byzantine Chinese government anyway? Are the governing institutions of the People's Republic of China even legitimate because the system was certainly not set up through peaceful democratic action and the will of the average Chinese, but rather under the bayonets of Mao Zedong's People's Liberation Army at the express direction of the CCP? Without the omnipresent coercion and threats from the CCP, would the Chinese people consider the CCP-run government to be legitimate as Xi and others assert?

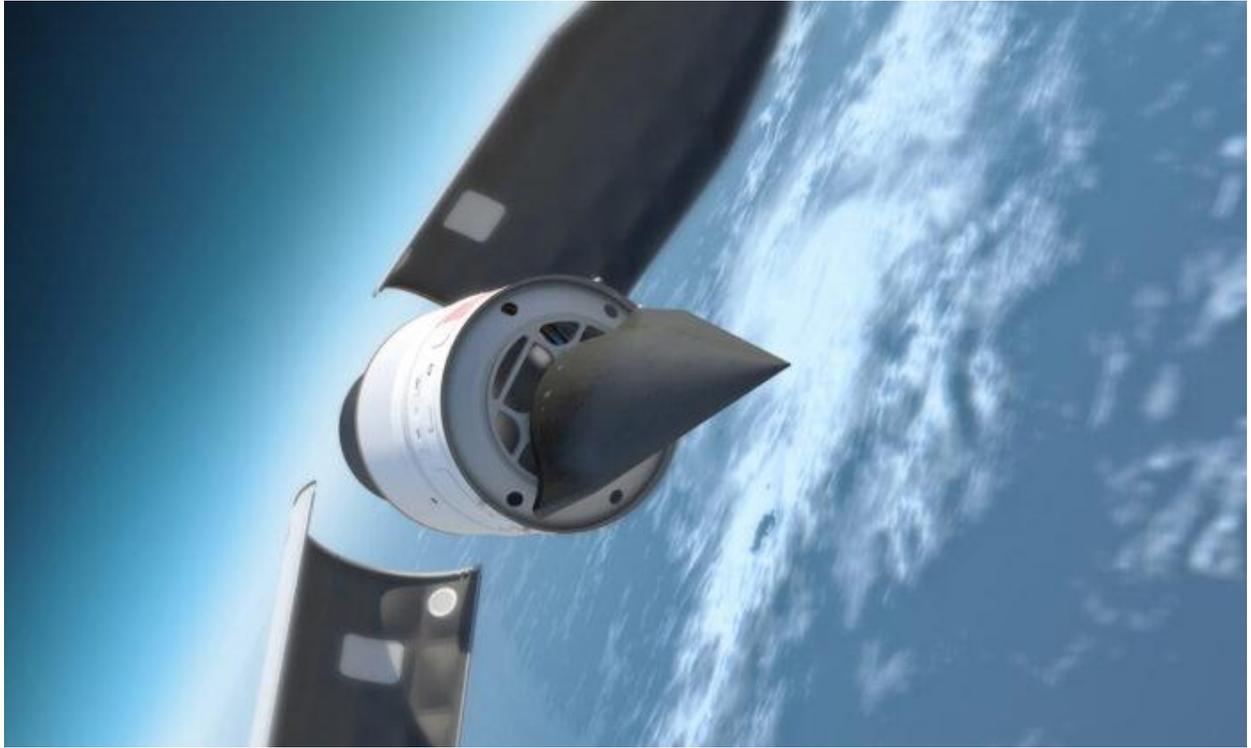
"Whole-process democracy" is communist gobbledygook, and "democracy with Chinese characteristics" seems a whole lot like communist dictatorship to most people around the world. No wonder Beijing was not invited to the democracy summit!

Stu Cvrk retired as a captain after serving 30 years in the U.S. Navy in a variety of active and reserve capacities, with considerable operational experience in the Middle

East and the Western Pacific. Through education and experience as an oceanographer and systems analyst, Cvrk is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, where he received a classical liberal education that serves as the key foundation for his political commentary.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/why-chinas-whole-process-democracy-didnt-qualify-for-the-us-led-democracy-summit_4155808.html

Defending Taiwan: Think Globally and ‘Look Up’



The U.S. Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency’s Falcon Hypersonic Test Vehicle emerges from its rocket nose cone and prepares to re-enter the Earth’s atmosphere, in this illustration. (Courtesy of DARPA)



Grant Newsham

December 9, 2021; Updated December 13, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary

U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin said last week that Chinese air force movements toward Taiwan look like “rehearsals” for an invasion. It is good that America’s military leadership is finally realizing that Xi Jinping is serious when he says he will use force, if necessary, to seize Taiwan.

Yet, in recent years whenever the U.S. military has “war-gamed” a fight with China over Taiwan, the Americans reportedly have “failed miserably.”

But there are war games and there are war games.

Depending on how you construct the scenario, things might turn out better for the United States.

You see, if the fight is confined to Taiwan and the surrounding area, the Chinese have a big advantage. They can deploy far more ships than the U.S. Navy can, and the same goes for aircraft. Chinese land-based missile and anti-aircraft batteries will further make things difficult for U.S. forces trying to “get in close” to help Taiwan. One doesn’t envy a U.S. destroyer skipper who has two-dozen supersonic anti-ship missiles coming his way and arriving in 90 seconds.

And the People’s Liberation Army Rocket Force’s ballistic missiles, which is able to hit moving targets at sea, will give U.S. aircraft carriers much to worry about. The missiles are nicknamed “carrier killers” for a reason. U.S. bases in Japan and Guam, from which American forces will be deploying to aid Taiwan, will also be getting Chinese missile attention.

This just covers a few of the problems facing U.S. forces and the Americans can, of course, strike some blows of their own.

But if it’s just a fight between the Americans and the Chinese, and it takes place right around Taiwan, then the Americans will have a hard time.

However, expand the battlefield, say, to include the entire globe, and the United States’ prospects improve considerably.

Here’s why:

China does not produce enough food to feed itself, nor does it have enough energy or natural resources to power its economy. That’s why the Chinese buy up Brazilian and

Ukrainian farmland, Australian milk companies, and American pork producers. The same goes for Chinese oil concessions in Iran, Iraq, and Venezuela; and mines in Africa and South America.



Food trucks wait to enter China near Muse, close to the Chinese border in Shan state, Burma (Myanmar) on April 20, 2020. (Phyo Maung Maung/AFP via Getty Images)

China not only depends on seamless (and long) supply lines to import commodities and raw materials, but it also depends on the same supply lines to export manufactured products that earn vital foreign exchange—and keep people employed and the economy humming.

If the Americans (and their allies and partners) “expand the battlefield” and cut off China from its overseas “assets,” as one Western expert puts it: “without these commodities arriving in China from around the world, the China we know and the Chinese know will not exist ... it will be 1.4 billion persons desperate for food, energy, commodities, natural resources.”

So if the United States musters the fortitude needed to impound or sink Chinese shipping and clamp down on air transport in and out of China, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) will be in dire straits.

The People's Liberation Army (PLA), despite carrying out the biggest, fastest defense buildup in history—including progress toward a “blue-water” global navy—over the last 20 years, still cannot defend China's overseas assets. And it will probably be another decade before PLA global power projection capabilities can do so.

Compounding Beijing's problems, China is also vulnerable to U.S. financial sanctions that exclude China from the U.S. dollar network. And Washington might also prohibit U.S. corporate business dealings with China.

So while Beijing might like its prospects in a straight up (and confined) fight to seize Taiwan, it is extremely vulnerable if the United States and other free nations “decouple” China from its overseas assets—and the convertible currency and inward foreign investment and trade that powers the Chinese economy.

But the Americans should not breathe easy.



A Long March-2F carrier rocket, carrying the Shenzhou-13 spacecraft with the second

crew of three astronauts to China's new space station, lifts off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in the Gobi desert in northwest China early on Oct. 16, 2021. (STR/AFP via Getty Images)

If China can seize the high ground in outer space and the upper atmosphere—and threaten the United States with a surprise (and undefendable) nuclear attack, as well as blinding U.S. forces by taking out their satellites—it might be able to checkmate the Americans. At that point, America's existing conventional advantages, both kinetic and non-kinetic, won't matter much.

China's recent tests of hypersonic delivery vehicles and the so-called FOBS (Fractional Orbital Bombardment System) give the American's plenty to worry about in this regard. These are hard to track and to defend against—not least as they allow nuclear warheads to be launched from directions where U.S. anti-missile systems aren't looking.

And, in a further move to dominate the high ground, the Chinese (and the Russians) are aiming for offensive operations against U.S. satellites on which America's defense depends. They have, in fact, already started interfering with U.S. space assets.

