

WEEK 33, 2019

THE EPOCH TIMES

# CHINA INSIDER

## ONE-CHILD FOLLY

DOCUMENTARY EXPOSES 35 YEARS OF SUFFERING  
UNDER CHINA'S ONE-CHILD POLICY

See Page 6

China Starts Currency War

What's next? 5

## CHINESE INFLUENCE

# The Trojan Horse: How WeChat Infiltrates Western Politics, Part 2

LIN YAN

As the largest social media and messaging app in China, Tencent's WeChat controls the news flow for overseas Chinese, directing them to read and watch content sanctioned by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

U.S. think tanks and China experts worry that WeChat is the new Trojan Horse which is infiltrating the West as the China-censored app has been widely used to influence Western politics and Chinese living abroad.

WeChat is a platform of communication between Western elected officials and political candidates and Chinese voters. It serves two purposes. One: the CCP controls political news and information flow on WeChat to benefit either pro-CCP political parties and political candidates, or those that the CCP wants to back. Secondly, by using WeChat Western politicians choose to self-censor by the CCP's standards in order to get Chinese votes.

## Western Politicians Evade CCP's Taboos

In addition to suppressing political hardliners, WeChat is also pulling some Western politicians towards the CCP's worldview.

Across Australia, Canada, and the United States many political parties and politicians have opened WeChat accounts to stay closer to Chinese immigrants in their districts.

It can't be denied that WeChat is under the close monitor and supervision of the CCP and has backdoors and other security issues no matter where the users are located. WeChat received a rating of 0 out of 100 in Amnesty International's instant messaging software security assessment, because of issues like not having end-to-end encryption and the presence of backdoors.

Even more concerning is the unwitting self-censorship by Western politicians.

One example is the Australian Federal election on May 18, 2019. Prior to the election, many candidates increasingly used Chinese social media platforms such as Weibo and WeChat to engage with Chinese voters.

"When Australian politicians are trying to communicate with their Chinese-Australian voters via this app (WeChat),

**WeChat is not just another social media tool to reach a specific demographic. It is a platform that can be manipulated by a foreign government—one that is known for its human rights violations—to suit its needs.**

Wang Yaqiu, researcher



(Above) As the largest telecom app in China, Tencent's WeChat controlled the news source for overseas Chinese, made them listen to and watch the CCP's content and do what the CCP wish.

(Below) 'The Trojan Horse' sculpture weighing 5.7 tons and measuring 46 feet (14 meters) high by 66 feet (20 meters) long in St. Moritz on March 17, 2016.

they are automatically part of the censorship apparatus that is being run out of Beijing," cyber analyst Fergus Ryan from the Australian Strategic Policy Institute told Australia Broadcasting Corp (ABC).

"It means that certain sensitive topics that Beijing doesn't like people discussing are not able to be discussed," Ryan said.

Australian Labor Party leader Bill Shorten interacted with the Australian Chinese community in a live WeChat forum on March 27. When he was asked questions regarding Chinese tech company Huawei, the CCP's infiltration and interference in Australia, a Chinese billionaire and political donor who has ties to the CCP, and negative views on the CCP, Shorten did not answer any of these questions.

On the other hand, the CCP has been using WeChat to shepherd Chinese immigrants' votes to pro-CCP candidates.

Researchers from the University of Canberra's Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis analyzed Australian content on 47 of the most visited WeChat Official accounts in mainland China between November 2018 and March 2019. 29 of these accounts were aligned with the CCP, according to ABC.

The 2,057 articles examined showed clear bias against the Liberal government, the researchers said. While little criticism was made against the Labor Party and its leader Bill Shorten in these articles, reports and remarks about the Liberal government were overwhelmingly negative and aggressive.

"Our evidence suggests that accounts aligned more closely with the Government in Beijing have a clear anti-Liberal (Government) story coming out of them," said Michael Jensen, a senior research fellow at the University of Canberra's Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis.

Former Chinese diplomat at the Sydney Embassy Chen Yonglin told The Epoch Times, "The CCP has a plan for Australia. They want to lead the country to a certain side. Basically they want the Labor Party to replace the Liberal government."

"What's particularly concerning about WeChat is that it is subject to Chinese censorship and control," Australian Strategic Policy Institute senior cybersecurity analyst Tom Uren said. "It's not just censor-

ship—sometimes they promote particular issues so it's a way of controlling public debate."

## WeChat Controls News and Information for Overseas Chinese

Wang Yaqiu, a China researcher of Human Right Watch, shared a thought-provoking story on Washington Post in February 2019.

During the 2016 U.S. presidential election, one of Wang's Chinese friends shared a Chinese website link that he was going to use to watch the live debate between Trump and Hillary Clinton.

Her friend was attending graduate school in New York at the time. He bypassed both live TV broadcasts and YouTube, and chose to watch the live debate on a Chinese website under the CCP's stringent censorship.

"Why? Because that was where he obtained information about everything, including the country he immigrated to," Wang wrote. "He's certainly not alone."

Chinese people abroad are largely still under the CCP's information control. That's why some Chinese are still aligned to the CCP on issues like human rights and politics.

