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Red Dragon Menacing III(5)

On CCP's All-Out Aggression Against Humanity

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Xu Na and the Million Souls

In China, a Deluded Regime Leads Its People Down a Doomed Path

Beijing's Political Warfare Campaigns Exploit Social Media



A stock photo of social media platform icons in a mobile device. (Pixabay/Pexels)

Beijing's Political Warfare Campaigns Exploit Social Media

Stu Cvrk

December 23, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis

Social media are an increasingly important front in the Chinese regime's political warfare campaigns.

With the increasing loss of credibility of legacy media among Americans, people are turning to independent and social media for their news and information. A Pew Research poll nearly a year ago reflected the shift away from traditional television news to digital devices that is accelerating: “More than eight-in-ten U.S. adults (86%) say they get news from a smartphone, computer or tablet ‘often’ or ‘sometimes,’ including 60% who say they do so often. [Furthermore, when asked what they] prefer to get news on, roughly half (52%) of Americans say they prefer a digital platform—whether it is a news website (26%), search (12%), social media (11%) or podcasts (3%).”

And while 11 percent of Americans getting their news from social media is not a large number, consider the narrow margins of victory in various U.S. political campaigns in 2020 and subsequently in 2021. This is why the political left in 2020, aided by their Big Tech allies, went all out to control dialogue on social media during the presidential campaign.

And the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) are all-in on trying to influence and control social media, too, for its own purposes.

Background

China is using political warfare, as coordinated by the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) General Political Department (GPD), to achieve its geopolitical goals around the world. Each target or objective of the CCP has an attendant political warfare strategy that is tailored according to the targeted society: Taiwan, India, the United States, Canada, domestic Chinese citizens, etc.

Some of the general principles of CCP political warfare are adapted to suit the target: undermine the legitimacy of the foreign government; challenge the democratic order in the particular society; challenge and exploit international law and international organizations to achieve goals; promote alternatives “with Chinese characteristics” to widely accepted universal values; and use the full range of information warfare tools to persuade, coopt, and influence political leadership, academics, cultural figures, and average people to adopt the CCP’s objective(s).

The objectives of CCP political warfare campaigns are invariably to weaponize all available sources of information to gain political power (ultimately, worldwide), capture and control foreign leaders, and defeat all counter-narratives aimed at exposing and

reversing CCP aggression and hypocrisies. Always in play are the psychological warfare aspects of CCP political warfare that lead to the demoralization of decision makers and especially targeted populations.

Thus, to achieve its political warfare objectives, China places great stock in information warfare, which is an amalgamation or derivative of the Chinese strategy of “Three Warfares” that includes concurrent psychological, media, and legal components. Propaganda is the tie that binds the Three Warfares together.

Before the phrase “information warfare” was invented, Mao Zedong himself valued the use of propaganda to win over the masses domestically: “The world is progressing, the future is bright and no one can change this general trend of history. We should carry on constant propaganda among the people on the facts of world progress and the bright future ahead so that they will build their confidence in victory.”



Students for a Free Tibet protest below a new electronic billboard leased by Xinhua (2nd from top), the news agency operated by the Chinese regime, as it makes its debut in New York's Times Square, U.S., on Aug 1, 2011. (Stan Honda/AFP via Getty Images)

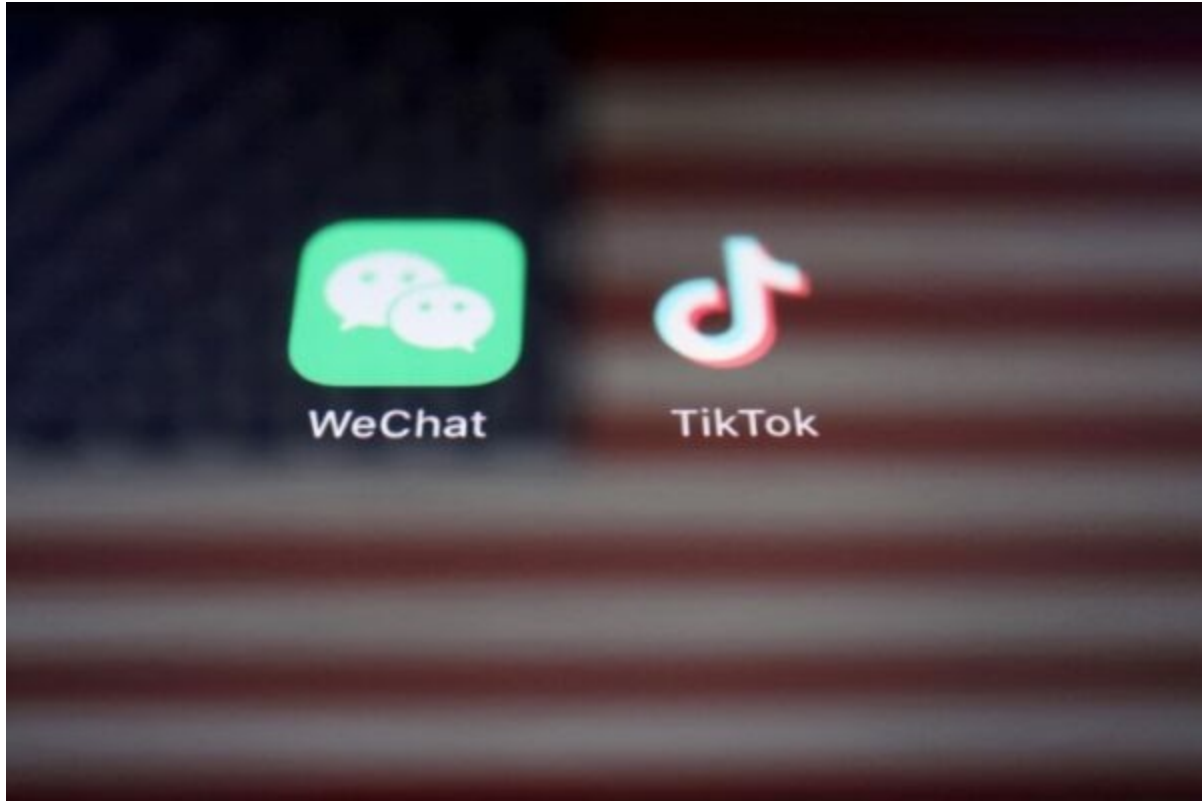
Exploiting Social Media

In recent years, the CCP has incorporated Soviet-era concepts of “active measures” to expand its information warfare toolkit in order to exploit new technologies and capabilities.

Active measures include the following: disinformation; false flag operations; counterfeiting; destabilization of foreign governments; direct support to and exploitation of foreign protest movements to weaken social cohesion; use of façade structures and false front entities; direct purchase of foreign media and/or control through paid advertising; and the mounting of social media campaigns using false accounts and proxies to target and influence key decision makers.

Social media have enormous reach and the ability to influence daily decisions of millions of people on a plethora of topics, not the least of which include the political. For example, current statistics reflect that Facebook has 1.9 billion daily active users and 2.9 billion monthly active users. Twitter has 396.5 million users, which represents 8.85 percent of all social media users in the world. With Twitter also being the most popular social media among users aged 25-34, it stands to reason that the CCP would target Twitter and Facebook to “capture the young”—just as Adolf Hitler (Hitler Youth—Hitlerjugend), Joseph Stalin (Young Communist League – KOMSOMOL), and Mao Zedong (Communist Youth League of China) did in the past. Control the next generation; control the population—the goal of every tyrant in history.

The methods those dictators used were cruder than the subtleties that are possible through the exploitation of social media. And the CCP aims to control social media by hook or by crook. It already controls WeChat and TikTok; why not Twitter and Facebook, too, as a modern tool in its political and information warfare tool chest? The CCP’s methods in doing so might make the Nazis and Soviets blush.



A reflection of the U.S. flag is seen on the signs of the WeChat and TikTok apps on Sept. 19, 2020. (Florence Lo/Reuters)

Bot Armies

A “bot” is defined as “a software program that imitates the behavior of a human, as in participating in chatroom or Internet Relay Chat (IRC) discussions.”

A single program can control and manipulate hundreds or even thousands of imitation accounts—referred to as “bot armies”—on social media. For example, the fake accounts can be manipulated to automatically “like” or “retweet” postings that present CCP propaganda or Chinese government narratives to give the false appearance of wide support for the particular topic. This is a very powerful force-multiplier in the propaganda wars being conducted on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media.

There have been many reports of bot armies being used by the CCP:

- During the 2016-2019 Russiagate hoax, as reported by *The American Spectator*, “China was operating one of Twitter’s largest propaganda bot networks.” The original

information source was a Twitter safety report published in June 2020. According to Twitter, nearly 200,000 bots and fake accounts were suspended, including what Twitter referred to as 23,750 accounts of a “highly engaged core network.”

- Last September, as reported by The Diplomat, Facebook suspended 155 accounts and 11 pages that included “China-based network that targeted political disinformation at users in the Philippines.” The accounts were linked to individuals in China’s Fujian Province.
- As noted by Dutch media this September, cybersecurity firm FireEye published a report detailing Chinese-backed accounts that were part of a coordinated social media influence campaign that “promoted the narratives of systemic racism, coronavirus fears and anti-Trump sentiments” in order to mobilize protestors in the United States in 2020.
- In November, The Diplomat reported that a study from “the Oxford Internet Institute and the Associated Press documented 26,879 Twitter accounts that amplified posts from Chinese diplomats or state media nearly 200,000 times before getting suspended by the platform for violating rules prohibiting manipulation.”
- As reported by the Daily Caller News Foundation earlier this month, Twitter suspended thousands of accounts, including many “linked to a Chinese campaign aimed at downplaying the Chinese government’s role in the treatment of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang.” The report said that Facebook suspended “524 Facebook accounts, 20 Pages, four Groups and 86 Instagram accounts linked to China” for nefarious practices.

Deepfake Technology

According to Norton, a leader in cyber protection technologies, “deepfake technology is an evolving form of artificial intelligence that’s adept at making you believe certain media is real, when in fact it’s a compilation of doctored images and audio designed to fool you.”

Perfect technology for influencing unsuspecting users on social media platforms like the popular YouTube application!

The Chinese are using artificial intelligence to create false images and videos aimed at corrupting and influencing social media chats and conducting spear phishing attacks, as well as to propagate false CCP-friendly videos.

According to an FBI alert reported in March, “foreign actors are currently using synthetic content in their influence campaigns, and the FBI anticipates it will be increasingly used by foreign and criminal cyber actors for spear phishing and social engineering in an evolution of cyber operational tradecraft.”

Frequent viewers of YouTube videos beware!

Use of Contractors to Generate Fake Content

The Chinese are blatant about their use of social media to shape public opinion at home and abroad. To arm their social media and cyber warriors in the political warfare campaigns, The New York Times reported on Dec. 20 an example of soliciting online bids from commercial contractors to produce content, including videos (using deepfake technology?), in support of official “public opinion management”—a CCP euphemism for public control through the use of propaganda.

According to the Times report, the purpose for that solicitation is “to create hundreds of fake accounts on Twitter, Facebook and other major social media platforms.” The goal is “an upgrade in sophistication and power: a series of accounts with organic followers that can be turned to government aims whenever necessary.”

Should any content sourced from mainland China be trusted?

Conclusion

The Chinese regime’s political warfare has ramped up in a new and modern domain—that of social media and the internet. Chinese-sponsored cyberwarfare—involving fake social media accounts, bot armies, deepfake technology, and artificial intelligence—is hard at work every day of the year in attempting to fool and influence millions of unsuspecting users around the world. If a particular social media

posting or video seems to be “not quite right” for its pro-China narrative, then there is a very good chance that it is indeed fake!

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/beijings-political-warfare-campaigns-exploit-social-media_4173398.html

The Ethical Risks of China's 'Brain Control' Tech



A University of Florida student uses a brain-controlled interface headset to fly a drone during a mind-controlled drone race in Gainesville, Fla., on April 16, 2016. (Jason Dearen/AP Photo)

The Ethical Risks of China's 'Brain Control' Tech

China's military is researching implantable machine-brain interfaces that could be used for brainwashing

Anders Corr

December 23, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis

The U.S. government recently accused China of developing “brain-control weaponry,” a type of technology that raises major ethical issues when adopted by a totalitarian, genocidal, and territorially aggressive regime.

The U.S. accusation, reported by the Financial Times, was part of the export blacklisting of China’s Academy of Military Medical Sciences, along with 11 affiliated biotechnology research institutes, for allegedly assisting the Chinese military in development of the weapons.

The Academy has reportedly researched “brain-machine interface” or “brain-computer interface” technologies, known as BCI, including through implantation of electrodes into the brains of live monkeys like macaques.

According to Elsa Kania in a 2020 National Defense University publication, “researchers at the Academy of Military Medical Sciences are using macaques to examine techniques for brain-machine interfaces that involve the implantation of electrodes in the brain.”

The U.S. Commerce Department blacklisted the Academy and affiliated research institutes on Dec. 16.

According to U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, “China is choosing to use these technologies to pursue control over its people and its repression of members of ethnic and religious minority groups.”

The Financial Times quoted a senior U.S. official saying that China used new biotechnologies to attempt military applications of the future that include “gene editing, human performance enhancement [and] brain machine interfaces.”

Chinese companies that use drone, facial recognition, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and cloud supercomputing for surveillance in the Xinjiang region of China are also on the new U.S. blacklists, including those of the Treasury Department.

Major U.S. investors—including Accel, Kleiner Perkins, GGV Capital, Glade Brook Capital Partners, Qualcomm Ventures, Silver Lake, and Tiger Global Management—according to the Financial Times, will be required to liquidate investments in blacklisted companies.

U.S. companies that research BCI technology are also linked to China.

Blackrock Neurotech, associated with Palantir's Peter Thiel, and Elon Musk's Neuralink are two leading U.S. companies seeking to advance BCI technology. Neurotech got \$10 million of investment backing in May, and claims to have already implanted 28 devices in American, Chinese, and European patients.

Neuralink has experimented with a macaque monkey named "Pager" who plays Pong on the computer using his mind, in exchange for drops of banana smoothie delivered through a steel tube. The company made a video of the "Monkey MindPong" experiment, which is available to the public.

Musk's fortune is tied to Tesla Inc., which is dependent upon manufacturing and revenues from China. Tesla built over 133,000 vehicles in China in the third quarter of 2021. The company has garnered approximately \$3 billion in quarterly revenues from China since the fourth quarter of 2020.

While China is behind on BCI technologies, Beijing has a stated goal of "dominating" biotechnology and artificial intelligence technology development globally. Toward this end, Beijing in approximately February banned the export of research primates, which are critical to the advancement of BCI science.

According to Slate magazine in November, "control of the primate research market lends itself to China's quest for technology transfer, as foreign entities who wish to do experiments with Chinese primates will have to ship their technology and expertise to China. Institutions and companies on the cutting edge will effectively be teaching China how to close the innovation gap."

The CCP's 'Brainwashing' of Uyghurs and Falun Gong

The Chinese military's brain control research is particularly concerning given its history of genocide and brainwashing of minority populations.

U.S. and other governments have recognized that a genocide, according to the U.N. definition, is ongoing against the Uyghur minority in China. Genocides are also arguably ongoing against Falun Gong adherents and Tibetans.

The Beijing regime has detained over 1 million in “reeducation” detention facilities in an attempt to remake its religious and ethnic minorities into “good” communists, according to researchers and U.S. government officials. The latter have estimated as many as 1 to 3 million Uyghurs in reeducation camps over the past several years, though academic opinion has settled on a number between 1 and 2 million.

Dr. Adrian Zenz, one of the most prominent researchers of the Uyghur genocide, has analyzed evidence from CCP sources that Uyghurs undergo “brainwashing” at the reeducation camps.



Buildings at the Artux City Vocational Skills Education Training Service Center, believed to be a re-education camp where mostly Muslim ethnic minorities are detained, north of Kashgar in China’s northwestern Xinjiang region, on June 2, 2019. (Greg Baker/AFP via Getty Images)

According to Zenz in a peer-reviewed 2019 paper, “Vocational Training Internment Camps” engage in forced labor. He has documented Chinese regime statements that claim to “wash clean the brains’ of those interned in them.” Zenz stated, “Those subjected to such coerced brainwashing are referred to as ‘re-education persons’—the same term used for detained Falun Gong practitioners.”

Zenz obtained a classified Chinese document that “states that detainees who show signs of resistance are to be subjected to ‘assault-style re-education’ efforts.”

A 2017 work report from Xinyuan County’s justice bureau “puts this in ... drastic terms,” according to Zenz. “Under the heading ‘centralized transformation through education work,’ the report states that re-education work must ‘wash brains, cleanse hearts, support the right, [and] remove the evil’ (xinao jingxin fuzheng quxie 洗脑净心扶正祛邪),” Zenz noted.

A London-based tribunal found on Dec. 10 that CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping is directly responsible for the Uyghur genocide.

The Ethical Risks of ‘Brain Control’ Technologies

The combination of the Chinese military’s research into “brain control” and the regime’s genocidal “brainwashing” should be taken more seriously by ethicists and government officials in the United States, Europe, and among Asian allies.

According to bioethicists Marcello Ienca (University of Basel in Switzerland) and Pim Haselager (Radboud University Nijmegen in the Netherlands), brain-control interfaces can be used to “hack the brain” in a way that violates the individual’s privacy and agency. Ienca is currently at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne.

BCIs provide a brain-machine interface, either through direct implantation of electrodes in brain tissue, or through more temporary wearable technology that keeps the electrodes outside the intact skull, according to the Ienca-Haselager paper, which is peer-reviewed and appeared in the April 2016 issue of *Ethics and Information Technology*.

BCI is designed to assist patients who suffer from neurological diseases that impair sensory-motor functions. BCIs can help them, for example, communicate to a robotic arm that provides the patient with increased control of their environment.

BCIs are also being researched by the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) for military applications, such as more rapid and efficient human operational control over a fighter drone.

But Ienca and Haselager cautioned in the paper, “Hacking the brain: brain–computer interfacing technology and the ethics of neurosecurity,” that the ethical risks of BCI technologies are underexplored relative to their rapid development.

“Neurocrime” and “brain-hacking,” the researchers argued, including “illicit access to and manipulation of neural information and computation,” are a major risk to the individual’s “neurosecurity” such as individual privacy and agency.

At risk are the most basic qualities of individuality, including consciousness, volition, perception, thinking, self-identification, judgment, language, and memory. Ienca and Haselager argued that “misusing neural devices for cybercriminal purposes may not only threaten the physical security of the users but also influence their behavior and alter their self-identification as persons.”