Earlier this year, the commander of the U.S. Space Command, General James Dickinson, stated in a congressional hearing:

“China is building military space capabilities rapidly, including sensing and communication systems and numerous anti-satellite weapons. ... Similarly concerning, Russia's published military doctrine calls for the employment of weapons to hold us and allied space assets at risk.”

In his written testimony, Dickinson added:

“One notable object is the Shijian-17, a Chinese satellite with a robotic arm. Space-based robotic arm technology could be used in a future system for grappling other satellites. China also has multiple ground-based laser systems of varying power levels that could blind or damage satellite systems. China will attempt to hold US space assets at risk while using its own space capabilities to support its military objectives and overall national security goals.”

So far, the Americans are apparently just playing defense in outer space—rather than building up the offensive capability to do to the Chinese (and the Russians) what they are planning to do to them—and more. According to one observer, Team Biden's response so far is “finger wagging and scolding.” Not exactly a winning approach.

One imagines a scenario where Beijing makes its move on Taiwan and tells Washington to “stand back”—and that includes sanctions and attacks on China’s supply lines—or it will face “blinding” and nuclear attack “from above.”

This is, of course, something of a poker game if things reach this point. The Chinese might be bluffing, or they might not. And it will take a certain type of American president to call their bluff. But whoever it is, if the Chinese get “the high ground,” there will be a number of people telling the president that “Taiwan isn’t worth it” and to “let it go.”

So, while the current focus is on Taiwan and conventional hardware and capabilities needed to deter a Chinese assault, the United States will do well to prepare to “expand the battlefield” and hit China where it is most vulnerable.

But the United States also needs to “look up” and do what is necessary to dominate outer space and counter China’s hypersonic and FOBS capabilities that potentially “checkmate” America’s earthbound advantages.

Not surprisingly, America’s military leadership knew of China’s developing hypersonic capabilities some years back and, by and large, ignored it.

One hopes they do better this time.

Grant Newsham is a retired U.S. Marine officer and a former U.S. diplomat and business executive who lived and worked for many years in the Asia/Pacific region. He served as a reserve head of intelligence for Marine Forces Pacific, and was the U.S. Marine attaché, U.S. Embassy Tokyo on two occasions. He is a senior fellow with the Center for Security Policy.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/defending-taiwan-think-globally-and-look-up_4140829.html?utm_source=ai_recommender&utm_medium=a_bottom_above_etv

Hong Kong's Slide Into Darkness



*A police officer stands guard outside a polling station in Hong Kong on Dec. 19, 2021.
(Vincent Yu/AP Photo)*

Hong Kong's democracy disappears as Beijing tightens the screws on the city



Stu Cvrk

December 19, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary

Hong Kong tastes the bitter fruit of China's "whole-process people's democracy." The transition of Hong Kong's democracy into a Chinese-run nightmare is painful to watch.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) is in the midst of being completely absorbed into communist China's political system—despite the promises made by Beijing in 1997 that the city would be allowed to maintain its political autonomy "for fifty years" under a "one country, two systems" framework.

Throughout the 1990s to the present, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been redefining the meaning of that framework in order to implement "lawful" communist political and social controls over Hong Kong. The framework concepts were captured in the Basic Law, which was passed by China's rubber-stamp legislature, the National People's Congress (NPC), in 1990, to include guarantees of a "high degree of autonomy" for "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong."

All those high-minded promises made by Beijing were tossed in the trash in the summer of 2020 when the CCP bypassed Hong Kong's own legislative process to implement new draconian national security legislation.

In retrospect, the Basic Law was part of the CCP's long-term plan to exert complete political control over the HKSAR, as it included an article requiring the passage of the national security legislation applicable to Hong Kong.

From Article 23 of the 1990 Basic Law (emphasis added): "[HKSAR] shall enact laws on its own to prohibit **any act of treason, secession, sedition, subversion** against the Central People's Government ... and to prohibit political organizations or bodies of the Region **from establishing ties with foreign political organizations** or bodies."

The highlighted words are eerily similar to a summary of the main provisions in the new national security law that was passed by the NPC last June (emphasis added): "The law, passed in China's Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPCSC), includes 66 articles and covers **four areas of criminal activity: secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign or external forces**. Those convicted of such crimes face maximum sentences of life imprisonment."

In effect, the 1990 Basic Law laid the foundation for passage of the key provisions of the national security law in 2020—those dealing with the ability to coerce and control Hong

Kong citizens and political activities based on CCP-defined prohibitions. It was imposed on Hong Kong by the NPCSC without input from the residents of HKSAR or their locally elected representatives. To give further evidence of the farce, the NPC had voted 2,878-to-1 to produce the new law to begin with. The law was always in the cards because it was a major objective in Beijing's long-term plans to intimidate and control anyone deemed to be a threat to the CCP's interests.

The national security law has given HKSAR police sweeping new powers, including the ability to conduct warrant-free raids. Here is a chronology of some of the shocking actions that have been taken under the law over the past 16 months:

- Intimidation of Hong Kong leaders accused of “politicizing the new law.”
- Threatening to expel foreign reporters for “misreporting” how the law is being implemented.
- Sanctioning of foreigners for violating the law.
- Removal of books critical of the CCP from library shelves, banning of political slogans, and censorship in schools.
- Self-censorship by publishers fearing prosecution under the law.
- Firing of teachers who backed pro-democracy protests.
- Arrests of student protestors for “inciting secession.”
- Arrest of pro-democracy media mogul Jimmy Lai, his two sons, and several of his executives.
- Arrest of Hong Kong opposition activist Tam Tak-chi of the group People Power.
- Arrest of teen activist Tony Chung (without bail).
- Dozens more arrests, including pro-democracy activists, lawmakers, a pollster, and a lawyer
- Forty more arrests: “every prominent, and even moderate, opposition voice in Hong Kong is either in jail or in exile,” according to the Washington Post.
- Arrests of four student union leaders at the University of Hong Kong on suspicion of “advocating terrorism.”
- Threatening The Wall Street Journal (The Journal).
- Arrests of 10 people for allegedly “urging voters to boycott the polls or cast blank ballots in protest” in Sunday's election, according to The Journal.



Hong Kong pro-democracy media tycoon Jimmy Lai is led into a police van as he heads to court to be charged under the Beijing-imposed new national security law on Dec. 12, 2020. (Peter Parks/AFP via Getty Images)

As indicated by the last bullet above, the legal threat to Hong Kong citizens posed by the national security law is also a key backdrop for the “patriots”-only election on Dec. 16, which was the first to be held there since the law was implemented last year. The election shaped up to be the typical rubber-stamped CCP-run farce that is no different from any held in the people’s congresses of townships, towns, districts, and counties in communist China, as the only candidates on the election slates are CCP-approved.

The pro-democracy proponents of Hong Kong’s Legislative Council (LegCo) are getting a first-hand experience of what “whole-process people’s democracy” really means—which does not square with the platitudes of Chinese leader Xi Jinping, as previously reported here.

The stakes are high for the communists in the election, as a low turnout would torpedo the CCP’s propaganda campaign leading up to the election, claiming that Hongkongers have “great confidence in candidate’s abilities,” as bleated out by state-run media China Daily. China Daily also announced that 10,000 Hong Kong police would be deployed to

polling places to “maintain order.” The election is the culmination of the CCP’s grand plan to exert full political control over Hong Kong.

Other enclaves of overseas Chinese are in the sights of the CCP, too, after Hong Kong has been subdued. What is frightening is that the national security law allows Beijing to pursue anyone deemed subversive, including overseas Chinese and even foreigners.

