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CHINA INSIDER

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OPINION

Look Who's Interfering With the 2020 Election

China seeks to defeat Donald Trump in the 2020 national election with the help from who else? Americans

AFP/GETTY IMAGES



JAMES GORRIE

Apparently, China can't take another four years of Donald Trump in the White House. To make sure he's a one-term president, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is enlisting the help of anti-Trump Americans from Washington to Wall Street and beyond.

Will Chinese interference in America's upcoming election be tolerated by those so upset at President Trump's supposed "collusion with Russia" to win the 2016 election?

If the 2018 midterm elections are any indication, the answer is "no."

China's 2018 Iowa Election Interference

Yes, China meddled in the 2018 midterm elections. The China Daily, a state-run newspaper, bought a four-page insert to post pro-China, anti-Trump trade policy propaganda in the Des Moines Register prior to the election. The aim of the insert was to sway voter opinion regarding U.S.-China trade and reminding Iowa voters of Chinese leader Xi Jinping's deep and historical connections to Iowa. The state had strongly supported Trump's election in 2016.

China's little propaganda play had little or no impact. Nonetheless, no one on the left cared about it. There were no special reports on CNN, nor articles in The New York Times warning about Chinese influencing an American election—which speaks volumes.

China Can't Win Against Trump's Policies

But with the 2020 election coming up, China has decided to do all it can to stop Trump from being re-elected. It's easy to understand why. Trump's huge tariffs against Chinese goods are giving the Chinese economy a serious beating. China's economic output has fallen to its lowest level since 1992.

What's more, it doesn't look like the Chinese economy will improve much between now and the election.

A Chinese worker sews a banner declaring President Donald Trump's re-election intentions, which reads, "Trump 2020: Keep America Great" at a factory in Fuyang, Anhui Province, China, on July 13, 2018.

China's domestic consumption continues to tighten, trade volume with the Eurozone is falling, and Trump's higher tariffs on China's remaining imports begin on Oct. 1. The immediate outlook for China's continued economic growth is less than promising.

More to the point, China has figured out that the best way to win a trade negotiation with Trump is to negotiate with a Democrat president instead. To accomplish that, Xi Jinping has a plan, and you can be certain that it's much bigger than buying insert pages in the Des Moines Register Sunday Edition and way beyond Russia's fake Facebook pages. And apparently, the plan has been in place since the 2018 elections.

According to a recent interview with The Washington Free Beacon, exiled Chinese billionaire Guo Wengui, a staunch anti-communist, "For the 2020 U.S. presidential election, the security committee [of the CCP] has given very clear instructions that it is not permissible for Trump to win the 2020 election."

Guo has said that Chinese Vice President Wang Qishan gave him the details recently in Beijing. More on those in a moment. But just as interesting is the person running the effort to stop Trump's re-election—none other than Xi Jinping himself, through the CCP's tightly controlled National Security Commission. One could be forgiven for thinking it's a rather personal matter for Xi.

China's Four-Point Plan to Defeat Trump

According to Guo, China has "four weapons" to thwart Trump's re-election, and they all involve pro-China assets within the United States:

1. Wall Street financial leaders: Those leading financiers have made a fortune raising capital to fuel China's economic development at the hands of the CCP, and have no interest in losing the tremendous cashflow.

2. Corrupt Washington lobbyists and political leaders: They have been in

the CCP's pocket for years, and will be called upon to help defeat Trump.

3. Mainstream media and social media outlets: These anti-Trump forces are already well-known and already slavishly serve China's anti-Trump narrative to the American people. They include Google, Facebook, The New York Times, and The Wall Street Journal.

4. Powerful Chinese and Asian-Americans: These groups have significant financial influence and political power in America. Are we absolutely crystal clear on that? Xi Jinping and the CCP have determined that it's "not permissible" for a sitting president of the United States to win a second term. And China's American colluders have just been named.

China Slow-Walking the Negotiations

That certainly explains why China appears to not be in any hurry to reach an agreement with the United States on a trade deal. Recall that in late July, a deal seemed all but done, but after China reneged on its agreement to buy U.S. soybeans, the U.S. announced higher tariffs on China's remaining \$300 billion worth of imports, effectively killing the negotiations.

Trump sees through the rather transparent plan and has used it to taunt the Chinese, saying, "The problem with them waiting, however, is that if and when I win, the deal that they [China] get will be much tougher than what we are negotiating now... or no deal at all."

If the information from Guo is reliable, it doesn't appear that a trade deal with China will be made, or even should be made.

