

WEEK 19, 2021

THE EPOCH TIMES

# CHINA INSIDER

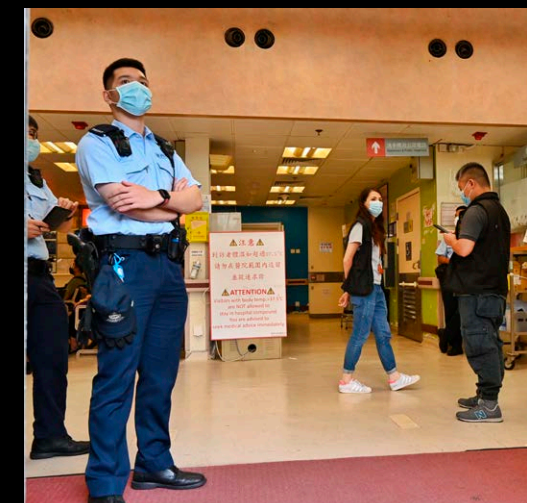
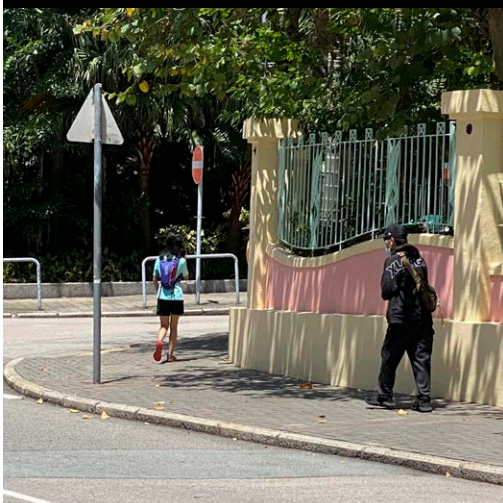
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## ATTACKED

HONG KONG REPORTER ASSAULTED  
BY BAT-WIELDING MAN

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## PRESS FREEDOM

# Epoch Times Reporter in Hong Kong Attacked by Bat-Wielding Man

FRANK FANG

A reporter for the Hong Kong edition of The Epoch Times was assaulted by an unidentified man wielding an aluminum softball bat on May 11, in an attack believed to be orchestrated by the Chinese regime in its latest attempt to silence reporting by the publication.

Sarah Liang was outside her residential building when the midday attack took place. The assailant hit her with the bat more than 10 times before fleeing in a car, leaving Liang with bruises on both of her legs.

The incident is the latest in a string of attacks on Epoch Times facilities and reporters in Hong Kong—all suspected of being organized by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) as part of its campaign to thwart the outlet's reporting in the city. The publication, one of the few independent outlets in Hong Kong, is known for reporting on corruption, political fighting, and human rights abuses committed by the communist regime.

Liang was transported by ambulance to Queen Elizabeth Hospital for treatment, and around 3 p.m. local time, police arrived to get her account of the attack. As of 6:30 p.m., she was still in the hospital.

A witness with the surname Li said he was coming out of a nearby restaurant when he heard a woman screaming, "Help me, I am being beaten."

Li said he then saw a large man in his 40s carrying a bat jump into a car and flee. According to Li, the assailant left in a black Mercedes-Benz with the license plate number "TV3851."

He suggested that whoever was behind the attack wanted to send a warning to The Epoch Times and prevent the outlet from carrying out its reporting. He de-



SONG PI-LUNG/THE EPOCH TIMES



SONG PI-LUNG/THE EPOCH TIMES

▲ Sarah Liang, a reporter for the Hong Kong edition of The Epoch Times, shows her bruised legs outside the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Hong Kong on May 11, 2021.

▲ Sarah Liang, a reporter for the Hong Kong edition of The Epoch Times, speaks to local media outside the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Hong Kong on May 11, 2021.

nounced the attack as brutal and inhumane, adding that he would be willing to testify against the attacker.

Speaking to local media outside the hospital at around 2 p.m. local time, Liang said she believed the attack was premeditated because another man suddenly charged toward her on May 8 at the same location where she was assaulted on May 11. In the earlier incident, the man eventually walked away after realizing that the bat he had hidden beneath his clothes had fallen to the ground while he was running.

She urged Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam to take note of her case as public safety in the city seems to be deteriorating. The reporter said she believes the attacker is connected to the Chinese

Communist Party, and that the Chinese regime was trying to intimidate her.