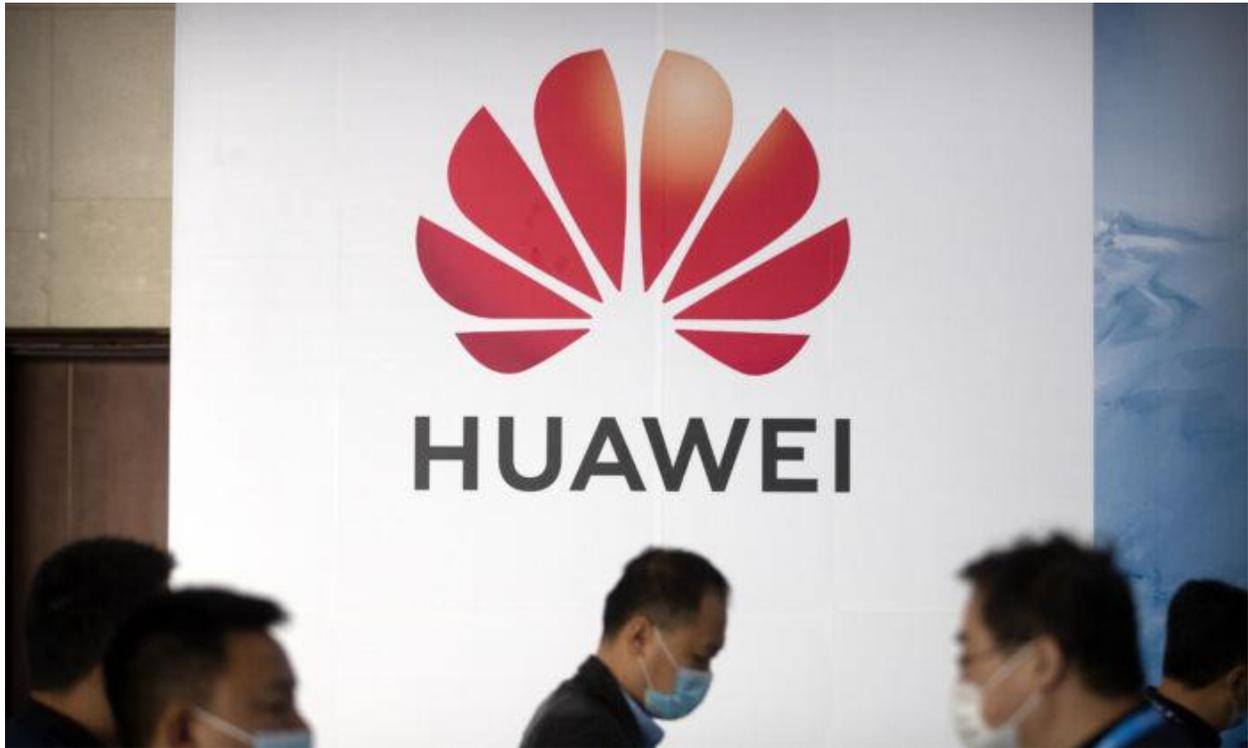
According to The Dallas Morning News: “The law includes provisions criminalizing ‘offences’ committed not only in Hong Kong, but by anyone, anywhere around the globe. According to a December report submitted to Congress by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, ‘Left unchecked, the law could grant the Chinese government broad power to censor global discourse.’”

The absorption of Hong Kong into Beijing’s political empire is in its final stages with Sunday’s rubber-stamp election of a CCP-approved slate of candidates. The lessons-learned during the implementation of the national security law in Hong Kong will almost certainly be applied to Taiwan if/when Taipei capitulates to Beijing’s threats and intimidation. Is Hong Kong’s present experience with “whole-process people’s democracy” a portent of Taiwan’s future?

Stu Cvrk retired as a captain after serving 30 years in the U.S. Navy in a variety of active and reserve capacities, with considerable operational experience in the Middle East and the Western Pacific. Through education and experience as an oceanographer and systems analyst, Cvrk is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, where he received a classical liberal education that serves as the key foundation for his political commentary.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/hong-kongs-slide-into-darkness_4165649.html

Chinese Tech Giant Huawei Attacked Aussie and US Networks in 2012



People walk past a billboard advertising Chinese tech company Huawei at the PT Expo in Beijing, China, on Oct. 14, 2020. (Mark Schiefelbein/AP Photo)

Democracy's current cyber defenses only address the tip of the iceberg



Anders Corr

December 20, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis

Australia discovered Huawei's cyber spying in about 2012 and informed the United States, according to a new Bloomberg News investigation.

The Aussie discovery started a long process of investigating and finding Huawei hacks in other countries. The result: a too-quiet information campaign against the company's attempts to monopolize the world's wireless networks, from 2G to 5G.

But the campaign failed to alert the public early and does not address China's deeper links to European telecom companies such as Nokia and Ericsson, or its potential espionage among technicians in telecom companies globally.

The Australian officials claim that Huawei's attack began with a malicious software update. "In 2012, Australian intelligence officials informed their U.S. counterparts that they had detected a sophisticated intrusion into the country's telecommunications systems," according to the Bloomberg report by Jordan Robertson and Jamie Tarabay.

That cyber breach and its discovery led to Australian and U.S. intelligence sharing with other countries.

The Bloomberg report, first published on Dec. 16, is based on interviews with almost two dozen national security officials from Australia and the United States who got briefings on the matter between 2012 and 2019.

The officials, some of whom confirmed only parts of the story pieced together by Bloomberg, include the following: former Congressman Mike Rogers (R-Mich.), who chaired the U.S. House Intelligence Committee from 2011 to 2015; Michael Wessel, a current commissioner on the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission; Keith Krach, former under secretary of state for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment; and Michèle Flournoy, former under secretary of Defense for Policy. The report also drew from National Security Agency documents leaked by Edward Snowden.



House Intelligence Committee Chairman Mike Rogers speaks during a press conference to release the committee's report on the security threat posed by Chinese telecom companies Huawei and ZTE in Washington on Oct. 8, 2012. (Mandel Ngan/AFP/Getty Images)

The report is the first time the 2012 breach of Australia's telecom networks has been made public.

The Australian Signals Directorate (ASD), while declining to answer Bloomberg's specific questions on the incident, did point to China's Ministry of State Security (MSS) as a malign actor.

"Australia is not alone in the threats we face from state-based actors in cyberspace," the ASD said, noting that Australia has "joined with others in the world to express serious concerns about malicious cyber activities by China's Ministry of State Security."

Huawei Is Not the Only Risk

Huawei, with its headquarters in Shenzhen, China, dominates the global telecom market, which amounts to approximately \$90 billion annually. The data that flows through these networks, however, is far more valuable and explains why Huawei and other Chinese telecommunications companies, like ZTE, arguably undercharge for their offerings and pose a high risk to global data security.

Sweden's Ericsson and Finland's Nokia compete with the Chinese telecom giant, but even they source some of their equipment from China, and sell to China. They are thus in part beholden to China—likely technically compromised—and only weak competitors to Huawei. Nokia even co-owns a company with Huawei that may be planning to sell Huawei-designed phones.

The interlinking of Western telecom companies with China will make it difficult to ensure the safety of clean networks even if Huawei and other Chinese companies are banned.

The United States, Britain, Australia, and Sweden have all banned Huawei from 5G networks, and approximately 60 nations have signed onto the U.S. Clean Network program that commits them to rejecting Chinese telecommunications equipment.

Huawei's Malware

According to seven of the officials who spoke with Bloomberg, an apparently legitimate software update from Huawei for a major Australian telecommunications company “contained malicious code that worked much like a digital wiretap, reprogramming the infected equipment to record all the communications passing through it before sending the data to China.”

The code deleted itself after a few days, “the result of a clever self-destruct mechanism embedded in the update” meant to cover the malware's traces.

Australia's intelligence services ultimately discovered that China's spies caused the breach, “having infiltrated the ranks of Huawei technicians who helped maintain the equipment and pushed the update to the telecom's systems.”

“The seven former officials who provided detailed accounts of their briefings said that Australia's intelligence agencies had detected suspicious traffic flowing from the

country's telecommunications systems to China, a trail that led to Huawei equipment," according to Bloomberg.



Advertising for Huawei Experience Store Opening in Sydney's Hurstville, Australia, on Sept. 24, 2020. (The Epoch Times)

The investigators accessed the infected systems, but arrived only after the self-destruct mechanism began its own deletion.

“Digital forensics on those systems revealed only fragments of the malicious code’s existence, and investigators reconstructed the attack using a variety of sensitive sources, including human informants and secretly intercepted conversations,” according to Bloomberg.

The attack siphoned all data flowing through the Huawei equipment over the course of the malware’s operation.

“The data gave them access to the contents of private communications and information that could be used to target specific people or devices in future attacks,” according to the Bloomberg sources.

Bloomberg named two telecommunications companies operating in Australia that reportedly utilized Huawei equipment. Optus, a division of Singapore Telecommunications, utilized Huawei starting in 2005 for digital and wireless networks.

In addition to being Australia’s second-biggest mobile carrier,” according to Bloomberg, “Optus also operates Australia’s largest fleet of satellites, and it works closely with the Australian military.”

It is unclear why Australia would trust—with its most sensitive satellite and military data—companies associated with an authoritarian government like Singapore, especially since they cooperate closely with China’s Huawei.

Vodafone Hutchison Australia, Australia’s third-biggest mobile carrier, “selected Huawei to overhaul its entire 2G and 3G infrastructure in 2011 and later for parts of its 4G networks as well,” according to Bloomberg.

The breached network, according to two officials with whom Bloomberg spoke, was Optus, which claimed to “have no knowledge of the alleged incidents.”

American intelligence officials, guided by the Aussie tip in 2012, discovered a similar Chinese attack the same year that used Huawei equipment in the United States.