Ienca and Haselager identified not only BCIs as “particularly critical” given the potentiality of neurocrime and the function of BCIs for “reading of brain activity,” but also devices known as “neural stimulators.” This latter category of machine-brain interface includes devices for “deep brain stimulation (DBS) and transcranial direct-current stimulators (tDCS).”

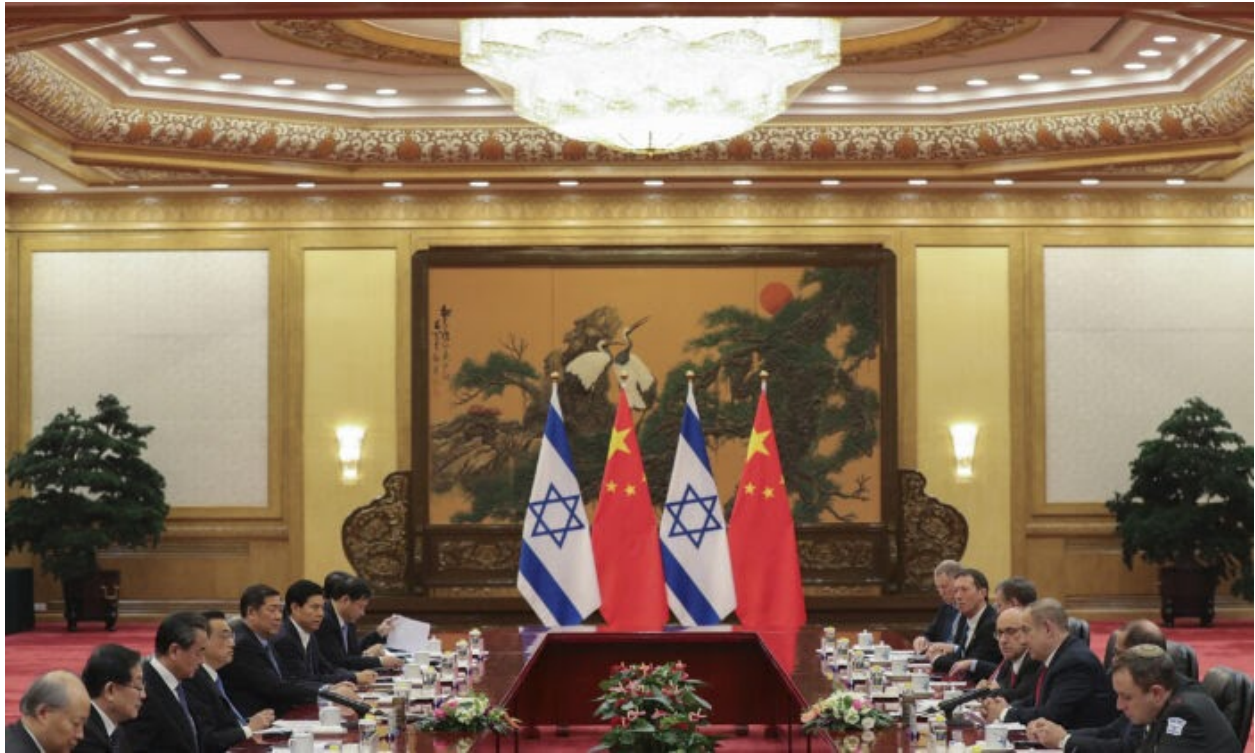
Ienca and Haselager rightly highlighted the risks of brain readers and stimulators, and argued that “ethical safeguards against these risks should be considered early in design and regulation.”

Ethical safeguards, regulation, and emerging international law will be particularly the case as Beijing disregards ethical standards in its attempt to increase its control of the individual within the expanding boundaries of what the CCP considers to be “Greater China.”

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/the-ethical-risks-of-chinas-brain-control-tech_4167051.html

How Israel, a Close Ally of the US, Became a Close Ally of China



Chinese Premier Li Keqiang (4th-L) meets with Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (3rd-R) at the Great Hall of the People on in Beijing, China, on March 20, 2017. (Lintao Zhang/Pool/Getty Images)

How Israel, a Close Ally of the US, Became a Close Ally of China

John Mac Ghlionn

December 27, 2021

Epoch Times Commentary

The United States and Israel appear to be close allies. However, things aren't always as they seem. As Israel cozies up to China, that once "unbreakable bond" between the United States and Israel looks increasingly fragile.

In 1948, the United States became the first country to officially recognize the new State of Israel; seven decades on, the Trump administration made history by recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. According to the U.S. Department of State, "Israel has no greater friend than the United States." The two countries' unbreakable bond "has never been stronger," or so we're told.

Can Beijing sever the bond once and for all?

In a speech, delivered in 2017, Benjamin Netanyahu, then the most important man in Israel, waxed lyrical about a "marriage made in heaven." The politician was not speaking about his wife, nor was he speaking about the United States. He was speaking about Israel's marriage to China. A marriage of convenience rather than love, no doubt. A marriage nonetheless.

Xi Jinping also has as a soft spot for Israel and Isaac Herzog, the country's president. Xi recently invited Herzog to visit Beijing next year, to mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of normal diplomatic ties between the two countries. The marriage, it appears, is growing stronger by the day.

According to research published by the RAND corporation, an American think tank, since 2000, China and Israel have started to form stronger relations. From diplomacy to trade, infrastructure to research, China continues to invest heavily in Israel. Chinese tourists now flock to Israel in record numbers, according to the BBC.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP), however, is not really interested in seeing the sights; it's far more interested in seeing the science. More specifically, it's interested in seeing Israel's advanced technology, as the RAND paper revealed.



Chinese Vice Chair Wang Qishan during his tour with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of the Israeli Innovation Summit in Jerusalem on Oct. 24, 2018. (Ariel Schalit/AFP/Getty Images)

Why is Israel interested in China? Again, according to RAND, this interest stems from the Israeli government's desire to "expand its diplomatic and economic ties with the world's fastest growing major economy." Israel's leaders wish to diversify the country's "export markets and investments," even though China firmly supports Iran, a country that would love nothing more than to see Israel wiped off the face of the planet.

Earlier this year, Beijing signed a 25-year strategic agreement with Tehran. How can a friend of Iran also be a friend of Israel? Then again, how can a friend of the United States (Israel) be a friend of China?

The second question can be answered with one word: money. Today, the bilateral trade relationship between Beijing and Jerusalem is worth \$10 billion. Twenty-eight years ago, it was worth just \$50 million.

All Eyes on Technology

The quickly developing field of quantum computing, according to tech experts, will have “far-reaching” and potentially “disruptive” influences. In the United States, there are genuine fears that the CCP will use quantum technology to steal sensitive data from its citizens as well as various branches of government.

It will come as little surprise, then, to find out that Israel, China’s new best friend, is one of the leaders in quantum tech.

According to a recent Bloomberg Innovation Index, Israel, a country with the same population as New York City, is now the seventh most innovative nation in the world. The United States, it’s important to note, is no longer in the top 10. In Silicon Wadi, Israel’s version of Silicon Valley, more than 5,000 different companies can be found, many of them dedicated to all things tech. Of the 18 countries in the Middle East, Israel boasts the largest number of start-ups per capita. A number of these start-ups carry out research in the areas of artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and quantum computing—a fact that is not lost on the CCP.

Since 2019, according to a recent Physics Today report, the number of Israeli firms working in quantum tech has “surged from 5 to 30,” with the “Israeli army, air force, and intelligence community” forming the “backbone” of the burgeoning industry.

As the Rand report warned, the CCP’s investment in Israeli technology “could lead to leaks of sensitive technology and cyberespionage.”

Don’t be surprised if the CCP uses Israel’s quantum knowledge to attack its American foes. After all, Israeli spyware has already been used to target U.S. officials, and Beijing appears to have Jerusalem in its proverbial back pocket.

As Neville Teller, an expert on Middle Eastern politics, recently wrote, the question for the Israeli government “is how far it should go in embracing China as a business partner, given American suspicions about China’s true motives. Are all such Chinese investments pieces in a vast jigsaw designed to secure China’s unassailable political and economic global supremacy?”

The answer to that question, Mr Teller, is a resounding yes.

Israel, a country that acts as a bridge between three different continents—Asia, Africa, and Europe—appears to be a key component in Beijing’s plans for world domination.

One imagines that the CCP won't stop until it destroys that "unbreakable bond" between Israel and the United States. Will it succeed? Only time will tell.

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.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/how-israel-a-close-ally-of-the-us-became-a-close-ally-of-china_4173534.html

The CCP's \$275 Billion Deal with Apple and the Road to Global Tyranny

Anders Corr on Communist China's Reported \$275 Billion Deal with Apple and the Road to Global Tyranny

American Thought Leaders

JAN JEKIELEK

Whether it's academia, our politics, our economics—people are being compromised.”

In this episode, we sit down with Anders Corr, publisher of the Journal of Political Risk, columnist for The Epoch Times, and author of the book, “The Concentration of Power.” We discuss the Chinese Communist Party's alleged \$275 billion secret deal with Apple in 2016, and growing threats of global tyranny.

Jan Jekielek: Anders Corr, such a pleasure to have you back on American Thought Leaders.

Mr. Corr: Thank you.

Mr. Jekielek: Anders, it's been a while since we've talked and since you talked on camera. You've actually become quite a prolific columnist. It's actually quite amazing. Every day, every couple of days I see a new article. And you wrote a really fascinating column on essentially Apple's gift to the Chinese regime presumably, to allow it to function within China's borders and continue functioning. Anyway, tell me a little bit about this reality.

Mr. Corr: Apple apparently had a secret agreement a couple of years ago with the Chinese Communist Party to give them about \$275 billion. It seems like that in terms of forced technology transfer, development costs and maybe some other stuff, it wasn't exactly clear from the reporting, but it's a significant sum of money. It seems to have

been coerced. Right beforehand, China was not allowing certain things to be on the app store. So it does seem like a textbook example of forced technology transfer.

Also before they gave that, to sweeten the negotiations that appeared a few days before they gave that, they put a \$1 billion investment into DiDi. That was questionable too. It was the ride hailing app in China that was in direct competition with Uber. And it was at a time when Uber and DiDi were competing for market share in China. So it was an American company stepping in to support a Chinese company that was in competition with an American company.

And you can see how the Chinese Communist Party is using its power to warp the strategic and tactical abilities and approach that American companies take, that American politicians take, that academics take. It's quite remarkable that the Chinese Communist Party can do this so effectively without more pushback from higher levels of our government, our businessmen, our businesspeople. It's very concerning.

Mr. Jekielek: Okay. And this of course speaks to exactly the topic of your book. So how is it that China or the Chinese regime has this leverage? That they can do something like this without it even really being known for a number of years?

Mr. Corr: The CCP has an incredible concentration of power really in Beijing. And not only the CCP, but Xi Jinping himself, as "Emperor For Life," as they say, has more power, arguably than any other single individual on planet earth. And that makes him a very dangerous person, especially given that he is clearly looking for more power, whether it's personal power over the Chinese people or power over neighboring nations. Not only neighboring nations, but power in deep sea, power in Brussels, London and Paris. He's affecting and influencing our top leadership globally. And we really need to be concerned about that.

[Narration]: Our team reached out to Apple, but they did not immediately respond.

Mr. Jekielek: Let's go to this question, because you were talking about the concentration of power. So even 10 years ago, probably, I don't know this for sure, but probably the Chinese Communist Party could not have pulled this off with Apple. Apple was certainly not in China in the way it is, but so maybe this... I'm already answering some of the question, but how did the CCP get this leverage? Chart it out from me over time.

Mr. Corr: Let's go all the way back to the 1930s and the 1920s. 1921, when the CCP was founded, it was a very small party in China. They were able to grow through

bringing in workers, peasants essentially. In the 1930s, they took their first piece of territory. They were supported by Stalin for that. They had the Great March back. They waited out World War II; most of World War II as the nationalists were fighting the Japanese. And then they came in at the end and essentially mopped things up and took over.

Now when they took over China, they had control of one of the biggest raw markets in terms of the number of people that the world has. And the power of that is hard to explain. But even back then in 1949, the British, the Americans, they were all trying to get into this market and to maintain the market share that they had because everyone had business in China already. They knew that to maintain that power or to maintain that market access, they needed the acceptance of the Chinese Communist Party.

So all the way back in the forties, in the fifties, we were actually competing with the British. We were competing with other countries to maintain market share. That has continued over the years. In the seventies, we opened up to China. We were hoping that we would liberalize China through more economic engagement. We should have known that we have been engaging with China economically for years and it did not work to liberalize the CCP. We should have known then.

We really should have known in 1989 at the Tiananmen Square Massacre, that things weren't working. Our strategy of engagement of China simply did not work to liberalize the country politically. Finally, in about 2008 when we had our recession, I think China really decided, or the leadership in China decided, that it was time to take a more forward presence. They could argue that we were weak, that capitalism was weak, that democracy was weak. You really saw a change, especially with Xi Jinping coming in around 2012, you really saw a change to a much more aggressive approach.

Biding time was a thing of the past at that point and China moved forward, Xi Jinping moved forward to expand on his power and start claiming that democracy, capitalism, market approaches to economics, were a thing of the past.

That is now where we are. And as China's economic growth has skyrocketed, their military power is skyrocketing. And at this point they're building more Navy ships than we are annually. And they're building hypersonics, they're building drones, artificial intelligence. In some areas, supercomputing they're actually ahead of the United States in terms of their technological capabilities. So, it's an incredibly dangerous time. And I feel like we haven't, as a nation, really woken up to the threat that the CCP in Beijing provides for us as a nation.

Mr. Jekielek: It's remarkable to see, to chart the rise of the Chinese regime and the power that it holds today. To me, this was fueled by the U.S. economy, from everything I understand. The level at which, for example, Apple is dependent on the Chinese regime itself and to be in its good graces, that is remarkable as the world's largest, or close to being the world's largest company, bigger than most bigger economy than most countries. Yet essentially subservient.

Mr. Corr: I think so. It's subservient because it has to have access to that market. Beijing acts as a gatekeeper to that massive quantity of 1.4 billion people that Apple wants to access. They want those people to buy phones. They want those people to provide inexpensive labor, which is getting more expensive, but they want the polysilicon that they can get from the Xinjiang region of China. China is a massive economy. It's something like 20 percent of the world's economy or something at this point.

So that's a lot of power for Xi Jinping to have, whereas the U.S. president doesn't have that kind of power. We, as an open system, as a market economy, we prefer freedom. We prefer to allow our corporations and our people to engage freely with people on the outside. But because we have so much freedom in a sense, our government doesn't have quite as much power as Xi Jinping has, when he can decide to turn off or turn on the App Store for Apple. So they have quite a bit of power that Apple needs.

Mr. Jekielek: They also have the other side, right? You spoke to a little bit, the supply chain, some of the source components, some of the source minerals. But also, they produce those phones there. If the regime decided to look badly at Apple suddenly, what would happen to Apple sales globally? It would crater, wouldn't it? It's astounding when you think about that.

Mr. Corr: And it's not only that 275 billion. China can ask Tim Cook to have influence on our government back in DC, which is free for Tim Cook. Tim Cook can come and he can talk to Trump, he can talk to Biden, and he can say, "Listen, we need a peaceful relationship with China. I don't want you to make too big a deal about human rights abuse in China, because that might hurt my business. If it hurts my business, it hurts my shareholders and it's bad for you."

So it's the influence that Beijing has over American politics through our corporations, is actually quite similar to the influence that Beijing has in other countries. Whether it's Uganda or the Philippines, they wield quite a bit of power through being able to turn on and turn off imports and exports from between China and all other countries in the

world. And they use it in a way that we don't. And that gives them this tremendous power.

Mr. Jekielek: You also started speaking to this that also there's maybe the most disturbing power, which is the ability to have us subvert our values, or I guess, not prioritize their values so highly as maybe we should.

Mr. Corr: Absolutely. We have our values, whether it's democracy, human rights, freedom of speech. And we also have our greed. Sometimes we put our greed ahead of our values as Americans. And you can see that quite frequently, whether it's Ray Dalio or Schwarzman or many of the billionaires who are doing business in China. And specifically, they say quite right outright that they can't look at the human rights issues. They can't look at the governance issues. They're not experts in this. They leave that to government.

And actually that is the cue for government to step in and say, "Okay, well, it's the government's responsibility to ensure that American companies are doing the right thing, globally, that other companies globally, Europeans, the EU, Germany, France, Britain these countries need to make sure and coordinate their approach and their strategy to China so that they make sure that our corporations are not selling out democracy when they're doing business in China."

Mr. Jekielek: That doesn't look very promising to me right now, Anders, from where I sit.

Mr. Corr: We're certainly not doing enough. The SEC is not doing enough, for example, in enforcing Chinese companies that list in the United States to provide the same level of data that American companies have to provide. This gives the Chinese companies an advantage. They can do things that American companies can't do. And it puts our shareholders, our investors, and investors globally at huge risk because they're putting money, they're dumping money into companies that aren't required to disclose all the facts that they should be disclosing.

Mr. Jekielek: We know of multiple examples of pretty massive fraud because of this lack of disclosure, which of course, the Chinese communist party leverages all the time. I want to talk a little bit about this just briefly, about the moral equivalency we heard from Mr. Dalio. Talking about human rights in China, we have our own human rights problems here in the U.S. What do you think about that?

Mr. Corr: They just don't compare. You can't compare a triple genocide in China of the Uighurs, Tibetans, and Falun Gong, to what's going on in the United States. Of course, every country can be better than it is. Every democracy can have a better human rights record. But to compare the two is a total whitewash of China and a slander on the United States. It's absolutely wrong to say that.

Mr. Jekielek: Do you think that people that say such things, because there are many people that do, do they believe that?

Mr. Corr: Maybe he thinks he's going to get a better deal for his investments in China. I think that as a billionaire doing business in China, if you prove to China that you are on the Chinese Communist Party side, whether it's by saying the right things about China, not saying the wrong things about Taiwan, donating \$275 billion in a secret agreement to tech transfers to China, if you prove that, maybe they give you a better deal.

Maybe they give you a better deal in a short term that maximizes your short-term revenues, increases your bonus as a CEO, but sells out shareholders down the road. It's a very dangerous position to put your shareholders into because they don't really know why you're giving that 275 billion if it's a secret agreement.

Mr. Jekielek: I found reading your book, frankly, a bit disturbing. You postulate a whole expansive theory of how power accumulates in societies over time. It's absolutely fascinating to me. The really disturbing part is that you argue that the process really only goes in one direction; towards increased accumulation of power and the logical conclusion of that of course is the single global government hegemon, I think, as you describe in the book. And that your expectation on the current course is that that will be the very illiberal Chinese communist regime. And of course, it's not pleasant to read such things, knowing the realities that you just mentioned.