She was also targeted in two separate incidents over the past month. On April 26, she was stalked by an unidentified man outside a local metro station. Two days earlier, a man who claimed to be making a delivery entered her residential building and knocked on her door. Liang declined to open her door after the man failed to identify himself.

The Hong Kong edition's printing plant was also attacked by hammer-wielding intruders on April 12, forcing the facility to suspend operations for a few days. Less than two years earlier, the same printing press was set on fire by four masked individuals. The attackers haven't been found by police. It's widely believed that

the CCP is behind both attacks.

June Guo, director of the Hong Kong edition of The Epoch Times, said there's no doubt that the CCP was behind the assault on Liang. Guo urged the international community to help ensure the safety of all reporters working in Hong Kong.

The CCP's goal with this attack, as well as the others, was to force The Epoch Times to abandon its business in Hong Kong, Guo said.

The safety of staff at the outlet's printing plant has been another concern. Guo added that there have been unidentified vehicles and people spotted near the facility recently.

Officials at the Chinese edition of The Epoch Times urged Hong Kong Police to carry out their duty to investigate all unresolved cases involving the Hong Kong bureau.

"We call on the general public in Hong Kong to continue to support The Epoch Times," a statement from the outlet read. "The Epoch Times will not back down and it will continue to provide truthful coverage and safeguard Hong Kong."

They also called on the international community to help "prevent the CCP's escalating violence against Hong Kong media."

The former British colony, once celebrated for its civil liberties, has seen a drastic deterioration of press and other freedoms as the Chinese regime has tightened its grip over the city. In particular, Beijing's imposition of a draconian national security law and other measures in the past year have led observers to say that Hong Kong will soon be just another mainland Chinese city—an outcome in direct violation of Beijing's pledge under an international treaty to preserve the city's freedoms and autonomy until 2047.



ADRIAN YU/THE EPOCH TIMES

▲ Sarah Liang, a reporter for the Hong Kong edition of The Epoch Times, stands outside the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Hong Kong on May 11, 2021.

## OPINION

## It's No Longer About Taiwan, It's About Us

It's 1941 all over again; like Japan, China is very vulnerable from being cut off from what it needs to survive.

JOHN MILLS

Retired Adm. James Stavridis has a book out, "2034," in which a war breaks out with China. It escalates to include a nuclear exchange and the seizure of Taiwan. There have

been a number of interesting reviews as the admiral (there is a co-author) accrues book sales based on his former status. Stavridis is well known as a vocal senior retired officer and is in what we call the retired generals and admirals club, a very exclusive group.

What the admiral misses is the gravity, acceleration, and immediacy of Beijing's plans. The book should be called "2021" because we are facing immediate conflict with China. China needs three things that we dominate: food, energy, and access to the capital market. We control it, they need it. We take it for granted, they don't. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) war machine also needs access to dual-use chips. Taiwan has them and we desperately need them also.

And then Secretary of State Antony Blinken makes a comment that sows confusion, saying "our purpose is not to contain China." Words matter and Blinken's comment

unshackles the planners of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and perhaps assures conflict, just like our actions with Japan in 1941.

Maybe "containing" isn't the exact right word for the U.S. policy on China, but an expression very close to it should be used. China needs what we have, they need it now, and our current administration doesn't seem to realize the advantage they're sitting on and are intent on vacuous policy comments that are hyper-analyzed by the CCP information warfare machine.

Furthermore, as Steven Mosher points out in his book "Bully of Asia," the CCP feels it's their time to displace the United States and become the world's uncontested Hegemon. This means displacing or destroying the United States—right now. Things are coming to a head now, not in 2034.

### Thucydides Trap? Maybe

The often used and hard to pronounce Thucydides Trap paradigm is often thrown around to describe the approaching catastrophe. Simply put, it's the collision of a rising power with a fading dominant power. China may be given the term "rising power," but much of the acceleration of the timetable for war is its dire need for

what we have. So a "desperate power" may be more apropos for the CCP.

In many ways, we're back to a World War II-era grand strategy on centers of production, resource control, and the ability to generate war material on scale. Taiwan is our center of production for chips and must be defended as our Silicon Valley West. Would we have let Detroit fall to the Axis in World War II and just shrugged our shoulders?

**When the CCP moves on the Philippines or Taiwan, they're not stopping. It's about knocking the United States down and replacing us.**

I urge the Biden administration to move to the "arsenal of democracy" mode immediately to build capacity to deter and prevent war, but that doesn't seem to be the top priority for the administration.