Chinese Spies Need Admin Access to Succeed

“All their intelligence services have poured over the same material,” Bloomberg quoted Rogers as saying. “This whole body of work has come to the same conclusion: It’s all about administrative access, and the administrative patches that come out of Beijing are not to be trusted.”

Even John Suffolk, Huawei’s global cybersecurity officer, admits that “Huawei considers the possibility of its workers being compromised a ‘valid threat,’” according to Bloomberg. The countermeasures that Huawei claims, however, including annual “compliance training,” are laughably inadequate.

Huawei, founded in 1987 by Ren Zhengfei, a former Chinese military officer, claims not to know about the spying.



Chinese leader Xi Jinping (R) is shown around the offices of Chinese telecom giant Huawei by its president and founder Ren Zhengfei in London, England, during Xi's state visit to the UK on Oct. 21, 2015. (Matthew Lloyd/AFP via Getty Images)

This is highly unlikely. But Ren's plausible deniability points to the problem running deeper than just Huawei. If Huawei's leadership can claim not to know about the spying, they may be purposely looking the other way. China's spy services could infiltrate any company from any country, the officials from which likewise ignore spying for short-term market gains. If a low-level technician from any company with administrative access is compromised by China's spy agencies and gains personal access, he or she can insert the necessary malicious code.

The Huawei Problem Is Actually the CCP Problem

International telecommunications companies, including Huawei, make billions of dollars from business with China and have numerous short-term financial incentives to both ignore the danger, and encourage their home governments to do the same.

The problem is international. Huawei has reportedly helped two African governments utilize espionage against political opponents, and built data storage for the government of Papua New Guinea that included obvious security gaps that made sensitive files vulnerable to theft. Published Huawei documents have demonstrated how the company helps Beijing track its own population.

In recent years, with China's growing economic and technological power, the problem has only increased. Robust Chinese cyberattacks continue today against Australia, for example. "Chinese hackers have targeted Australian institutions with relentless attacks since the country called last year for an independent probe into the origins of Covid-19," according to Bloomberg.

The root of the problem is not Huawei, but the links and dependency of corporations from all countries on the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and their willingness to allow the continuation of the CCP's aggressive and unethical approach to the promotion of its international business and illiberal influence.

The problem of Beijing's cyberhacking—which empowers its industrial espionage, political influence, and privacy violations globally—will not be solved until China democratizes its totalitarian political system and, thus, rids itself of the CCP's all-consuming hunger for ever more power.

Anders Corr has a bachelor's/master's in political science from Yale University (2001) and a doctorate in government from Harvard University (2008). He is a principal at Corr Analytics Inc., publisher of the Journal of Political Risk, and has conducted extensive research in North America, Europe, and Asia. His latest books are "The Concentration of Power: Institutionalization, Hierarchy, and Hegemony" (2021) and "Great Powers, Grand Strategies: the New Game in the South China Sea" (2018).

https://www.theepochtimes.com/chinese-tech-giant-huawei-attacked-aussie-and-us-net-works-in-2012_4165582.html

The Consequences of Threat Deflation: Why Did the US Underestimate the Threat From China?



Military vehicles carry China's DF-41 nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missiles in a military parade at Tiananmen Square in Beijing on Oct. 1, 2019. (Greg Baker/AFP via Getty Images)



Bradley A. Thayer

December 20, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary

One of the most significant strategic questions of our time is why the United States underestimated for decades the threat from the Chinese regime. Underestimating the threat, or threat deflation, is a rare event in international politics where a great power consistently does not perceive the rise of peer competitive threat.

During the Cold War, U.S. decision makers had an accurate conception of the China threat. China was seen as an opponent second only to the Soviet Union until 1972, when President Richard Nixon travelled to China. After that opening in Sino-American relations, U.S. policy was informed by the principles of great power balancing against the Soviet threat.

Only with the end of the Cold War did the United States abandon the conception that the People's Republic of China (PRC) was a threat. This was due to three reasons.

First, the imbalance of ideological and material power in favor of the United States. The economic and military power of America was supreme with the defeat of the Soviet Union. However, the end of the Cold War disarmed the West ideologically, yielded triumphalism, and, ironically, ideological disarmament, and allowed China to expand its power and influence in the West and globally without effective resistance.

Second, U.S. business interests sought economic cooperation with China, treating the Chinese people as the source of cheap physical labor for manufacturing as well as inexpensive intellectual labor, including for research and development. This facilitated the PRC's rise, as did the welcoming of intelligent and diligent Chinese students to run U.S. and Western scientific labs and numerous academic departments in engineering, life and natural sciences, especially chemistry, computer science, genetics, mathematics, and physics.



Charles Lieber, former Harvard professor and chemistry chair, arrives at the federal courthouse in Boston, Massachusetts, on Dec. 14, 2021. Lieber is accused of lying to U.S. authorities about his ties to a talent recruitment program of the Chinese regime and concealing funding he received from the regime. (Brian Snyder/Reuters)

Third, China advanced a strategy of threat deflation which started under former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping. Deng profited from studying and improving upon Soviet efforts to penetrate American society as well as learning key lessons from the USSR's mistakes in the Cold War.

As a consequence of threat deflation, the United States never balanced against the Chinese regime until the Trump administration. It is a remarkable fact that the threat from the PRC grew year by year, and the United States did not stop China's rise or balance against it when it was substantially weaker. Indeed, there remains a reluctance in many quarters within the United States to balance the now existential threat to U.S. security, as American society only has a partial understanding of the nature and scope of the China threat.

Beijing successfully caused threat deflation by adopting a strategy comprised of three components. It focused on elites in all aspects of U.S. and other Western societies by

reaching out to them (the “push”), enriching them, and shaping their perception of China and of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), while using the enticement of a growing market (the “pull”) to influence their behavior. For a generation, the Chinese regime masked its intentions and framed its expansion as economic rather than strategic.

The first component, “the push,” is an ancient one: rewarding the avarice of the enemy’s elite—the political and business leaders, academics, and opinion makers—is as old as recorded history. Beijing’s investment in U.S. political, business, intellectual, and opinion elites is complicated and multifaceted but is, fundamentally, an investment in the personal financial success of these elites, including their families, friends, partners, and shareholders. In turn, this results in a personal investment in China’s success, of the growth of its economy, greater economic ties, and ever-expanding political power and influence.

This investment—in essence, a stake in China’s continued growth—results in the implicit message from the elites to the leadership and rank-and-file members of the national security bureaucracies, as well as others—including think tank communities, academics, publishers, Hollywood, and media—that the negative implications of the Chinese regime’s rise should not be explored. As a result, there was rather little serious examination of the deleterious consequences of China’s rise for the national security interests of the United States and other Western nations.

Second, the “pull” shaped U.S. economic interests by enticing businesses with access to the large Chinese consumer market as well as labor for manufacturing and research and development. The consequences of this gravitation to China were profound. Through its introduction to the Western economic ecosystem in the 1990s, and its flourishing in the decades since, China has gained knowledge of how the United States produces knowledge in its universities, businesses, and centers of technology. This penetration has yielded its greatest ability to challenge America.

U.S. entities have worked hand in glove with the Chinese for a generation and have allowed China to siphon off knowledge and practices that greatly contributed to China’s rise. Wall Street has permitted corrupt Chinese firms with *sub rosa* ties to Beijing to raise capital on U.S. markets and learn its practices. Western universities have cooperated with Chinese colleagues in pursuit of knowledge, but also directly and indirectly to the benefit of the CCP and the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). Western laboratories and departments of engineering, mathematics, and natural sciences depend on Chinese researchers and graduate students. This collaboration came at a tremendous cost to the long-term interests of the United States and its allies. The

Chinese regime learned how the West produces knowledge, funds its development, and employs it. In sum, it mastered how to replace the United States.



Students walk on the University of Minnesota campus in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on April 9, 2019. The university closed its Confucius Institute in 2019. (Stephen Maturen/Getty Images)

Third, the CCP employs political warfare expertly through its influence campaigns, including the United Front Work Department and other non-official united front activities. Used by the Soviet Union and expertly improved by the Chinese regime, the united front advances the CCP's interests, and undermines, neutralizes, and defeats its enemies.

The united front often works through front organizations, clandestine agents, and proxies to mask the Chinese regime's involvement. Whether operating through the formal United Front Work Department or informal but allied united front components, they act to target on elites through a collection of front organizations, academe, media, and business to influence politics and policy, shape perceptions about the CCP and its rule over China, and defeat their opponents.

The confrontation with the Chinese regime has clear echoes from the past concerning its assumptions and in threat identification, but also far worse than the Cold War in the denial of the threat for so long by so many sectors of U.S. society, economy, and national security community.

