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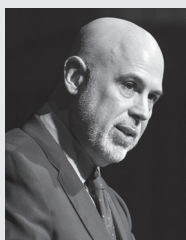
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Facing Up to the China Threat

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The following is adapted from a speech delivered on September 29, 2020, in Rapid City, South Dakota, at a Hillsdale College National Leadership Seminar.

We are at risk of losing a war today because too few of us know that we are engaged with an enemy, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), that means to destroy us. The forces of globalism that have dominated our government (until recently) and our media for the better part of half a century have blinded too many Americans to the threat we face. If we do not wake up to the danger soon, we will find ourselves helpless.

That is a worst-case scenario. I do not think we Americans will let that happen. But the forces arrayed against us are many. We need to understand what we are up against and what steps must be taken to ensure our victory.

OUR MODERN understanding of Communist China begins during the Cold War, with President Nixon’s strategic belief that China could serve as a counterweight to the Soviet Union. This belief seemed to carry with it two great benefits. First, the U.S. wouldn’t have to take on the Soviet Union by itself: Communist China was a populous country that bordered the Soviet Union and shared our interest, or so we thought, in checking its global ambitions. Second, by engaging with China—especially in terms of trade, but also by helping it develop technologically—we would help to end communism as a guiding force in China. This second notion might be called the China dream: economic liberalism would lead to political liberalism, and China’s communist dictatorship would fade away.

At the end of the Cold War, pursuing the China dream appeared a safe course of action, given that the U.S. was then the world’s preeminent military power. The 9/11 Islamic terrorist attacks reinforced the notion that superpower conflict was a thing of the past—that our major enemy was now radical Islam, widely diffused but centered in the Middle East. Later that same year, China was granted “Most Favored Nation” trading status and membership in the World Trade Organization. Little changed when the Bush administration gave way to the Obama administration. The latter’s “pivot to Asia” was mostly rhetorical—a justification to degrade our military capabilities vis-à-vis China, integrate even further the U.S. and Chinese economies, and prioritize the Middle East above all else.

Under both administrations, the U.S. failed to build a military that could challenge Communist China’s aggression in the Pacific—specifically

its building of a modern navy and its construction of military installations on artificial islands in the South China Sea—and acquiesced in the export of much of the U.S. manufacturing base to China and elsewhere.

History will record that America’s China policy from the 1970s until recently was very costly because it involved a great deal of self-deception about the nature of the Chinese regime and the men who were running it.

COMMUNIST CHINA TODAY

The People’s Republic of China (PRC) has a population of 1.4 billion. They are governed by the Chinese Communist Party, which has 90 million members, and by an elite class of approximately 300 million additional Chinese who are deeply invested in the regime’s success. Not all of them may believe in every aspect of what the party calls “socialism with Chinese characteristics”—an admixture of Maoist, Marxist, and Leninist communism—but they actively support the regime. The system benefits these elites, whose businesses, mostly state-owned enterprises, are privately run with active participation by the CCP. Once a business reaches a certain size, it will take on board a cadre of party members who serve as a direct liaison between the business and the government.

However inefficient this may sound, understand that the CCP operates a massive global intelligence network through its Ministry of State Security. This network does its part to assist Chinese business and industry through industrial espionage, cyber warfare, and economic coercion. This type of state capitalism or neo-mercantilism has led to the creation of a modern economy that rivals

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that of the U.S. We might like to believe that communism in China cannot be sustained and will lead to the collapse of the regime. And it well may someday. But the CCP has proven extremely capable in building an empire that can govern 1.4 billion people. This required the conquest of a large number of peoples who were not willingly subjugated, as well as the physical mastery of a territory not easily managed. Doing this in such a short period of time and in such a ruthless and determined way is an achievement unparalleled in the known history of the world.

Under both the Bush and Obama administrations, the U.S. failed to build a military that could challenge Communist China's aggression in the Pacific—specifically its building of a modern navy and its construction of military installations on artificial islands in the South China Sea—and acquiesced in the export of much of the U.S. manufacturing base to China and elsewhere.

Today the PRC has a military of two million men, including the world's largest navy. This military may not be qualitatively on par with the U.S. military, but quantity has a quality of its own. In the last five years of U.S. naval war game simulations, in which the U.S. is pitted against China, the U.S. has failed to come out victorious. We do not have enough ships and munitions to defeat China's navy absent the use of nuclear weapons. And while it is often said that the Chinese do not have a nuclear arsenal to challenge the U.S., the fact is we don't know what the Chinese possess. We know they are capable of building nuclear weapons and advanced missiles and rocketry. We know they stole or otherwise obtained advanced U.S. technology involving warhead miniaturization and guidance systems and that they have had the industrial capacity to build these for nearly two decades.

On our side, we know that the U.S. has not tested a nuclear warhead since 1992 and has not built the

kind of advanced arsenal that might be required to deter China. And we know that Chinese President and CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping adheres to the beliefs of Mao Tse-tung, who held that the U.S. was a "paper tiger" that possessed nuclear weapons but would not use them. There is also the rather disturbing belief, also a favorite of Mao, that even if we did use our nuclear weapons, we could not kill all of them. Such is the way a nation at war thinks.