Turning little boys into little girls, turning coal miners into coders, or placing William

Burns as head of the CIA, an appointee with stunningly questionable connections, may be the priorities of the administration, which doesn't impress but only emboldens the CCP. We need to come together as a nation and realize the immediate existential threat we're facing.

Will China go against Taiwan as their first move? Maybe, but if I was a PLA/PLAN (People's Liberation Army Navy) planner, I'm not sure I would want to attempt the first proposed landing in CCP history against Taiwan. A dry run is in order, and northern Luzon, the largest island of the Philippines, looks much more appealing.

The quick establishment of a "Co-Prosperity" trade enclave in the Philippines would be a much better way to exercise the logistics and planning functions for complex military projections. There's not much the Philippine military and government could do if a large Chinese amphibious group showed up with no warning at a major beach or port (let's say the old U.S. Navy Base at Subic Bay).

This action would secure the right shoulder of PLAN access to the deep Pacific. The Philippine operation would also prep the PLA/PLAN for the much more difficult move on Taiwan.

Taiwan is no longer about unification—it's about two things: securing the TSMC chip production industrial base and securing the left shoulder of China's main access point to the second island chain, which includes the sovereign U.S. Territory of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.

When the CCP moves on the Philippines or Taiwan, they're not stopping. It's about knocking the United States down and replacing us. Everything will be on the table including nuclear strikes against sovereign U.S. territory.

### Avoiding War

We have the upper hand and can avoid this war, but the current administration doesn't seem to know it.

It's of the utmost importance that the Biden administration realizes it's facing an immediate showdown with China. Not in 2034, but right now. America has the decisive control of food, energy, and the capital markets which the administration must start using as tools against the spiraling military preparations of the CCP. The U.S. military enterprise and industrial base needs to be placed on an urgent footing to prevent war.

This includes forgotten World War II- and Cold War-era precepts of an industrial base on scale. The Navy public-private shipbuilding partnership needs to go on a 24/7 schedule to reestablish itself and pull out of its dismal status. By my count, there are essentially two large, carrier-size drydocks on the West Coast, and these will be much



ALEXANDER DRAGO/POOL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Secretary of State Antony Blinken at the State Department in Washington on April 5, 2021.

needed to return a battle-damaged carrier to service.

Furthermore, the "lanes" available for large ship construction on the West Coast are filled up by the leisurely pace of current Navy shipbuilding and ship repair. There is no surge capacity as it stands now for repair or construction. The Panama Canal is essentially under Chinese control already, so leveraging East and Gulfcoast shipyards isn't a certainty. A naval crisis this is. Halsey (and Reagan) would be confounded at the current naval state of affairs.

Massive funding is needed immediately

for the shipyard industrial base and shipbuilding program. One key rule to make this an efficient ramp-up: This must be multi-year appropriations and authorizations so that funding can be wisely spent over time, not subject to the horribly inefficient one-year cycles that significantly drive up costs of capital projects due to extreme budget uncertainty.

The Air Force needs similar immediate attention to generate overwhelming air power. The Marine Corps, Army, and Space Force need right sizing and transformation also. Missile defenses need to

be greatly expanded for Pacific Islands, Alaska, and the mainland United States. Once the CCP starts, nothing will be off the table.

The Capital Hill Autonomous Zone may look like a shambles now, but it will be un-shambled when the CCP unleashes a nuclear strike on Seattle. Many more things need to be done, but it all starts with the resolve and clarity of the president in power. The more we sweat now, the less we'll bleed later. The more unclear we are, the more we'll bleed later.

The window is rapidly closing on even the most optimistic of administration watchers and their hope of Blinken and a few others maintaining successful deterrence of a brazen China.

If the current administration declines to take this situation seriously, perhaps we need the previous administration back in place to protect the American citizens and the nation. But the downriver effects of the Maricopa County election forensic recount are material for another story.

*Retired Col. John Mills is a national security professional with service in five eras: Cold War, Peace Dividend, War on Terror, World in Chaos, and now, Great Power Competition. He is the former director of cybersecurity policy, strategy, and international affairs at the Department of Defense.*

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

### REACTIONS TO ATTACK ON EPOCH TIMES REPORTER



The United States condemns the recent attack committed against an Epoch Times journalist. Attacks against journalists are unacceptable and cannot be tolerated. We urge the authorities to complete a full investigation of this incident as well as the recent attack on the Epoch Times' Hong Kong printing facilities.