China's strategy of deception permitted the triumph of U.S. economic over strategic interests, and explains Washington's tardy and incomplete response. In turn, and if not reversed, this partial and delayed response results in draconian consequences for the position of the United States in global politics. There is little evidence that the Biden administration will assess the threat from the Chinese regime accurately and take the necessary and sustained steps to meet it. Regrettably for the interests of the United States and its allies, while economic inflation ravages the U.S. economy, threat deflation continues to paralyze strategic thought in America.

Bradley A. Thayer is a founding member of the Committee on Present Danger China and is the co-author of "How China Sees the World: Han-Centrism and the Balance of Power in International Politics."

https://www.theepochtimes.com/the-consequences-of-threat-deflation-why-did-the-us-underestimate-the-threat-from-china_4163509.html

China's Economic Attack on Lithuania Requires a Joint US-EU Defense



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken (right) speaks with Lithuania's Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis in the Benjamin Franklin Room of the State Department ahead of a meeting in Washington, on Sept. 15, 2021. (Mandel Ngan/Pool/AFP via Getty Images)

Beijing is also targeting Germany, France, and Sweden



Anders Corr

December 21, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis

Beijing has reacted against Lithuania's upgrade to its Taiwan relations with extended trade and diplomatic sanctions against the Baltic country. The move is so severe and unprecedented that it provoked reactions from not only the United States, Britain, and European Union, but a German business group that has deep financial ties to China.

Behind the uproar was Lithuania's courageous decision in November to allow Taiwan to open a de facto consulate in Lithuania's capital city of Vilnius. The office uses the name "Taiwan" rather than Taiwan's capital city of "Taipei." The former more accurately reflects the island democracy's sovereignty than the "Taipei" used in the United States and elsewhere in Europe.

Last year, Lithuania withdrew from China's "17+1" diplomatic forum of Central and East European countries, and Lithuania's ruling coalition agreed to support "those fighting for freedom" in Taiwan.

Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis said he will not attend the Beijing Winter Olympics.

Lithuania, a country of nearly 3 million, regained its independence from the Soviet Union in 1990, which in part explains the country's fierce defense of democracy relative to most of the rest of the world.

Beijing's Backlash Against Lithuania

In response to Lithuania's growing resistance, Beijing effectively banned imports from the Baltic country on Dec. 1, and demanded that international corporations sever ties with Lithuania or be denied access to the Chinese market.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) expelled Lithuania's ambassador to China in November, withdrew its own from Vilnius, and recently attempted to illegally downgrade the Lithuanian Embassy in Beijing.

According to Bloomberg, "China had pressured the Baltic nation to change its embassy's name to the Office of the Charge d'Affaires, according to Lithuania's Foreign

Ministry, a label that doesn't exist in international law and one that would effectively downgrade its diplomatic status.”

Landsbergis said: “This is still our embassy, which has never changed its name. Any change of name must be done on [a] bilateral basis. Unilateral changes are not recognized by international law.”

Beijing most recently demanded that Lithuanian diplomats return their identification cards.

Alarmed at their possible loss of diplomatic immunity and concerned for their safety, Lithuania recalled its diplomats from China on Dec. 15 for consultations. Nineteen of them and their dependents consequently departed. The embassy now works virtually.



The Lithuanian Embassy in Beijing, China, on Aug. 10, 2021. (Jade Gao/AFP via Getty Images)

According to Arnoldas Pranckevičius, Lithuania's vice minister of Foreign Affairs, “China is trying to make an example out of us—a negative example—so that other countries do not follow our path. Therefore, it is a matter of principle how the Western community, the United States, and European Union react.”

Support for Lithuania Is Growing Too Slowly

The United States, Britain, Estonia, and of course Taiwan have all supported Lithuania in its dispute with China. But, so far, the EU has reacted only weakly, in large part due to Germany and France's economic ties with China, and apparent reluctance to use the bloc in defense of Europe's smaller countries.

In response to Beijing's economic sanctions against Lithuania, the EU began gathering evidence to bring China to the World Trade Organization (WTO) for violation of international trade rules, but that could take months.

And the WTO effort could eventually be scuttled, as some companies will not want Brussels to take strong action against Beijing. According to the Financial Times, "many companies fear that if they complain they will be shut out of China completely."

Beijing Doubles Down Against Lithuania

China's nationalist media has weighed in on the dispute. According to the state-controlled Global Times tabloid, "we have no intention to deny that economic and trade cooperation between Lithuania and China will be affected after China downgraded its diplomatic relations with Lithuania to the level of chargé d'affaires, the lowest rank of diplomatic representative, over the latter's breach of the One-China principle. Make no mistake that any country that provokes China's core interests is bound to find itself on the receiving end of countermeasures."

Beijing's reaction could have been worse. In 2018, Beijing effectively kidnapped two prominent Canadians to pressure the North American country over the detention of Meng Wanzhou, the chief financial officer of Chinese tech giant Huawei. The two Canadians, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, were kept in harsh conditions for over 1,000 days, until Meng was returned to China.



(L-R) Michael Spavor and Michael Kovrig, two Canadians who were detained in China following the arrest of Meng Wanzhou in Canada on a U.S. extradition request. (AP Photo)

Over this time, Beijing lied about there being no relationship between the detention of the “two Michaels” and the Meng arrest. Yet Spavor and Kovrig were arrested, and released, within days of the same happening to Meng.

The Chinese regime has likewise denied pressuring international corporations to sever ties with Lithuania, but has indicated as much by saying that Chinese companies no longer trust Lithuania.

“I heard that many Chinese companies no longer regard Lithuania as a trustworthy partner,” a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said. “Lithuania has to look at itself for the reason why Lithuanian companies are facing difficulties in trade and economic cooperation in China.”

Beijing Extends Sanctions to Germany, France, and Sweden

The CCP's trade sanctions have quietly extended to pressure German, French, and Swedish companies with supply chains that reach Lithuania.

According to Politico sources, "two German companies in the auto industry had parts stopped at Chinese ports in recent days because they were manufactured in Lithuania. Some of these components could take years to be replaced with trusted alternative suppliers. ... French and Swedish firms are also reportedly facing similar problems because Lithuanian products form part of their supply chain."

Consequently, some international companies have canceled contracts with Lithuanian suppliers.

Over the longer term, others will increasingly reevaluate the wisdom of relying on Chinese markets and manufacturing.

"Lithuania's direct trade with China is relatively small," according to the Gatestone Institute. "The country exported €300 million worth of goods to China in 2020, less than 1% of its total exports. It is, however, home to hundreds of companies that make products for multinationals that sell to China."

This includes Lithuanian components in German cars, for example. The German industry is pushing its business lobby, BDI, into the desperate position of publicly criticizing both Lithuania and Beijing for the dispute.

German companies, which depend on the relatively low-wage industry of Lithuania, will also consider transshipment of Lithuanian components through other countries. Continental and Hella are two major German corporations that rely on Lithuanian labor and are getting pressured by Beijing through denial of imports or exports. Similar denials are also affecting smaller German companies.

"Continental, which has operations in 58 countries, is considering shipping products from Lithuania via other countries ... in order to avoid further the Chinese blockade," according to a Financial Times source.

BDI criticized Beijing for its “own goal,” revealing even in its public criticism that the group is advising the CCP on how best to achieve what the business group should realize are Beijing’s illiberal ends.

BDI went further to tangentially criticize the victim, Lithuania, for being “out of step” with EU policy.

The German industry’s awkward attempt to find a middle path between dictatorship and democracy is explained by Germany’s 2020 trade with China. This amounted to €213 billion (about \$247 billion) in goods alone, Germany’s largest with any country.

Beijing’s Threat to International Law and the Equal Sovereignty of States

By criticizing Lithuania, the German industry is weighing in on the side of autocracy and the status quo of massive China trade at the expense of democracy in Taiwan and the freedom of countries, like Lithuania, to support democracy globally. This will push the EU into pressuring not only Beijing, but Lithuania, thus furthering the occlusion of small democracies by big power politics.

China’s state media reflects this unequal approach to international politics, describing Lithuania as “a mouse or even just a flea under the feet of fighting elephants.”

Even large democratic blocs like the EU, of which Lithuania is a member, are in a weak position relative to Beijing.

According to Politico, “for the world’s biggest trade bloc, its usual trade defense instruments such as safeguards or anti-dumping measures do not cover the gray economic zone in which China is targeting Lithuania. The EU also doesn’t have a bilateral trade agreement with China through which it could remedy the tensions.”

The EU’s coordination failures and lack of defensive instruments will necessitate either caving to Beijing, or a strengthening of the EU, both of which result in a concentration of power in what are becoming superpower capitals.