Mr. Corr: Right. It certainly could be the CCP that comes out on top at the end of history. Fukuyama said that in the nineties, he believed we had achieved the end of history. It was democratic, it was liberal, small L. And then later he said, when that was clearly not the case when the rise of Xi Jinping, the rise of Putin in a dictatorial manner made that clear that it wasn't the case.

He said, "Oh, maybe we haven't reached the end of history. Maybe we have an illiberal end of history." So, I take that a bit further. I say, I think that the end of history is likely to be illiberal. I discuss some of the causal mechanisms that get us there and I liken it to ratchet. It tends to go in one direction. It tends to go towards the concentration of power, and it tends to...

So, on a geographic level, the first way that I noticed it was geographically. Over history, thousands of years ago, tribes and clans would aggregate into larger units. Kingdoms would aggregate into states. States became empires and really big alliance systems, like NATO or the Warsaw Pact in the Old Soviet Union. So, these are growing aggregations of power and there's a centralization of power that happens in the process over these thousands of years. But that's not the only way that power concentrates.

We also see that over time, the state through its improving technologies, its ability to surveil people more effectively, are able to control our individual lives in increasingly powerful ways; in ways that on one hand, as we discussed, security is improved. We're less likely to get mugged when I'm walking down the street. But at the same time we lose our privacy. That's just one example.

But in general, there is this concentration of power, and you really see it in China with the growth of geographical power of Beijing. From the second century, when you had the BC, when you had the war states period in China to today, you had a process, an aggregation of power in Beijing as a centralized state, but that state is now expanding its influence and power on a global level.

The Chinese communist party as Rush Doshi has written in his book, "The Long Game," has a goal of global hegemony. It has a goal of controlling the entire planet. This is an accepted truth now in academia. It's Oxford University Press. Rush Doshi works for Biden now in the administration. So this is already accepted.

It's a process I think that we have to look at and a historical trend that we have to look at that requires a very active approach to make sure that we don't get there. And we're not doing that today. And that's part of why I wrote the book; it's because we need to take a more active approach and defending the liberties that we have now and defending the sovereignties that we have, the national sovereignties that we have, from aggregation into these really powerful supernational units that do endanger them in the long term.

Mr. Jekielek: It's interesting talking about these supernational units. There's a whole bunch of them that exists out there right now. Of course, there's the UN, which many people are actually describing as being heavily co-opted by China. There's certainly, that definitely has huge control over a number of the agencies. And we saw during the pandemic of influence on the WHO for example, a very pivotal UN body. So that's one thing.

Then we have places like hyper concentrations of wealth, like at Davos, the world economic forum. There's another power center. Some people who say that this is the

most powerful power center of all. I don't know if that's sure or not. Certainly, it's a discussion of whether it's in Beijing or not. For you, it might be obvious. I don't know. I don't know if it is to everybody. But yes. There's potentially vying for different, massive concentrations of power and wealth that will vie with each other for supremacy. Was that what you see?

Mr. Corr: Absolutely. There's definitely a competition between these supernational entities. So, for example, in the Cold War, you had NATO going up against the Warsaw Pact. And you needed a strong NATO to be able to defend democracy in Europe, in the United States, and really the rest of the world from the Soviet Empire and the growth of the Soviet Empire. So, the supernational entities aren't always bad. Sometimes when they're developed by democracies for the protection of democracies, they're actually quite important.

But at the same time, they are still an aggregation of power and they are part of the process of aggregation of power over time. And there is the risk; there's always the risk that they will be taken over by some illiberal unit at some point in the future. And we have seen in history, adverse regime changes from democracies to dictatorships. For example, Mussolini or Hitler, where you had a democratic structure beneath that was taken advantage of by an autocrat, by someone who was totalitarian minded.

Mr. Jekielek: Or Chavez, for a more recent example. I even think that today there's a lot of people that don't realize how quickly and how dramatically Venezuela transformed from an affluent free democratic country to the Maduro Diet, as it's called, state now.

Mr. Corr: Right. Nicaragua, recently. The revolution in Nicaragua that turned it communist, but now more recently, they've just gone over to Beijing's camp. They're going to recognize Beijing instead of Taiwan. So this is happening country after country. Taiwan is losing all of its allies because Beijing's economic power is becoming so powerful that they're able to influence capital city after capital city to remove any diplomatic recognition of Taiwan.

Mr. Jekielek: Someone might be reading the "Concentration of Power" and think to themselves, "Well, Anders, this is a foregone conclusion. It's just going to ratchet up to this global hegemon and there's nothing we can do." I actually think you make a pretty convincing case about the trajectory.

Mr. Corr: Well, I think that there is a trajectory and I think there are institutions that we can put in place to try to preserve the diversity, the disaggregation of power that we have now. So for example, the U.S. Constitution, the division of powers between the

three branches of government is very important in terms of maintaining our democracy. Maintaining our freedoms. Ensuring that nobody becomes an “Emperor for Life,” like Xi Jinping.

Sunset clauses in laws where sometimes we decide it’s an emergency, we have to give more power to the president to deal with this emergency. We do that, but we include in that law sunset clause, so that in three years the president automatically loses that power. Those things are very important. They’re part of the institutional fabric that maintains our freedoms indefinitely into the future. The U.S. constitution, absolutely one of the most important documents to maintain freedom, to ensure that power in the United States doesn’t continue to ratchet up into some kind of king. We were very, very cognizant of the danger at that time of the aggregation of power.

Mr. Jekielek: In America right now, there’s people deeply concerned that those checks and balances are under assault for precisely the reason we’ve been talking about, because there’s always that interest. Is it human nature? What is it that drives this, this concentration of power that you describe?

Mr. Corr: Very simply, I would call it greed. I think avarice greed is driving people to seek ever more power individually. They use the institutions that are out there, the hierarchies that are out there, to expand their own power. They are able to maintain and ensure that the aggregations of power that are there in terms of hierarchies do not break apart because they’re using those hierarchies to incentivize and disincentivize the people within the hierarchies, not to leave the hierarchy in some way, not to revolt and leave.

So that over time leads to an aggregation within the hierarchy—hierarchies then also are in conflict with other hierarchies. They take each other over, that leads to an aggregation of power. And then hierarchies sometimes, because they’re trying to defend themselves from yet other hierarchies, they voluntarily aggregate with each other in order to defend themselves from outside processes. This is often called state building—empire building. There are many ways to aggregate power. There are very few ways to disaggregate.

Mr. Jekielek: One of the really fascinating concepts that you outline in “The Concentration of Power” is this idea of a hierarchy that’s leaderless, so to speak. Maybe it’s not exactly leaderless, but there isn’t one person out there pulling all the strings.

And frankly, even in China, Chairman Xi is accountable to some extent to these giant billionaire families that it’s essentially as we know, a mafia-like system there. So he

doesn't have complete control. But it struck me as something that might resemble the type of leadership structure that's developing frankly, in the free world. Leaderless concentration power. Tell me about this. This is very, very, very interesting. I'm just starting to think about it, frankly.

Mr. Corr: The idea is that shareholders are supposedly the leaders of corporations; CEOs are the leaders of corporations. But as you said, these top leaders have their own things that they're following. They're following their families. Each person is following someone else. So even a U.S. president for example, is following voters. As you said, Xi Jinping is following billionaires and other power holders; military power holders in China. So there's a leaderless quality to the international system and the hierarchies that make up the international system.

And what's concerning about it in a way, is that as power aggregates, the leaders become disjointed from any sense of competition with other hierarchies. So they end up being able to do things that are entirely arbitrary—ethically without anchor. So you get leaders that are making decisions based, for example, on aesthetics. In China, it's disturbing that the Chinese Communist Party is so stuck on not only its political ideology, but its racial ideology. It's Han Chinese racism really, against Uighurs, against Tibetans. It's bigotry against other religions. And I say other religions because in a way communism is like a religion.

But it's bigotry against Falun Gong or Christians or Tibetan religions. It is this totalizing, aesthetic, homogenizing approach to politics and culture. I think there is an arbitrary aesthetic quality to it that's disturbing. And they're only able to do that because there's starting to be no competitors for the Chinese Communist Party within China. But also increasingly outside of China, corporations, other governments are starting to fall into line with what the Chinese Communist Party wants them to do in a way that really should concern us.

We should be resisting more. We should be seeing more evidence of resistance against the CCP that we're just not seeing. The G7, the world's wealthiest countries recently met. They couldn't agree even on a diplomatic boycott of the Olympic Games, when there's three genocides going on in China. How is that possible? Japan, Italy, Germany, France; they couldn't agree to a clear, clear diplomatic boycott.

Mr. Jekielek: So this is what I was saying, Anders, that it doesn't look very promising from where I sit. It's this economic part of it. You put it well that greed is obviously a very central element here, but this economic connections which have been created between all the countries that you just mentioned and the Chinese regime and all of its tools of

influence and one belt, one road initiative across to entrench some of these debt trap diplomacy in some of the poorer countries. Altogether, it creates a pretty dire picture.

Mr. Corr: It is. It is a dire picture. If we recognize the dire picture, if we see it for what it is and stop ignoring it, I think we might have a chance to stop further aggregation of power. And that's critical. We might have a chance to stop CCP hegemony globally, but we really have to recognize it. We have to understand it to do something about it.

Mr. Jekielek: What is it in your mind that really needs to be understood to be able to tackle this?

Mr. Corr: Right now, the 10-meter threat is China. China is influencing Russia, it's influencing North Korea, it's influencing Iran terrorism. There's a very strong argument by Teng Biao and Terry Marsh, who've written that according to U.S. law, if you really apply U.S. law in a rigorous way, the CCP is a terrorist organization. We have to recognize that. We have to see the CCP for what it is, to really understand that we can't allow our corporations to just do business with the CCP willy nilly because that will turn them into terrorist organizations.

It sounds extreme, but the reality is that we have an organization that is truly like a mafia organization or a terrorist organization. They're involved in the UN. They're paying off presidents around the world. They're influencing people at very, very high levels. Hunter Biden got a three-karat diamond from people linked to this. We have to realize there is a problem and we need to take action to exclude terrorists, to exclude mafia people, to exclude the CCP from our highest decision makers. We have not done that as a nation and definitely in other countries, they're even worse off.

Mr. Jekielek: So to the viewers right now, because I know my viewers somewhat, and frankly myself, I'm thinking who is going to do this? Because a lot of the people who you might expect normally would be playing ball or at least to some extent. People have multiple motivations, but as you've been outlining, the CCP has created a lot of leverage over all sorts of people and sorts of myriadic ways. It's been its project for decades. I think you make a compelling argument, but who's actually going to do this?

Mr. Corr: The citizens. Citizens have to demand that corruption in Washington DC and Brussels, in London... and sometimes it's legalized corruption; those avenues of influence must be shut off. We cannot allow the children of our presidents to go do business in China and get at three-karat diamonds from CCP linked individuals. Jon Carey's son was in business with Hunter Biden related to China. It creates a massive

conflict of interest that we just can't allow as citizens. We cannot delegate leadership to people who have a conflict of interest on the China issue.

Mr. Jekielek: Yes, but that leaves almost no one at this point.

Mr. Corr: We need new laws. We need stronger laws. We need to enforce existing laws. Some laws aren't even enforced for years. The Foreign Agent Registration Act was not enforced. They had no investigators to actually find out who was actually breaking the law. It's full of loopholes. It needs to be revised and revamped and strengthened. But that won't happen until regular American citizens get out onto the streets and start protesting against corruption that is happening, whether it's academia, our politics, our economics. People are being compromised. The Harvard Chemist!

Mr. Jekielek: As we speak, the trial has just begun or should have begun, of Charles Lieber, one of the world leading experts in nanotechnology. Basically, the indictment says that he was taking something like \$50,000 a month from the Chinese Communist Party, and had an off-the-books lab that was created in China that he oversaw. He's being tried for not disclosing these things.

There're even some people today, and I was reading an article about this just before we sat down, that are wondering whether that was actually problematic. Is that really a problem? Why not have these good cooperative relationships? This is what someone was writing in an ostensibly respectable publication. So, I agree with many of the things you're saying. It doesn't make one filled with confidence and hope necessarily that this is actually going to be resolved.

Mr. Corr: Yes. There is a pessimistic tinge to the book. The last chapter talks about protecting our diversity, protecting the disaggregation of power. Actually, capitalism is part of that. We have many people who have their own property. When people own a company or they own a home, they have an independence from the massive hierarchies in society that you would never get in China.

So these small forms of independence that we have are critically important to the maintenance of freedom, to the maintenance of religious freedom, to the freedom of property, to the Second Amendment. All these things are a disaggregation of power that are being chipped away over time and will continue to be chipped away if we don't take a more serious approach to this. And we have to hold our leaders accountable.

Part of the problem too is partisanship. We tend to stick to one party. We start to think that party's going to be perfect, and we start to not be critical of that party when it also,

in certain ways, is compromised. All our political parties are beholden to billionaires, large corporations that are doing business in China. And all of those corporations and billionaires are putting pressure on our elected leaders of both parties to go easy on China's human rights abuse, to go easy when China claims to own the whole South China Sea, when China says openly, they're planning to invade Taiwan.

Mr. Jekielek: It's really interesting that you say this because looking at what's happened in most liberal democracies, not all, there's some really stark exceptions, is a massive aggregation of power as a result of COVID policy or CCP Virus Policy actually, as we call it at The Epoch Times. That's unmistakable—unquestionable.

To me, as I was reading, I was thinking, "Man, that ratchet really got a big swing up during this time." You were talking about the small businesses decimated at many, many levels. What are your thoughts about this? I think Sweden would be an exception. There are some U.S. states that are an exception. But I don't know if too many other places that are, frankly, an exception to this.

Mr. Corr: Yes, we got locked down, we accepted it. You know, it's definitely part of this aggregation of power by the state. In the past, we've had pandemics and you did not have this level of individual control by the state. This is new.

Mr. Jekielek: Is this another way that the CCP has influenced us?

Mr. Corr: Well, the virus certainly started in China and the CCP was pushing very, very draconian lockdown measures as the proper response. And I think actually the most draconian measures are there in China.

Mr. Jekielek: Oh no, unquestionably. But look at the great results they got. Only something like 4,000 dead. It's incredible. I don't want to be glib about this, but of course I hope most people don't believe those numbers.

We have seen, as we've just discussed, this aggregation of power in all ways. It's been, I think, transparent to most people that maybe didn't think about such things very much, but it's been very obvious, and it's been in many areas of society. It's been in many countries, at many levels. This last chapter in your book is about how to disaggregate. Tell me about how this can actually happen. Of course, you said the citizens, but what are the citizens going to do here?

Mr. Corr: The preservation, I think, of our freedoms that we still have, because I think a lot of freedoms are gone already, but what we still have has to be preserved. There's no one that will do this other than the citizens, because everyone high up in the hierarchy tends to be compromised in one way or the other.

Most recently, social media clamped down on the defunding of alternate voices—The Epoch Times is one of them. NTD, China Uncensored, all of these critical voices of China, which is what I watch, are being defunded. How can you operate? How can you get your message out if you've got absolutely nothing to spend?

I was on a show recently that was defunded by YouTube. They didn't have any money for a cameraman. So, one of the presenters had to move back and forth and fix the camera. And then the result of course, is something that doesn't look quite as professional as Bloomberg or quite as professional as CNN. So there's this bias that's being introduced in the media. That is absolutely part of this concentration of power.

If you go against the narrative, if you go against the CCP, which is where all the power is aggregating, you're defunded. You're delegitimized.

Mr. Jekielek: You already suggested the answer. So you go to the citizens, that's what we've done at The Epoch Times, of course, and we're so grateful for the many citizens who buy subscriptions or support us in other ways. It's the only way it works. So that's interesting that you say that.

Mr. Corr: Yes, Trump is starting his own social media, which is absolutely the right thing to do. If Twitter removes you and your millions of followers, how wrong is that? How wrong is that? Especially to a sitting president. It's unprecedented that a big corporation like that would, and something that's supposed to be a democratization of information. The internet was supposed to be a democratization of information where we could all have a voice. And those voices that were popular would rise up. That's what happened with Trump. And then the corporation comes down and knocks him down. So, we'll see. We'll see if Trump is successful in his new social media outfit, we have hope. If he's not successful, it's trouble.

Mr. Jekielek: We have hope because you feel it's going to be a democratizing force, basically. A disaggregating force.

Mr. Corr: It's a disaggregating force. You're taking power from Twitter, from Facebook, the biggest corporations, the biggest social media corporations that are trying to influence and control and channel the way we think about the world, in a way that's

entirely unnatural because they're removing dissident voices. And if those dissident voices are able to create their own media platforms in the same way that Epoch Times or NTD, or all of these different platforms are doing, if they're able to be successful and survive and grow, then I think we have hope.

Mr. Jekielek: So really, your call to action is everyone needs to get busy. Really, that's what you're saying.

Mr. Corr: People need to get busy fighting for freedom, defending the freedoms they have. Don't ever let a single freedom go. Don't give an inch of territory to the CCP or any other dictator or autocrat.

Mr. Jekielek: Anders, thanks for writing "The Concentration of Power." I think it's a very important book. I'm looking forward to seeing the next columns coming out, obviously this week, given what I've seen before. Such a pleasure to have you on again.

Mr. Corr: Thank you.

This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/anders-corr-on-communist-chinas-reported-275-billion-deal-with-apple-and-the-road-to-global-tyranny_4175550.html

US Should Sanction China for Jamming and Laser Attacks on Pilots



A Chinese missile frigate Yuncheng launches an anti-ship missile during a military exercise in the waters near south China's Hainan Island and Paracel Islands on July 8, 2016. (Zha Chunming/Xinhua via AP)

US Should Sanction China for Jamming and Laser Attacks on Pilots

Economic sanctions would send the right message

Anders Corr

December 28, 2021

Epoch Times News Analysis

The Chinese military is building stronger electronic warfare facilities in the South China Sea.

Rapidly expanding Chinese electronic warfare (EW) facilities were revealed by the Center For Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) on Dec. 17. The facilities, near Mumian on China's Hainan Island, are in the South China Sea region close to Vietnam.

The facilities serve as protection for the strategic island, on which are based nuclear submarines and future planned aircraft carriers for global power projection. The placement of the facilities near the eastern coast of the island helps Beijing electronically dominate the entire Gulf of Tonkin, located between China and Vietnam, as well as the northern half of Vietnam's coastline.

