THE EPOCH TIMES

CHINA INVESTING IN

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE WARFARE

TO THREATEN US MILITARY SUPERIORITY

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A surveillance drone on the runway of the airport in Hotan in China's western Xinjiang region on May 30, 2019.

Is Foreign Aggression the Next Step for China? 5

China Investing in 'Artificial Intelligence' Warfare to Threaten US Military Superiority

BOWEN XIAO

EW YORK—China is eroding America's military superiority and conventional deterrence through the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) systems in its military strategies, operations, and capabilities, an independent U.S. federal commission warned, adding that the United States needs to step up investment in the technology and apply it to national security missions.

China's communist regime has established research and development institutes to advance its military applications of AI. Those institutes are equivalent to the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)—a U.S. agency under the Department of Defense responsible for the development of emerging technologies for military use.

Military applications of AI technologies are being developed by Chinese researchers in the areas of "swarming, decision support, and information operations," while the country's defense industry is pursuing the development of "increasingly autonomous weapons systems," an interim report released by The National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence said on Nov. 4.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) declared it would be the world leader in AI by 2030, part of its broader strategy to challenge America's military and economic position in Asia, as Beijing also pursues a process of "intelligentization" as a new imperative of its military modernization. The comcompetitor" in their preface. China is also making an "active effort" to recruit global AI talent and to convince Chinese nationals working abroad to return to their home

As the AI race between Washington and Beijing continues to escalate, experts told The Epoch Times that the United States still holds the advantage. However, commission members said America's leadership in AI "may be at risk sooner" than thought and said that a loss of this position would translate to U.S military and intelligence agencies lagging behind with out-of-date systems, or being forced to buy more advanced technology from







NICOLAS ASFOURI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



mission's members described Chi-A Chinese soldier China and other countries. salutes in front of na as "our most serious strategic Ray Walsh, VPN expert at Proa drone during the

70th anniversary

of the communist

takeover of China,

in Beijing on Oct. 1,

China's HSU001

underwater drones during a parade on

the 70th anniversary

of the communist

takeover of China,

in Beijing on Oct. 1,

A staff member (R)

introduces a model

of FL-2 drone to a

visitor at Chinese

Equipment and

Defense Information

2019.

Privacy.com and a top authority in the field, told The Epoch Times that AI in warfare is best understood in two separate categories: decisionmaking systems that run trialand-error simulations of potential confrontation scenarios to produce tactical solutions, and lethal autonomous weapons, also known as "killer robots."

China is literally 'vacuuming up' immense amounts of data—this represents the digital nourishment that Al learns and evolves from.

Dr. Robert J. Bunker, adjunct research professor, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War

He said the potential for swarms of armed drones to engage in battle is a "new form of warfare" that could save lives instead of deploying soldiers, though he said the potential for mass casualties could become an emerging humanitarian concern. Walsh said the CCP is encouraging its army to work closely with startups in the private sector and with universities to advance these technologies.

"China sees AI as an opportunity to close the gap between itself and global war machines like the U.S.," Walsh said. "Leveraging AI, battlefield combat can be reduced to automated decisions produced via simulated environments giving military commanders newfound capabilities to create successful results."

One aspect of China's threat is its increasing efforts to "exploit civilian and commercial developments in AI" that would leverage an increasing number of companies to toe the Party line in both state and military purposes. The CCP has representatives in almost every

large company in China. Dr. Robert J. Bunker, adjunct research professor at the Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, told The Epoch Times that Beijing has a "massive regimebacked effort going into AI," describing the technology as key in the 21st century. He said the regime is using the technology to increase its comprehensive national power (CNP) as part of the great power competition

"My understanding is that the U.S. lead in AI is quickly eroding over time," Bunker said via email. "While we have better computer scientists and engineers in the field and more cutting edge companies

it sees taking place.

engaged in R&D (such as Google), China has far better access to massive datasets and informational resources gleaned from such platforms

as WeChat that has 1 billion users. "China is literally 'vacuuming up' immense amounts of data—this represents the digital nourishment that AI learns and evolves from."

AI weapons are a concern because they're capable of independent decision making, analysis, and target diagnosis, and can create an ability to wage war without human involvement, Walsh said. This comes amid a broadening anxiety over forced technology transfers from U.S. companies to Chinese authorities and intellectual property theft.

Domestically, there are generally two different opinions when it comes to the use of AI. Many defense experts have urged the country to move more quickly with the development of AI-enabled weapons systems and other capabilities, citing rising international threats and the possibility that the technology could save American lives and reduce civilian casualties.

On the other side, some technologists and ethicists urge the United States to slow its development of or abandon entirely the use of AI for military purposes, citing various potential problems, from "a catastrophic accident, to crisis instability, to the immoral weaponization of AI," the report stated.

"The U.S. claims that it will work on developing these kinds of AI weapons with respect for international laws and the nation's established code of moral conduct," Walsh said. "However, detractors are concerned the reality is that the U.S. is scared of falling behind in a new arms race that could see it lose its hegemony on the battlefield."

The Trump administration is watching China closely, with a number of U.S. officials in recent weeks publicly warning about the threats Beijing poses due to the proliferation in the West of Chinese companies such as Huawei, China's foray into 5G technology and AI coupled with well-established concerns of China's mass surveillance, espionage, and human rights abuses. The Chinese-owned videosharing app TikTok is currently facing a national security review over its \$1 billion acquisition of U.S. social media app Musical.ly.

National Security

The report identifies five major lines of effort it says are needed to preserve America's advantage: investing in AI research and development, applying the AI to national security missions, training and recruiting AI talent, protecting and building upon U.S. technology advantages, and to marshal global

"Adopting AI for defense and security purposes is an urgent national imperative," the report stated. "Accelerating applications of AI to national security missions is an intelligence, warfighting, and organizational necessity."

The commission noted that it's not "glorifying the prospect of AIenabled warfare," citing instead the choices made by America's strategic competitors, which force the United States to "examine AI through a military lens."