—State Department spokesperson



Hong Kong police cannot allow the brazen and lawless attack on Epoch Times journalist Sarah Liang to go unresolved. ... Authorities must waste no time bringing the perpetrators to justice, and must ensure safety for all journalists working in Hong Kong.

—Steven Butler, Asia program coordinator, Committee to Protect Journalists



There is no more dangerous tactic of silencing the free press than of physically assaulting a journalist. We condemn this apparent assault on reporter Sarah Liang, and call for a full, transparent, and impartial investigation.

—PEN America

## CLIMATE CHANGE

## Climate Change Presents Opportunity for Beijing to Expand Global Power: Chinese Professor

NICOLE HAO &amp; CATHY HE

The Chinese communist regime views climate change as an opportunity to expand its influence worldwide, according to a prominent Chinese academic.

The global emissions reduction agenda can boost the regime economically and also holds “political significance” for Beijing, Di Dongsheng, associate dean of the School of International Studies at Renmin University in Beijing, wrote in his blog on April 27.

“It can help [us] to regulate and control the social, political, and economic environment,” Di said.

The regime should take a key role in addressing global climate change, he said, given the growing rifts between Beijing and Western powers over a range of issues.

“The climate issue is basically the only positive topic that China, the United States, and Europe can come together and discuss amicably,” Di wrote.

The professor gained notoriety last year when he called out Wall Street’s long-standing role in influencing U.S. politics on behalf of Beijing. According to his online biography, Di has worked with various bodies of the Chinese regime, including the foreign ministry and the state’s planning agency, the National Development and Reform Commission.

Climate is one of the few issues that the United States and the regime have said they could work together to resolve, even as their wider relationship has fractured in recent years.

During the Trump administration, the United States progressively toughened its stance against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) on a number of fronts, from Beijing’s severe human rights abuses to its rampant theft of foreign intellectual property. The Biden administration has pledged to continue this hard-line approach, but has consistently said it’s also willing to cooperate with the regime on shared interests such as climate change.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping, in his first appearance with President Joe Biden during last month’s global climate summit, said the country would “strictly limit” increasing coal consumption in the next five years, and reduce it in the following five years.

China is by far the world’s largest coal user. In 2020, it brought more than 38.4 gigawatts of new coal-fired power capacity into operation, more than three times the amount built elsewhere. An

additional 247 gigawatts of coal power is planned—nearly six times Germany’s entire coal-fired capacity.

The country is also the world’s largest emitter of greenhouse gases, accounting for more than 27 percent of total global emissions. In 2019, China’s emissions exceeded those of the United States and other developed countries combined, a recent report found. In 2020, about 61 percent of China’s total energy consumption came from coal, according to official figures.

At the summit, Xi also repeated a pledge from last year to reach peak emissions by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2060. Lawmakers and experts, however, doubt that Beijing will make good on any promises, citing a long history of reneging on its commitments.

## Reaping Rewards

While Di has expressed skepticism about the existence of man-made global warming, calling it a “false theory,” he nonetheless believes that Beijing should seize the opportunity presented by the climate agenda to become a world leader in green technologies.

In doing so, the regime would stand to gain economically by boosting exports of clean technology worldwide, while earning political capital by being the country that sets the “green benchmark on global development issues,” he said.

The professor noted that the United Kingdom led the world’s first energy revolution through the use of coal, while the United States pioneered the second energy revolution on the backs of oil and gas. Now, according to Di, China could be the leader in the third energy revolution based on clean energy, and “guide humanity’s development in a new direction.”

“Within 10 short years, Chinese enterprises have beaten their European counterparts in wind and solar energies. In these two fields, China’s production capacity accounts for over 60 percent of the world’s total,” he said.

China is the world’s largest manufacturer of wind turbines and solar panels. But its rise to the top in clean energy industries has been fueled by an abundance of unfair trade practices that have allowed Chinese firms to dominate foreign competitors on the international market, experts say.

In solar power, for instance, government subsidies were critical in helping Chinese companies dominate the global market in the 2010s, according to a 2020



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

Within 10 short years, Chinese enterprises have beaten their European counterparts in wind and solar energies.

Di Dongsheng, associate dean, Renmin University

report by the Washington-based Information Technology & Information Foundation (ITIF). Chinese firms dumped cheap solar panels worldwide, gutting the solar panel industry in the United States and other countries. By the time the United States imposed anti-dumping duties on Chinese government-subsidized solar panels in 2012, it was too late to save much of the domestic industry.