On WeChat, all politically sensitive contents and criticism on the CCP are removed instantaneously by the system. This includes information shared privately between users. Some posts survive a few seconds before they are removed. Some messages are intercepted, though no failure notice is given that they were never received.

Many "sensitive terms" are human rights related, such as the Tiananmen Square Massacre, Falun Gong, and the recent protests in Hong Kong.

"WeChat is not just another social media tool to reach a specific demographic. It is a platform that can be manipulated by a foreign government—one that is known for its human rights violations—to suit its needs," Wang remarked.

A 2016 study by the University of Toronto found that WeChat applies different standards for users in mainland China and internationally, with the majority of censorship targeted for Chinese accounts. "Remarkably, the researchers found that censorship stays on even if users switch to a non-mainland phone number or travel to a different country," said the University.

Australian media outlet The Conversation found a significant disparity between the

news published by WeChat's top accounts targeting Chinese in Australia, and that from Special Broadcasting Service's (SBS) Mandarin version. SBS is funded by the Australian government and operates independently.

During a 20-month period, SBS dedicated 2.9 percent of its output to Chinese politics and foreign policy. The number was 0.26 percent for WeChat accounts, according to The Conversation. The majority of the WeChat articles "had similar content to news reports from China's domestic news agencies, which tend to reflect the position of the Chinese government," said The Conversation.

In a separate study, The Conversation surveyed Mandarin Chinese speakers in Australia to understand their media consumption habits. Over 60 percent of survey participants identified WeChat as their primary source of news and information, and only 22 percent reported that they "always access news and information from English-language media in Australia."

Chinese in the United States showed a similar pattern. A 2018 study by the Tow Center for Digital Journalism showed that among U.S.-based WeChat users, 79 percent said they read political news from chat groups. Seventy-one percent of users also reported belonging to groups larger than 100 people, where members may not know each other outside of WeChat.

New York commentator Zhu Ming said that WeChat is hard to replace in the near future for many overseas Chinese because it provides a convenient way to stay connected with those inside of China.

But Zhu advised Chinese to try to think independently. "When Chinese go abroad, they should learn to be part of a normal society, and cleanse their habitual ways of thinking that were formed in a communist environment," Zhu said. "Accepting different viewpoints, practicing critical thinking and reducing reliance on WeChat are some good first steps for Chinese overseas."

(Above) People use their mobile devices in a metro station in Shanghai on March 12, 2014.

(Below) The logo of the Chinese instant messaging app WeChat is shown in a July 24, 2019, illustration on the screen of a tablet.

## A Trojan Horse in the Heart of Western Politics

As the major news source for overseas Chinese, WeChat has been impacting Western politics from within.

Canadian member of Parliament Jenny Kwan posted a statement on Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement in September 2017, in which she praised Hong Kong protesters for "fighting for their belief and a better society." It took WeChat little time to delete her posting.

In an email reply to human rights expert Wang Yaqiu, Kwan said "the post received 100 reads, 1 like and 3 comments before WeChat administrators deleted it. We did not realize it was removed until we read your email."

Wang said that the censorship on WeChat allows the CCP to easily and quietly prevent foreign elected officials to communicate to Chinese voters in their own countries.

"If the CCP determines to interfere with such conversations in a broader scope, the result will be unimaginable," Wang said.

In its widely read "Chinese Influence & American Interests: Promoting Constructive Vigilance", the Hoover Institution also pointed out the potential harm WeChat can do to U.S. politics.

"A vast and vital community of Americans gets most of its 'news' from, and does most of its communicating via, a platform known to be censored by a foreign government that opposes free speech and has been named by the U.S. National Security Strategy as the greatest long-term security challenge the nation faces," said the Hoover report. "In the United States, as in China, WeChat censors news and comments in accordance with rules set by China's Communist Party."

"But it is more than that," said the report. "For many users in the United States, China, and around the world, WeChat is a digital ecosystem so ubiquitous that it constitutes a lifestyle—a drumbeat that determines the rhythms of the day."

The authors of the report are mostly leading China experts. Many of them hoped the CCP would reform for real freedom for the

people, but now they see their hopes would never come true.

The report further warned that "the anti-American hothouse created by WeChat's 'news channels' leads to a type of resentful pro-Chinese nationalism that is ripe for exploitation by the Chinese government."

Such resentment is a strong message to Western politicians through overseas Chinese: You'd better not be tough against the CCP because you'll be labeled as a China-hater or China-rejector, and that will cost you many Chinese voters.

University of Technology Sydney's China expert Professor Feng Chongyi told The Epoch Times, "The WeChat platform itself is one that's operated by the CCP—a platform with complete features for censorship, deletion, and filtering."

"The 'public opinions' on WeChat are coined. This platform is by no means a natural and natural discussion platform. It'll cause turmoil for Australia's democratic system," Feng said. "If such platforms are used in the election process, the distorted view of public opinions will cause the voters to misjudge the political parties."

Commentator Zhu Ming pointed out the fact that WeChat has been leading the Chinese community to support or reject certain Western politicians should be treated as an espionage activity trying to shape and influence Western politics by a foreign power.