As for China's air force, it possesses and is building today advanced fighter aircraft that rival anything the U.S. has built. They may not yet have the quantity, but that will come with time. As for proficiency in war fighting, that is something that likewise can be acquired. For all of our nation's military superiority, we have not been in

combat with a peer competitor for half a century. As good as we may be, history contains many examples of militarily inferior nations developing military superiority. If we think that this is not what Communist China is seeking to do today, we are mistaken.

UNRESTRICTED WARFARE

There is a famous book, *Unrestricted Warfare*, written in 1999 by two People's Liberation Army colonels. It argues that war between the PRC and the U.S. is inevitable, and that when it occurs China must be prepared to use whatever means are necessary to achieve victory. This includes economic warfare, cyber warfare, information warfare, political warfare, terrorism, and biological warfare, in addition to conventional and nuclear warfare. The book's purpose was not only to shape Chinese policy, but also to plant the idea in the minds of U.S. policymakers that China will consider nothing out of bounds.

The book itself is an act of information warfare. Understanding the lengths to which the PRC is willing to go, might the U.S. prefer some kind of accommodation in lieu of building a military capable of challenging China's strategic designs?

In thinking about the implications of the word *unrestricted*, it is useful to look at the CCP's treatment of its own people.

Estimates put the number of those killed at the hands of the CCP—whether through war, starvation, or execution—at roughly 100 million. The mass murder committed by the party and its Red Guards during the Great Leap Forward (1958-1962) and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) alone resulted in some 70 million dead. And these numbers do not even take into account the forced abortions stemming from China's one-child policy. That number is conservatively estimated to be 500 million—500 million children murdered in the womb.

The Chinese government today is perfecting a system of social credit scoring that relies on constant monitoring of its people using the tools of social media, with the aim of grading each individual based on his or her support of the regime. This exerts a chilling effect on the people, who seem to have decided to go along with their communist masters lest they be excluded from whatever benefits they might enjoy from China's economic modernization.

Many of us have heard of the CCP's imprisonment in concentration camps of one to two million Muslim Uyghurs in Xinjiang province. Fewer of us are aware of how the Chinese government facilitates the abduction of Uyghur women for sexual use by Chinese soldiers—or even worse, if that were possible, how the government harvests the organs of the Uyghur population for sale both in China and abroad. This latter atrocity has become a multi-billion dollar industry: the Uyghur organs, since they are uncorrupted by alcohol or pork, are especially desirable to

wealthy Muslims in the Middle East and elsewhere.

The ability of Westerners to avert their eyes from such abject horrors is clearly illustrated by the new Disney movie *Mulan*, parts of which were filmed mere miles from some of these camps. Disney went so far as to thank the Turpan Municipal Bureau of Public Security, responsible for imprisoning the Uyghurs, for its help during filming.

As an indication of the CCP's treatment of Christianity, Chinese school textbooks are now promoting a false account of Christianity and of Jesus's life and teaching. In the Chinese version of the story from the Gospel of John about the adulteress threatened with stoning, for example, Jesus explains that he too is a sinner and then stones the woman to death after the crowd disperses. Despite this and the CCP's long history of persecuting Christians, Pope Francis will be renewing his agreement with the CCP that gives it effective control over how the Catholic Church, or what passes for it, is run in China.

The CCP operates a vast intelligence network in the U.S as well. It is made up not merely of intelligence operatives working for the Ministry of State Security, but also a myriad of business and industry officials, Chinese scholar associations, Confucius Institutes operating on American campuses, and 370,000 Chinese students attending American universities. Every one of these Chinese citizens is subject to Article 7 of the PRC's National Intelligence Law of 2017, which requires that "any organization or citizen shall support, assist, and cooperate with state intelligence work." Students and others must report to handlers in Chinese consulates and embassies about who they meet, the research they're working on, and whatever else is demanded.

It should not be surprising that a combination of the efforts of this network and of China-based cyber criminals yields \$500 to \$600 billion of intellectual property theft annually. Also

aiding the effort is China's Thousand Talents Program, which seeks to recruit the brightest Chinese and American professionals to support Chinese science and industry. This has proved to be a real problem for the U.S.—consider the recent arrest of Harvard chemist Charles Lieber for not disclosing his ties to the Chinese government and the firing of the Chinese-American CIO of the California Public Employees' Retirement System, who had invested CalPERS funds in Chinese corporations tied to the People's Liberation Army.

Perhaps the greatest threat to the U.S. posed by the CCP is its corruption of America's business and financial elites, who view the economic benefits of dealing with China as more important than America's national interests. If there is a single group committed to the globalist project and the delusory China dream, it is Wall Street. Our great investment banks are now selling trillions of dollars in debt and equity in Chinese corporations to American investors and retirees. They are literally betting on the success of China at the expense of the U.S.