"The Mumian facility is home to satellite tracking and communication (SATCOM) platforms and appears to possess systems that could be used in EW," according to the CSIS authors, who are part of the think tank's China Power Project and iDeas Lab.

"The site also likely plays a role in collecting signals intelligence (SIGINT), which includes any intelligence gleaned from intercepting and analyzing foreign signals or communication from satellites, radars, weapons platforms, and other electronic systems," wrote the authors, Matthew P. Funaiolo, Brian Hart, and Joseph S. Bermudez. Mr. Bermudez is a senior fellow for imagery analysis with CSIS.

The revelations about the facilities' recent expansion are from comparing satellite imagery from 2020 to those taken about a month ago. The facilities have apparently operated, according to satellite imagery, since at least 2018.

That year, news about likely Chinese military electronic and laser attacks on American and Australian planes increased. There was no significant American response, and the laser attacks continued in 2019 and 2020.

The new facilities at Mumian could be used to electronically buttress such attacks on U.S. and allied planes, or for the gathering of intelligence.

"Many assets in the vicinity appear dedicated to gathering communications intelligence (COMINT), a subset of SIGINT that includes the collection of communications between individuals and organizations."

The latest installations include a SATCOM/COMINT complex with “four dish antennas (three 14 meters wide and one 4 meters wide) for SATCOM and tracking, and at least four tall tower antennas suitable for communications or EW,” according to the report.

“Distributed throughout the enlarged facility are at least 90 vehicles and trailers of various types, including a sizeable number featuring mounted antennas (configured as either a single large antenna or two smaller antennas).”

The Chinese military’s expansion of capabilities on Hainan, including EW, is already having negative effects on American pilots in the South China Sea.

According to Rick Fisher, a senior fellow at the International Assessment and Strategy Center, “the U.S. quest for electronic intelligence regarding China’s military buildup on Hainan Island was at the center of the April 1, 2001 ‘EP-3 Incident’ in which a Chinese Naval Air Force J-8II fighter collided with a U.S. Navy EP-3 electronic intelligence gathering aircraft. At that moment, China was in the early stages of building a new nuclear missile submarine base at Yalong Bay on Hainan Island.”



U.S. Navy F/A-18 Super Hornets multirole fighters and an EA-18G Growler electronic warfare aircraft (2nd R) on board USS Ronald Reagan (CVN-76) aircraft carrier as it

sails in the South China Sea on its way to Singapore on Oct. 16, 2019. (Catherine Lai/AFP via Getty Images)

The Chinese military fully disassembled, and presumably attempted to copy, the EP-3's electronic intelligence capabilities after it was downed.

“China’s People’s Liberation Army has and will continue to constantly upgrade its electronic intelligence (ELINT) and signals intelligence (SIGINT) capabilities on Hainan Island due to its overall strategic importance for the power ambitions of the Chinese Communist Party,” wrote Fisher in an email.

“Hainan’s security is crucial for the CCP as it protects most of its nuclear ballistic missile submarines, will soon host multiple aircraft carrier battle groups for global power projection, and the Wencheng Satellite Launch Center on Hainan will be key to CCP power projection ambitions to the Moon and Mars.”

According to Australian reporting, the Chinese claimed in 2018 that a U.S. combat aircraft “lost control” over the South China Sea. The Chinese report said: “All the instruments in the cabin were chaotic. The fighter planes were completely out of control and could not communicate with the outside world, but they did not know what happened.”

Jamie Seidal at news.com.au wrote that China’s “claim appears to relate to a 2018 incident in which [a] US Navy EA-18G Growler aircraft from the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt reported jamming of their equipment.”

Instead of public retaliation as a show of strength, the U.S. government apparently just meekly took the blow and allowed American pilots to explain away the aggressive incident.

Pilots “said they were never put in any danger,” according to Seidal.

Grant Newsham, a former U.S. Marines colonel with extensive experience in Asia, commented that the “USA had better get serious about all this—and be ready to hit China hard.”

Newsham said that the Chinese military would “push the limits” just enough “to bother us—and even humiliate us” while disguising and brazenly denying the attack origin.

“Unfortunately, they get away with their denials—or at least we do nothing in response,” he said.

Newsham noted that after the Chinese military wounded American pilots with lasers near Djibouti and over the Pacific in 2018, the United States did nothing. He called this a failure in American strategy.

A former Morgan Stanley banker, Newsham advised a correction to the failure by banning “U.S. investment in China for 6 months, or pull Bank of China’s banking license for a year.”

Newsham is right. China’s military expansion and increasing international influence both depend on its economy. So for the United States and allies to maintain a preponderance of power in the coming century requires the rapid deceleration, with the risk of collapse, of China’s growing economy.

The same strategy has been used through major economic sanctions on Russia, Iran, and North Korea.

The pin-prick economic sanctions on China that America has imposed so far are clearly not doing enough and need to be increased to have the necessary effect.

The United States cannot impose sanctions alone—or else Beijing would simply divert its trade and investments to Europe and the rest of the world, thus isolating the U.S. economy. The sanctions or tariffs must be agreed on a global level. Only the United States, with its powerful military, can lead these global sanctions today.

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-should-sanction-china-for-jamming-and-laser-attacks-on-pilots_4181027.html

Repression of Religion in China



Chinese Christians pray during a Christmas Mass at a Catholic Church in Beijing, China, on Dec. 24, 2020. (Kevin Frayer/Getty Images)

Repression of Religion in China

Antonio Graceffo

January 3, 2022

Epoch Times News Analysis

Beijing effectively banned Christmas, underscoring the lack of religious freedom in China, where Xi Jinping Thought is now being incorporated into religious writings.

The ban allegedly came in order to preserve Chinese culture and prevent foreign influence. Generally, Christmas is celebrated as a commercial holiday in China, providing retailers with a tremendous spike in earnings. However, apart from Christmas

as a consumer holiday, some Chinese celebrate Christmas as part of their religious beliefs.

It is difficult to know the actual number of Christians in China, because the vast majority attend unregistered "house churches." By some estimates, China is home to as many as 115 million Protestants and at least 12 million Catholics.

The Chinese Constitution supposedly guarantees religious freedom, but cults, superstitions, and non-orthodox beliefs are banned. And the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) decides what is a religion and what is orthodox, and everything else is prohibited.

Numerous religious groups are specifically banned in China such as Falun Gong, the Church of Almighty God, and the Association of Disciples. Additionally, while Buddhism is permitted, Tibetan Buddhism is restricted. All monks and nuns in Tibet have been subjected to reeducation. Those who refused to abandon their beliefs were imprisoned, tortured, or killed.

In 2015, the CCP ordered the removal of 1,200 crosses from churches in Zhejiang Province. A protestant pastor was sentenced to 14 years in prison for refusing to remove the cross from his church.

Muslims have suffered some of the worst repression, even being told that their Hajj must be approved by the National Religious Affairs Administration, which is overseen by the Party. In Xinjiang, up to 1 million Uyghur Muslims have been imprisoned, and in many instances, tortured, raped, or forcibly converted.



Police officers patrolling in Kashgar in China's western Xinjiang region on June 4, 2019. The recent destruction of dozens of mosques in Xinjiang highlights the increasing pressure Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities face in the heavily-policed region. (Greg Baker/AFP/Getty Images)

The CCP's Administration of Internet Religious Information Services has banned unlicensed online groups or ceremonies, prohibiting foreign organizations or individuals from spreading religious content online. According to China Aid, a Christian NGO, Party censors search for and remove the words "Jesus" and "God" from internet posts.

Sanctions have also been brought against four members of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), which prepares reports on various countries. Apparently, Beijing was angry that the latest report alleged that China restricts religious freedom.

The CCP only recognizes five major religions, including Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism. Adherents may only practice these religions through CCP-approved organizations: the Buddhist Association of China, Chinese Taoist Association, China Islamic Association, National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic

Movement of the Protestant Churches in China, and the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association.

The Constitution guarantees the right of belief, but not the right of worship. Consequently, the day, time, and place of worship must be approved by the Party. The five recognized religions are administered by the CCP's United Front Work Department, which dictates the scripture and liturgy. Even the religious leaders, priests, and pastors must be approved by the CCP. Catholic bishops, for example, are appointed through the Party-run Bishops' Conference of the Catholic Church in China. All religious leaders are required to support the Communist Party.

The Regulations on Religious Affairs (RRA) says that religions practiced in China must not be subject to foreign administration and influence. This is one of the reasons why the CCP has a particular issue with Catholicism. Not only is Catholicism governed by the Vatican, but the Vatican State and the Holy See recognize Taiwan.

Authorities closely monitor the activities of religious organizations. Under the Regulations on Religious Affairs (RRA), religious groups are required to register with the government. Religious schools or religious facilities also must have government approval. Religious gatherings outside of approved locations and times are prohibited.

Violators can be severely punished. According to Article 300 of the Criminal and Public Security Laws on "Cults," "Whoever forms or uses superstitious sects ... or cult organizations ... to undermine the implementation of the laws and administrative rules and regulations of the state ... shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than seven years or life imprisonment and concurrently sentenced to a fine or confiscation of property."

Members of the CCP are prohibited from belonging to a religious group. This prohibition has been extended to retired members of the Party.

In 2017, a CCP publication referred to religion as "spiritual anesthesia." New regulations, adopted in 2020, require religious groups to incorporate Party ideology in their teachings. To this end, Xi Jinping Thought has been infused into the liturgy of the five approved religions.

Catholic churches have been torn down and had their crosses and statues removed. Images of Chinese leader Xi Jinping have replaced those of the Madonna (the Virgin Mary) and the Christ Child (Baby Jesus). And Xi quotes have been painted over the Ten Commandments.

Xi seems to be dedicated to becoming one of the three great leaders of communist China, alongside Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping. Xi has seized control of the Party, the government, the military, and the economy. Now that the CCP also controls religion, perhaps the three should be referred to as a “Trinity.”

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/repression-of-religion-in-china_4188418.html

Beijing Setting Up a Trap to Collect Money From Wall Street



*A pedestrian passes the New York Stock Exchange, in New York, on Nov. 30, 2021.
(John Minchillo/AP Photo)*

Beijing Setting Up a Trap to Collect Money From Wall Street, Says China Experts

Justin Zhang

January 2, 2022; Updated January 3, 2022

Epoch Times News analysis

Chinese companies are transitioning to a different model to raise money by going public. When one of China's concept stocks is delisted from the United States, it is then listed in Hong Kong or China. At the same time, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is working hard to present an image of economic prosperity to attract foreign investment. Experts believe that these moves are a trap set by the CCP to deceive overseas investors.

On Dec. 22, China Mobile launched the IPO application process, expecting to be listed in China in January 2022. In addition, China Unicom, China Telecom, as well as China Mobile, the three major Chinese telecom operators that were delisted from the United States, have all transferred back to China for A-share listing.

Didi, the Chinese version of Uber, which delisted its shares from the New York Stock Exchange under pressure from Chinese authorities, indicated that it will go public in Hong Kong instead.

The CCP has devised a new retreat strategy: state-owned firms to return to China's stock market from Wall Street, and private firms to return to Hong Kong for listing, experts said.

Mike Sun, a Chinese investment strategy expert living in the United States, told The Epoch Times that the CCP probably truly wants to see this happen. Chinese authorities are still negotiating with the U.S. government for the Chinese concept stocks to stay. If they can't, it would not be a bad thing for the CCP to have these companies return to China for listing.

As the United States has become increasingly stringent in its supervision of listed companies from China, it is very likely that more Chinese concept stocks will withdraw from the U.S. stock market. On Dec. 20, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) required listed Chinese companies to disclose more risks that they may bring to investors.

Prior to this, the amended Holding Foreign Companies Accountable Act began requiring foreign companies to disclose more information about their relationship with the government and more details of their financial reports. However, these regulations were rejected by the CCP on the grounds of "endangering national security."

As of the end of 2020, more than 600 Chinese companies were listed in the United States, with a total market value of approximately \$6 trillion, accounting for about 9

percent of the total U.S. stock market. However, Chinese concept stocks withdrawing from the United States has become an irreversible trend in the last three years.

Hong Kong financial analyst Katherine Jiang told The Epoch Times that if these companies return to China for listing, they will still be able to bring with them huge amounts of capital from Wall Street.

Loosening Monetary Policies to Beat the Fed

Now, as the market expects the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates ahead of schedule and more aggressively, the CCP is also stepping up its monetary and fiscal policies.

Contrary to the Fed's tightening of the monetary policy, the CCP continues to run on the path of a loose monetary policy, which it officially named "cross-cyclical and counter-cyclical macro-control."

The CCP's Central Bank on Dec. 20 decided to lower the benchmark loan prime rate (LPR) from 3.85 percent to 3.8 percent. The bank's reserve ratio was lowered in early December, freeing up approximately \$190 billion.

According to Sun, internally, the CCP is facing tremendous pressure to stabilize the economy. Meanwhile, externally it has to keep an eye on the Fed's timetable in conjunction with its own monetary policies, in order to prevent large-scale capital outflow.

Therefore, the CCP's newly formulated policies serve two purposes—to secure foreign funds and prevent capital outflow. To achieve these goals, the CCP has created an image of economic prosperity, Sun said.

"In the past, Wall Street fed the Chinese companies very well. Even if these companies are now forced to return to China to be listed on domestic stock exchanges, they have already collected a lot of money from Wall Street."

Among the Chinese companies listed in the United States, there are many state-owned or semi-state-owned companies that are disguised as private companies. The company

filings are now relatively complete, making it difficult for the SEC to verify their background.

Take Fangda Group as an example. Based in Liaoning Province, Fangda, a so-called private enterprise, is an industrial conglomerate focusing on carbon, chemicals, medical, and steel products manufacturing.

Fang Wei, Chairman of the Board of Directors, said on Dec 8: "We have always insisted on listening to the Party and following the Party. We now have more than 300 legal entities. As I often say, the Fangda Group belongs to the Party, the country, and the society. "

Fangda Group is the only strategic investor in the restructuring of HNA Group Co. Ltd., after the latter filed for bankruptcy.

Under the guise of "private enterprises," these companies have completely bypassed the laws of the United States, as it is extremely difficult to trace such deep and hidden connections.

Although the Holding Foreign Companies Accountable Act is now forcing Chinese companies to exit U.S. stock exchanges, the CCP may well be willing to welcome Chinese concept stock companies back to their domestic listings at this time.

Jiang said that the CCP is expanding the capital market and needs suitable assets to attract overseas funds to stay in the Chinese market for the long term. Even if these companies return to Hong Kong or China now, not only have they already collected money, but companies with good potential can also continue to attract foreign investments.

Connecting the financial markets of mainland China and Hong Kong is a key part of the CCP's capital expansion plan. The CCP hopes to use the Hong Kong market to attract outside capital to stay in China's capital market for a long time, Sun said.

He believes that the CCP is trying to attract foreign investment through the "economic prosperity" created by the release of huge amounts of funds into its financial system, which is equivalent to setting up a trap to lure foreign investments.

Justin Zhang has been analyzing and writing articles on China issues since 2012. He can be contacted at justinzhang1996@gmail.com

https://www.theepochtimes.com/beijing-setting-up-a-trap-to-collect-money-from-wall-street-says-china-experts_4186771.html

Beijing Is Shutting Down Hong Kong's Last Free Media



Ronson Chan, deputy assignment editor of Hong Kong outlet Stand News, speaks to reporters outside the outlet's office in Hong Kong, on Dec. 29, 2021. (Sung Pilung/The Epoch Times)

Beijing Is Shutting Down Hong Kong's Last Free Media

Global sanctions, not just words, are the necessary response

Anders Corr

January 4, 2022

Epoch Times News Analysis

The Fragrant Harbor's last truly free media are falling one after another under the pressure of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

Hong Kong police raided Stand News on Dec. 29. The leveling of the outlet, and the "voluntary" closure of Citizen News on Jan. 3, are two more nails in the coffin of democracy.

Human rights and free speech advocates have roundly denounced the shutdown of Stand News, Citizen News, an earlier sacking of Apple Daily, and the muzzling of RTHK and the South China Morning Post. The latter two outlets increasingly pull their punches, or don't punch at all, when it comes to the Chinese and Hong Kong regimes.

In the process of attacking Hong Kong's pro-democracy elements in civil society, Beijing has denuded the city of its most loyal citizens. Hongkongers are getting arrested, or wisely voting with their feet and leaving the city in advance. In most instances they can fight for freedom in Hong Kong more effectively from outside the city.

The Stand News heroes who were arrested most recently include Denise Ho, a pop music star, board member, and Canadian citizen.

Ho's foreign citizenship and celebrity status indicate that nobody is safe in Hong Kong. Neither are investments. The police confiscated almost \$8 million during the Stand News' closure, their largest haul yet.

Also arrested during the Stand News raid were Patrick Lam, acting editor-in-chief; Chung Pui-kuen, former editor-in-chief; Margaret Ng, a prior board member; Chow Tat-chi, a writer; Christine Fang; and Chan Pui-man, who is married to Chung and the former associate editor of Apple Daily.

Ronson Chan, deputy editor, was taken in for questioning.

The day prior, police charged the billionaire founder of Apple Daily, Jimmy Lai, along with six senior employees, with sedition. Over the past year, approximately 50 independent media organizations in Hong Kong shut down due to CCP pressure.

Stand News' final statement to the public were its principles, proven by the arrests of these heroes for democracy. "Stand News's editorial policy was to be independent and committed to safeguarding Hong Kong's core values of democracy, human rights, freedom, the rule of law and justice."

The Wall Street Journal editorial board wrote, “The Communist Party can’t tolerate a free press covering its demolition of Hong Kong freedom, so it slanders the city’s journalists as criminals and traitors.”

But these “traitors,” in a totalitarian regime, are the heroes of democracy. One should weep at their fall, in the hope that they might rise again.



Police officers conduct a raid at the Apple Daily office in Hong Kong on June 17, 2021. (Apple Daily via Getty Images)

The United States, Germany, and the United Nations Human Rights Office condemned the latest media closure.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken immediately called on the People’s Republic of China (PRC) to release the Stand News employees.

“We call on PRC and Hong Kong authorities to cease targeting Hong Kong’s free and independent media and to immediately release those journalists and media executives who have been unjustly detained and charged,” he said. “By silencing independent media, PRC and local authorities undermine Hong Kong’s credibility and viability.”

Germany had similar sentiments. “From our point of view, the events illustrate anew that there is a steady erosion of pluralism, freedom of opinion and freedom of the press in Hong Kong—especially since this national security law came into force,” a German foreign ministry spokesperson said.