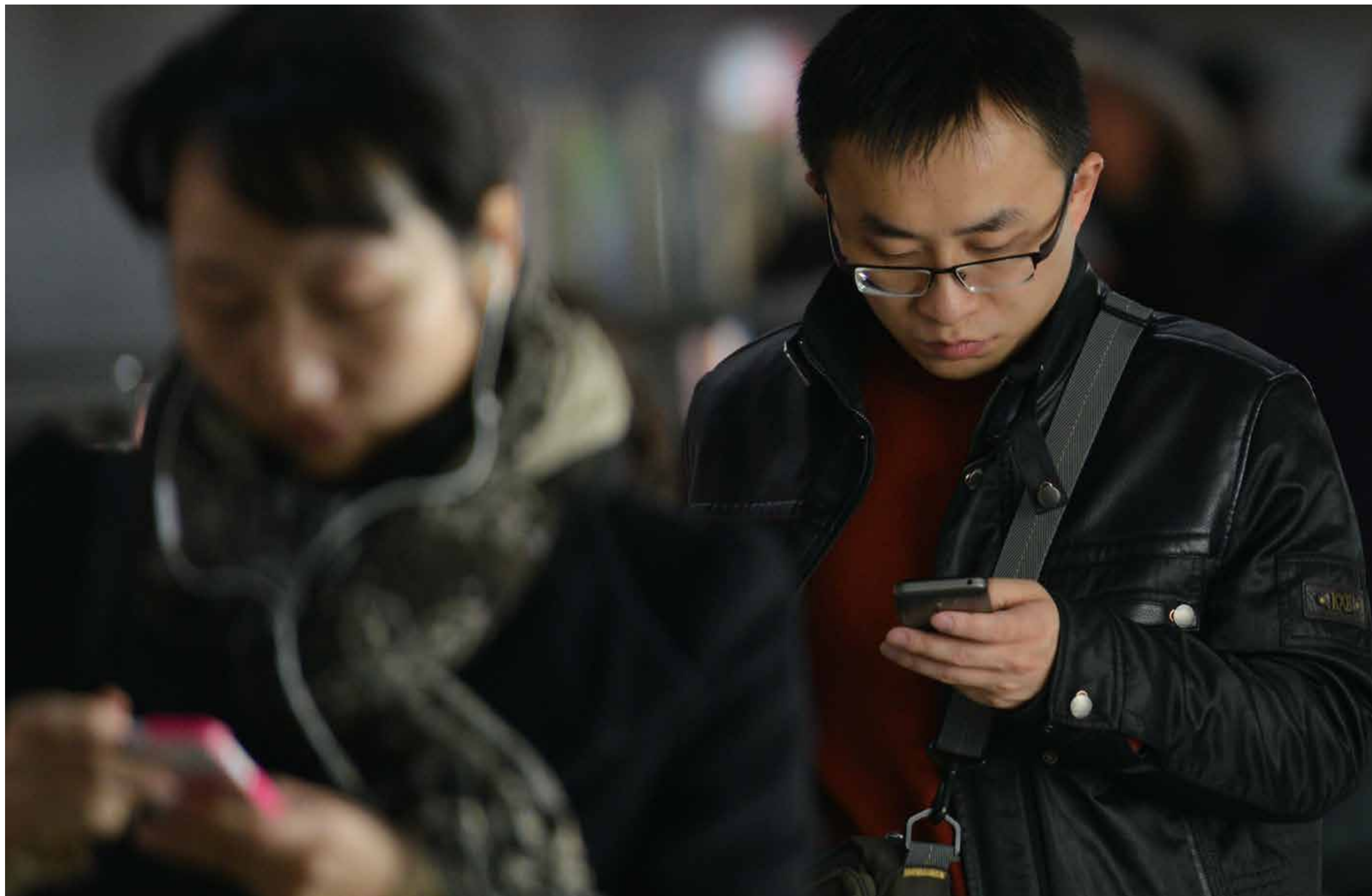
Zhu suggested western governments should watch and investigate the level of the CCP's interference in their domestic politics via WeChat.

Western politicians' attempts to engage the Chinese community on social media should be encouraged. But we should not overlook the potential harm of WeChat.

Wang Yaqiu urged Western politicians to make extra effort to reach the Chinese communities through channels free from such CCP influence. Otherwise, she said, they may fall into the trap of CCP's influence.

Public ethics expert Professor Clive Hamilton, the author of "Silent Invasion," warns that Australian politicians using WeChat "need to understand that their communications are being monitored and, if necessary, censored by Beijing's army of censors."

"Australian politicians need to develop their own means of communicating directly with voters of Chinese heritage rather than relying on media controlled by Beijing."