In a joint message, the chairman of the commission, Eric Schmidt, former CEO of Google, and vice chairman Robert Work wrote that global leadership in AI technology is a national security priority.

AI technology will change warfighting strategy, with future use possibly involving the U.S. military using AI-enabled machines, systems, or weapons that would aim to understand the battlespace more quickly, and technology that would help people make "relevant decisions faster or mount more complex multi-domain operations

in contested environments." The technology will foster a "new generation of semi-autonomous and autonomous combat systems and operations." Autonomous capabilities can have multiple applications "including for predictive analysis, decision support systems, unmanned platforms, robotics, and weapons (both cyber and physical)."

The commission report stresses that long-term strategic implications to implement AI technologies for military applications may be "even greater than the impact on any specific military task," citing the speed of decision-making and accuracy of AI compared to humans. They note how some believe AI will bring in a new era of "algorithmic warfare," rather than traditional warfighting factors such as the range of weapons systems.

"Battlefield advantage will shift to those with superior data, connectivity, compute power, algorithms, and overall system security," the report said. "Reaching such a future will require the development of new operational concepts, organizational constructs, and decision-makers at all levels trained to understand AI and its associated technologies."

The commission also detailed specific areas of warfare that AI could be applied to, including electronic warfare and anti-submarine warfare. In electronic warfare, "cognitive systems could autonomously detect and respond to signals jamming," and in anti-submarine warfare, "an unmanned vessel could navigate the open sea and hunt adversary submarines for months at a time.'

One role of AI technology is its role in intelligence, with AI algorithms being able to go through troves of data to find patterns, detect threats, and identify correlations. AI tools can "make satellite imagery, communications signals, economic indicators, social media data, and other large sources of information more intelligible." AI can also assist in America's defense systems with tools that identify anomalies to inform counterterrorism and counterintelligence efforts.

DARPA's AI Next campaign, launched in 2018, provides \$2 billion in federal funding to new and existing programs, which Walsh said was a step in the right direction. This year, DARPA also tested

an offensive swarm of drones. The United States is also preventing a UN initiative to ban autonomous killer robots. Russia, South Korea, Israel, and Australia have also joined efforts to prevent the ban.

Alexander M. Kehoe, co-founder and operations director at Caveni Digital Solutions, an SEO and digital marketing company, told The Epoch Times it's clear that AI military due to its wide-reaching applications.

He said it was no surprise that China, as a growing power, has decided to go that route, but he said he doubted whether the CCP would achieve global dominance in AI by 2030. He also called the propositions of Google working in China to develop AI "concerning."

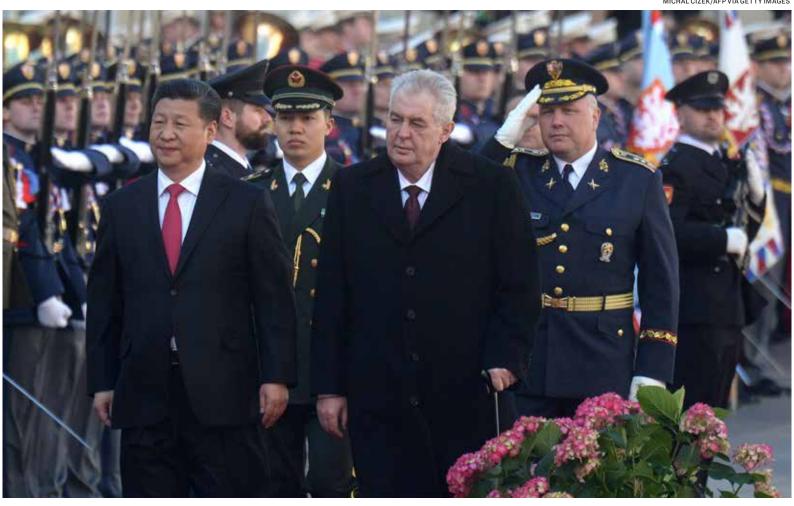
"Recent breakthroughs in quantum computing by NASA and Google are a huge step in the direction of creating the computational power needed to develop even more advanced AI," he said. "So these discoveries are still being made in the United States."

"Should the U.S. military be looking into funding more artificial intelligence research? Absolutely," Kehoe said. "Does it look like China will overtake the United States in the near future? Absolutely not."

The Department of Defense can directly take advantage of autonomous and intelligent systems, the commission stated, with the Intelligence Community more effectively processing and analyzing vast amounts of data, and other agencies possibly using it to find efficiencies in business operations so other resources can be sent to the missions with the highest priority.

AI also provides an advantage in national security missions where speed is vital—for example, in cybersecurity or missile defense. There are currently over 600 active AI projects in the Defense Department, according to a recent

The Five Eyes Technical Cooperation Program, a collaborative five-nation forum between the UK, U.S., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, also recently started an AI Strategic Challenge, which would be a three-year effort focused on AI applications for allied militaries, according to the report.



Chinese leader Xi Jinping (L) and Czech President Milos Zeman review a guard of honor at the Prague Castle, on March 29, 2016.

OPINION

Sister City Partnerships With China: Promoting the Chinese Regime's Agenda Abroad

gans for united front work.

The friendship city can thus be

co-opted to perform the CCP's

Another less noticeable function of a

friendship city is inadvertently export-

ing the CCP's human rights violations

and religious persecution. In a 2017 Party

document, titled "Working Points of the

Henan Provincial Party Committee's Lead-

ing Group for Preventing and Handling

Heretical Teachings," a section is devoted

friendship cities, improve the quality of the

work of friendship cities, and effectively

suppress Falun Gong's space for activities

outside the country," it states. Falun Gong,

also known as Falun Dafa, is a spiritual

meditation practice that has been severely

suppressed by the Chinese regime since

1999. Its adherents continue to be harassed,

Since provincial Party committees don't

directly draft foreign policies, this can only

mean that the directive was an order from

the senior leadership in Beijing. That is to

say, the CCP's persecution of Falun Gong

has been exported to the whole world

are actually no clear boundaries in the in-

ternational arena. When the United States

and China first used the term in their Joint

Communique, they already had differenc-

es. China called it the "one China" prin-

ciple, while the United States refers to it as

the "one China" policy. The United States

acknowledges the "one China" positions

of both the Chinese regime and Taiwan,

but doesn't recognize Taiwan as a sover-

eign country. It has, however, maintained

robust ties with the island, chiefly through

supplying arms for its self-defense—often

The situation in other countries is simi-

lar. Disputes have occurred over the inter-

pretation of "one China," as the CCP often

The breakdown of the Prague-Beijing

agreement is one such instance, while a

demand by China's aviation authority that

international airlines change references to

"Taiwan" is another; there's also the pun-

ishment of Taiwanese entertainers for sim-

dictates when and how it's applied.

drawing ire from Beijing.