The U.N. Human Rights Office said in a statement to Reuters that it is “alarmed by the continued crackdown on civic space” in Hong Kong, which is “bound by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and has a legal obligation to respect the rights to freedom of information, expression and association, as well as to guarantee due process.”

According to the United Nations itself, the Chinese and Hong Kong regimes, which are really one and the same now, are in violation of international law.

But the two most important points made by commentators were not condemnations, simple statements of support, or observations that Beijing is breaking international law, which most everyone knows and ignores for lack of the necessary military strength for its enforcement.

The two key points are: the need for unified Western actions, rather than just talk, in support of Hong Kong; and the complicity of Hong Kong business elites in the destruction of their own city.

“The crushing of press freedom in Hong Kong joins anti-Uyghur genocide on the list of reasons it was right for President Biden to stage a diplomatic boycott of the Games,” according to The Washington Post editorial board, “and why the struggle for human rights in China will need more such solidarity in the years ahead.”

Hong Kong’s former Legislative Council member Nathan Law spoke to PBS from London in an interview from self-imposed exile. “The West has to step up,” Law said. “What we are lacking is a much more coordinated pushback and also democratic countries using multilateral and different mechanisms to work together.”

Benedict Rogers, a human rights activist and co-founder of Hong Kong Watch, wrote: “It is time that the regime in Beijing and its quisling henchmen in Hong Kong were made to pay the consequences for destroying Hong Kong’s liberties and way of life. The reason incidents such as the attack on Stand News continue to happen is that, so far, the regime has been allowed to perpetrate such violations with impunity.”

According to Rogers, the United States is the only government that has actually gone beyond words to place sanctions on the Chinese regime for its breach of the Sino-British Joint Declaration of 1984, an international treaty registered at the United Nations.

But the United States cannot rectify Beijing alone. If other countries do not follow voluntarily, the United States will be forced to either fold its opposition, or make new sanctions that have extra-territorial effect.

“This is not a regime that respects statements alone, although we must continue to speak out,” wrote Rogers. “But it is a regime that only understands the language of strength and action. So democracies, if we still believe in press freedom and other basic human rights, must unite and coordinate robust, targeted sanctions to make it clear that the assault on Hong Kong is unacceptable.”

All of these points on Hong Kong have lessons for the rest of the world, which must act together against the CCP or risk the permanent destruction of democracy in the United States, Europe, and everywhere else.

If the world empowers Beijing by giving up Hong Kong with barely a fight, then tomorrow we will be even weaker when it comes to defending our own freedoms. *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/beijing-is-shutting-down-hong-kongs-last-free-media_4188935.html

Fentanyl From China Is Killing Americans in Record Numbers



A Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) chemist checks confiscated pills containing fentanyl at the DEA Northeast Regional Laboratory in New York on Oct. 8, 2019. (Don Emmert/AFP via Getty Images)

Fentanyl From China Is Killing Americans in Record Numbers

John Mac Glionn

January 4, 2022

Epoch Times Commentary

In November, President Joe Biden remembered all those who had died from drug overdoses in 2020—more than 100,000 Americans—a new milestone in the nation’s escalating crisis. However, in remembering the dead, the president failed to call out China.

In America, use of drugs, illicit or otherwise, is rampant. Nevertheless, the addiction epidemic plaguing the nation doesn’t take anything away from the fact that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) appears to be playing a key role in funneling narcotics into the United States.

Every 5-and-a-half minutes, somewhere in the United States, a person dies from a drug overdose. Many of these deaths involve opioids. Every corner of the country—from Los Angeles to Louisiana, Wisconsin to Washington, Syracuse to Sarasota—have been touched by the opioid crisis. Some communities—even entire cities—have been decimated by it. As the Republican Greg Walden so rightly said, opioids are “an equal opportunity destroyer.”

In 2019, 70,000 Americans died from drug overdoses; in less than a year, that number had risen to 100,000. More than 64,000 of these deaths resulted from the use of synthetic opioids, like fentanyl, the deadliest opioid in existence. This is a staggering number, especially when you recognize the fact that 2019 saw 36,000 Americans die from the use of synthetic opioids; in 2018, that number was somewhere in the region of 31,000. Compared with 2018, 2020 saw the number of deaths from fentanyl more than *double*.

Fentanyl, it’s important to note, is an extremely powerful drug; it’s up to 100 times stronger than morphine, and some 50 times stronger than heroin. Among 18-45 year olds, fentanyl overdoses are now the number one cause of death in the United States. This is a national emergency that China has helped create.

According to the Brookings Institution, over the past decade, China has played a key role in flooding the United States with this highly addictive drug. Somewhat laughably, 2019 saw the CCP promise to curtail the manufacturing and supply of fentanyl-class drugs. Not surprisingly, this particular promise, like almost every single promise that comes from those in Beijing, carried absolutely zero weight.

As the U.S.-China Economic Security Review Commission (USCC) recently noted, China is now “the primary country of origin for illicit fentanyl and fentanyl-related substances trafficked into the United States.”

To think that Beijing is not somehow involved—if not directly involved—in the flow of lethal drugs into the United States requires a complete and utter suspension of disbelief. Remember, this is a regime that watches every single one of its citizens—the good, the bad, and those who lie in the gray area, somewhere in between—closely.

As someone who lived in China up until very recently, I speak from experience when I say the following: The CCP keeps files on all of its citizens, including those who are involved in the drug trade.

In the words of the author and researcher Bonnie Girard, “China has numerous potential avenues for cracking down on illegal drug production and export. What it lacks is the political will to do so.”

China has gotten a little more creative in its efforts to flood America with drugs. Instead of sending supplies directly to the United States, Chinese drug traffickers now send them to Mexico. In recent times, Chinese drug dealers have forged strong alliances with some of the biggest drug cartels in Mexico.



L-R: Scottsdale Police Chief Jeff Walther, Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich, and

Cheri Oz, special agent in charge of the DEA's Phoenix field division at a press conference in Scottsdale, Ariz., on Dec. 16, 2021. (Scottsdale PD)

A recent report issued by the aforementioned USCC documents the ways in which Chinese traffickers have “shifted from primarily manufacturing finished fentanyl to primarily exporting precursors to Mexican cartels, who manufacture illicit fentanyl and deliver the final product.” In addition, “Chinese brokers are laundering Mexican drug money through China’s financial system.” Moreover, the CCP absolutely refuses to cooperate with U.S. authorities “on criminal and money laundering investigations, conducting joint operations, and U.S. requests for inspections and law enforcement assistance.”

When one thinks of drugs coming from Mexico, that oh so porous border instantly springs to mind. If only there was a gigantic wall to keep bad actors out, some might shout. However, although drug cartels continue to exploit a catalog of weaknesses at the border to move the likes of fentanyl and meth into the United States, they are far more likely to use ports.

In recent times, coincidentally (or not), Chinese private sector companies with close ties to the CCP have invested in a number of Mexican ports. Back in 2015, Chinese investors agreed to build a new port in Nayarit, a state inextricably linked with the drug trade. In 2020, U.S. agents arrested Salvador Cienfuegos Zepeda, Mexico’s former defense minister, accusing him of working with one of the country’s deadliest criminal enterprises, the Nayarit H-2 cartel. According to U.S. agents, Zepeda played a key role in helping the cartel traffic drugs into the United States.

In October of last year, the United States sanctioned four members of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, accusing them of using the port of Manzanillo to ship drugs into the United States. Coincidentally or not, China Harbour Engineering Company, a subsidiary of the state-owned China Communications Construction Company, has invested a lot of money in this particular port.

In Veracruz, another state intimately linked with the drug trade, companies with close ties to Beijing have financed a number of projects, including Veracruz Port. For more than 10 years, this particular port has played a significant role in Mexico’s drug trade. Again, to think that those in Beijing are not fully aware of what’s occurring requires a complete and utter suspension of disbelief.

What can be done? Surely, the Biden administration can introduce stricter measures. Surely, for instance, any goods coming from Mexican ports should be forensically

analyzed. The drug overdose problem is not going away. In fact, as the statistics show, it's a problem that is getting *exponentially worse* each year. President Biden must act now. The question, though, is will he?

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.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/fentanyl-from-china-is-killing-americans-in-record-numbers_4183388.html

China Targets Western Elites Through Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube



Logos of Google, Facebook, and Twitter on a computer screen in a file photo taken on Oct. 21, 2020. (Denis Charlet/AFP via Getty Images)

China Targets Western Elites Through Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube

Journalists, academics, and politicians need better protections: cut off Beijing's access to foreign servers

Anders Corr

January 6, 2022

Epoch Times News Analysis

Beijing is systematically mining the world's social media data—including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube—to better understand political opinions and elite networks, and to compile a list of foreign targets.

The Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) goal is to use sophisticated algorithms, big data, artificial intelligence, micro-targeting, and purchased social media accounts for early warning of public opinion trends against the CCP, to influence the global public toward pro-CCP positions, and to introduce schisms within groups critical of Beijing—that turns people against each other where they are uniting against the totalitarian and genocidal regime.

Sophisticated data systems are being used by Beijing's "state media, propaganda departments, police, military and cyber regulators," according to a Jan. 1 investigative report by Cate Cadell in *The Washington Post*. The report draws from "hundreds of Chinese bidding documents, contracts and company filings."

The data systems, each of which costs hundreds of thousands of dollars, include "increasingly technical surveillance for China's censorship apparatus." They compile a network of "foreign targets" in the West and seek to "maintain control over the Internet," according to the *Post*.

They "include a \$320,000 Chinese state media software program that mines Twitter and Facebook to create a database of foreign journalists and academics; a \$216,000 Beijing police intelligence program that analyzes Western chatter on Hong Kong and Taiwan; and a cybercenter in Xinjiang, home to most of China's Uyghur population, that catalogues the mainly Muslim minority group's language content abroad," according to the report.

Companies, state media, and a half dozen Chinese universities are listed as supplying software to the regime for these purposes. One Shanghai company claims to use "advanced big data mining and artificial intelligence analysis technology" that covers over 90 percent of foreign social media in the United States, Europe, and countries that neighbor China, according to the report.

An analyst in Beijing who works for China's Central Propaganda Department told the *Post* that with the new data systems, "we can better understand the underground network of anti-China personnel." The Department compiled profiles of individual politicians, academics, and journalists.

The systems “automatically collect and store Facebook and Twitter data in real time on domestic Chinese servers for analysis,” according to four of the Post’s sources in Beijing. This sounds like a violation of Twitter and Facebook rules that ban automated collection of data, except in cases of prior authorization. Twitter also bans data mining to infer users’ political, ethnic, or racial characteristics—a rule that the regime is now apparently violating.

China’s state media claimed in 2014 that over 2 million individuals worked in public opinion analysis. The new systems sometimes operate 24 hours, and include teams of English and foreign policy specialists. In 2018, according to state media, the regime’s online opinion analysis industry was valued at billions of dollars and growing at 50 percent annually.

A China Daily bidding document from 2020 cited in the report is for a \$300,000 “foreign personnel analysis platform.” The platform will mine Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube for information on “well known Western media journalists” and other “key personnel from political, business and media circles.”

The software must “map the relationships between target personnel and uncover ‘factions’ between personnel, measuring their ‘China tendencies’ and building an alarm system that automatically flags ‘false statements and reports on China,’” according to the Post.

A Beijing Police Intelligence Command Unit paid \$30,570 to People’s Daily Online to “trawl foreign social media and produce reports on unspecified ‘key personnel and organizations,’” according to the report, “gathering information on their ‘basic circumstances, background and relationships.’”

These systems mostly monitor domestic Chinese media, according to Post sources, including “highly sensitive viral trends online.” But, since mid-2019, they have also monitored foreign social media. Reporting to the Cyberspace Administration of China must include personal details of social media users, according to the Post.

“The ultimate purpose of analysis and prediction is to guide and intervene in public opinion,” a People’s Daily public opinion analyst named Liao Canliang wrote. The Post quoted the analyst as writing in an article, “Public data from social network users can be used to analyze the characteristics and preferences of users, and then guide them in a targeted manner.”

This is also known as “micro-targeting,” used by Cambridge Analytica to mold U.S. public opinion ahead of the 2016 presidential election.

Twitter suspended 23,000 accounts in 2020 that it alleged were linked to the CCP for covert use in the spreading of propaganda targeting pro-democracy Hong Kong protests.

In December, Twitter removed another 2,048 accounts that coordinated their content to undermine human rights advocacy against abuse of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in the Xinjiang region. The U.S. State Department and other government entities in Europe and Britain have recognized the ongoing genocide against Uyghurs in that area.



Tribunal chair Geoffrey Nice (C) delivers the verdict of the independent tribunal assessing evidence on China’s alleged rights abuses against the Uyghur people, in London, on Dec. 9, 2021. (Alberto Pezzali/AP Photo)

Many of the systems flag “sensitive” content related to ethnic minorities in China, and can monitor individual social media users over time.

“A \$43,000 system purchased by police in central China’s Shangnan county included a ‘foreign sensitive information’ collection system that requested Uyghur and Tibetan staff translators,” according to the Post.

The accounts that Twitter closed since 2020 are a “small fraction” of the artificial pro-Beijing social media messaging, according to experts cited by the Post.

Many of the police contracts since 2020 state that “People’s Daily was chosen to conduct monitoring on the basis of its technical ability to gather data abroad,” according to the Post.

The report quotes the Guangdong Police Department as saying in 2020 that People’s Daily is “the only one in the industry that deploys overseas servers. It is a public opinion service organization that can monitor and collect more than 8,000 overseas media without ‘overturning the wall.’”

The Chinese regime’s use of data servers in the West point to one potential counter-strategy against Beijing’s invasive social media influence and surveillance campaign: legal bans on allowing China to operate servers outside its own Great Firewall. If Beijing does not allow free use of Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube by its own citizens, then why should the West allow China to abuse these platforms outside of its borders?

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https://www.theepochtimes.com/china-targets-western-elites-through-twitter-facebook-and-youtube_4189424.html

Will the Beijing-Havana Axis Spawn Another Cuban Crisis?



Chinese Navy ship Type 054A frigate 548 Yiyang moors at the port of Havana, Cuba, on Nov. 10, 2015. (Yamil Lage/AFP via Getty Images)

Will the Beijing-Havana Axis Spawn Another Cuban Crisis?

China's Caribbean expansion has now reached America's backyard

Joseph V. Micallef

January 7, 2022

Epoch Times News Analysis

A growing China–Cuba axis threatens to transform the geopolitics of the Caribbean basin and heralds the return of great power rivalry to a region that has historically been a critical component of America’s continental defense.

How serious a challenge is Beijing’s Caribbean gambit to U.S. national security?

The significance of the China-Cuba axis was underscored nearly two weeks ago when Havana signed on to China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). In doing so, it joined the Bahamas, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, the Dominican Republic, and Jamaica as Caribbean participants in China’s infrastructure development program.

Cuba, the Bahamas, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica have received commitments of over \$7 billion in Chinese aid and loans for various development projects, according to a 2020 report.

The BRI is a Chinese government sponsored program, also known as “One Belt, One Road,” under which Chinese companies and financial institutions seek to build roads, acquire, expand, or create port facilities, develop railroads, as well as pipelines, power plants, 5G, and fiber optic networks.

The development projects are mostly funded with loans but may also include outright grants from Beijing. Critics of the program have pointed out that loan terms can be onerous and that several countries have already defaulted and have been forced to give Chinese companies control of the underlying assets.

In the Caribbean, projects have ranged from a National Cricket Stadium in Grenada to the Baha Mar resort in the Bahamas, to the Kingston Freeport Terminal in Jamaica, to the expansion and modernization of the port facilities in Santiago de Cuba.

The addition of Cuba to China’s BRI underscores the rapidly growing economic relationship between the two countries. China has supplanted Russia as Cuba’s largest trading partner, and in turn Cuba is China’s biggest trading partner in the Caribbean.

Senior Chinese government officials have visited Cuba more than two dozen times since 1995 and Cuban officials have reciprocated with a comparable number of visits. A People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) hospital ship visited Cuba in 2011, and three PLAN warships visited for five days on Nov. 10, 2015, to commemorate the 55th

anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries and to participate in a joint naval exercise with the Cuban Navy.



Cuban special forces, called the Black Berets, pose alongside their Chinese trainers from a paramilitary in a government-run training school in Cuba in an undated photo. (Courtesy of ADN Cuba)

China is also believed to have been involved in the construction and ongoing operation of a new radome designed to intercept U.S. communications at the Cuban signals intelligence facility in Bejucal, although Beijing's involvement has not been definitively proven. However, Florida Senator Marco Rubio, a member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations as well as the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, has claimed since 2016 that China was behind the new radome.

Chinese companies have played a major role in building out Cuba's internet and telecommunications infrastructure, and played a key role in shutting down access to Cuban protesters when demonstrations erupted in July 2021.

Cuba is in a unique position to control the maritime approaches to key U.S. ports—in particular Miami, New Orleans, and Houston. The latter two are particularly important to the U.S. energy industry since more than half of all U.S. imports and exports of oil and

gas flow through these two ports. In addition, roughly one-third of U.S. agricultural exports flow through New Orleans.

Geostrategically, the Caribbean plays the same role for the United States that the South and East China Seas play for China. A Cuban-based military capability would give China some of the same prerogatives to potentially threaten U.S. shipping that the United States has toward Chinese shipping in the China Seas.

China has claimed large areas of the South and East China Seas as territorial waters—a claim that is disputed by the United States as well as all of China's maritime neighbors. Although the United States is the dominant military power in the Caribbean, it has not extended any claims of sovereignty on any of the waters of the Caribbean beyond those already recognized by existing international treaties.

Does that mean that Beijing will seek a naval base in Cuba or look to have a permanent naval presence in the Caribbean? That's certainly possible. There is no evidence yet that a permanent naval presence in the Caribbean is Beijing's aim but judging from Chinese actions elsewhere—most notably Djibouti and Equatorial Guinea—neither can it be ruled out.

Both possibilities—especially if they were to include the stationing of ballistic missile submarines, like the Type 094 (Jin Class), in the Caribbean with access to Cuban naval facilities—would be red lines for the United States.

Will Beijing make the same mistakes that Moscow made when it tried to station nuclear-armed missiles in Cuba?

What is more likely is that China sees in the Caribbean the opportunity to gather geostrategic chips with which to bargain with the United States over its posture in the South and East China Seas. That makes it virtually inevitable that the PLAN's naval presence in the Caribbean will increase in the future even if it stops short of a permanent deployment.