PETER PARKS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

RICHARD A. BROOKS/PHOTOFEST/IMAGES

MARTIN BURBANK/PHOTOFEST/IMAGES

## OPINION

# The China Factor in Taiwan's 2020 Election

HE QINGLIAN

Taiwan's presidential election in 2020 is set to be a showdown between Tsai Ing-wen and Han Kuo-yu. For the pan-Green coalition—parties that support a tougher stance towards the mainland—it is a stroke of luck that Han, the most pro-China of the Kuomintang (KMT) candidates, has become Tsai's rival—this will make their mainland policies the main theme of the campaign trail, distracting from Tsai's much-maligned governance. This comes as a major reversal of the situation following the victory of the "anti-Democratic Progressive Party force" in the Taiwanese local elections of 2018. No matter what happens in Taiwan over the next few months, the China factor will be the salient issue of the election.

## Han the 'Beijing Agent'

On June 1, Han's first major campaign event was held in front of the Presidential Office, with over 400,000 people reportedly in attendance. According to a live interview by a BBC reporter, many in the audience were Taiwanese businessmen residing abroad who had returned home specifically to participate as "reinforcement of the pro-Han commoners." Most Taiwanese businessmen support the pan-Blue coalition—parties that support closer ties with mainland China—and it's an open secret that the mainland Chinese regime has in recent years chartered airliners to take Taiwanese residing in mainland China back to Taiwan so they could more conveniently take part in the local election process.

What's more, Han Kuo-yu has already met with leading personnel of the Beijing's Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Liaison Office, as well as the chief executives of both the Hong Kong and Macao SARs, giving the Chinese regime's explicit endorsement. It's a given that Taiwanese businessmen, who listen to Beijing, would rush back home to lend popular support to Han and vote for him in the general election.

There are other shadowy but powerful supporters—or, more accurately, promoters of Han—whom neither the KMT nor Han himself would want to mention. On June 28, an insider story titled "Chinese Cyber-Operatives Boosted Taiwan's Insurgent Candidate" by Foreign Policy described how several supposed employees of China's Tencent helped Han win the primary election.

"Multiple social media and national security experts have privately examined this finding and were dumbfounded that a professional cybergroup potentially organized by the Chinese state would have left such relatively obvious traces. But they were all in agreement that the three Facebook users and 249 profiles on LinkedIn are unmistakably linked," reads the article.

Once this news was disclosed, public opinion in Taiwan was seething with indignation: Han's fans are from the other side of the strait.

On July 15, in "Who Is the Biggest Hero Behind Han Kuo-yu's Victory in the Primary Election?", the U.S.-based Duowei News, which is linked to the Chinese Communist Party's Great External Propaganda Plan, highlighted three supporters behind Han's campaign on June 1: Tsai Eng-meng of Want China Times, the Buddhist monk Master Miao Tian, and Fu Kun-chi, former commissioner of Hualien County. Want China Times is the CCP-aligned publication that became the object of protests against subversive "red media" in a June 23 demonstration that saw tens of thousands of people march in the rain that day in Taipei.

## 'A Rare Lucky Winner': The Tsai Administration

This May, at the invitation of the publisher, I went to Taiwan to promote my new book "Red Infiltration: The Truth About the Global Expansion of Chinese Media," published in March. At that time, the DPP had yet to recover from its failure in the local elections of 2018. Taiwanese society's dissatisfaction with Tsai Ing-wen's performance still remained.

Small and medium-sized business owners and workers were dissatisfied with the policy of "one fixed day off and one flexible rest day;" military personnel, civil servants,

and teachers disliked the 18 percent preferential savings rate reform which would impact them; the KMT lost its party assets. Even the pan-Green coalition base chafed at Tsai playing the game of political correctness when people's livelihood hadn't improved; focusing on same-sex marriage and unrealistic environmental protection goals. There was widespread concern in the pan-Green coalition that "punishing the DPP" could become a factor in Taiwan's election campaign. The DPP was at the peak of the race between Tsai and Lai. What's more, Han Kuo-yu was strong.

For the 2020 Taiwan election, the pan-Green coalition felt very uncertain about its prospects. Although the public clearly felt that Taiwan's media industry and politics are being infiltrated by communism, and that the CCP's strategy of "better to buy Taiwan than to fight Taiwan" was working, it was hard to find a focal point for protest. After returning to the United States, I wrote the article "Taiwan's Anxiety In the Face of 'Red Infiltration'" about my thoughts during this trip. But as the old Chinese saying goes, "man proposes, God disposes." In June, the anti-extradition bill protests erupted in Hong Kong, and the situation made a complete reversal. The theme of Taiwan's 2020 election was no longer Tsai's performance, but anti-communist infiltration and the security of Taiwan's democratic politics. The KMT, which has close ties to Beijing, lost its political support all at once, and even the CCP's overseas media exclaimed that "Tsai Ing-wen's administration is a rare lucky winner in Taiwan's history."