EU Trade Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis has proposed as much in his anti-coercion instrument “designed to tackle exactly this [China-Lithuania] type of geopolitically motivated trade tensions,” according to Politico, and which would allow “the EU to strike back against trade challengers via goods, services and intellectual property rights.”



EU Trade Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis speaks during a press conference at the Europa building in Brussels, on Dec. 7, 2021. (Olivier Matthys/AP Photo)

But Brussels, Paris, and Berlin are all more cautious about opposing Beijing publicly, than are smaller states in the EU—including Czechia, Lithuania, Slovenia, and Slovakia—that want EU protection against Beijing’s pressure. Thus the EU is stymied by the vetoes of its biggest economies.

The WTO is likewise paralyzed and illiberal due to the accession of China in 2001.

Beijing Forces Global Political Polarization and a Concentration of Power

The China-Lithuania dispute and its necessary remedies are tragic examples of the concentration of power at the international level, as Lithuania retreats from its independent representation in Beijing to rely on the EU, whose remedies are contrary to the political independence of its component parts. The EU has a relatively illiberal position, compared to Lithuania, on the issue of Taiwan's sovereignty and democracy.

Trade sanctions meted out by Beijing have similarities to what it might have done years ago to foreign corporations that refer to Taiwan as a country rather than a city or province of China. This indicates how Beijing views the status of not only Taiwan, but other small countries globally. They are either with Beijing, or against it, due to their recognition of Taiwan. Those in the latter category must necessarily be subordinated to Beijing's goals of hegemony.

The best defense of Lithuania, Taiwan, and democracy generally is for the EU to overcome its paralysis and work together with the United States to impose counter-sanctions on China directly, completely bypassing the slow-moving WTO. International organizations that include China have proven to be failures for democracies given Beijing's growing influence, veto, and breaking of international norms.

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https://www.theepochtimes.com/chinas-economic-attack-on-lithuania-requires-a-joint-us-eu-defense_4164991.html

China's Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction Against the World



The P4 laboratory on the campus of the Wuhan Institute of Virology in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, on May 13, 2020. (Hector Retamal/AFP via Getty Images)



Bradley A. Thayer

December 22, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary

Nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons were considered weapons of mass destruction (WMD) during the Cold War. Later, radiological weapons were generally considered to be another form of WMD.

Each of these weapons had a horrific effect: they could kill large numbers of people and so norms prohibiting their use were established and have mostly held. Nuclear weapons have not been used since 1945, and biological weapons not used since the Japanese military's Unit 731 employed them in China against civilians and other allied prisoners of war during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945).

While chemical weapons were used in Syria's civil war, there has not been widespread use of chemicals or toxins in interstate warfare since World War I and Italy's employment in Ethiopia in the Second Italo-Ethiopian War from 1935 to 1936. Despite allegations of their use and their considerable stockpiles, WMD were not used by the superpowers during the Cold War or after.

Each of these examples was conscious and deliberate employment by a state. But the world should also consider the effect of covert or inadvertent use of WMD, or employment due to negligence and, thus, a violation of a state's duty to police its territory and its responsibility for what occurs within its borders.

These forms of WMD use should also be prohibited with the strongest sanctions enacted if the norm is violated. It is time to update the world's understanding of WMD to acknowledge that WMD have been employed *de facto* and without repercussions. One example of this was the 1979 anthrax leak from a military research facility in Sverdlovsk (now Yekaterinburg) in the Soviet Union. Over 66 Soviet citizens were killed by their own government and scores more made ill. The Soviets were never held to account for this inadvertent WMD use. Nor were they for another, more infamous case—the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster. The legacy of which remains.

Despite common perception, WMDs are being used now against the United States by China. Beijing has conducted a current and far more disastrous use of WMD than the United States' Soviet enemy.

Opioid Epidemic

First, the opioid epidemic has killed and disrupted the lives of tens of millions in the United States alone. Rather than an epidemic, it should be considered a chemical weapons attack. Precursor chemicals are shipped from China to the cartels to Mexico to be transported into the United States and around the world. The Chinese regime, firms, and the cartels should be held to account for employment of WMD. Immediate sanctions and other punishments should be employed against them and China itself for its unwillingness to police its territory, govern its export, and thus provide implicit approval of WMD use against America.



U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers at the Otay Mesa commercial facility seized more than 3,100 pounds of methamphetamine, fentanyl powder, fentanyl pills, and heroin on Oct. 9, 2020. (DEA)

COVID-19

Second, the COVID-19 pandemic is a case of covert or inadvertent use of WMD by the Chinese regime against its own citizens, the United States, and the rest of the world. Thus far, over 5 million people have died, millions have lasting health effects from the

virus, tens of millions more have been made ill, and there has been major and sustained disruption to people's lives, wellbeing, mental health, safety, education, and employment. Profound and lasting political, psychological, physiological, and economic effects also must be factored into account.

The Chinese regime has gotten away with two major uses of WMD with catastrophic effects on the world without penalty or even acknowledgment of WMD employment. Such use compels sanctions and sterner measures to punish Beijing and to deter future use. Regrettably, this has not happened due to the absence of awareness and the concern by many with an interest in China that these actions not be recognized for what they are.

The unwillingness to perceive the Chinese regime's actions as WMD employment allows the continuation of the business as usual approach toward the regime by its supporters around the world, in the American elite, including on Wall Street, the U.S. political system, and the media.

To acknowledge communist China's use of WMD would compel the recognition that it is the world's most dangerous regime due to its intent and capabilities, as well as the world's greatest violator of international law and norms.

To address this, much needs to be accomplished. Three steps must be taken forthwith.

First, the global media must call them for what they are: WMD attacks against civilians. This stark fact must be repeated until the world identifies these as WMD attacks that require a response.

Second, rather than focusing solely on nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons use, the norm of WMD effect and consequence must be adopted by governments, inter-governmental organizations like the United Nations, and non-governmental organizations, and China held to account by them for its use of WMD. If a state releases a pandemic by design or not, it has employed a WMD against the world, and so is culpable for the consequences and must be punished to deter future use.

Third, the U.S. government should call the attacks as WMD and trigger the full force of the government to combat the consequences of both attacks. The opioid WMD attack should be treated with equivalent energy of response as the COVID-19 WMD attack. Sanctions must be imposed upon the regime for their use against the United States and reparations made to the world's victims. Compensation from Chinese assets in the United States and globally would be a start. The prohibition of investment in China by

U.S. or other entities would be a second step. Banning Chinese entities from U.S. financial or other markets would be a third.

Strong measures are needed as not sanctioning Beijing for its WMD violations encourages it to continue its actions and to break additional norms, including against nuclear use. The Chinese regime owes the world compensation and the international community is going to have to compel payment of the debt.

Bradley A. Thayer is a founding member of the Committee on Present Danger China and is the co-author of "How China Sees the World: Han-Centrism and the Balance of Power in International Politics."

https://www.theepochtimes.com/chinas-use-of-weapons-of-mass-destruction-against-the-world_4170557.html

The Risks of CCP China's Digital Yuan Are Understated: Part I



A Chinese yuan currency sign with two arrows through it, pictured outside a bank branch in Shanghai on August 13, 2015. (Johannes Eisele/AFP/Getty Images)

J.G Collins

December 21, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary [Audio PDF](#)

This is the first of a two-part article articulating the risks of CCP China's new digital yuan, the e-CNY.

Part I details the risks to people and businesses in CCP China.

Part II addresses the geopolitical and geostrategic risks of the digital yuan to other nations and Western-style democracies.

GCHQ, the UK's intelligence, security, and cyber agency, according to its website, recently warned of the dangers of CCP China's new digital currency, the e-CNY.

In an interview with the Financial Times the week of Dec. 5, Sir Jeremy Fleming, the GCHQ chief said e-CNY "gives them the ability . . . to be able to exercise control over what is conducted on those digital currencies" and to "surveil transactions."

Surveillance and Control

In a July white paper from a Peoples' Bank of China (PBOC) working group tasked to evaluate progress on the e-CNY, the authors talk about "managed anonymity," an Orwellian phrase that they say "follows the principle of 'anonymity for small value and traceable for high value.'" Then adds, "it is necessary to guard against the misuse of e-CNY in illegal and criminal activities, such as tele-fraud, internet gambling, money laundering, and tax evasion." But PBOC has told the foreign Deutsche Banks that transactions between payers and payees can be anonymous.

The PBOC will treat the e-CNY as what economists call "M0" (M-zero), the measure of coin currency, physical paper, and central bank reserves. This is important because, as M0, it will effectively be the equivalent of cash in your pocket or purse. e-CNY will only be able to earn interest if it is deposited in one of CCP China's state-owned banks.

Given the costs of printing, distributing, and protecting physical cash, one could safely assume that physical currency will ultimately disappear from CCP China, and PBOC cites those costs as a principal reason for adopting e-CNY.