China's position in the Caribbean has grown substantially over the last decade—and will continue to do so in the future. Moreover, China's rapidly growing economic and diplomatic position in the region and its possible military dimension means that though they may be on opposite sides of the world, the South and East China Seas and the Caribbean are increasingly linked geostrategically.

All the more reason for the United States not to take its position in the Caribbean for granted. It's time for Washington to renew its commitment to the countries in its own backyard!

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https://www.theepochtimes.com/will-the-beijing-havana-axis-spawn-another-cuban-crisis_4196522.html

More Than Oil: China Expands Its Influence in the Middle East



China's leader Xi Jinping gives a speech during the 8th Ministerial Meeting of China-Arab States Cooperation Forum at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on July, 10, 2018. At the time, China said it would provide Arab states with US\$20 billion in loans for economic development, as Beijing seeks to build its influence in the Middle East and Africa. (Wang Zhao/AFP via Getty Images)

More Than Oil: China Expands Its Influence in the Middle East

Antonio Graceffo

January 7, 2022

Epoch Times News Analysis

As the world's largest energy importer, the Middle East engages with China through infrastructure investment and trade, as well as nuclear development, in exchange for oil and international political support.

Over the past decade the United States has shifted its focus away from the Middle East, concentrating more on China. Ironically, this has left the region open for China to increase its trade, investment, and influence. China has signed partnership agreements with 16 Middle Eastern countries. According to the Beijing's 2016 "Arab Policy Paper," China's engagement with the Middle East follows the "1+2+3" cooperation scheme, where "1" is energy, "2" is trade and investment, as well as infrastructure construction, and "3" is nuclear energy and satellites.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) takes a cautious approach to the security and political challenges of the Middle East, steadily increasing its investment and trade through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI, also known as "One Belt, One Road") as well as through security exchange, while largely steering clear of becoming entangled in regional geopolitics.

Since 2015, China has been the world's largest importer of crude oil—with about half of it coming from the Middle East. Consequently, China's closest relationships in the region are with the oil-producing Gulf states. In 2016, China became the largest foreign investor in the Middle East. In 2017, trade reached just under \$197 billion, according to the International Monetary Fund.

The top crude exporters to China are Russia, Saudi Arabia, Angola, Iraq, and Oman, followed by Brazil, Iran, and Kuwait. China's brand of authoritarian capitalism focuses on raw material extraction, which has implications for regional stability as it reinforces autocratic regimes. Where U.S. foreign policy has been predicated on cultivating peace through democracy, the CCP's 2016 "Arab Policy Paper" stresses peace through development.

The CCP's strategy in the Middle East is similar to its approach in other parts of the world, namely, interacting with countries for the purpose of obtaining energy in exchange for cash, infrastructure investment, and trade—but not making demands for increased democracy or human rights. The CCP is also careful to remain outside of regional conflicts, forming close relations with both Hamas and Israel. Functioning under the protection of the U.S. security umbrella and its own policy of nonintervention, the

CCP has been able to benefit from investments in the Middle East, without contributing to the public good.

In the “Arab Policy Paper,” the CCP proposes to invest in Middle Eastern countries in petroleum and natural gas, oil prospecting, extraction, transportation, and refining. Additionally, the Paper states that the Middle East and China will cooperate on the BRI—with infrastructure construction and investment in railways, highways, ports, aviation, power, communications, and satellite ground stations.

The China and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) launched the China-GCC Free Trade Agreement in 2004. The Paper reaffirmed the CCP’s objection to trade protectionism as well as its dedication to the removal of non-tariff trade barriers. As of 2021, China and the GCC are still negotiating a free trade agreement.

The CCP is committed to China-Arab cooperation on designing and building nuclear power plants, scientific research, nuclear fuels, reactors, nuclear security, and space exploration. China has largely stayed out of Iran’s nuclear program for many years. But when the Biden administration imposed new sanctions on two Iranian government agencies and several officials on Dec. 7, 2021, Beijing criticized the move and pushed for sanctions to be lifted.

Two Chinese companies are building a nuclear facility in a remote desert location of Saudi Arabia, near the city of Ula. When completed, the plant will be able to extract yellowcake from uranium ore. Yellowcake uranium is an integral component used for both civilian nuclear power and nuclear weapons. The United States is concerned that this nuclear fuel could be enriched to produce bombs. Saudi Arabia has planned to build 16 nuclear power reactors over the next 25 years. At a cost of \$80 billion each, this could be an incredible revenue stream for the CCP.

Saudi Arabia had been in negotiations with the Trump administration over building a nuclear program, but the United States required the Kingdom to sign on to the standards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The Kingdom had been counting on the U.S. desire to counter Iran by allowing Saudi Arabia to have a nuclear program, without meeting IAEA requirements. When the Saudis realized that this would not happen, they turned to China, which made no such demands.

In return for trade, investment, and nuclear program support, the CCP requires the Middle East to abide by the “one China” policy. Additionally, Middle Eastern countries must agree to not form diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

In international affairs, the “Arab Policy Paper” says that China and Middle Eastern countries should “support each other on issues of core interests or major concern,” including voting at the United Nations. And, while not specifically stated, it is understood that the CCP expects Arab countries to remain silent on charges of genocide against Uyghur Muslims in China’s Xinjiang region.

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.”

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China: The Manipulation of Data and the Biggest Lie in Modern History



Security personnel keep watch outside the Wuhan Institute of Virology during the visit by the World Health Organization (WHO) team tasked with investigating the origins of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, on Feb. 3, 2021. (Thomas Peter/Reuters)

China: The Manipulation of Data and the Biggest Lie in Modern History

John Mac Ghlionn

January 7, 2022

Epoch Times Commentary

In April of last year, something very strange happened. COVID-19 death rates in Ireland, a country I hail from, surpassed death rates in China.

Yes, Ireland, a tiny country with a population of less than 5 million people versus China—the world’s most populated country—with more than 1.4 billion citizens.

According to a John Hopkins University (JHU) report, in late April 2021, Ireland had 4,873 COVID-related deaths and close to a quarter of a million confirmed cases. Meanwhile, in China, 4,845 official deaths were reported, with 102,373 cases.

Today, almost a year on from this rather staggering report, China’s “official” (a slippery term, especially when discussing China) death toll has hardly budged. On the other hand, Ireland’s death toll is almost 6,000. How is this possible?

Of course, something is, shall we say, a little off. The people reporting death tolls, like the scientists working at JHU, can only comment on the data provided.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is clearly withholding data. As you will see throughout this piece, this is not a controversial point to make. For well over two years, those in Beijing have done all in their power to hide the truth from the world. Now, though, the cat is very much out of the bag.

In a recent, rather brilliant piece for Forbes, George Calhoun, an academic with a conscience and a considerable amount of bravery, compared the mortality rates from COVID-19 in the United States and China.

Somewhat incredulously, he commented, the CCP “reports a Covid death rate overall of **0.321 per 100,000** population.” Across the pond, meanwhile, “The U.S. Covid death rate is **248 per 100,000** population—**800 times higher.**”

Why, Calhoun asked, have so many Western media outlets accepted such preposterous figures as valid? Especially when the CCP continues to act in a “triumphalist” manner, attributing “their success of their “zero covid” approach—marked by severe lockdowns for entire cities, travel bans, intensive contact tracing, military enforcement.”



Workers in protective suits stand at an entrance to a university's residential area under lockdown, following the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, China, on Dec. 20, 2021. (China Daily via Reuters)

China's COVID success is a farce. The CCP's "zero COVID" approach carries zero credibility.

The CCP sits on a foundation of lies. Last year, Chinese leader Xi Jinping called on the Chinese people to rejoice. Severe poverty, he assured the masses, was a thing of the past. Well, it's not. It's still very much a thing of the present. Then, in October, the CCP started pushing a pernicious rumor regarding the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. According to the experts in Beijing, the virus didn't originate in Wuhan, instead it actually originated in Maine. Yes, Maine, a state in America. Of course, this is nonsense—such nonsense undoubtedly makes many Americans angry, as it should.

But where should this anger be directed? At the CCP, many will shout. Our real anger, I contend, should also be directed at certain news outlets in the West—especially in the United States—that have enabled the perpetuation of false narratives and deceit.

Enabling Beijing

Ever since the virus originated in Wuhan, those in Beijing have gone to great lengths to hide the truth from the world. Sadly, the CCP has been assisted—unknowingly or otherwise—by many commentators in the West, including some of the biggest media outlets in the world.

Instead of focusing on the origins of the virus, some prominent authors instead chose to focus on a former president's etiquette: how dare he say the "China virus"; what is he thinking?

No, what were they thinking?

It took Jon Stewart, a comedian, to shake millions of Americans out of a collective slumber. Stewart is a funny man but very few people are laughing across the country today. The virus has wreaked absolute chaos. People have lost their homes, their jobs, and their lives. Inflation continues to surge. The United States is struggling. Average Americans are struggling. The only people laughing are members of the CCP. China is in the ascendancy as its economy could overtake the U.S. economy by 2030, according to analysts at the British consultancy Center for Economics and Business Research.

As the United States becomes more divided—with so much of this division stemming from a virus that originated in China—those in Beijing continue to laugh at Americans. They laugh at the current president. They laugh at the state of America. And they laugh at the fact that they may never have to pay a price for arguably the greatest cover-up in recent history.

John Mac Ghlionn is a researcher and essayist. His work has been published, among others, by the New York Post, Sydney Morning Herald, Newsweek, National Review, and The Spectator US. He covers psychology and social relations, and has a keen interest in social dysfunction and media manipulation.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/china-the-manipulation-of-data-and-the-biggest-lie-in-modern-history_4196857.html

US Companies Continue to Cave in to Pressure From Beijing Over Human Rights



A woman walks out from a Sam's Club in Shenzhen, in southern China's Guangdong Province, on Nov. 15, 2015. (Ng Han Guan/AP Photo)

US Companies Continue to Cave in to Pressure From Beijing Over Human Rights

Walmart is the latest US company to face backlash in China

Antonio Graceffo

January 11, 2022

Epoch Times News Analysis

The lure of money that can be earned in the Chinese market has driven major U.S. companies to give in to Beijing's demands at the expense of data security, integrity, and human rights.

Recently, Walmart was censured by Beijing's top disciplinary agency after its warehouse retailer Sam's Club removed Xinjiang-sourced products from its apps in China.

The Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) said in a statement on Dec. 31 that the move showed "stupidity" and "shortsightedness," and accused Sam's Club of having a "hidden agenda."

Although both the Trump and Biden administrations have called the repression of Uyghurs in Xinjiang a genocide and have effectively banned the importation of products from the region, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) continues to deny the allegations and criticizes American companies that adhere to the bans.

President Joe Biden signed the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act on Dec. 23, banning products made with slave labor. It seems that the CCDI's objection is that Sam's Club followed the ban.

"We believe the private sector and the international community should oppose the PRC's [People's Republic of China] weaponizing of its markets to stifle support for human rights," according to White House press secretary Jen Psaki.

There is no legal precedent requiring U.S. companies that adhere to U.S. laws to apologize to a foreign government. And yet, there is a long list of American companies that have caved in to pressure and apologized to Beijing in order to avoid losing access to China's tremendous consumer market.

Kowtowing to Beijing

Intel issued an apology to Beijing despite the fact that it was following U.S. law and international human rights conventions. The company published a note on its website last month, asking suppliers not to use goods, services, or labor from Xinjiang. After the news went viral in China, the company came under harsh public and government criticism. Intel's China ambassador, popstar Karry Wang, cut ties with Intel. And state-run Chinese tabloid Global Times accused Intel of "biting the hand that feeds it."

Amid pressure, Intel apologized to the CCP in a Chinese-language statement on WeChat and removed the note to suppliers from its website.



Visitors are seen at the Intel booth during the China Digital Entertainment Expo and Conference, also known as ChinaJoy, in Shanghai, China, on July 30, 2021. (Aly Song/Reuters)

Last year, foreign brands such as H&M, Nike, Adidas, New Balance, and Uniqlo lost their Chinese celebrity endorsements, and suffered from consumer boycotts and a decline in their stock values after they supported statements condemning slave labor in Xinjiang.

Other U.S. companies that caved in to CCP pressure and issued apologies are Airbnb, Coca-Cola, General Electric, and the Houston Rockets. Apple agreed to store data on servers run by Chinese state-owned firms. And Amazon deleted reviews of Chinese leader Xi Jinping's book that were less than five stars.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC), which supposedly upholds human rights, allowed Beijing to host the 2022 Winter Olympics—the decision implies that the CCP has met or has agreed to uphold the IOC stance on human rights.

The IOC claims that it's "committed to improving the promotion and respect of human rights within the scope of its responsibility across its three spheres of activity—as an organization, as the owner of the Olympic Games and as the leader of the Olympic Movement."

Secretary of State Antony Blinken and United Nations Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield have identified the situation in Xinjiang as genocide. And despite the diplomatic boycott of the Olympics by six countries, including the United States, free democracies and U.N. member states—including Muslim majority nations such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Pakistan—will participate in the Games. Additionally, U.S. companies, like Coca-Cola are spending hundreds of millions to sponsor an Olympics which will glorify the CCP.

U.S. corporations have also apologized to China for showing a map of Taiwan, listing Taiwan or Tibet as separate countries, and supporting democracy in Hong Kong.



Security guards at Shanghai Disneyland after its reopening in Shanghai, China on May 11, 2020. (Hu Chengwei/Getty Images)

In 1997, Disney apologized to Beijing for making the movie "Kundun" and Sony apologized for "Seven Years in Tibet"—both of which depicted the CCP invasion of

Tibet. Disney and Sony kowtowed to the CCP despite the fact that the U.S. State Department, Human Rights Watch, and the International Commission of Justice (ICJ) had published reports that documented the CCP's abuses in Tibet. In 2011, the U.N. called on Beijing to address human rights violations in the region.

With international organizations and the U.S. government condemning the CCP's actions, it would seem that U.S. companies would have no need to apologize or self-censor. And yet, in 2016, Marvel's "Dr. Strange" changed the backstory of the mystic master character, the Ancient One, from Tibetan to Celtic.

In 2017, the U.S. Congress held a hearing on Tibet, which outlined Beijing's abuses in the region. In 2019, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Tibetan Policy and Support Act, which calls for human rights and autonomy in Tibet. In 2020, U.N. rights experts called for increased protection of human rights in Xinjiang and Tibet. In October of the same year, 39 U.N. member states signed a joint statement on Xinjiang that also included human rights in Tibet.

Vladimir Lenin allegedly said, "When it comes time to hang the capitalists, they will sell us the rope."

U.S. corporations that make a lot of money in China are able to ignore the one-party state and its long list of violations: the lack of democracy and freedom of speech; the detention camps and forced labor; unfair trade practices such as forced technology transfer; organ harvesting; persecution of Falun Gong adherents, Christians, and other religious groups; and cultural genocide in Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, and Tibet. The same companies issue statements on corporate governance and corporate responsibility, while turning a blind eye to these obvious violations.

U.S. financial firms such as BlackRock, Vanguard, Fidelity, Hancock, and the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (TIAA) and the College Retirement Equities Fund (CREF) issue ESG mutual funds that invest in companies that rate highly in environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG). In spite of their implied commitment to human rights, these funds often include top Chinese firms, including Alibaba and Mengniu Dairy, as well as numerous American firms that have apologized to or otherwise support the CCP.

In July 2021, the U.S. State Department issued a "Xinjiang Supply Chain Business Advisory," outlining "the heightened risks for businesses with supply chain and investment links to Xinjiang, given the entities complicit in forced labor and other human rights abuses there."

In December 2021, Under Secretary of State Uzra Zeya was appointed as special coordinator for Tibet, prompting Beijing to allege that the United States was interfering with the internal affairs of China.

The CCP's condemnation of U.S. laws and resolutions is an example of interference in U.S. internal affairs. Washington's stance on the CCP's human rights violations is clear, and the Biden administration has said that there's no need for companies to apologize to Beijing.

Psaki said that "American companies should never feel the need to apologize for standing up for fundamental human rights or opposing repression."

With so much U.S. government and international support, there should be no reason for U.S. companies to self-censor or issue an apology to the CCP—but it's sure to happen again because there's a lot of money at stake.

Antonio Graceffo, Ph.D., has spent more than 20 years in Asia. He is a graduate of the Shanghai University of Sport and holds a China-MBA from Shanghai Jiaotong University. Graceffo 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/us-companies-continue-to-cave-in-to-pressure-from-beijing-over-human-rights_4200072.html

How Long Until China Controls Cuba?



Chinese Navy ship Type 054A frigate 548 Yiyang moors at the port of Havana on Nov. 10, 2015. (Yamil Lage/AFP via Getty Images)

How Long Until China Controls Cuba?

John Mac Ghlionn

January 11, 2022

Epoch Times Commentary

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has hidden risks. It's a debt trap. Not to mention a data trap.

The dangers of the BRI have been well documented by many authors, myself included. Nevertheless, 142 countries around the world have signed up to the dangerous initiative.

In December 2021, Cuba became the latest country to sign up. Will the Latin American nation come to regret this decision?

On Dec. 26, Global Times, a mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), published a piece discussing the ways in which China and Cuba will work together on projects such as infrastructure, technology, culture, education, tourism, energy, communications and biotechnology,” which, we’re assured, “are in line with Cuba’s development plans for the short and long term.”

Not only is the CCP planning to reshape Cuba’s infrastructural landscape, it’s planning to reshape the minds of the masses. What have culture, education, and communications got to do with the BRI—an initiative ostensibly designed to promote the construction of bridges, buildings, and roads?



Employees work in an oil rig operated by Cuba and China, in eastern Havana in this undated photo. (Adalberto Roque/AFP/Getty Images)

When a country signs a deal with China, it gives the CCP carte blanche to reshape that country in its own image. This includes the construction of buildings—but also includes the construction of ideologies.

Controlling the Cuban People

On July 11 of last year, anti-government protests took place in towns and cities throughout Cuba. The protests—which were fueled by a lack of access to basic provisions (including food and healthcare)—turned violent, leaving several people injured. At least 140 Cubans were detained or were disappeared.

Protesters used social media to highlight the brutality of the Cuban regime and the manner in which people were being beaten and bullied. Some protesters called on the U.S. government to intervene.

U.S. Senator Marco Rubio took to Twitter to voice his concerns. He wrote, “Expect the regime in #Cuba to block internet & cell phone service soon to prevent videos about what is happening to get out to the world.” He then added, “By the way, they use a system made, sold & installed by #China to control and block access to the internet in #Cuba.”

Rubio’s final point—concerning China’s ability to manipulate the internet in Cuba—is a particularly interesting one, not to mention a particularly worrying one.