## Key Factors in the 2020 Taiwan Election

Several factors can be expected to accompany Taiwan's election until the results are announced in January 2020:

### 1. Hong Kong as a Negative Example

Hong Kong's anti-extradition bill protest has turned into a long and bitter struggle for universal suffrage. Taiwan's current social consensus is to never follow the footsteps of "one country, two systems" in Hong Kong. Even if the KMT hopes to focus on the Tsai administration's performance, Han Kuo-yu's slogan of "one hundred percent economics, zero percent politics" and calculation to attract votes by his vision of "making a fortune" are hard to realize. Although Taiwanese are not very familiar with mainland Chinese politics, they know that this slogan is a bit unreliable, because even for Chinese directly under Beijing's rule, 90 percent of them failed to make a fortune. In addition, Han Kuo-yu's pro-China position is known to all. Everyone knows that his "Republic of China area" was not a slip of the tongue. No matter how Han conceals it, the fact that he received political endorsement from the mainland, and the exposure of various backroom conspiracies, such as Tencent campaign group, all demonstrate his status as China's chosen political agent. Thinking about the dark prospect of how "voting in the KMT will turn Taiwan into Hong Kong," most Taiwanese will make political security their top priority

### 2. Internal Friction in the KMT Will Split Its Support Base

After Han Kuo-yu was selected as the presidential candidate of the KMT, there appeared an article titled "The End of the Primary Election Marks the Beginning of Civil War in the KMT." In it, the author talked about

the perennial disease of schism in the KMT from historical experience and the present situation, and considered the DPP to be more united than the KMT. For example, after DPP candidate-hopeful Lai Ching-te withdrew from the primary, he immediately laid low so as not to bother Tsai Ing-wen. On June 13, Lai wrote on Facebook that "Taiwan is our common mother," and once again called on people to support Tsai, and then retreated from the public sphere. The author also noted that the DPP is now planning to bring Lai back into politics through legislative elections. By contrast, the KMT never gets over its internal strife even when it comes to war. The end of the primary election is the beginning of the KMT's civil war. Schism seems to be part of the KMT's DNA, without exception. This time, for instance, more than one candidate wanted to leave the party and run independently. Han Kuo-yu expressed his view on the KMT's disunity: the DPP has a natural healing force. Cut off its hand today, another hand will grow out tomorrow. Cut off the head and it'll grow another head.

### 3. Han's Inherent Weaknesses as Presidential Candidate

One of Han's weaknesses is the aforementioned label of Chinese political agent. This year is an unlucky year for Han. China's support did not help him, and this label will be seized upon by the pan-Green coalition to attack him. The second is that Han himself is ill-prepared. His aides and staff are not particularly politically experienced. Han has also been losing points by making indiscreet remarks. Furthermore, he has thrown himself into another election less than half a year after taking office as Kaohsiung mayor. Kaohsiung residents have been dissatisfied with this "runaway mayor" for a long time. One false move in the campaign could lose Han his political backyard.

### 4. US Support for Tsai Helps Her Election Chances

The protracted trade war between China and the U.S. will continue to impact Sino-U.S. relations. Although the United States cannot influence the Taiwan election to the extent that China can, its support for Tsai's government at critical moments will have a favorable impact on her electoral fortunes.

Unlike local elections, in which are economic considerations predominate, the presidential election concerns Taiwan's future and the topic of unification or independence cannot be avoided. Beijing is now subject to international censure on too many fronts, so its hope of propping a Taiwan political proxy up in 2020 is very likely to be dashed.

*He Qinglian is a prominent Chinese author and economist. Currently based in the United States, she authored "China's Pitfalls," which concerns corruption in China's economic reform of the 1990s, and "The Fog of Censorship: Media Control in China," which addresses the manipulation and restriction of the press. She regularly writes on contemporary Chinese social and economic issues.*

*Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.*

Attendees of a political campaign rally wave Taiwan's flags in Taipei on Nov. 11, 2018.



CHRIS STOWERS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

## OPINION

# China Starts Currency War— What's Next?

China allows the yuan to devalue in response to Trump's latest tariffs.



STR/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

JAMES GORRIE

Has the trade war between the United States and China just turned into a currency war? It certainly looks that way. For the first time since the Great Recession in 2008, the value of the yuan fell below the 7:1 ratio against the U.S. dollar. This policy mandated devaluation is a very significant response by the Chinese and comes with a variety of possible implications.

## Currency Manipulator

It has prompted the Trump administration to officially label China as a currency manipulator, which immediately lead to heavy losses in the stock market. That may or may not be justified, because China has actually been manipulating the yuan for years, just in the opposite way. China's yuan is not traded in the markets like other currencies. Rather, its value has been carefully controlled—that is, manipulated—by the People's Bank of China (PBOC) to trade within a narrow 2 percent band up or down its official fixture.

Paradoxically, tariffs tend to weaken a currency's value anyway, because they weaken the economy behind the currency. And it's worth noting that only when the PBOC stopped its support of the yuan, and let it "float" in the market that its value against the dollar fell. The market forced this devaluation, not the central bank.

China has admitted as much in their accompanying statement to the devaluation, saying that the PBOC "has accumulated rich experience and policy tools, and will continue to innovate and enrich the control toolbox, and take necessary and targeted measures against the positive feedback behavior that may occur in

the foreign exchange market."

## Devaluation Was Expected

Nonetheless, China's devaluation decision is in response to President Trump's decision to slap tariffs on the remaining \$300 billion worth of mainly consumer goods that had been excluded in earlier tariff rounds. That means that everything China exports to the United States will now be taxed, making Chinese goods less competitive, adding pain to an already contracting Chinese economy.