Regarding the "one China" policy, there

through the friendship city project.

imprisoned, and tortured for their faith.

to the role of friendship cities.

tasks—beyond diplomacy—

without being noticed

HENG HE

n October, the city council of Prague voted to terminate its sister city relationship with Beijing.

L Shortly after, Beijing announced it would also end the Friendship City agreement, which is one of the many treaties signed during Chinese leader Xi Jinping's visit to the Czech Republic in 2016. Chinese officials said they would stop direct flights between China and Prague, and terminate financial support for the Slavia Praha football club in Prague.

While Zdenek Hrib, who was elected mayor of Prague in November 2018, repeatedly asked Beijing to remove a clause in the Friendship Agreement that read, "Supporting One-China Policy, Taiwan belongs to China," he never received a response.

The "one China" policy asserts that there is only one sovereign state under the name of China. The Chinese regime views Taiwan—officially called the Republic of China—as a renegade province to be united with the mainland in the future, with military means if necessary. Taiwan is a self-ruled island with its own democratically elected government, military, and currency, and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has sought to undermine Taiwan's international standing by pressuring countries to accept the one-China policy and drop diplomatic ties with Taiwan.

Meanwhile, Taiwan asserts that it is the

sole legitimate "republic of China." Officials in Prague, which was the first city to publicly challenge the "one China" policy clause written in the sister city agreement, raised an important question. Why should anybody write the "one China" clause into a sister city agreement? A diplomatic relationship between two countries is mutual recognition of their competence—which is stated clearly when the two nations agree to establish ties.

China-U.S. diplomatic relations, for example, are based on the "Three Joint Communiques" signed in 1972, 1979, and 1982. Exceeding this scope violates the basic principles of diplomatic recognition.

A city has no diplomatic authority. Prague, or other cities in the Czech Republic—or any city in the world, for that matter—has no obligation or power to intervene in the foreign affairs of a nation. That the "one China" policy is written into sister city agreements seems unnecessary, but it's actually how the CCP transcends diplomatic authority and directly influence other countries' internal affairs.

"Citizen diplomacy" is how Beijing describes its sister city partnerships. The Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), which is a self-proclaimed nongovernmental organization in charge of promoting ties between Chinese and foreign cities, counts senior Party officials among its ranks, and is a proxy of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In this way, in addition to the official embassy and consulate, CCP foreign affairs agencies have added a quasi-diplomatic organization that isn't on the list of

diplomatic envoys and isn't regulated by foreign governments. The friendship city can thus be co-opted

to perform the CCP's tasks—beyond dior any other Western countries. plomacy—without being noticed. One of Prague was the first to say "no" to CCP's those tasks is "united front work"—the arbitrary definition and application of Chinese regime's term for efforts to influthe policy. ence people and organizations overseas The United States and other Western to promote its agenda. In Chinese provcountries need to carefully check whether inces and cities, efforts to promote "friendthe friendship city agreements between ship" ties are coordinated by the Chinese their cities and their Chinese counter-People's Political Consultative Confer-

parts—and their daily activities—conform to their domestic laws; pose a national ence (CPPCC), one of the Party's chief orsecurity threat; or violate the freedom of religious belief and human rights of their citizens and residents.

ply showing the Taiwan flag. The red lines

have always been drawn and changed by

the CCP, and never by the United States

Another Chinese institution worthy of attention is the Council for the Promotion of Peaceful National Reunification (CPPNR). This is an organization that is very suspicious from name to function, and has a presence throughout the United States and the rest of the world.

There are 37 branch organizations in the United States, according to the CPPNR's official website. If this organization's mission is to promote the policy, as it states on its website, it should be operating in countries that still maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan. However, all the CPPNR branches are based in countries that have already have formal diplomatic "(We must) fully utilize the channels of relations with the Chinese regime. What's the purpose of having these CPPNRs in

Secondly, according to CCP rhetoric, "unification" is a internal Chinese affair. So why should CPPNRs set up branches in foreign countries on an issue that's entirely a China internal affair? Isn't the Chinese regime itself inviting foreign countries to interfere in its internal affairs? Or is it that the CCP lacks self-confidence and needs to set up such organizations to invite foreign-

ers to endorse its policies? Think tanks such as the Hoover Institution have pointed to CPPNR as part of the Chinese regime's united front efforts, having established "nongovernmental fronts

What CPPNRs do in the United States is suspicious; they don't organize any activities related to domestic affairs in the host country. All CPPNRs carry out Beijing's agenda.

If they exist to influence U.S. foreign policy, they should be registered as lobbying groups. However, only two of the 37 CPPNR branches are located in Washington. Whom are they lobbying in Guam and Puerto Rico, where they have local chapters? If not for lobbying, what are they doing?

This is a typical example of how the CCP uses the democracy and freedoms of Western countries to export its own values. Because the purpose of these organizations is to promote the CCP's policies, the United States should require that they register with federal authorities as

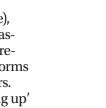
Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.



Technology Exhibition in Beijing, on June 18, 2019.



Visitors look at an Al security software program on a screen at the 14th China International **Exhibition on Public** Safety and Security in Beijing on Oct. 24, 2018.