China's Plan Shows How Desperate the CCP Really Is

The four-weapon plan as laid out is as impressive as it is revelatory. Undoubtedly, China can leverage all of those assets mentioned and likely more. But will it be enough?

Consider, for a moment, that all four of the CCP's so-called "anti-Trump weapons" were called into use since at least Trump won the Republican nomination for president, if not even earlier, when he announced his candidacy. Wall Street financiers, corrupt politicians, the mainstream media, and the social media technofascists at Facebook and Google were all anti-Trump all the time in 2016. One would assume that the Chinese-American groups were leveraged then as well.

And yet, Trump still won.

What's more, China faces growing food shortages and rising prices. African swine fever has decreased pork supplies—a Chinese staple—by 20 percent across all 31 autonomous regions and provinces. Making matters worse, crops are being ravaged by a growing armyworm infestation, which is expected to be nationwide by mid-2020. China needs the American agricultural heartland—the very same states that supported Trump in 2016—to feed its population.

The larger picture is that we now know just how devastating Trump's policies have been and continue to be for China. As we discussed last year, they're pushing China closer to the edge of internal instability every day. That's why the CCP is trying to break Trump's political support, to stop his anti-CCP policies, no matter what hardship it puts upon the Chinese people. The Party's very survival may depend on it.

For China, this is the real context of the 2020 election. For Americans, it's an international plot to dictate the outcome of our next election.

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

ECONOMY

China Faces Economic Collapse and Decoupling From World Markets, Expert Says

OLIVIA LI

resident Donald Trump announced on Twitter on Aug. 23 a new round of raising tariffs, on \$550 billion worth of Chinese goods, and he told U.S. companies to move their operations out of China. China expert Frank Xie believes that when the trade war has escalated to this level, it will bring devastating consequences to China's economy, but won't have a major impact on the United States.

In an interview with the Chinese-language edition of The Epoch Times, Frank Xie, an associate professor at the University of South Carolina's School of Business Administration, said that when this latest tariff increase is imposed, the United States and China will become completely decoupled economically.

"The Chinese communist regime has been trying to drag [the trade talks] out to give itself more time, and the Trump administration is fully aware of that. In addition, Beijing has broken its promises several times. They promised to buy agricultural products, but later changed their mind. At a certain point, they even promised to buy large quantities of agricultural products, but they did not make any purchase thereafter. They have certainly irritated the American people," Xie said.

"President Trump doesn't trust the Chinese communist regime anymore. That is why he keeps increasing tariffs on Chinese goods."

Xie believes the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is eyeing the European market because it's losing the U.S. market.

President Trump attended the G-7 summit (held from Aug. 24 to Aug. 26 in France), where he sought to reach a consensus with European leaders. The European Union is expected to demand the same terms from China as the United States has obtained through the trade talks, Xie said.

Based on Xie's analysis, Japan and the UK will certainly take the same stance as the United States. Italy is

From the upper to the middle level of the CCP, they all know that no matter how they try to procrastinate, there isn't much time left before the Chinese regime is hit hard by the trade war.

Frank Xie, associate professor, University of South Carolina's School of Business Administration

the only G-7 country that has participated in China's "One Belt, One Road" (OBOR, also known as Belt and Road) initiative. However, Italy is in the process of forming a new government, which may very likely withdraw from the OBOR, Xie said.

"In the European Union, the next battleground of the U.S.-China trade war, the battle has just begun. I think the European Union will eventually stand by the side of the United States," he said.

He pointed out that if the CCP loses the American, European, and Japanese markets, essentially the whole world is shutting the door to China, and it will return to the "closed country" state.

In Xie's opinion, China has basically lost its last chance in the trade talks, and the CCP has no other choice but to continue to fight stubbornly and desperately and at the expense of Chinese consumers.

"From the upper to the middle level of the CCP, they all know that no matter how they try to procrastinate, there isn't much time left before the Chinese regime is hit hard by the trade war," Xie said. "What we'll see next is capital flight, and many CCP officials will accelerate their plans to leave China."

Trade War Is Devastating to China but Not the US

According to Xie, the trade war will have little impact on the U.S. economy. "This is because China's retaliatory tariff increases are mostly imposed on automobiles, auto parts, petroleum and agricultural products. Actually, China won't be able to restrict the imports of these products because it has a high reliance and demand for them," he said.

However, the United States can easily replace Chinese imports with products from other countries.

"The key issue is whether there are options," Xie said. "China cannot produce most of the imports from the United States."