Letting their currency devalue with market forces is an expected reaction. A cheaper yuan relative to the U.S. dollar helps China offset the higher cost of Trump's tariffs by lowering the cost of Chinese goods.

But China's decision to devalue could have far-reaching impacts on its an already strained relationship with the United States. It gives the impression that China's leadership has all but abandoned the idea of trying to de-escalate the trade war with President Trump. Rather, it appears that they're mirroring Trump's hardline approach to negotiations. This doesn't bode well for the U.S.-China economic relationship over the next two years.

## Political and Economic Costs for Xi and Trump

But it's a calculation that makes some sense. In political terms, Trump is now in a more difficult position than Xi because Trump faces election in 2020, whereas the Chinese regime doesn't allow elections. The stock markets' immediate and negative reaction to China currency devaluation makes Trump's argument for re-election more difficult this week than it was last week, let alone last year.

What's more, if the latest

round of tariffs on consumer goods is applied, the American consumer may feel it in their wallets as out of pocket prices rise. And China's refusal to make agreed purchases of American agricultural products is intended to hit U.S. producers hard. All of these developments could possibly hurt Trump's re-election efforts in 2020.

That may well be the point. Waiting to see if Trump is replaced in 2020 is probably a big factor in the Chinese leadership's devaluation decision. If so, China may end up disappointed.

A devalued currency hurts the Chinese people and leads to capital flight as well as disrupting markets, which also damages the Chinese economy. The Chinese regime already had to bail-out three smaller banks this year, which is not a coincidence.

## The Fed Will React to Trade War

In response to the yuan devaluation, the Federal Reserve has already indicated it would cut interest rates further if economic conditions demand it. And agricultural subsidies are a distinct possibility, as they've already been used to offset American farmers' earlier loss of the Chinese soybean market. In other words, the impact of China's first shot in a currency war may not be as effective as they'd like, or as soon as they'd want.

But the cycle of retribution and response isn't likely to stop there. China is violating its commitment to the G20 to not engage in "competitive devaluation." That's precisely what they're doing of course, and it isn't as smart as they think it is. A cheap yuan not only hurts American producers, but China's other major trading partners as well, such as the Eurozone and Japan.

## Tariffs Are Both Tactical and Strategic

Tactically, the tariffs on Chinese goods are to get China to change its adversarial trading behavior. China's One Belt, One Road debt traps, widespread Huawei spyware, inveterate practice of technology and IP theft, and other practices that provide the hostile Chinese regime unfair trade advantages that President Trump wants to stop. Furthermore, China must make good on its promise to open its market to Western companies.

It's doubtful, however, that China has any plans to fundamentally change the behavior that has led to the rise of the power of its regime. Its decision to devalue is designed to reverse the Trump administration's thinking on tariffs against Chinese goods. Even China's decision to moderate its devaluation doesn't mean it will roll over and change, because it can't do so without weakening the CCP's grip on power. Quite understandably, China would like to return to the status quo ante.

That's not going to happen. From a structural standpoint, the tariffs are hurting China much more than they're hurting the United States, at least in the short run. But from a strategic standpoint, the trade war is designed to initiate if not hasten the demise of China's command economy and the rule of the CCP. For both these reasons, it's more likely that the trade war will further escalate.

*James Gorrie is a writer based in Texas. He is the author of "The China Crisis."*

*Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.*

A devalued currency hurts the Chinese people and leads to capital flight as well as disrupting markets, which also damages the Chinese economy.

## OPINION

# Progressives Finally ‘Woke’ About China’s One-Child Policy—Now That It’s Over

STEVEN W. MOSHER

A new documentary about China’s draconian one-child policy has just been released, and has been greeted with tremendous fanfare from the Left. In fact, it won the Grand Jury Prize at this year’s Sundance Film Festival. And thanks to Amazon, it premiered in select theaters on Aug. 9.

Called “One-Child Nation,” the documentary details the 35 years of suffering that Chinese women and girls endured under the policy, which ended in 2015.

It is a story that I am intimately familiar with, for I was in China in 1980 when the policy began. I saw firsthand the brutal way it was being enforced by Communist Party officials. The sight of sobbing women being subjected to forced abortions and sterilizations is a vision of Hell I am unlikely to ever forget, not least because I was in the operating room with them—standing only a few feet away from the operating table in shocked disbelief.

Over the years I have given countless talks, written dozens of articles for publications such as the Wall Street Journal, The Epoch Times, and the Washington Post, written best-selling books, and have appeared on national television—all to highlight the horrors of China’s misguided population-control policy. Many other voices have emerged over time to speak out on behalf of Chinese women and their babies as well. Together we formed quite a chorus.

For anyone who was paying attention, there was never any doubt about what was happening in China. The policy allowed one child for urban residents, and two children for country folk, with an escalating series of threats and punishment used to enforce these strict limits.

Officials began their campaigns to pressure women and their husbands into abortions by firing them from their jobs, destroying their homes, seizing their livestock and other property, and imposing impossibly steep fines. But those Party officials carrying out this cruel and inhumane policy didn’t stop there.