That all seems relatively benign, but one would be naive to not question e-CNY given the CCP's unrelenting efforts to surveil, control, and limit the freedoms and human rights of the people in China.

The irony of the PBOC advancing a Central Bank Digital Currency (or “CBDC”) is that CCP China already has a number of “private” (or as private as one can be under the jackboot of the CCP) fintech payment platforms like Alipay and WeChatPay.

So why is CCP China being a pathfinder on CBDC, fintech that a number of countries are pursuing? While, incidentally, prohibiting private cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, Ethereum, etc.

In a word, control.

In China, people will undoubtedly have their social credit scores linked to their spending. The CCP will be able to collect fines and penalties without due process; they’ll simply debit offenders’ e-CNY accounts by accessing their “wallets.” (A wallet is one’s private key code to access cryptos, but one can readily surmise that e-CNY wallets, which will be tied to CCP China-owned banks, won’t be private, despite PBOC assurances to the contrary.)

The e-CNY will also cow companies into submission. While the PBOC says it will “guard against the misuse of e-CNY in illegal and criminal activities,” make no mistake: if your business or the leadership of your business—or perhaps, an employee of your business—offends the CCP, be assured: your business will be denied access to revenues and will be blocked from being able to obtain e-CNY. If e-CNY becomes the predominant currency in CCP China, that means you are out of business unless you can survive in a barter economy.

As with Huawei, e-CNY will give the CCP greater ability to surveil, control, and, when beneficial, silence the Laobaixing or “old 100 names;” the common people of China who suffer under the Party’s obsessive denial of the personal freedoms that people who live in Western-style democracies take for granted.

Our Chinese friends who live under the thumb of the CCP should resist e-CNY by all available means: barter, scrip, or personal credit ledgers at the town or neighborhood level. While doing so will ultimately be hopeless, widespread resistance to e-CNY will help build opposition to the CCP and their fetish to know everything about everyone.

Advocates of freedom and free people around the world would applaud. And it might even make the CCP re-think its obsession.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/the-risks-of-ccp-chinas-digital-yuan-are-understated-part-i_4170009.html

The Risks of CCP China's Digital Yuan Are Understated: Part II



Arrangement of various world currencies including Chinese yuan, U.S. dollar, Euro, British pound, pictured on Jan. 25, 2011. (Kacper Pempel/Illustration/Reuters)

J.G. Collins

December 22, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary Audio PDF

This is the second of a two-part article articulating the risks of CCP China's new digital yuan, the e-CNY.

Part I details the risk to people and businesses in CCP China.

This Part II addresses the geopolitical and geostrategic risks of the digital yuan to other nations and Western-style democracies.

The power the CCP will exercise from e-CNY that I described in Part I won't be limited to the borders of CCP China.

There is a bigger, looming, threat, and it's global.

CCP China's "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI) is intended to spread commercial and geopolitical influence in Central, South, and Southeast Asia, as well as into Europe and the Middle East.

For less developed economies, e-CNY may be a godsend that allows access to payment and banking services, but it's also a Trojan Horse. While payments can be transferred far more easily in, say, the desolate areas of Afghanistan, they can also be monitored, controlled, and prohibited.

So if the e-CNY becomes the preferred—or only—currency in your remote part of the world where the CCP is engaged in the BRI, it can sanction behavior via the e-CNY. If you or your local community object to seizing farmland for a BRI development, good luck surviving without what may be your only means of paying or receiving money. You'll be under the same CCP thumb of control as the common Chinese people.

But the larger risk is to the global economy.

One can easily imagine the CCP eventually pushing OPEC and individual oil-producing nations to price their oil in e-CNY and bypass the petrodollar, which has been a critical element of U.S. economic power and foreign policy for nearly half a century. Since many of the countries with which the United States has had disputes, and for which it has imposed sanctions, sit atop oceans of oil, the e-CNY would be an attractive incentive for them to price their oil in CNY.

Most oil-producing nations, including most OPEC nations, price their oil in U.S. dollars (USD).

Consequently, nearly every country keeps USD reserves for oil payments and to otherwise participate in the U.S. economy. But those dollars aren't sitting in a vault;

they're recycled back to the United States as investments, often in U.S. Treasury securities. They help fund our exorbitant deficits and debt. (Even CCP China funds our debt, returning the USD we use to pay for their exports back to the USA as Treasuries, real estate, and equity investments.)

Were the CCP to succeed in undermining the petrodollar, it would likely significantly reduce the demand for USD and increase demand for CNY. Instead of the USD being the world's reserve currency, a position it has held since 1944, it would fall back to be among one of several "reserve" currencies, including the euro, the CNY, and the JPY. Theoretically, having achieved an advanced standing as a reserve currency, it's possible—even likely—that CCP China could then further consolidate CNY's status by setting the prices for rare earths or even its everyday exports of things like toys, computers, etc. in CNY. (To give you a peek at the world where multiple currencies reign alongside the USD, when President Obama's then-novice treasury secretary, Tim Geithner, said in 2009 that he was open to a basket of currencies replacing the USD as the world's reserve currency, the dollar tumbled in moments before Treasury walked Geithner's comments back.)

If a good portion of global USD demand disappears because oil starts to be priced in e-CNY, and CCP China further capitalizes from there on its standing as a leading world reserve currency, the United States would have to raise its interest rates to lure foreign investment in our debt securities or, perhaps, devalue the dollar, which would significantly boost inflation.

Finally, from a geostrategic perspective, the rise of the e-CNY as a reserve currency would allow countries subject to sanctions by the USA or international institutions, like Nato, the EU, or the U.N., to avoid them.

That's because those sanctions are usually administered by SWIFT, the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication, based in Brussels. It's how funds move around the world. But e-CNY allows anyone with an internet connection to transfer value. The world's ability to affect the plans of bad actors—often friendly with CCP China—would be significantly hindered, and national and global security risks increased.

Beware

CCP China hopes to introduce the e-CNY as an international currency during the Winter Olympics this coming February.

Three U.S. senators have requested the U.S. Olympic Committee to prohibit U.S. Olympic Team members from using it, drawing a rebuke from CCP China authorities. The free Western-style democracies that have joined the diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympics should follow the senators' request, as should the U.S. Olympic Committee: Do not submit to pressure, or accept the convenience, of using the e-CNY during the Olympics; avoid it entirely.

If that cannot be done (i.e., if the only payment option in the Olympic Village is e-CNY), then Olympians should be provided single-use telephones by their respective national Olympic committees, loaded with an e-CNY per diem, to be used exclusively for e-CNY spending. The phones should then be returned to the committees and destroyed at the end of the Olympics to prohibit further CCP surveillance of the athletes.

Fighting Back

Federal Reserve Chair Jay Powell, the Federal Reserve, Congress, and President Joe Biden should move with all deliberate speed to finalize an e-USD that can compete head-to-head with the e-CNY. Research has been underway between the Fed and MIT, but that should be addressed with the same urgency of the Space Race or the Missile Gap of the early 1960s.

The United States also needs to get a handle on its deficits by cutting the costs of government, eliminating lucrative—and blatantly unfair—tax loopholes, such as the tax treatment of carried interest and the home mortgage interest deduction (which only a handful of other countries permit).

It is vital for the United States economy and for our national security that we continue as the global currency hegemon, whether that be in greenbacks, bank accounts, or a USD CBDC. The United States should lead Nato, in partnership with the EU, Japan, South Korea, Australia, India, and the other Western-style democracies to contain the spread of e-CNY.

Our future—and the future of the free world—depends on it.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/the-risks-of-ccp-chinas-digital-yuan-are-understated-part-ii_4170446.html

China Now Controls Africa



Chinese leader Xi Jinping poses with African leaders, including Malawi's President Arthur Peter Mutharika (2nd row, 2nd right), during the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Beijing, China, on Sept. 3, 2018. (How Hwee Young/AFP/Getty Images)



John Mac Ghlionn

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Epoch Times Commentary

When we think of colonialism, we tend to think of men like Christopher Columbus and Charles Du Gaulle; and countries like France, Portugal, and Spain. In other words, we tend to think of colonialism in the past tense, as something that occurred long, long ago.

Today, however, millions of people across the globe still live under colonial rule. Some will scratch their heads and ask how? But, it's important to note, colonialism looks a little different today. It's less explicit, less violent, and less obvious.

In Africa, let's call it "colonialism with Chinese characteristics."

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is busy constructing bridges, ports, roads, and state-of-the-art facilities in Africa. These projects come with a significant price, and that price is freedom.