"For China to impose tariffs on American imports, this would only increase purchase prices for Chinese consumers; it's a suicidal act,"

Xie said. "For the United States, consumer reliance on Chinese products is essentially about a preference for bargains, and almost all Chinese products can be replaced with imports from other countries. Therefore the impact is completely manageable."

More importantly, the restructuring of the global supply chain, with companies moving manufacturing out of China, is devastating to China's economy.

Xie pointed out that it has become clear the trade war will be a prolonged confrontation between the two countries, and the supply chain will continue to shift from China to other countries. Most notably, Taiwan, Vietnam, Bangladesh, South Korea, and India are replacing China's role as the biggest global manufacturing hub. As a result, in the near future, tens of millions of Chinese workers will be out of a job.

In addition, the decline in China's exports to the United States will drastically reduce China's trade surplus, which in turn will exhaust China's foreign exchange reserves. The Chinese regime's ability to intervene in the yuan exchange rate will also decrease as a result. It will then trigger a new round of bubbles bursting, such as a housing market crash, banks going bankrupt, and a credit crisis.

"China's economy will decline. From the bursting of the real estate bubble, to higher unemployment, to the deterioration of the entire economic environment, combined with inflation, the Chinese economy is facing an almost complete collapse," Xie predicted.

Another important insight gained through the U.S.-China trade war is that the CCP has revealed its true nature in its tit-for-tat tariff retaliations, Xie said.

"The United States, from the government to the common people, has come to realize that the CCP is an evil regime. It doesn't hesitate to sacrifice the interests of the Chinese people for the sake of its own survival."

Epoch Times reporter Li Xinan contributed to this report.

REUTERS/KEVIN LAMARQUE



INTERVIEW

Stephen Bannon on Huawei and the Communist China Threat



SAMIRA BOUAOU/THE EPOCH TIMES

IRENE LUO & JAN KEKIELEK

Huawei is the greatest national security threat that America has ever faced—even greater than the threat of nuclear war—according to former White House chief strategist Stephen Bannon.

The Chinese company Huawei, the world's largest telecommunications equipment maker, has close ties to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the People's Liberation Army (PLA), Bannon noted, and it is vying for control of 5G, the fifth generation of cellular mobile communications.

"The backbone of the future of technology is 5G," Bannon said in an interview with The Epoch Times' program "American Thought Leaders." "Right now, the path that Huawei's taking, as a front for the PLA, is to basically take over the networks and the components throughout the world. If we allow this to happen even for a couple more years, Huawei is going to control basically the communications systems of the West, and therefore will be able to control the West."

Under the laws in communist China, companies have to cooperate with Chinese authorities and grant access to data when asked. U.S. legislators have highlighted the fact that Huawei equipment could be used by Beijing to engage in espionage or disrupt communication networks.

"Huawei is a methodology, a high-tech methodology to basically have domination over the world," Bannon said. In his view, Huawei expanded its business largely under the radar for years. It now operates in more than 170 countries across the globe and serves more than 3 billion people, according to the Huawei website.

The threat of Huawei is spotlighted in a new film, "Claws of the Red Dragon," which was executive produced by Bannon. The plot of the film was largely inspired by the 2018 arrest of the chief financial officer of Huawei, Meng Wanzhou, who is also the daughter of Huawei's founder. In the indictments, U.S. prosecutors charged Huawei with stealing trade secrets from T-Mobile and violating sanctions against Iran.

The film calls attention to the intimate relationship between telecom giant Huawei and the CCP and highlights the regime's hegemonic ambitions.

"People will be shocked when they see it," Bannon said. The 54-minute film, which will be released in September, is being dis-

Steve Bannon, former White House chief strategist and former executive chairman of Breitbart News, at his home in Washington on Aug. 23, 2019.

tributed by New Tang Dynasty Television.

Huawei, Bannon said, isn't a "fine corporate citizen," as they would have people believe. Instead, "it's a branch of the People's Liberation Army. It's an intelligence branch."

Bannon, the former executive chairman of Breitbart, is currently chairman of the Rule of Law Society and co-founder of the Committee on the Present Danger: China. Both organizations focus on the communist China threat to the West, as well as the Chinese regime's suppression of the Chinese people.

The film, Bannon said, will "cause a lot of controversy. It's going to cause a lot of conversation. That's what we want."

The Culpability of Corporate America

The indictments of Meng and Huawei speak of decades-long abuses, so "why did both the Bush and the Obama administration kind of look the other way, while investigators at the Department of Justice and other places were pursuing this?" Bannon said.