Hong Kong Protests

Reach New Intensity

CATHY HE

he city of Hong Kong has seen regular eruptions of violence and chaos over the course of almost six months of mass protests. But the level of intensity over the past week has prompted fear that the crisis may never reach a resolution.

It started with the death of a 22-year-old student on Nov. 8, who died from his injuries after falling one story from a parking garage where police had fired tear gas to disperse protesters—the first fatality connected to police actions in the continuing pro-democracy movement. His death triggered a wave of protests over the weekend.

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Otherwise, there

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Protester surnamed

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On the morning of Nov. 11, an unarmed protester was shot at close range by a police officer—the third demonstrator injured by a live round fired by police. That sparked fresh waves of anger toward Hong Kong authorities as protesters called for a citywide strike and disrupted traffic to try to pressure the government into hearing their demands.

Tensions escalated on Nov. 12 when protesters and police engaged in an hours-long standoff lasting late into the night at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK). Police fired 1,567 canisters of tear gas, 1,312 rounds of rubber bullets, and 380 bean-bag bullets-most of that at CUHK to disperse students who had set up blockades, hurled bricks, and threw petrol bombs to keep police from

A day earlier, police had charged into CUHK, other universities, and a church to make arrests—the first time authorities had entered those properties to crack down on protesters.

'Things are escalating both in frequency and in degree," said Jason Ng, lawyer and convenor of Progressive Lawyers Group, a local group of lawyers who advocate for pro-democracy causes. "That's what makes it troubling. And what makes it worse is that there's no end in sight."

Direction From Beijing?

The Hong Kong government has maintained that it can put an end to the crisis, repeatedly blaming "rioters" for intensifying the situation. The city's leader, Carrie Lam, at a recent press conference, again vowed that she wouldn't give in to protesters' demands, which include universal suffrage and an independent inquiry into alleged police brutality against protesters.

Lam's remarks came after a visit to Beijing in early November, when Chinese leader Xi Jinping and the regime's top official overseeing the city's affairs publicly backed her handling of the protests. The trip was read by some commentators as a sign that Lam received support from Beijing to harden her stance toward the protesters.

There has been a "remarkable change in her behavior, both in speech and in action," since Lam's meetings with Beijing leaders, Ng said.

"The rhetoric [used by Lam] has become much more uncompromising," he said, adding that the unprecedented police enforcement over the past week has demonstrated that such rhetoric has been matched by action.

There has been a "clear shift" by Chinese and Hong Kong authorities toward a willingness to use lethal force to reassert control of the city, Dan Garrett, author of "Counter-hegemonic Resistance in China's Hong Kong: Visualizing Protest in the City," told The Epoch Times via email.

He said the communist leadership in Beijing appears to have demilitary to quell protests would be untenable due to the potential international backlash, so they've

instead adopted the approach of militarizing riot police to forcibly subdue the protests.

"This, however, requires an aggressive ... campaign to frame the protesters as extremists and terrorists using exceptional violence, thereby necessitating and legitimating the use of lethal force," Garrett said.

The Chinese regime has been doing so for months. Chinese officials and state-run media frequently paint protesters as criminals and "extremists," and have urged a tough response by local authorities.

Geng Shuang, Chinese foreign affairs ministry spokesperson, at a regular press briefing on Nov. 13 labeled protesters as the "enemy of the people," echoing Lam, who used the same wording to describe protesters days earlier. Geng also reiterated the regime's "resolute support" for the Hong Kong government, police, and courts in taking "effective measures to severely punish illegal and criminal activities."

Top officials at a Party conclave held in late October also emphasized the need for "perfecting" Hong Kong's "legal system and law enforcement mechanism" to "safeguard national security," according to the communique.

That directive was reflected in recent statements made by senior regime officials, such as Zhang Xiaoming, director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office within the cabinet-like State Council, who, in an article published on the office's official website on Nov. 9, said that strengthening Hong Kong's "law enforcement power" is an urgent task for the Hong Kong

Anger and Despair

Protests show no signs of easing, with claims of police violence growing by the day, aggravating the unrest. Social media is awash with video footage that shows instances of police aggression, including officers beating subdued protesters, and pepper-spraying bystanders and journalists.

The Hong Kong police have also attracted international condemnation. A September report by Amnesty International found that police had engaged in a "disturbing pattern of reckless and unlawful tactics against people during the protests."

"You can't expect protesters to ... just roll over and let you beat them up, let you arrest them, let you even shoot them with live bullets," Ng

But the more the protesters push back, the more reason the police have to crack down on them, he said. "So it just becomes a vicious

circle," Ng said. Besides public anger, a growing sense of despair appears to have spread among protesters.

"I feel helpless ... I don't know how to achieve my political ideals," an office worker surnamed Chan told the Hong Kong bureau of The Epoch Times. He took part in a demonstration in the central business district on Nov. 13.