Pregnant moms who refused to abort were summarily arrested by local Family Planning officials and taken by force to abortuaries, where their unborn children were killed by lethal injection.

To handle the large number of women who were already seven, eight, or even nine months pregnant, Party doctors invented a new crime against humanity: the “Caesarean section abortion.” As the term itself suggests, this entailed opening up women’s bodies like so many tin cans so that their now dead or dying babies could be more easily removed and thrown away. Cases of infanticide—where “illegal” babies were killed by government doctors at birth—were common. Many of these horrors—though not all—are

A scene from “One Child Nation,” which shows in the background propaganda for the Chinese Communist Party’s one-child policy.



A Chinese girl wears a mask as she is held by her mother outside a local hospital during a day of heavy smog on Dec. 8, 2015 in Beijing.

recounted in “One Child Nation.” But while nothing in the documentary surprised me, it has apparently stunned many progressives. In fact, to judge from the buzz about the film, many on the left seem to be genuinely astonished by the sheer evil of China’s policy, and talk about it as if they were becoming

aware of it for the first time.

Nick Schager, for example, writing for the Daily Beast, is so appalled by what he learned from watching the documentary that he can hardly contain himself. “China’s horrifying child-killing policy,” he writes breathlessly, was a “reign of terror” that resulted “in countless abductions, forced abortions, and child deaths.”

The viewers at the Sundance Film Festival were equally taken aback. Pregnant women abducted from their homes by the millions and forcibly aborted? Children killed by the millions at birth, or sold to orphanages to be sold in turn to foreigners? How could this have happened? Such a brave and groundbreaking documentary, they apparently believed, deserved to be widely recognized. Hence the award.

The progressives’ belated awakening to the horrors of the one-child policy is, I suppose, a vindication of sorts for those of us who, at great cost, have sought to expose the policy over the past few decades. As Monica Showalter writes in American Thinker:

“Remember Stanford scholar Steven Mosher? Way back in the 1980s, the man was reviled in scholarly circles for exposing just these brutal realities about China. Instead of being praised for adding to the scholarly body of knowledge, he was abused, slandered, accused of process crimes, and eventually kicked out of his Ph.D. program because he reported the truth about what was happening. This was at the urging of the Chinese government, which wanted all news of its cruelty kept hidden—the lies-violence cycle that Alexander Solzhenitsyn described as so necessary to all totalitarian tyrannies. I recall that controversy back when I was a student studying Chinese history, and my professor (I won’t name him, because, well, I liked him) called Mosher “a rat” because his revelations about China’s forced abortions and human rights violations angered the Chinese communist gov-

ernment and caused it to limit opportunities for scholarly research on China.

“Yet the only thing Mosher was really guilty of was the highest responsibility of a scholar, which was to tell the truth.”

Yet the Left—including most of my Stanford faculty colleagues—not only turned a blind eye to the truth, some of them even defended China. How could they ignore the brutality that was China’s one-child policy for 35 long years? How could they defend the indefensible?

Not everyone did, obviously. American pro-life organizations heard the cries of the women of China for help, and sought to aid them in various ways. Pro-life U.S. administrations, beginning with Reagan and ending with Trump, have cut funding to the U.N. Population Fund and other organizations because of their involvement in Beijing’s policy. But the Left generally averted its eyes. Why?

Part of the reason is that, when it comes to criticizing the human rights abuses of socialist or communist regimes, leftists are always late to the party. Long after the mass graves begin filling up, they are still inclined to give their fellow socialists a pass. They instinctively understand that “fundamentally transforming” a country into a communist paradise is dirty work, and that “class enemies” who stand in the way of progress and stubbornly refuse to be “transformed” must be gotten out of the way—eliminated—somehow.

In fact, leftists are generally only willing to acknowledge the human rights atrocities of any particular communist regime only after it has collapsed, when the evil that it has committed is laid bare for the whole world to see. Bernie Sanders was still celebrating the Soviet Union as late as 1988, long after its crimes were legend and when it was clearly on its last legs.

The People’s Republic of China still exists, of course, but the one-child policy itself

The sight of sobbing women being subjected to forced abortions and sterilizations is a vision of Hell I am unlikely to ever forget.

has been quietly abandoned by the Chinese Communist Party. The Party line has shifted, which perhaps explains why leftists have finally decided to break their long silence.

### (Im)moral Equivalence

No true progressive would dream of criticizing a socialist country without throwing in a little good-old-fashioned American bashing for “balance”—if only to reassure his leftist friends that he has not abandoned the barricades. This is why Schager’s article in the Daily Beast begins by trashing the United States. “One Child Nation,” he writes, “is a stark reminder that America isn’t the only country where a woman’s right to control her body has been under siege.”

China may treat its women badly, you see, but America is just as deplorable.

What could be as bad as arresting pregnant mothers for the crime of being pregnant, dragging them off to abortion clinics, and holding them down on the operating table while they are aborted and sterilized? Schager doesn’t say. But then he doesn’t have to. His fellow leftists are so united in their hatred of “fascist” America that no explanation is necessary.