"Every administration, every president of both political parties," he said, has "folded when it came into the spotlight with the Chinese" and allowed the Chinese communist regime to freely renege on its promises.

In Bannon's view, the crux of the problem was the marriage of corporate America and the CCP.

"Here's the analogy I make: Wall Street is the investor relations department for the Chinese Communist Party, because they're the ones that raise capital for them. The corporations are the lobbyists," Bannon said. "The tragedy and the crime," in Bannon's view, are the corporate elites who have knowingly chosen to look the other way in the face of egregious human rights abuses in China.

"They know all of it, and they don't care." Involvement with the Chinese regime "means more money. It means higher stock prices. It means lower slave labor [costs]," Bannon said.

"Wall Street's the cheerleader. And corporate America has been the lobbyist."

"They have no moral authority. They have totally bought into a system that's completely corrupt, and they know all about it," Bannon said. Yet, they "mock Donald Trump and say, oh, he's the barbarian. He's the wild man. He's the disruptor to the system."

In the end, Bannon said, "the blood and guilt is on their hands," because they sought to profit from a close relationship with the Chinese ruling regime.

"And it's the working men and women in the middle class in this country [who] have paid the price," Bannon said.

"Over the past 20 years, we've de-industrialized the United States, and we shipped those manufacturing jobs to China," Bannon said. And in return, "they sent in the opioids and the fentanyl to go into the old manufacturing areas in Ohio and Pennsylvania and Michigan." Former manufacturing workers, mired in depression and hopelessness about future job prospects, have been especially vulnerable to this influx of drugs from China.

"This is not just a crisis. It's a tragedy of the United States," Bannon said. Wall Street and the corporate elites are "going to be held accountable by history for what went on in this time and place, what went on in China, and what they knew about and looked the other way."

"Donald Trump, the central reason he's president is this: He said, we have to return America to her former greatness. We have to make America great again. And the way we're going to do that [is] we're going to confront the [CCP]. Wall Street has shipped those jobs over there, and I am going to bring them back," Bannon said.

In Bannon's view, Trump is the first president to take a strong stance against the Chinese communist regime.

On Aug. 23, Trump raised existing tariffs even higher and ordered U.S. companies to exit China, after Beijing announced retaliatory tariffs on \$75 billion of U.S. goods.

It was a "warning shot" to corporate America, Bannon said, to bring their manufacturing supply chains back to the United States. The move has caused controversy among people who don't believe the president's mandate includes the power to order private corporations out of China.

"He does have emergency powers," enumerated in the International Emergency Economic Powers Act of 1977, Bannon said. The president has threatened to declare a national emergency to force U.S. businesses to cut ties with China.

Many people don't have a clear understanding of the ruling Chinese regime, Bannon said. Advocates of free trade, in Bannon's view, are well-intentioned, but they often "have this kind of soft, gauzy notion that they read in Adam Smith about free trade, not understanding that you have a gangster organization that runs a totalitarian mercantilist state."

For decades, Americans were made to be-



LELIAN SUWARNUMPHA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

lieve a lie, Bannon said—namely that once China entered the World Trade Organization, received Most Favored Nation status, became wealthier, and started to develop a middle class, then China would gradually democratize and become more of a free market with rule of law.

Yet "we've seen the exact opposite. In the past 20 years, the CCP has become more radical," Bannon said.

"Why is that? Because they have a totalitarian system" where the elite "essentially skims the money off the top," Bannon said.

"You go to Belgravia, you go to the West End of London—a lot of that is Chinese money," Bannon said, and "not from the Chinese people, not from the hardworking 'Old Hundred Names' that breaks his back every day in a factory for a buck a day. That's from the elites in the [CCP] that have skimmed the money off the top of the slave labor of China, money-laundered it through banks and investment banks, and bought real estate and hard assets in the West."

"The Chinese Communist Party is the Frankenstein monster created by the elites in the West—the capital provided by the elites in the West, the technology that's provided by the elites in the West," Bannon said.

"At Breitbart, for years, we were talking about the threat of, not a rising China, [but] the threat of the [CCP] and how it's getting more radicalized over time and how it had hegemonic designs on the world.

"The people of China are some of the most hardworking, decent people on earth. They're enslaved by a radical totalitarian surveillance state of the Chinese Communist Party and really a radical cadre inside that Communist Party that suppresses, enslaves the Chinese people."

The nature of the Chinese regime becomes especially clear, in Bannon's view, in the way the police are treating the Hong Kong protesters.