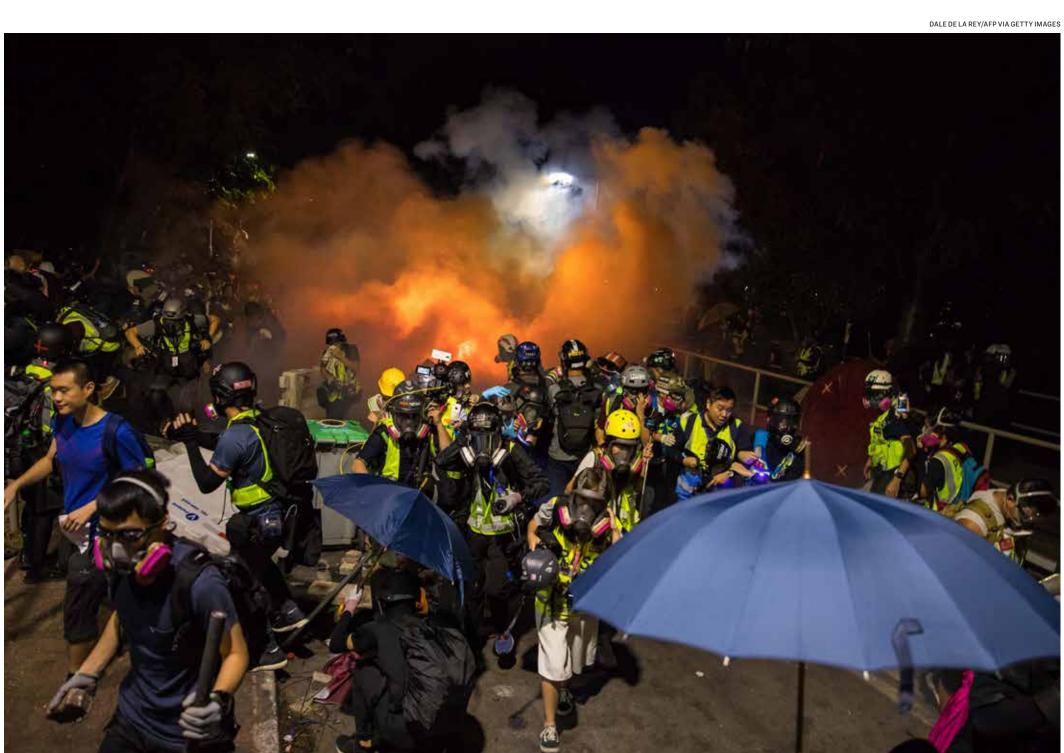
Chan, an alumnus of CUHK, said he understood the actions of students who clashed with police at the university on Nov. 12, one of the most intense confrontations since the mass protests began.

"They don't know what to do to resolve the problem. They're using their last resort," he said, as he begins to cry. "I hope the government can seriously consider the protesters' demands and settle this crisis. Otherwise, there will be many casualties. Hong Kong will head toward the path of no return."

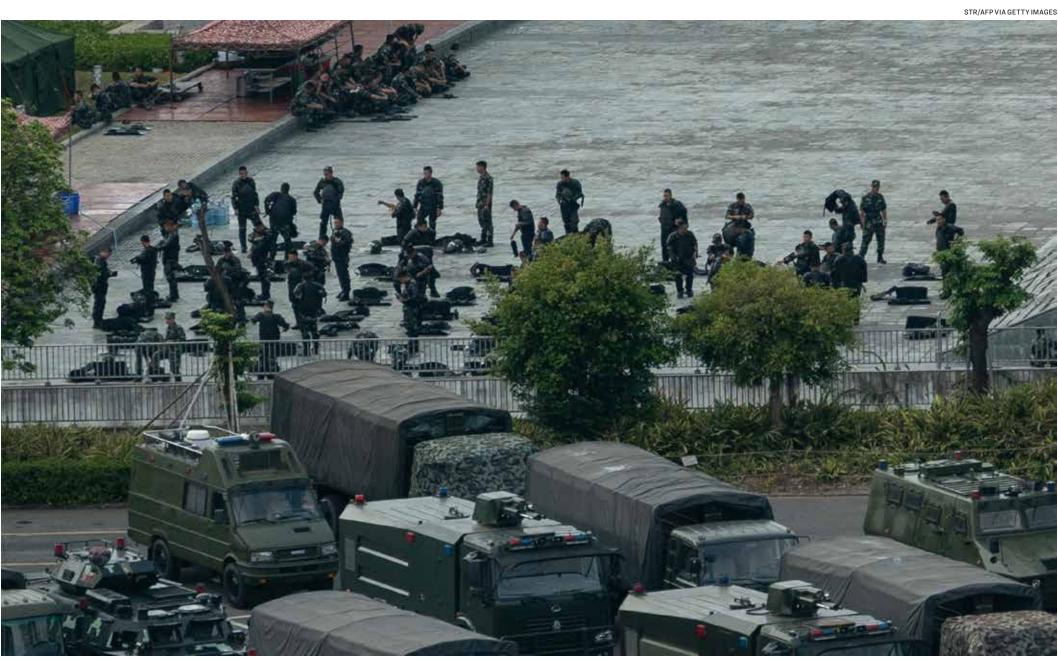
Ng believes that the movement may have reached the point where it's "never going to end."

It's going to turn into a "rolling crisis," Ng said, in which the city or even years to come."

Eva Fu contributed to this report.



Protesters and journalists react, after police fired tear gas at the Chinese University of Hong Kong on Nov. 12, 2019.



Chinese military personnel gather near parked trucks and armored personnel carriers at the Shenzhen Bay stadium in Shenzhen, bordering Hong Kong in China's southern Guangdong Province, on

Is Foreign Aggression the Next Step for China?

A flagging economy and rising instability may push China's leadership to foreign adventurism as a way out of its legitimacy crisis

JAMES GORRIE

he Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is in crisis. That may seem to be an exaggeration, but it's not. The Party is facing the greatest challenges to its leadership since Tiananmen Square in 1989. In fact, the risks to the Party's legitimacy are even higher today because the Party could rely on rising levels of exports to the West and direct investment from it. That's no longer

The trade war is helping to both reveal and exacerbate some of the deep fissures that exist in the relationship between the Chinese people and their leadership. These rifts of dissatisfaction were there long before Trump arrived, but as they grow more pronounced, they pose potentially explosive consequences for China and its leadership.

Communist Party Dissatisfaction Hurting Party Loyalty

These rifts are certainly not just about Hong Kong or even Taiwan, although they're definite factors. More concretely, it's the deep alienation that much of the mainland Chinese populace feels with regard to the Party that is the clear and present threat to domestic stability. Furthermore, this is no secret in China; everybody knows it.

The CCP most certainly understands its now-tenuous position within the minds of its subjects. In his address to the National Congress in March of this year, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, acknowledged it in unusually frank terms, saying that, "Instability and uncertainty are visibly increasing and externally generated risks are on the rise." He also admitted that China's problems are "of a kind rarely seen in many years."

Thus, the Party faces growing public dissatisfaction on a variety of fronts, not just the with the economy, although that is huge, since economic growth is central to the Party's claim to political legitimacy. Additional criticisms include rampant state corruption, such as state theft of property and businesses, uncontrolled pollution, poor social services, including healthcare and unemployment benefits, as well as many other complaints.