Of the 54 countries in Africa, 45 have already signed up to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This year, Congo became the 45th African member. Shortly after signing on the dotted line, the largest country in sub-Saharan Africa entered into an "unconscionable" mining deal with Beijing. Congo is the world's leading producer of minerals like metal, cobalt, and copper. Sadly, the Chinese regime now controls the country's mining industry.

The BRI saddles members with unimaginable levels of debt. In November, The Diplomat's Mercy Kuo warned that, ever since the BRI was launched back in 2013, "China has outspent the U.S. on a more than 2-to-1 basis." However, it "has done so with debt rather than aid, maintaining a 31-to-1 ratio of loans to grants."

To compound matters, Kuo found "that the average [recipient] government is now underreporting its actual and potential repayment obligations to China by an amount equivalent to 5.8 percent of its GDP."

Not surprisingly, a number of BRI participant countries are experiencing a sense of "buyer's remorse." Why wouldn't they? More than one-third of BRI infrastructure projects have "encountered major implementation problems—such as corruption scandals, labor violations, environmental hazards, and public protests," noted Kuo. Moreover, "project suspensions and cancellations are on the rise."

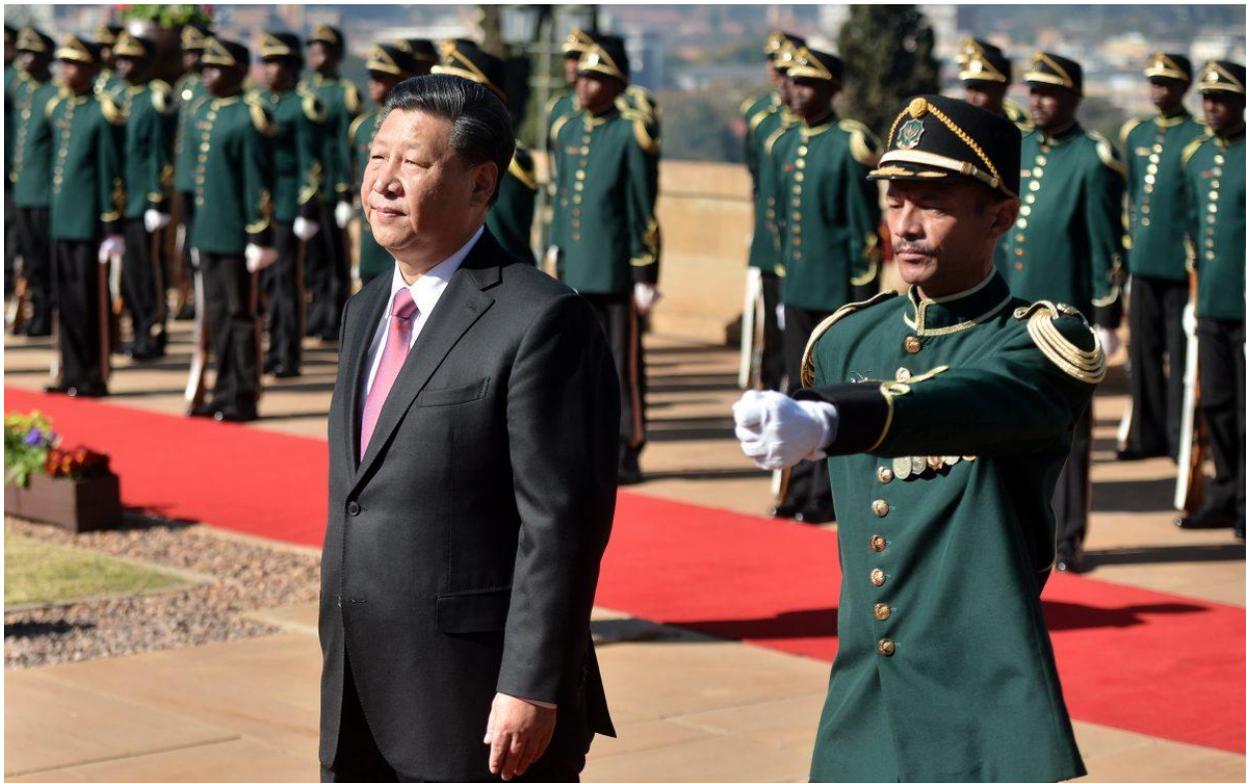
Kuo's findings are backed up by a recent study carried out by AidData, a research lab at the College of William and Mary's Global Research Institute. According to Bradley Parks, AidData's executive director and a co-author of the report, unreported debts

alone “are worth approximately \$385 billion.” The hidden debt problem, he warned, is likely to get considerably worse.

What does all of this mean for Africa? In short, nothing good.

Take Equatorial Guinea, for example, a country heavily indebted to Beijing. The CCP is currently attempting to build its first permanent military base in the West African country, according to American intelligence reports. The small nation, home to just 1.4 million people, has an abundance of offshore oil reserves—a fact not lost on the CCP. According to Maj. Gen. Andrew Rohling, the new base will allow China to establish “naval presence on the Atlantic” and directly compete with the United States.

Even countries not signed up to the BRI cannot avoid the ominous shadow of the CCP. China has invested in 52 out of the 54 African countries; 49 of the 54 countries (more than 90 percent) have signed memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with Beijing. These MoUs are the equivalent of entering into a Faustian bargain. By accepting large sums of money from Beijing, African countries have allowed the CCP to enter their backyards and exploit their resources.



Chinese leader Xi Jinping inspects a military honor guard during his official state visit at

the Union Building in Pretoria, South Africa, on July 24, 2018. (Phill Magakoe/AFP/Getty Images)

Who Controls the Money Controls the Future

China's investments in Africa are strategic. Going forward, to do business with Beijing, one will have little option but to use e-CNY, China's new digital currency.

Last year, Huawei unveiled the Mate 40, a smartphone that comes with a pre-installed e-wallet that uses China's digital currency. Soon after the unveiling, the CCP started putting the phones in the hands of millions of Africans.

As researchers at the Lowy Institute noted, it appears that China's "secondary focus may very well be Africa—with an eye towards disrupting the global financial system."

Is the CCP using Africa, the world's fastest growing continent, to reshape the international balance of power? The answer appears to be yes. Not only is Africa the world's fastest-growing continent, it's the youngest; 60 percent of Africa's population is under the age of 25.

In recent years, the Nigerian capital of Lagos, home to the fastest growing economy in Africa, has seen an influx of Chinese investments. The two countries enjoy an apparently unbreakable bond (although Nigeria is heavily indebted to Beijing), with China now looking to establish banks in the megacity. What is occurring in Nigeria should be seen as an attempt to control the entire financial narrative across the entire continent of Africa.

Not only is the CCP reshaping the financial narrative, it's also reshaping the military one. According to a recent report, titled "China's military education and Commonwealth countries," several African nations, including Ghana and Tanzania, have opened CCP-sponsored, "politico-military schools." These establishments, according to analysts Radomir Tylecote and Henri Rossano, should be understood in the context of Beijing's growing efforts to gain even greater levels of control over developing countries. Not surprisingly, as the report shows, a large number of the countries participating in these programs are also members of China's BRI.

A Continent Conquered

In less than a decade, China has essentially conquered a continent of 1.2 billion people, a continent with an abundance of natural resources, including diamonds, sugar, salt, gold, iron, cobalt, uranium, copper, bauxite, silver, petroleum, and cocoa beans.

As the colonization of an entire continent was occurring, the United States and the European Union simply sat back and did nothing. One can't help but feel that their latest projects, the 'Build Back Better' and Global Gateway initiatives, are destined to fail. The CCP has an eight-year head start on Washington and Brussels, with the majority of African countries heavily indebted to Beijing.

The sad fact is this: Even if African countries want to leave the BRI, many of them can't.

If in doubt, let me point you in the direction of Uganda, a country whose debt stands at \$18 billion, almost 50 percent of its GDP. The country owes most of this debt to China. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni recently sent a delegation to Beijing to renegotiate the outstanding debt. However, as Nigeria's Punch Newspaper reported, "the request was turned down," with the CCP refusing "to allow any alteration in the original terms of the loan agreement." What does this mean for the East African nation? It's likely that the Ugandan government will have to "forfeit the Entebbe International Airport"—the country's only airport.

China's "financial assistance" is little more than predatory lending, with collateral in case of loan default coming in many forms, including international airports. What we are witnessing is death by a thousand cuts—an entire continent being swallowed up by the communists in Beijing. Considering Xi Jinping recently promised to invest another \$10 billion in Africa over the next three years, expect the Chinese assault to continue.

John Mac Ghlionn is a researcher and essayist. His work has been published by the likes of the New York Post, Sydney Morning Herald, Newsweek, National Review, The Spectator US, and other respectable outlets. He is also a psychosocial specialist, with a keen interest in social dysfunction and media manipulation.

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