"When you see the tear gas, you see the beatings, you see the rubber bullets, you see exactly what they are. This is a gangster

A protester is detained at Causeway Bay in Hong Kong on Aug. 31, 2019, in the latest opposition to a planned extradition law that has since morphed into a wider call for democratic rights in the semi-autonomous city.

organization that doesn't believe in any individual rights," Bannon said.

"What they've done to the Uyghurs, what they've done to the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan Buddhists, what they've done to the Evangelical Christians, what they've done to Falun Gong, what they've done to the underground Catholic Church is unacceptable," Bannon said. "These are criminals that don't abide by any rule of law."

The Fight for Freedom

"The defining event I believe in the first half of the 21st century is the freedom of the Chinese people," Bannon said. "I think the freedom of China starts in Hong Kong. I think it's going to spread from there."

"The people in Hong Kong are among the most orderly and decent folks on earth. If you've ever been there, it's basically a rock island with no resources, that the grit and determination of the Chinese people, coupled with English common law, has created the third-greatest capital market in the world," Bannon said.

Historically, Hong Kongers have tended to be apolitical and business-focused, in Bannon's view. Yet now, millions of Hong Kongers have flooded the streets over the past few weeks to protest an extradition bill that would allow the Chinese regime to wantonly extradite Hong Kongers—including dissidents and activists—and sentence them in a Chinese court.

"They're standing up for freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, freedom of speech. They're free-market capitalists. Many of them are Christians. To me, it's very motivating to see young people that are not prepared to back down in the face of totalitarian brutality," Bannon said.

"Those young men and women are exactly what the patriots of 1776 were in the United States. They have the grit, they have the determination, they have the indefatigability. They are not going to back down. They've been tear-gassed, they've been beaten,

they've had rubber bullets shot at them, and time and time again, they show up.

"I think they're heroes of the modern world. I think they deserve to be nominated for and win the Nobel Prize for peace."

The moment that the CCP decides to stamp out the protests like they did with the Tiananmen pro-democracy protesters, the moment the Chinese regime repeats the Tiananmen Square massacre, Bannon said, "that's the beginning of the end of the Chinese Communist Party."

In Bannon's view, China would be swiftly ostracized and shut off from Western technology and capital markets. But more importantly, he said, "I think even with the firewall, the contagion of freedom will start to spread in China."

Eventually, Bannon believes, the Chinese people will stand up and say, "We've had enough of 100,000 people or 50,000 people ruling a country of 1.4 billion and stealing all our money, stealing all our wealth, taking it for themselves, making us live in a totalitarian surveillance state."

'A Profile in Courage'

"Only the Chinese people can free the Chinese people," Bannon said. But people in the West can help by putting the spotlight on the Chinese regime's brutal persecution of dissidents and religious believers.

The Huawei expose film, "Claws of the Red Dragon," seeks to inform people around the world about the opaque inner workings of the Chinese communist state—where major corporations are deeply influenced by the Chinese regime.

In the film, Canadian government officials grapple with whether they should hold the Chinese regime accountable, when doing so could potentially endanger Canadian citizens in China. China arrested two Canadians and charged them with espionage last December, a move that has largely been seen as retaliation for Canada's arrest of Huawei's Meng.

"Claws of the Red Dragon" is "a profile in courage," Bannon said, that highlights the difficult moral dilemmas that ordinary individuals face in confronting a goliath regime like the Chinese Communist Party. It's a "tense situation where people are making moral trade-offs all the time."

"I think it's a very powerful film, and I'm very proud to be associated with it," Bannon said.

"The pursuit of truth and pursuit of your higher moral self comes at a great cost. It's just like in Hong Kong. There is a huge cost they are paying. They're being jailed. They're being beaten. They are being [told] your careers are ruined, your careers are finished. This is a high cost in the modern society, and yet they refuse to back down," he said. "They will rise up to their higher, highest self."

Correction: A previous version of this article incorrectly identified the law from which President Trump derives emergency powers to order companies out of China. The correct law is the International Emergency Economic Powers Act of 1977. The Epoch Times regrets the error.

"American Thought Leaders" is an Epoch Times show available on Facebook, YouTube, and the Epoch Times website.

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Steve Bannon

The film "Claws of the Red Dragon" seeks to expose the ties between Chinese telecom giant Huawei and the Chinese Communist Party.



SCREENSHOT VIA JOE WANG/VIMEO



TRUTH *and* TRADITION

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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:

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