The Party's "cure," for what ails the country, however, may be just as bad, if not worse, than the disease.

Power at Any Cost Is the CCP's Priority

Some of the people may still believe that economic growth is the Party's top priority, but it isn't. Remaining in power is the Party's top priority, and containing internal instability is the key to doing so. Delivering continuous economic growth has been the

heart of that effort for decades. But that's no longer happening.

The trajectory of China's economy, at least in the near term, remains downward. This reality is only accelerating China's problems as well as the CCP's deteriorating reputation. This explains the expanding state control over the population via its "social credit system" that includes growing surveillance and punishment powers.

That may also be why, after 40 years of Party rule by consensus, that the Party mantle of supreme leader, a role last held by Mao Zedong. They may have decided that one, powerful and charismatic personality will engender more loyalty than a phlegmatic council of faceless elders devoid of personality.

But that move comes with serious risks as well. Consolidating power into the hands of one person is, by definition, a destabilizing factor. Information channels and decision-making processes are narrowed, political paranoia clouds perspective and self-preservation may come at the expense of the greater good. Historical examples of the dangerous excesses of one-man rule are plentiful and recent.

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What's more, resorting to the old ways of creating "economic growth" through redundant development will also prove futile. It further distorts prices and triggers bubbles without delivering ongoing economic benefit. Building more roads to nowhere and empty cities won't revitalize China's economy.

Oppression Will Shrink China's GDP and Increase Instability

Furthermore, the Party's claim that only it can guide China to a prosperous future while admitting that things are getting worse is a tough pill for the public to swallow. Undoubtedly it's an effort to rally the public's continued patience and support for the Party. But ordering expanded levels of control over the economy and greater oppression of political and religious expression in the face of deteriorating conditions won't raise GDP, either.

The reality is that as the impact of the trade war with the United States deepens and spreads out into the economy, conditions will continue to decline. The CCP's totalitarian approach will only lead to greater instability, generating more unrest, not less. The Party finds itself in a vicious downward spiral.

Playing the Foreign Aggressor Card

As noted in earlier posts, China's "One Belt, One Road" (OBOR, also known as Belt and Road) initiative has been a part of China's effort to expand its economic, political and cultural footprint. But it has not yet delivered the resources and economic growth needed to offset the current economic challenges. Nor will manipulating GDP data for public consumption be enough to change the reality on the ground.

As conditions get worse, the Party will certainly appeal to Chinese nationalism against the United States, commonly portrayed as a nefarious, meddling foreigner. That's what makes both Hong Kong and Taiwan quite convenient and powerful propaganda tools. Consider, for instance, that Taiwan's per capita income is almost two-and-a-half times that of China, while Hong Kong's is almost four time higher. This simple reality is undeniable proof that the CCP is not needed in China for the people and the country to prosper.

But rather than change the political and economic system in response to that fact, which would certainly mean the eradication of the Party from China, the CCP would prefer to change the facts. Both Taiwan and Hong Kong are allied with the West, specifically, the United States. Hongkongers waving the American flag and appealing to the United States for protection against any crackdown by the CCP have provided the Party with the perfect foil: the return of the threat of foreign intervention in China.

The Taiwan situation, with its de facto alliance with the United States, may be even more of a catalyst for China's military intervention than Hong Kong. Xi Jinping has explicitly stated that "re-unification" with the "renegade province" is inevitable. The aggressive policies of the Trump administration may well have accelerated those plans.

Since 2016, Beijing has systemically isolated Taiwan from most of its regional allies. That's more than just a message. It's an effort by China to set the regional political table prior to taking some sort of political, if not military, action against Taiwan. The CCP's public accusations against the United States of "interfering in China's internal affairs" and "damaging its sovereignty" with its arms sales to Taipei underscores this narrative.

Concurrently, as things become worse in China, the more instability will rise and the people's patience with the CCP will fall. This dynamic will only deepen the crisis in the Party. It also makes it more likely that China will turn to nationalistic militarism to divert the people's focus away from the worsening conditions and their cause.

James Gorrie is a writer and speaker based in Southern California. 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.



Adherents of Falun Gong reenact the forced organ harvesting of prisoners of conscience by the Chinese regime at a protest in Vienna on Oct. 1, 2018.

ORGAN HARVESTING

Chinese Regime Likely Manipulated Organ Donation Data, Study Finds

New research adds to mounting evidence that regime is forcibly harvesting organs from prisoners of conscience

FRANK FANG

new study has concluded that the Chinese regime likely systematically falsified its organ donation data, further fueling concerns that the regime has been forcibly harvesting organs for transplant from prisoners of conscience.

In 2015, the regime said it would stop sourcing organs from executed prisoners, and exclusively rely on a newly set up voluntary donation system.

But a study, published in the scientific journal BMC Medical Ethics on Nov. 14, led by Mathew Robertson, a doctoral student at the Australian National University (ANU), found that "Beijing's reported organ donation numbers don't stack up and there is highly compelling evidence that they are being falsified."

Study co-author Jacob Lavee, professor of surgery at Tel Aviv University, told The Epoch Times via email that by applying statistical forensics on official Chinese donation datasets, the study found that the figures "conforms almost precisely to a mathematical formula"—a quadratic function.

"When you take a close look at the numbers of organs apparently collected, they almost match this artificial equation point for point, year in, year out. They're too neat to be true," Robertson said in an ANU press release. Robertson was formerly an editor at The Epoch Times.

"These figures don't appear to be real data from real donations. They're numbers generated using an equation," he said.

The study analyzed official Chinese data on voluntary hospitalbased donated organs between 2010 and 2018.

The data was published by the China Organ Transplant Response System (COTRS) and the Red Cross Society of China. The COTRS forms the basis of China's voluntary organ donation system—every organ

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solely through it. The Red Cross Society of China is required to verify and witness every such organ donation.