Soon after Rubio posted his comments on Twitter, internet outages occurred across Cuba, preventing innocent people from sharing further evidence of government-backed violence.

As authors at The Diplomat have noted, “Chinese companies have played a key part in building Cuba’s telecommunications infrastructure, a system the regime uses to control its people, just as the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) does within its own borders.”

In December 2020, the Institute for War & Peace Reporting released a rather telling report. According to the authors, in Cuba, “only one company, the state-owned Etecsa, provides internet access. According to its own corporate magazine, Etecsa’s primary technology providers are three Chinese companies: Huawei, TP-Link, and ZTE.”

Three years before this particular report, the Open Observatory of Network Interference (OONI), a global community dedicated to combating internet censorship, “found traces of Chinese codes in both the surface and the interfaces used for access portals for wifi connections.”

“Ete[c]sa’s login portal,” we’re told, “appears to have been written by Chinese developers, since its source code contains comments written in Chinese. This indicates that Etecsa likely hired Chinese developers to implement the portal.”

Qurium, a Swedish nongovernmental organization dedicated to freedom of speech and internet security, published a report documenting the ways in which Huawei, China’s telecom giant, played a significant role in blocking very specific content in Cuba. The authors detected the “fingerprints of Huawei’s eSight, a network management software for routers, switches and firewalls.”

It’s important to stress that Qurium is an expert in digital forensics, meaning that its analysis—and warnings—are accurate.

It is abundantly clear that China’s involvement in Cuba goes far beyond the construction of various buildings and roads. CCP-backed businesses play an integral role in limiting what the Cuban people see and when they see it. For years, Beijing played a major role in silencing voices throughout the volatile nation. Now, the latest BRI agreement may very well prove to be the final nail in the Cuban coffin.

Will the Latin American nation regret signing a deal with the devil? It depends on who you ask. The tyrants in power will say no; everyday citizens, however, will say yes.

John Mac Ghlionn is a researcher and essayist. His work has been published, among others, by the New York Post, The Sydney Morning Herald, Newsweek, National Review, and The Spectator US. He covers psychology and social relations, and has a keen interest in social dysfunction and media manipulation.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/how-long-until-china-controls-cuba_4201187.html

Chinese Communists Lied and Hong Kong Died



Students wearing black graduation gowns and masks stand in front of the Goddess of Democracy statue at the Chinese University of Hong Kong campus as they hold up black balloons in Hong Kong, China, on Nov. 19, 2020. (Anthony Kwan/Getty Images)

Chinese Communists Lied and Hong Kong Died

Austin Bay

January 12, 2022

Epoch Times Commentary

In late December, the Voice of America reported that Hong Kong's Dec. 19, 2021, election had "almost completely eliminated pro-democracy voices from the former British colony's Legislative Council"—colloquially called the Legco.

VOA's evidence: pro-Beijing candidates and their local allies took 89 of the council's 90 seats.

I prefer the word "took," for in this faux election "won" is a propaganda deceit.

In March 2021, the process of choosing Legco members changed. Chinese Communist Party selection replaced election. Seventy seats were "reserved for candidates picked by influential members of industry groups and by a committee of Beijing loyalists." That's VOA's careful description.

Translation: the CCP installed cronies and operatives in the Legco. They are puppets and propagandists for the CCP dictatorship, not democratically elected representatives of Hong Kong's now dispossessed citizens. Beijing also required all candidates, even the 20 in so-called elected slots, to pledge loyalty to China and the CCP.

What killed Hong Kong's democracy? The blunt truth is the CCP dictatorship callously broke an international treaty.

Hong Kong's status was ostensibly protected by the Sino-British Declaration of 1984 that, on paper, assured autonomy through 2047. Hong Kong's post-handover constitution, The Basic Law (which had Beijing's imprimatur) promised "one country, two systems," adding "the socialist system and policies will not be practiced in Hong Kong."

Beijing communists, however, do not respect negotiated diplomatic compacts. The regime decided to absorb Hong Kong, so to hell with signed and solemn treaties that manage relations among peace-seeking nations.

History's bottom line: breaking the treaty means the CCP regime lied to the world. Since dictatorial control has largely shifted from collective decision-making to individual whim in the person of President Xi Jinping, that suggests Xi himself was complicit in the lie.

My guess is that Hong Kong's 2019 demands for liberal freedoms and evident distrust of Beijing had international narrative resonance. Xi and his propagandists contend that authoritarian governance works and portray China's dictatorship as a successful and

stable ideological competitor to what they call the U.S.-led “liberal international order.” Hong Kong’s demonstrations challenged that Big Lie.

Beijing has broken other treaties. In 2016, The Hague’s Court of Arbitration gave the Philippines a unanimous legal victory over China. The Philippines case involved South China Sea territorial disputes and Chinese maritime resource theft. The court used the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as its legal guide.

China signed that treaty—and continues to ignore the ruling. Chinese territorial expansionism, sometimes referred to as “adventurism,” continues in the South China Sea.

After Hong Kong, Taiwan is definitely a target.

Beijing’s abrogation of the Sino-British Declaration indicates it cannot be trusted or believed. It must be thwarted and resisted.

China’s economy is huge and its economic power immense. However, its economic operations are often opaque. Accounting practices are vague. Banks and corporations are creatures of the CCP. No one really knows how much debt saddles many Chinese companies. Japanese analysts see many signs the Chinese economy faces serious problems.

For these and many other reasons, free-world economies should “decouple” investments and technology sharing with China.

Relying on China for critical raw materials, such as rare earths, is a huge mistake that must end.

Relying on Beijing-made digital technology is another huge mistake.

Huawei and its suspect “next generation” wireless communication 5G technology has received deserved attention. Huawei systems have the ability to connect cellphones, the internet, the internet of things—virtually all things digital. Huawei could monitor communications (i.e., spy locally as well as globally), interrupt, deny or corrupt digital services. Evidence exists that Huawei is basically an arm of the CCP.

Recently Defense One reported on issues raised by a Virginia-based security firm that have attracted congressional attention. The firm found flaws in another Chinese

manufacturer's phones "that an adversary could use to steal data" and record calls and track user digital activity. The Chinese corporation's "service agreement requires users to accept China's laws" as required (paraphrasing Defense One) by China's "national interest."

Given Hong Kong's demise, the service agreement should be cause for concern.

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https://www.theepochtimes.com/chinese-communists-lied-and-hong-kong-died_4208706.html

Beijing's Trade Bullying Fails



China's Ambassador to Australia Cheng Jingye hosting a press conference at his residence in Canberra on April 7, 2021. (AAP Image/Mick Tsikas)

Beijing's Trade Bullying Fails

China's attempt to punish Australia inspires an effective decoupling

Milton Ezrati

January 12, 2022

Epoch Times Commentary

Australia is a case in point—for both China's trading partners and for decision-makers in Beijing. Because in 2020 Australia had asked too many questions about the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, Beijing had set out to deprive it of lucrative aspects of its China trade.

But Australia has managed to replace much of what it lost in China. The two lessons are clear: China is not as big as Beijing seems to think, and China's trading partners have more alternatives than is commonly believed.

The dispute blew up early in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Canberra in April 2020 led an international call to investigate the origins of the virus in Wuhan, the capital of China's Hubei Province. Beijing reacted immediately. It instructed its ambassador to Australia, Cheng Jingye, to threaten consumer boycotts of Australian products.

In May 2020, Chinese authorities imposed massive "anti-dumping" duties on Australian barley, one of the country's principal exports to China.

In the weeks that followed, Beijing discontinued export licenses for many Australian beef producers and placed heavy tariffs on Australian wine, wool, lobsters, sugar, copper, timber, and grapes. Tariffs on cotton, coal, and natural gas followed quickly.

In November 2020, Beijing handed Canberra a list of "14 grievances," threatening no return to normal trade relationships until Australia complied.

China has used trade sanctions before to try to wring diplomatic concessions from countries, including Canada, Japan, Lithuania, Mongolia, Norway, the Philippines, South Korea, and Taiwan.

The move against Australia was, however, unprecedented in its speed and severity. And if there ever was a country seemingly vulnerable to such pressure, it was Australia. In recent years, China had grown increasingly important to Australian trade. The volume had trebled in just the five years leading up to the dispute. China absorbed a great proportion of Australian overseas sales of coal, natural gas, and agricultural products. Money flows from Chinese tourists and students had also become important to the Australian economy. At the start of this trouble, China absorbed fully 40 percent of all Australian exports, approximately AU\$149 billion (about \$110 billion).

Yet Australia managed to avoid most of the economic pain that Beijing sought to inflict. Australian exporters found workarounds and, more significantly, alternative markets. Beef producers sent their cattle to abattoirs that, for one reason or another, had retained their export licenses in China. Lobster farmers found ways into Chinese markets through existing Hong Kong arrangements. China, to replace Australian coal, had tapped Russian and Indonesian sources, leaving it to the Australians to sell coal to former clients of Russia and Indonesia who had lost out to the new Chinese demand. Australian barley farmers found ready buyers in Saudi Arabia and Southeast Asia.

Europe and Japan consumed the Australian copper that China no longer bought, while Bangladesh and Vietnam did the same for Australian cotton. Timber and wine were tailored to the Chinese market, so they have had more difficulty finding substitutes, but they are adjusting.



Australian beef is seen at a supermarket in Beijing on May 12, 2020. China suspended imports from four major Australian beef suppliers on May 12, just weeks after Beijing's ambassador warned of a consumer boycott in retaliation for Canberra's push to probe the origins of the coronavirus. (Greg Baker/AFP via Getty Images)

The Australian Treasury sums up the whole incident with these estimates. Under the old trade arrangements, Chinese strictures threatened a loss of some AU\$5.4 billion (about \$3.9 billion) to Australian trade. The adjustments, however, have made back AU\$4.4 billion (about \$3.2 billion) for a net loss of about AU\$1.0 billion (about \$729 million). That amounts to barely one half of one percent of 2021 Australian exports.

Not only did Beijing's fit of pique fail to do Australia much economic harm, but it brought China diplomatic setbacks in its wake. Its representatives suffered embarrassment at the 2021 G-7 summit in Rome, when the Australian delegation distributed copies of the "14 grievances" as an example of Chinese coercion. More substantively, it seems likely

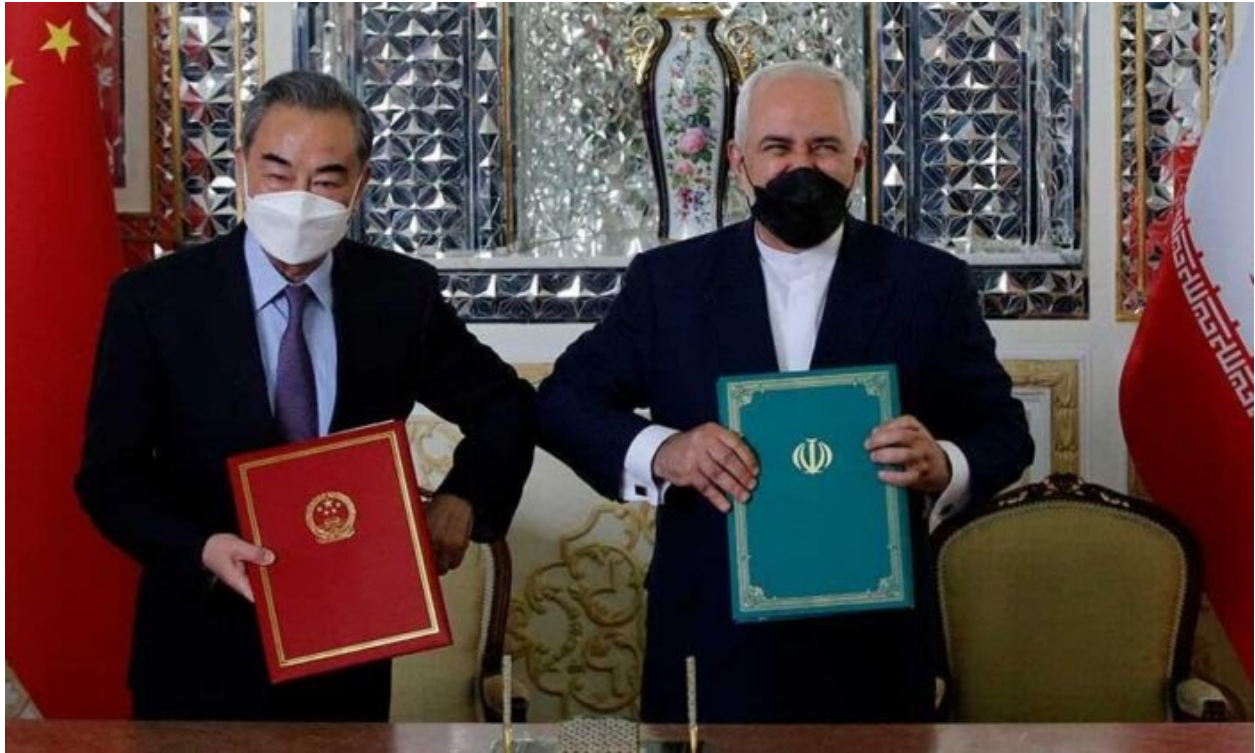
that Beijing's ruthless economic pressure contributed to Canberra's decision to press ahead with the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue with India, Japan, and the United States, as well as develop the AUKUS security partnership with the United Kingdom and the United States.

Beijing frequently chides Washington for its arrogance and overreach. It is often on the mark. Such behavior seldom gets the results intended for it. China's authorities might also look in the mirror and take the lesson for themselves. Their high-handed effort to bully Canberra has done Australia little harm and in the balance upset what were once useful trade relationships for China. It has embarrassed Beijing on the world stage and at the margin tipped the military balance away from China. All told, it speaks to poor planning and an adolescent petulance that never has a place in world affairs.

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https://www.theepochtimes.com/beijings-trade-bullying-fails_4204188.html

Beijing Evades Sanctions on Iran and Venezuela



Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif (R) and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, pose for a picture after signing an agreement in Tehran, Iran on March 27, 2021. (AFP via Getty Images)

Sanction China's Oil Trade

Beijing is using small refiners to evade sanctions on Iran and Venezuela

Anders Corr

January 12, 2022

Epoch Times News Analysis

Small refiners in China are evading U.S. sanctions on Iranian and Venezuelan oil exports by using false flags, old tankers, turning off ship transponders, and transferring oil mid-ocean between vessels to hide the origin of illegally-exported oil.

Iran's crude oil sales, which jumped 40 percent in 2021, are primarily purchased by China—Iran's biggest oil client. Other large purchasers of Iranian oil in 2021 are all close to Beijing, including the United Arab Emirates, Syria, Venezuela, and Russia.

Iran's illegal oil exports are facilitated by the Biden administration's lax enforcement measures in its failed attempts at reviving the Iranian nuclear deal.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has supported global dictators and rogue nations before, including through its oil imports. After the United States imposed sanctions on Russia for its 2014 invasion of Ukraine, China increased its crude oil purchases from the territorially-aggressive nation.

Despite Burma's genocide against the Rohingya starting in 2017 and coup in 2021, China has invested heavily in an oil and gas pipeline that starts at the military dictatorship's hydrocarbon fields off the Burmese shore and ends at the Chinese province of Yunnan.

China buys much of its oil from Iran despite the country's support of Hamas, Hezbollah, and Houthi terrorism in the Middle East. To finance the terrorists and boost Iran's economy, "Tehran uses a so-called ghost armada of foreign-flagged vessels to avoid detection and skirt international authorities," according to Adam Kredo in the Washington Free Beacon on Jan. 7.

"The country's ships routinely turn off their onboard tracking devices, which is illegal, so that they do not appear on radars as they ferry the oil across international waters."

Congressman Scott Franklin (R-Fla.) noted on Jan. 10: "Iran's illegal oil shipments to China skyrocketed by 40% in 2021 because of @POTUS's [President Biden's] lax enforcement of sanctions. Enforcement is critical to preventing the regime from paying off its terror proxies and engaging in uranium enrichment."

According to a Bloomberg analysis on Jan. 10, China's refiners doubled imports of Iranian and Venezuelan crude oil in 2021, more total imports than in the prior three years.



A crude oil tanker is seen at Qingdao Port, Shandong Province, China, on April 21, 2019. (Jason Lee/Reuters)

Small refiners with assets and markets largely limited to China and its allies are able to ignore the risk of U.S. penalties in order to gorge on the cheap oil, according to the report.

Processors in China bought 324 million barrels of Iranian and Venezuelan crude in 2021 on the cheap, up 53 percent compared to 2020. In 2018, China purchased 352 million barrels from the two rogue nations.

U.S. sanctions on Venezuela and Iran, without tougher enforcement measures against small importers, actually drive rogue exporters to the Chinese market and benefit Beijing.

“The risk that non-U.S. entities may lose access to the U.S. financial system or have their American assets frozen if found guilty of breaching the sanctions hasn’t dissuaded them,” according to the Bloomberg analysis.

“A glut of unsold cargoes, rising international prices, and the issuance of more crude import quotas by Beijing, have incentivized the private refiners, known as teapots, to snap up more oil from the pariah states.”

Official customs data does not typically include the small shipments of oil sold at below-market prices.

The crude from Iran, for example, sells at 10 percent cheaper to China, according to a tanker analyst from Braemar ACM Shipbroking Pte. The analyst, Anoop Singh, told Bloomberg that sanctioned oil is usually transported by aging ships that are better suited for the scrapyards.

Oil can be shipped directly from Iran and Venezuela on tankers that “go dark” by turning off their transponders, or by transferring the crude between vessels on the high seas, in order to hide its origins.

The illegal cargoes are often rebranded as originating in Malaysia and Oman, according to the Bloomberg report. While China claims that its last Iranian oil imports were in December 2020, shipments from Malaysia and Oman—likely with falsified origin papers—rose dramatically the next month.

Beijing’s allowance—if not encouragement—of illegal oil purchases from Iran and Venezuela undercut U.S. and allied attempts to promote democracy, free markets, and human rights globally. From the second quarter of 2020 to the first quarter of 2022, oil exports to China largely drove Iran’s economic rebound. This allows Iran and other rogue regimes to thumb their noses at human rights and democracy, secure in the belief that they will always have an export market in China. Tehran can afford a 10 percent discount if a guaranteed buyer in Beijing keeps its regime in power.

If dictators know that they can run to Beijing for their sanctioned exports, then U.S. sanctions could actually hurt the promotion of democratic values globally by further aligning the global economy with Beijing, and empowering the CCP’s totalitarianism and aspiration to global hegemony.