China is a “leader ... in stealing foreign clean technologies, pressuring these companies to transfer it [to China] when

they don’t want to do it, and massively subsidizing less innovative clean technology companies in China,” Robert Atkinson, president of ITIF, said during a virtual discussion on April 19.

Di also suggested that the regime set incentive policies to encourage Chinese companies to convert to clean energy, since most enterprises in the country are serial polluters and energy wasters. This would lead to a significant drop in emissions, enhancing the Chinese regime’s prestige on the international stage.

Such fighting words follow the Global Times’ demonization of Australia, and the entire Five-Eyes Alliance.

wage war with the PLA, they must know what disasters they would cause to their country.”

Such fighting words follow the Global Times’ demonization of Australia, and the entire Five-Eyes Alliance (United States, Britain, Canada, and New Zealand) as an “axis of white supremacy.” This characterization is obviously false given the multiethnic nature of these democracies’ leadership, including former U.S. President Barack Obama, current U.S. Vice-President Kamala Harris, and current New Zealand Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta. Yet, the accusation will have currency with some given the colonial history of the Five-Eyes countries, and their current very public and laudable attempts to combat racism within their borders.

Conversely, China’s all-powerful 7-member Politburo Standing Committee are all Han males who resolutely deny the existence of racism in China while at the same time engaging in genocide against their Uyghur minority. The real “axis of racial supremacy” is therefore not between the Five-Eyes, but between Beijing and Moscow.

Australia is not the only country that needs an independent nuclear deterrent and membership in NATO. A similar logic applies to other democracies, including Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, New Zealand, Ukraine, and Georgia, that are under threat from powerful nuclear-armed dictators. All of these countries should be encouraged to join NATO and obtain independent submarine-based nuclear deterrents.

NATO should also strengthen itself by encouraging its most powerful and democratic members, including Germany, Italy, and Canada, to obtain independent nuclear deterrent forces. Against

KEVIN FRAYER/GETTY IMAGES

FENG LI/GETTY IMAGES



A Chinese worker walks between the solar modules in Dunhuang, Gansu Province, China, in this file photo.

## Left Behind

China’s quest to increase reliance on clean energy will come at a cost to the country’s poor, Di said.

A large segment of the Chinese population lacks heating in winter because the entire southern part of China isn’t equipped with central systems. Hundreds of millions of Chinese who can’t afford private heating solutions are forced to endure cold winters.

If the regime tries to cut emissions, Di fears that the people’s “dream” of having heating in winter won’t be realized

for a long time.

Di recalled in his hometown of Qidong city in eastern China’s Jiangsu Province, all people could do was shiver through winter seasons when average temperatures dipped to the freezing point. Qidong lies at the mouth of the Yangtze River, which crosses the south-central part of the country.

While most people who live in the Yangtze River region can’t afford their own heating systems, the Chinese economy isn’t strong enough to support the installation of central heating to all these homes, he said.

## OPINION

## China’s Threat to Bomb Australia Shows Need for Aussie Nuclear Deterrent

ANDERS CORR



China’s state media recently threatened a military attack against Australia with both long-range H-6K bombers and missiles. The

threat came the same day that Australia’s prime minister expressed support for Taiwan and said that, “We always have stood for freedom in our part of the world.”

China’s latest threat, made on May 7 by the editor-in-chief of the Global Times, Hu Xijin, reveals Australia’s military vulnerability to a far larger and more powerful nuclear-armed China. The Global Times is controlled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

Given Hu’s threat, which is consistent with the larger pattern of China’s aggression, the United States and allies should immediately support Australia in obtaining an independent submarine-based nuclear deterrent, so that Australia can join countries such as the United States, France, Britain, and India as powerful global defenders of freedom and democracy. The independent strength of individual members of an alliance improves the overall strength of the alliance.

Australia has a limited window of opportunity in which to go nuclear, after which China’s rising power and regional hegemony will make an independent nuclear Australia impossible. At that point, which could be as soon as 5 or 10 years,

NATO should no longer be a purely Atlantic affair, given globalization and the rise of China.

the window will close and China could more effectively use nuclear brinkmanship, control of Asian seas, checkbook diplomacy, and its economic trading power, to break Australia from its allies, and bring it under Beijing’s dominance.

NATO should welcome Australia into its alliance as a full member, before China has a chance to create a territorial dispute down under, and thereby make Australian accession more difficult. If Washington came under the influence of Beijing, the bilateral U.S.-Australia alliance would be useless to Australia’s defense.