THE PEOPLE'S WAR

Over the past decade alone, the PRC has stolen almost \$6 trillion of U.S. intellectual property, including tech innovations coming out of Silicon Valley and Seattle, entertainment coming out of Hollywood, and medical research and development coming out of New England and elsewhere. Properly understood, this is China stealing the wealth and future wealth of the American people. It is only recently that our government began trying to combat this theft in a serious way. At the same time, the U.S. has begun a strategic military buildup—including the creation of a new branch of our armed services, the

U.S. Space Force, sending a signal that the U.S. would not cede the strategic high ground of space to China, which is already active in militarizing space.

In response, on May 13, 2019, the PRC, through the Xinhua News Agency—which is controlled by the CCP—declared a “People's War” against the U.S. This was specifically in response to U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods, which themselves were a response to restrictions of access to Chinese markets and China's failure to negotiate in good faith on the theft of intellectual property.

What was meant by this declaration of a People's War? Was the phrase essentially rhetorical or did it signal a fundamental shift or escalation in Chinese thinking?

We know with certainty that after the virus began spreading in Wuhan in the fall of 2019, the Chinese government closed down flights from Wuhan to the rest of China. At the same time, it allowed flights from Wuhan to continue to go to Europe and to the U.S.—where the Chinese knew with certainty that the virus would spread.

I would not go so far as to say that the COVID-19 virus that originated in the Wuhan Institute of Virology was part of this People's War. But the virus did set into motion a radical reorientation of American society that had grave economic and political consequences.

We know with certainty that after the virus began spreading in Wuhan in the fall of 2019, the Chinese government closed down flights from Wuhan, which is in Hubei province, to the rest of China. At the same time, it allowed flights from Wuhan to continue to go to Europe and to the U.S.—where the Chinese knew with certainty that the virus would spread. And when President Trump closed the U.S. to flights from China, its foreign ministry and one of the CCP's propaganda arms, the *Global Times*, pushed for a reversal of this policy—again, knowing full well how contagious the virus was. Indeed, the Chinese



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government locked down Wuhan and released videos of men in hazmat suits welding doors shut so that people could not leave their homes.

The U.S. government and its Centers for Disease Control, which has offices in China, asked to be let into Wuhan to investigate. To this day China has denied us access. The initial gene sequencing for the virus that we received from China—evidence that led the now famous public health bureaucrat Anthony Fauci to say that China was being open and cooperative—was incorrect, a fact that made testing Americans for the virus all the more difficult. Were these decisions by the Chinese government part of the People's War?

When challenged on its dishonesty regarding the virus's origins, the CCP's Xinhua News Agency threatened that China could plunge America into a "mighty sea of coronavirus," pointing out that China controlled the supply chain for the active pharmaceutical ingredients used in the production of 90 percent of our medicines. This fact alone—the result of the loss of the U.S. manufacturing base to China and other nations, an explicit policy of our government until recently—is a scandal of immense proportions that our government is now working to correct.

Regardless of whether the COVID-19 virus was a by-product of biological weapons research or resulted from inadequate safeguards in a virology lab, it is the CCP that is to blame for its spread throughout the world, and it was criminal for the Chinese government to keep the world in the dark about the nature of the pathogen.

Nor has COVID-19 been the only line of attack in this People's War. It should come as no surprise that the PRC uses its diplomatic missions around the world as a base for industrial espionage and to conduct political and information warfare. Thus it was that on July 24 of this year, the U.S. State Department closed down the Chinese consulate in Houston, saying that it was serving as a hub for CCP operatives who were engaging in

theft of America's research into, among other things, the development of a COVID-19 vaccine.

To quote a State Department official:

Consulates are also bases of operations for Fox Hunt teams. These are teams of agents sent from China here to coerce economic fugitives—meaning political rivals of President Xi, the Communist Party critics, and refugees—coercing them, that is, to return to the PRC. Consulates enabled the activities of those teams. Consulates also enabled direct lobbying of state and local officials, as well as business people, to favor Chinese interests. And while that's to be expected by diplomats, when it takes a turn towards the coercive or the covert, that becomes a national security problem.

It is also believed that Chinese operatives in the Houston consulate provided intelligence to Black Lives Matter and Antifa rioters in Houston as a way of demonstrating their solidarity. Indeed, there is growing evidence that the CCP's United Front includes these groups, and that some of the funding for BLM and Antifa is coming from CCP-sponsored or affiliated groups: Liberation Road, the Freedom Road Socialist Organization, and the Chinese Progressive Association.

IN CONCLUSION, Americans are not looking for war with Communist China, but Communist China appears to be at war with us. As a first order of business, we must continue what we have at long last begun: building a military designed to deter Chinese aggression and pursuing trade and other policies that put our own national interests first.

Equally important—especially given the violence in our cities that our foreign enemies cheer—is defending our American way of life and teaching our countrymen why America deserves our love and devotion, now and in the days ahead. ■