To avoid this double-edged effect, the United States should enforce sanctions against not only relatively easy targets like Venezuela and Iran, or inaccessible targets like teapot refiners in China, but by taking the tougher, riskier, and ultimately more effective action of sanctioning larger and more accessible refiners in China itself for the transgressions of smaller, less accessible entities.

All Chinese refiners are ultimately controlled by the CCP, and benefit the CCP. So sanctions must be enforced and should be escalated where necessary to send the signal that America and its allies will not be deterred, boxed in, or fooled by Beijing's fake companies and imports, or by Iran's ghost ships.

The entire market in China is controlled by the CCP and should be treated as such whenever any part violates international law.

Beijing's powerful surveillance technologies and state economic control must be aware of, and capable of stopping, the illegal trade in cheap sanctioned oil. But Beijing is profiting from the misery of Iranians and Venezuelans, and the instability caused to the U.S.-championed international system. So it falls upon the United States and allies to fix the problem.

The CCP's profit and growing threat to the international system and democracy can be stopped by escalating U.S. sanctions from small Chinese refiners to large Chinese companies with bigger global markets to lose. If even that fails, sanctions and tariffs can and must be increased on the entire country.

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/sanction-chinas-oil-trade_4206682.html

Former Xinjiang Commander to Lead China's Hong Kong Garrison: An Ominous Sign for Global Freedom



A Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldier guards the entrance to the PLA Hong Kong Garrison headquarters in the Central Business District in Hong Kong, on Aug. 29, 2019. (Anushree Fadnavis/Reuters)

Former Xinjiang Commander to Lead China's Hong Kong Garrison: An Ominous Sign for Global Freedom

China is expanding its genocidal policies to Hong Kong, with no protest from the world's democracies

Anders Corr

January 15, 2022

Epoch Times News Analysis

On Jan. 9, an ill wind blew into the FrAGRANT Harbor. Peng Jingtang, a blood-thirsty paramilitary chief from Xinjiang, was appointed by China's dictator Xi Jinping to lead Chinese troops in Hong Kong.

For years, Peng led the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) crackdown in Xinjiang—where there is an ongoing genocide.

From 2018, Major General Peng was chief of staff of the People's Armed Police (PAP) in the region. He was also the overall deputy chief of staff of the PAP.

The PAP is primarily charged with countering riots and protests. But Peng led "counterterrorism" efforts in Xinjiang, where there is little terrorism other than that imposed by the CCP itself.

In Xinjiang, the CCP uses the excuse of Uyghur terrorism to enforce its Han bigotry on the territory through a network of concentration camps, "reeducation" centers, and factories in which forced laborers are subjected to slave-like conditions, including torture, rape, mass surveillance, forced abortion, and state-imposed birth control.

In 2019, Peng bragged to the state-controlled Global Times newspaper that his paramilitary police squad had fired as many shots of ammo in Xinjiang in 2018 as all other security forces combined over the prior three years. Xi likely honored Peng's squad in 2021 for killing 91 "terrorists."

Now Peng will lead the Chinese military's Hong Kong garrison, which seeks to put the fear of the CCP into any Hongkongers who might wish for a return to the freedoms of what could be called the inter-imperial years, between Britain's control of the city and that of Beijing.

Peng's appointment follows that of Zheng Yanxiong, a CCP official who became the first director of China's Hong Kong Office for Safeguarding National Security. Zheng was previously an official in China's southern Guangdong Province, where he suppressed newspapers and imprisoned villagers who opposed land grabs by CCP officials in the area. One protest leader died in police custody.



Relatives carry a picture of Xue Jinbo, the village leader who died in police custody, in Wukan, Guangdong Province, China, on Dec. 16, 2011.

After Zheng's appointment in July 2020, the Hong Kong regime imposed a violent crackdown on the city's free press, including Apple Daily and Stand News.

China's offices in Hong Kong do not operate according to Hong Kong law, which is a violation of China's 1984 treaty with Britain that ensured an independent Hong Kong legal system, free speech, press freedoms, and other civil liberties after handover of the city to Beijing's control in 1997. Those freedoms should have lasted, according to the treaty lodged with the United Nations, for 50 years until at least 2047. All of that is gone now, as is any shred of credibility that Beijing's solemn treaty promises might previously have had.

After massive Hong Kong street protests of Beijing's illegal control in 2019, the CCP imposed the National Security Law that not only resulted in the intimidation, imprisonment, and exile of democracy advocates, but had global extraterritorial effect, illegalizing any support anywhere for Hong Kong independence, for example.

Yet, independence should be a right for any territory under the control of a genocidal, and therefore illegal, regime. That includes any part of mainland China, Taiwan, and

Hong Kong today. The failure of the world to at least morally support independence and democracy movements in China today is a failure of our morality and democratic ethics.

Electoral candidates in Hong Kong who do not demonstrate loyalty to Beijing are not allowed to stand for election to Hong Kong's Legislative Council. The CCP only permits Beijing loyalists or "patriots" to hold office in the city, giving the lie to ludicrous CCP claims that communist China is anything close to a real "democracy."

The dual appointments of Peng and Zheng in Hong Kong add more to the mountain of evidence that Beijing's intentions in Hong Kong are anything but honorable. The world should finally recognize that the CCP is more of a terrorist, fascist, or mafia organization, than a legitimate source of governance for Hong Kong or China more generally.

The sooner the world faces these unfortunate realities, the sooner we will find effective strategies to defend ourselves. These should include much tougher economic and diplomatic sanctions on the CCP, support for the independence of regions subject to genocide, bans on trade with territories controlled by genocidal organizations, and bans on CCP international travel, including to free world cities like New York, Paris, Geneva, and Rome.

To break from business as usual with China, we must free our minds of the illusion that the CCP is a legitimate political party. The Chinese people deserve democracy and their independence from the totalitarian CCP.

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/former-xinjiang-commander-to-lead-chinas-hong-kong-garrison-an-ominous-sign-for-global-freedom_4204396.html

The Looming Threat of Chinese Spyware

Bruce Abramson

January 17, 2022

Epoch Times Commentary

One of the great lessons of the past two years has been that the events poised to change our lives often percolate far from public consciousness.

Gain-of-function research on coronaviruses interested almost no part of the general public until it was far too late.

Critical race theory took over our classrooms long before parents began to notice, complain, and find themselves playing a late defense.

Street riots had been part of the American terrain since 2014, but most people other than those directly involved more-or-less shrugged them off until a massive wave engulfed urban America.

Few other than activists or election scholars thought much about the role of propaganda, or about balancing ballot access and election integrity, until the credibility of America's elections came under attack.

Which is why it might be worthwhile to set these now-front-burner issues aside for a moment and consider another critical threat arising in a place that few Americans care to look: the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) spyware worming its way into our defenses, infrastructure, communities, schools, and homes courtesy of procurement policy and purchasing decisions.

Like the issues that dominate today's front pages, this one is already visible—at least at the federal level—to those who are willing to look:

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) maintains a National Vulnerability Database (NVD). Relying in part on the NVD, a 2019 Inspector General report (pdf) singled out the Department of Defense's procurement of Lenovo computers, Lexmark printers, and GoPro cameras as potential threats to national security—a threat that we have yet to address.

Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.), in a February 2021 report (pdf) raising awareness about China's economic long war against the United States, argued that "Chinese firms' presence in Silicon Valley should not be treated as aboveboard commercial ventures but as spying outposts for the CCP."

And just last week, a letter from representatives John Katko (R-N.Y.) and Andrew Garbarino (R-N.Y.) (ranking members of the House Committee on Homeland Security and Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Innovation, respectively) to Secretaries Alejandro Mayorkas (Homeland Security) and Gina Raimondo (Commerce), called for an inquiry into whether "civilian agency procurement of commercial off-the-shelf information technology items may pose cybersecurity risks for telecommunications infrastructure," comparable to the national security vulnerabilities discussed in the IG report.

In a sign of the glacial pace that the federal government has set in addressing these critical issues, last week's letter was essentially a followup of their inquiry dated last April 13 (pdf).

Still, the federal government deserves at least some credit for basic awareness of the issue. That's more than can be said for the states. Lenovo, Lexmark, and other brands with CCP ties are used widely in state government offices around the country. Robert Chernin, my colleague at the American Center for Education and Knowledge (ACEK), recently called out the National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO) for its master contracts with Lenovo.

That contract is hardly the only problem at the state level. The procurement contracts that landed these Chinese products in government offices positions the CCP to track critical information on American infrastructure, energy, security, emergency awareness, and personnel. Perhaps hitting a bit closer to home, it also gives the Chinese regime a far better window into America's classrooms than most American parents can claim.

It seems likely that most of these potential incursions are happening not because of corruption or maliciousness, but rather because of laziness, inattention, and the insularity of procurement decisions. If Lenovo or Lexmark makes your school district a compelling offer, why not take it?

We've all been there. Though we all know today that our devices and software spy on us, most of us can remember when we first learned that "if you're not the customer, you're the product." Millions of us have simply accommodated ourselves to a world in

which a few tech titans—and the various companies to whom they've sold their collected data—know the most intimate details of our lives.

Perhaps it's time to consider that these giant and intrusive American corporations may be the least of our problems. According to a recent report in the Washington Post, China has been so pleased with its domestic surveillance network and social credit scores that it's now expanding its reach across the globe. America's wide open procurement policies and love of low prices is welcoming that expansion with open arms.

Taken together, the dissemination of Chinese technology products at all levels threatens the privacy and security of every American. It's long past time to think about the implications of our purchasing and procurement decisions. As we learned the hard way with the issues that have dominated the past two years, the time to act is before things hit the front page.

Bruce Abramson, Ph.D., J.D., is a senior fellow and director of the American Center for Education and Knowledge (ACEK). He is the author of five books, most recently "The New Civil War: Exposing Elites, Fighting Utopian Leftism, and Restoring America" (RealClear Publishing, 2021).

https://www.theepochtimes.com/the-looming-threat-of-chinese-spyware_4218314.html

Xu Na and the Million Souls



Chinese artist Xu Na in this undated photo. (Courtesy of Minghui.org)

Xu Na and the Million Souls

A poet, imprisoned in China, speaks of genocide

Anders Corr

January 19, 2022

Epoch Times Commentary

A woman, nameless and faceless to most, has been swallowed by the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) prisons. This woman is a poet and a painter. She has a name.

Xu Na.

But the world is largely silent about her suffering. The same prisons in China that opened their doors to her include the concrete cells in which over 100 prisoners of conscience were tortured and killed last year, and over 5,000 arrested.

These prisons hold millions of Uyghurs, Falun Gong adherents, Tibetans, and Chinese human rights advocates. They might soon hold millions of Christian prisoners of conscience. There are 44 million Christians at risk today in China.

Like all prisoners of conscience, Xu Na has principles. She believes in truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance.

These values are universal to most religions.

But they are illegal in China. They are the main tenets of Xu Na's Falun Gong spiritual practice that, like Islam and Tibetan Buddhism, is being outlawed and wrongly maligned to the point of what officials and scholars are only slowly acknowledging is a form of genocide.

Xu Na describes her persecution from her own lived experience. She compares her personal experience to genocide.

After being sentenced to five years in prison in 2001, Xu Na was tortured and subjected to forced labor.

"How I wish I had been imprisoned in Auschwitz instead of a Chinese prison," she wrote. "Because in the Nazi gas chambers, one could die quickly, while in the Beijing women's prison, it made living worse than dying."



A reenactment of torture called “the splits” used by China’s prisons or labor camps targeting Falun Gong practitioners. (Courtesy: Minghui.org)

Xu Na described a torture called “the splits,” in which “the legs were pulled apart at 180 degrees and three prisoners were ordered to sit on the legs and back of the tortured person and pressed repeatedly. The police were proud of this invention: ‘This is good, because the pain is unbearable, but it does not hurt the bones.’”

An unspeakable atrocity against a woman, which splits the body but also the morality and ethics of the prisoners forced to execute it, is the kind of torture that Xu Na could now be experiencing in prison, again.

Yet Xu Na experienced her persecution with the clarity that many in the “free world” do not have.

“My homeland represents the mountains and rivers of the land and the thousands of years of traditional Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism,” she wrote after her last imprisonment.

“But a hundred years ago a ‘ghost’ floating over Europe came to scourge the land of China, making the people profit-oriented, speaking of national profit, family profit and personal profit.”

Xu Na’s “ghost” sounds like the state capitalism that the Chinese Communist Party forces upon the citizens of China, and which is expanding from Tibet and Xinjiang to Hong Kong, and is now a direct and imminent threat to Taiwan as well.

This ghost is not accepted willingly, but forced upon entire nations at the point of Mao Zedong’s gun and Xi Jinping’s nuclear weapons.

“The whole country ‘crossed up and down to conquer profits’ and abandoned the five virtues of ‘benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and faith,’” wrote Xu Na.

“It battles the heavens and the earth, so that mountains and rivers are no longer. Now even the green water and green mountains are to be squeezed out of the golden and silver mountains.”

Xu Na is a poet who can eloquently describe her experience. Millions of others who have undergone similar kinds of persecution in China after 1949 remain entirely voiceless.

They suffer in unknown silence.

The world ignores their plight.

Instead, we plan to play Olympic “games” in Beijing, where the tortures of Xu Na could be taking place just across the street. Perhaps her screams will join the screams of cheering fans—oblivious to the blood and death upon which their games depend.

The screams could become louder, the torture of the splits much worse for Xu Na. We could never see her again, free to ponder the mountains and rivers of the land of China.

The torture is perhaps even worse for other prisoners, including guards and regular citizens who are in truth prisoners of the system, and forced by that system, or their own corrupted minds, to impose the torture upon her.

The world, by ignoring Xu Na’s screams, is complicit. We who are silent are all those prisoners and guards, simultaneously forcing an injustice on Xu Na, ourselves, and the future.

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/xu-na-and-the-million-souls_4221041.html

In China, a Deluded Regime Leads Its People Down a Doomed Path



A road in Xi'an, China's northern Shaanxi Province, was blocked amid a COVID lockdown on Dec. 31, 2021. (STR/AFP via Getty Images)

In China, a Deluded Regime Leads Its People Down a Doomed Path

John Mac Ghlionn

January 22, 2022

Epoch Times Commentary

What makes the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) so dangerous? Is it the fact that the elites in Beijing appear to speak a completely different language to the rest of the world?

To be clear, by language, I'm not referring to Mandarin. I'm referring to a type of language completely detached from reality. Part speaking in tongues, part speaking in plain old nonsense, this type of language. Let's call it *doublespeak with Chinese characteristics*, which has become frighteningly common since COVID-19 burst onto the scene.

It's now beyond reasonable doubt that the coronavirus originated in Wuhan. Was it intentionally created, or was it the product of mismanagement, negligence, and overall ignorance? In truth, we don't know.

What we do know, though, is that the virus originated in China. Nevertheless, the CCP, in a desperate yet utterly futile attempt to perpetuate a charade that has worn incredibly thin, continues to spin the most preposterous of narratives. Could COVID have actually originated in Maine, United States? No, of course not. But that hasn't stopped Beijing from attempting to sell the lie. Unfortunately, millions of people have bought it.

The CCP, it seems, cannot be reasoned with. It's the political equivalent of Jim Jones, intent on dragging us all over the cliff. While Xi Jinping might lack the charisma of a man like Jones, he certainly matches the evangelical preacher when it comes to paranoia.

A paranoid leader is a dangerous one, and a country that finds itself unable to question the motives of a paranoid leader is destined for disaster. That, in my opinion, is what makes those in Beijing so dangerous. They treat their own people despicably—imprisoning them, torturing them, disappearing them, and even killing them. Can the CCP be reached? Can it actually be made to see common sense, whatever common sense looks like in 2022? The answer, I fear, appears to be a no, and a resounding no at that.

If in doubt, let me point you in the direction of a recent Bloomberg article, which outlines the many ways in which the CCP, in a desperate attempt to achieve "zero COVID" (an endeavor that makes zero sense) is desperately attempting to crack down on the virus.

Everything that needn't be targeted is being targeted, from overseas mail to people's pets. As the Bloomberg piece notes, ever since the "first omicron infection was found in a woman who received post from Canada," international mail has received high levels of

scrutiny. The woman’s letter, “which had passed through the U.S. and Hong Kong, tested positive for a similar strain previously found in North America and Singapore.”

The idea of cracking down on all mail from abroad might sound preposterous—and it is—but that hasn’t stopped the CCP from telling its citizens to “minimize international purchases and disinfect packages.”

Scandinavian fish is also frowned upon by the CCP, according to the Bloomberg piece. In fact, “Norwegian salmon was initially linked to an outbreak in Beijing in June 2020 after a cluster of over 300 infections was traced to a chopping board used by a seller of the fish.”

To think that one chopping board—in a land of millions, if not billions, of chopping boards—prompted the CCP to respond in such a manner shows us what we are dealing with.

Madness has gripped the country.



staff member from Agriculture, Fisheries, and Conservation Department walks past a pet shop that was closed after some pet hamsters were tested positive for the

coronavirus, according to local authorities, in Hong Kong, on Jan. 18, 2022. (Kin Cheung/AP Photo)

In Hong Kong, a once free-wheeling, rather inviting city, the CCP has cracked down on everything from free speech to hamsters—yes, hamsters. According to the Bloomberg piece, these furry creatures “are being investigated as a possible source of a surprise delta-variant case in a pet-shop worker and potentially a rare example of animal-to-human transmission.”

The key word in that sentence is rare. Animal-to-human transmission of the virus is incredibly rare. Nevertheless, the CCP has “ordered more than 100 customers into quarantine and will cull about 2,000 small animals, including hamsters, chinchillas and rabbits,” the report said.

There are reactions, and then there are overreactions. The CCP excels at the latter.

When it comes to the murdering of pets, such overreactions have profound consequence. In a piece published in November, I documented the ways in which the CCP, ruthless in the extreme, employed individuals to murder the pets of people in quarantine—without the owners’ knowledge. Many of these individuals were single, and looked to their pets as a source of comfort and support.

How do you reason with the unreasonable? You can’t. And this is what should worry us all, not just those who find themselves living in China. After all, if China is to become the most powerful country in the world, which looks increasingly likely, and this country is going to be run by a totalitarian regime, which is almost guaranteed, then we must be able to engage in meaningful dialogue.

But engaging in such dialogue is impossible if one party is reading from a somewhat logical script, while the other is reading from one devoid of all sensibilities. While the majority of the world prepares to embrace a post-pandemic world, the CCP appears determined to keep its people trapped in a never-ending cycle of pernicious lies and draconian lockdowns.

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