> The researchers also compared the figures with data from 50 other countries in the Global Observatory on Donation and Transplantation, a database managed by the World Health Organization, and found that none of the other countries' datasets fit any formula.

They also found that "Chinese datasets deviate from every other country between one and two orders of magnitude," Lavee said.

"There can be no other explanation to such deviations, but that of data manipulation," he added. In addition, the study found "major anomalies" in the datasets to further suggest manipulation. For example, in a 10-day period in 2016, Red Cross data showed that 21.3 organs were procured from each donor—"a clearly impossible feat," Robertson said.

The study's findings were reviewed by Sir David Spiegelhalter, former president of the Royal Statistical Society in the UK.

"The anomalies in the data examined ... follow a systematic and surprising pattern," Spiegelhalter said in the press release.

Spiegelhalter added that he couldn't "think of any good reason for such a quadratic trend arising naturally."

Lavee said their findings were significant because it casts "serious doubts" on the Chinese regime's claims to have reformed its organ transplant system in recent years. For more than a decade, researchers have collected growing evidence pointing to the practice of

organ harvesting—that the regime is killing prisoners of conscience, most of whom are practitioners of the persecuted spiritual group Falun Gong, for their organs and selling them in the transplant market. Falun Gong, also known as Falun

transplant is meant to be allocated Dafa, consists of moral teachings been heavily suppressed since 1999. Adherents are subject to arbitrary detention, forced labor, and torture. Thousands have died in custody, according to the Falun

Dafa Information Center.

A 2016 report by the International Coalition to End Transplant Abuse in China found that the Chinese regime was performing roughly 60,000 to 100,000 transplants each year, far outstripping the officially reported figure of 10,000 to 20,000 per year. The conclusion was based on analysis of public records from 712 Chinese hospitals, including bed counts, bed utilization rates, surgical personnel, training programs, and state funding.

In June, an independent people's tribunal based in London, after a yearlong investigation, concluded beyond a reasonable doubt that the regime has forcibly harvested organs from prisoners of conscience for years "on a significant scale."

organs mostly came from imprisoned Falun Gong practitioners. The tribunal was chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice QC, who previously led the prosecution of former Yugoslavian President Slobodan Milosevic at the International Criminal

It also found that the harvested

Tribunal. In September, counsel to the tribunal Hamid Sabi presented before the United Nations (U.N.) Human Rights Council the tribunal findings, telling the U.N. and member states that they had a "legal obligation" to confront Beijing over its "criminal conduct."

In response to the tribunal findings and recent study, Lavee said that international organizations and the transplantation community should "probe deeply into the matter [of China's transplant abuses] and do their utmost to stop those atrocities."

Cathy He contributed to this report.

OPINION

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China and the Other Kind of Disinformation

RONALD J. RYCHLAK

here's a great deal of talk today about fake news and disinformation. Almost always, the object of the disinformation is someone or something that's receiving allegedly undeserved criticism. That's not the only way disinformation can work, however. Sometimes it can "frame" an object in a positive manner.

As the Russian/Soviet intelligence agencies developed the art of disinformation into what they called a science, it was every bit as important to be able to cast a positive light on an entity or individual (usually the reigning leader) as it was to be able to put someone in a bad light.

It looks like China is engaged in a similar disinformation effort, especially when it comes to carbon emissions and climate change. The effort has been going on for

In 2007, reacting to an announcement by China that blamed the United States for global warming, former Vice President Al Gore said, "They're right in saying that."

In fact, Gore said, "emerging economies such as China are justified in holding back on fighting greenhouse gas emissions until richer polluters like the United States do more to solve the problem," The Associated Press reported.

Gore was in China in 2011 to address the Global Urban Development Forum. He praised China's communist regime for its "unusual success" in carbon-reduction

In December 2017, Gore praised China's new "carbon market" as "another powerful sign that a global sustainability revolution is underway. ... It is clear that we're at a tipping point in the climate crisis."

One year later in Poland (not quite a year ago), he praised China's leadership for tackling climate change, saying that China is "one of the few countries on track to meet its Paris commitment," according to China's state-run news agency Xinhua. He went on to explain that China had already exceeded some of its own targets on renewables. (More on China's targets

In 2011, James Hansen, the retired NASA scientist who has been called the "father of climate change awareness," called the Chinese regime the "best hope" to save the world from global warming. He even called for an economic boycott to force the United unwilling to provide.

Gore and Hansen aren't the only environ-



Smoke billows from stacks as Chinese men pull a tricycle in a neighborhood next to a coal fired power plant in Shanxi, China, on Nov. 26, 2015.

mental activists who have said good things about China, nor are these the only times that they have spoken on the subject, but these serve as examples to provide a flavor of the way global warming activists talk about the communist dictatorship in China.

The amazing thing here is that China has had the world's largest carbon footprint since 2006. In 2017, it was responsible for 27.2 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions, according to the Global Carbon Atlas. China is also one of the world's largest emitters of methane, another greenhouse gas. In fact, methane is 34 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas.

China's problem is coal. It may be the world's biggest producer of solar panels, but a lot of them are built for export. China runs on coal. It's both the world's leading producer and the world's leading consumer of coal, and its capacity is expanding. From 1985 to 2016, coal provided about 70 percent of China's energy. That, of course, came at a high environmental cost.

Coal produces up to twice the amount of carbon dioxide as other fossil fuels. While China reports that its coal usage has declined since 2014, it still consumes more coal than the rest of the world combined. As of 2017, coal provides over 60 percent of the nation's total energy use, according to

Just last year, the Chinese regime approved development of seven new coal States to match China's effort. In 2015, Han-mines. That means that between 2017 and China's CO2 emissions grew by an esticern than anything else. The expansion sarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

mated 4 percent in the first half of 2019. Over that same time period, the nation's coal demand increased by 3 percent, its oil demand increased by 6 percent, and gas

> China has had the world's largest carbon footprint **SINCE 2006**

demand increased by 12 percent.

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to the Global Carbon Atlas. China is also one of the world's largest emitters of methane.