One of my former colleagues at Stanford University, the late William Skinner, did once take a stab at explaining why China’s treatment of women is no worse than America’s. “I find the forced abortion of women in the third trimester of pregnancy is repugnant,” he told me after reading my reports on China. “But it is no more repugnant than the refusal of the Reagan administration to fund abortions.”

You would think that a full professor at one of America’s most prestigious universities would be too smart to make such a fundamental error in logic: The principled refusal to participate in homicidal acts by funding them—the Reagan administration’s position—can hardly be equated with state-mandated mass murder practiced by the

Chinese Communist Party.

But then we’ve already established that leftism can make you deaf, dumb, and blind.

### Averting Cannibalism?

My biggest complaint about “One Child Nation” is that it fails to adequately address—much less debunk—the one-child policy’s bogus economic rationale.

Party propaganda at the time went into overdrive, warning the Chinese people that too many babies were an existential threat to China’s future. Without a drastic reduction in the birth rate, China would suffer an economic, environmental, and societal collapse so catastrophic that people might even resort to eating each other. One still-credulous old woman assured the filmmakers that, without the one-child policy, “China would have faced famine and potential cannibalism.”

Under the Party’s new policy, however, all would be well. The elimination of large numbers of children would lead to wealth and happiness for those who survived the cut. The god of prosperity would smile upon China, everyone’s standard of living would double, and China itself would recover its national glory.

So it was that, on the orders of the Party, China embarked upon “cannibalism” of a different sort: It began to devour its own children. Babies were the new “class enemies” who stood in the way of socialist progress. Like all such “enemies of the people,” they had to be ruthlessly eliminated, even if this meant forcibly aborting their mothers or killing them at birth.

Fundamentally transforming a country into a communist paradise is, as I said earlier, dirty work.

Over the ensuing three-and-a-half decades, an estimated 400 million children, both born and unborn, were sacrificed to the lie that their deaths were necessary for China’s economy to thrive. It is a lie because it was access to Western markets, capital, and technology, combined with the native entrepreneurial ability and work ethic of the Chinese people, along with their sheer numbers, that has allowed China’s economy to grow over the past few decades.

The truth is that people—especially young people—are an indispensable aid to the economic development of any country over the long term. And the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party, in eliminating 400 million of the most hardworking, intelligent, and business-minded people on the planet, were literally destroying China’s future. It was the wanton destruction of human capital on a scale never before seen in human history.

All this is to say that the one-child policy has not only broken the hearts and spirits of hundreds of millions of Chinese women, it has made China poorer as well.

And as Chinese birth rates continue to plummet, and its work force continues to shrink, an even darker future may be in the offing. China may be entering a decades-long demographic recession, brought on by the devastation of China’s most valuable resource: its people.

The real-world effect of eliminating roughly half of two generations of Chinese young people is the aging and dying population of today. In fact, China is aging more rapidly than any other country in the world. Unlike its Asian competitors—Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan—it will grow old before it grows rich.

This is obviously not the first time that the Chinese Communist Party has compromised China’s future. Each and every one of the massive social engineering programs carried out by the Party—from the People’s Communes of the 1950s, to the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s, to the crackdown that followed the Tiananmen Massacre, to the current vicious persecution of religious believers—have set back China’s real economic and social progress.

Why should anyone with even a passing familiarity with the brutal history of the Party expect the one-child policy to have turned out any differently?

Steven W. Mosher is the president of the Population Research Institute and the author of “Bully of Asia: Why China’s Dream is the New Threat to World Order.”

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.





TRUTH *and* TRADITION

# COVERING IMPORTANT NEWS OTHER MEDIA IGNORE

LEADING REPORTING ON  
**THE CHINESE COMMUNIST THREAT**  
FOR THE PAST 18 YEARS

The Epoch Times not only reports reliably on U.S. politics and the Trump administration, but also publishes authoritative China news, covering topics including:

- Impact on the United States
- Business and economy
- Communist infiltration of our government, businesses, schools, universities, popular culture, and more
- Disinformation surrounding U.S.–China trade relations
- Security and espionage
- Influence on media and Hollywood
- Overseas interference and United Front activity

The Epoch Times has also championed a new method of investigative journalism, steeped in the discipline's traditions of truth and responsibility. Combining this method with quality design, our journalists expose corruption and subversion in U.S. politics, and other important issues. Our investigative infographics have included:

- Illegal Spying on President Trump
- Hillary Clinton and the Uranium One Deal
- China's Military Expansion Into Space
- The Secret Propaganda War on Our Minds
- Spygate: The True Story of Collusion
- Clinton Foundation 'Pay to Play' Model Under Investigation

Download infographics

[ReadEpoch.com/infographics](https://ReadEpoch.com/infographics)

FREE newsletter signup

[EpochNewsletter.com](https://EpochNewsletter.com)

Subscribe to the paper (print/epaper)

[ReadEpoch.com](https://ReadEpoch.com)

More information

[TheEpochTimes.com/about-us](https://TheEpochTimes.com/about-us)