Of course, coal mined in one area needs to be shipped if it's to be used in another area. China just opened the Menghua Railway, the nation's longest coal transporting railway line. This railway, over 1,000 miles long, is expected to carry about 200 million tons of coal annually from the mining areas in northern China to the industrial hub in

None of this expansion in mining or shipping bodes well for the air quality in tians in the Middle East" (co-edited with provide the carbon emissions reduction tons of new coal mining capacity. Then lem. In a recent poll sponsored by state-run leadership that the United States had been this year, China allocated funding for 17 newspaper China Daily, more respondents Views expressed in this article are the more new coal mines across the nation. listed pollution as their number one con-

also suggests that perhaps China is not the model of enlightenment when it comes to combating man-made climate change.

Of course, for the disinformation campaign to succeed, criticism must be suppressed. Recently, the China Meteorological Administration issued regulations prohibiting weather forecasts by anyone other than the state's official meteorological agencies. Violators are subject to fines of almost \$8,000.

Perhaps even more disconcerting, in 2015, a former TV journalist in Beijing released a feature-length documentary titled "Under the Dome." It has been called China's version of Al Gore's climate change documentary, "An Inconvenient Truth." Millions of Chinese people watched "Under the Dome" online and saw its criticism of the Chinese regime for tolerating poor air quality. Within a week of it being posted, however, major Chinese websites pulled it down under orders from the Communist Party's central propaganda department.

Open debate—especially criticism of the government—cannot be tolerated. Even the "progress" that China's defenders cite when hailing the nation's environmental record are misleading.

Regarding China's "targets," it has pledged to reduce "carbon emission intensity," but the nation has not promised to impose an emissions ceiling. "Carbon emission intensity" measures the amount of carbon released per dollar of economic activity. Thus, with more economic activity, more emissions can be justified. So, total emission levels might continue to climb, and China would still be meeting its targets as long as economic growth outpaces those emissions. That is not the kind of promise Western nations are making or being asked

In the end, this is a beautiful piece of disinformation. China aggressively pursues its economic agenda using the least expensive energy available to it. It's able to claim to be meeting its environmental goals, and Western "experts" point to it as an example of environmental responsibility. Moscow would be proud.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

China's 'Bravest Female Lawyer' Describes Inhumane Torture in Chinese Prisons

HONG NING & OLIVIA LI

Wang Yu is acclaimed as the "Bravest Female Lawyer in China" by rights activists in the country. Wang became a human rights lawyer because she wants to defend innocent people from China's corrupt judicial system. She was also imprisoned for her human rights work in 2015. Having experienced abuse in a Chinese prison, Wang recognizes many of the instruments and torture methods used in Xinjiang's intern-

Wang, 48, used to practice business law until an incident at a train station in Tianjin City in 2008. When several railway employees denied her from boarding a train even though she had a ticket, Wang got into an intense argument with them and later filed a lawsuit. However, she was arrested and sentenced to two and a half years in prison on the charge of "intentional assault."

After Wang was released, she decided to become a human rights lawyer to help victims of China's unjust judicial system and fight for their rights. Many of her clients were Falun Gong practitioners. Wang was the first lawyer arrested during

what is now referred to as the "709 Incident." On July 9, 2015, the Chinese regime rounded up hundreds of human rights lawyers and activists across the country. The lawyers and activists were detained and interrogated, with some, like Wang, forced to make "confessions" on China Central

Television, saying that they have realized forced to wear handcuffs and shackles what they have done as a human rights of made of crude iron for seven days and lawyer or activist was wrong—it was the \(\frac{1}{2} \) nights. These handcuffs and shackles are Chinese regime's method of discouraging wery heavy, making it difficult for her to their activism and promulgating deceptive $\frac{9}{8}$ move around, raise her arms, eat meals,

Although Chinese authorities released

her from prison in August 2018 due to international pressure, she is still constantly under surveillance.

In mid-October

of this year, Australian human rights activist and Uyghur Muslim Arslan Hidayat tweeted a video, showing shocking scenes of various torture instruments, allegedly filmed in an internment camp in Xin-

After watching the video, Wang told the Chinese-language Epoch Times that Chinese Chinese human rights lawyer authorities used many of the same torture instruments on her while she was imprisoned during the "709 Incident."

For instance, she was

Wang Yu, acclaimed as the "bravest female lawyer in China," and her husband Bao Longjun. Bao is also a lawver and he supported Wang's human rights work

sleep, or use the restroom. The crude iron is extremely coarse and prolonged expo-

> sure caused severe bruising on her wrists and ankles. Hidayat highlighted a torture device called

> > Prison guards use belts to bind and legs tightly to a bench. They of bricks or some

under the victim's feet, which further pulls the binding, sometimes to the point that the belts break. Victims endure unbearable pain from the pressure of the belts

and often pass out. Wang said she suffered this torture method as

In another torture session, Wang said she was deprived of sleep for five the Xinjiang region.

days in a row. She thought she would die, but eventually managed to pull through. "It was truly a miracle. I feel that God was with me, protecting me," Wang said.

During the "709 Incident," Wang's husband was also taken away by the police and her school-age son was placed under house arrest. Wang was awarded the 21st prestigious

Ludovic Trarieux International Human Rights Prize in June 2016, also called "The award given to a lawyer by lawyers." In August 2016, the American Bar Asso-

ciation awarded its inaugural International Human Rights Award to Wang in absentia. Liu Xiaobin, a former mainland police

officer, revealed that in the early 2000s, many detention centers and prisons sent their employees to Masanjia Re-education Camp—a camp notorious for inventing numerous barbaric torture methods—to learn how to extort confessions through torture. These employees and Masanjia staff collaborated and developed many new torture methods that are implemented at local prisons and detention centers. Liu is a Falun Gong practitioner who now lives in the United States.

Wang Qingying, a prominent rights activist from Guangzhou City who fled to the United States, said that while he was imprisoned, he observed that Falun Gong practitioners suffered the most severe tortures, followed by Uyghur detainees from



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