NATO should no longer be a purely Atlantic affair, given globalization and the rise of China. What matters today in choosing our closest allies is not geography, but shared values in support of democracy, as well as the inclusion of a broader diversity of allies, including countries like Saudi Arabia and Vietnam, that will strengthen the alliance in resisting Beijing’s growing preponderance of power. Today, China has strong alliance partners in Russia, Iran, and North Korea. Welcoming Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, and other autocratic powers into an alliance with democracies will keep them from turning against us, and strengthen us all.

The Global Times article includes a prominent photo of an H-6K nuclear-capable bomber flying in formation with two Chinese military Su-35 fighter jets. The caption notes that the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Air Force (PLAAF)

conducted “patrol training over China’s island of Taiwan on Friday.” The planes reportedly flew over the Bashi Channel for the first time, marking a “new breakthrough in island patrol patterns.” China almost daily threatens Taiwan’s sovereignty with fighter jet flights that force Taiwan to scramble, and thus degrade, its own jets in defense. China also frequently pushes its land, maritime, and air boundaries against Japan, India, Bhutan, Myanmar (Burma), Vietnam, and the Philippines. The same may soon be true for Australia.

“Given that Australian hawks keep hyping or hinting that Australia will assist the US military and participate in war once a military conflict breaks out in the Taiwan Straits, and the Australian media outlets have been actively promoting the sentiment, I suggest China make a plan to impose retaliatory punishment against Australia once it militarily interferes in the cross-Straits situation,” writes Hu. He therefore thinks that China has a right to attack Australia, and apparently believes that a war over Taiwan is not a question of if, but when.

“The plan [to attack Australia] should include long-range strikes on the military facilities and relevant key facilities on Australian soil if it really sends its troops to China’s offshore areas and combats against the PLA,” Hu writes. “If they [Australian hawks] are bold enough to coordinate with the US to militarily interfere in the Taiwan question and send troops to the Taiwan Straits to



Rockets launch from missile systems at the Turali range on the Caspian Sea coast in the Republic of Dagestan in Southern Russia during the “Caucasus-2020” military drills gathering China, Iran, Pakistan and Myanmar troops, along with ex-Soviet Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus, on Sept. 23, 2020.

a nuclear-armed foe, no country can entirely rely on another for its defense. Frequent breach of contract between democratic allies, such as the United States and Canada, Britain and the European Union, and Italy and Ireland, over vaccines and personal protective equipment (PPE) during the COVID-19 pandemic, proves that even democracies violate agreements with each other over issues of far less consequence than military conflict in the nuclear age.

Only democracies should have nuclear weapons, because only democracies have the sovereign legitimacy that free and broad-based political participation provides and that tends to (but unfortunately has not always) limited the use of such weapons against civilian targets. But democracies should come to the defense of allied autocracies, for example

Saudi Arabia, which is under military pressure from Iran, and Vietnam, which is under threat from China. Maintenance of global political diversity requires the protection of these less powerful autocracies, with all their failings, from larger autocratic threats. Less powerful autocratic allies will eventually undergo a natural and peaceful political evolution towards democracy and improved human rights.

Democracies must not only defend themselves, but the international system of diverse nation-states, in order to keep China and Russia from creating a sufficiently powerful alliance to fold the world’s less powerful states into their plans for regional hegemony and the resulting balkanization and destabilization of the post-1945 rules-based international system. States under threat from

these aspiring illiberal hegemony must band together in a powerful alliance, but be sufficiently strong individually, to independently defend their own sovereignty.

Anders Corr has a BA/MA in political science from Yale University (2001) and a Ph.D. in government from Harvard University (2008). He is a principal at Corr Analytics Inc., publisher of the Journal of Political Risk, and has conducted extensive research in North America, Europe, and Asia. He authored “The Concentration of Power” (forthcoming 2021) and “No Trespassing,” and edited “Great Powers, Grand Strategies.”

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



People wearing face masks wait at a red light to cross a street during rush hour in Beijing on Oct. 14, 2020.

## BIOWEAPONS

# Chinese Military Scientists Discussed Man-Made Coronavirus Attack Years Before COVID-19 Pandemic

FRANK FANG

Chinese military scientists in 2015 detailed a plot to unleash a bioengineered SARS coronavirus to cause mass terror and advance the communist regime's global political ambitions.

These newly uncovered revelations come amid intensifying scrutiny over the possibility that the COVID-19 pandemic originated from a laboratory leak in Wuhan, an institute that has collaborated with the Chinese military.

The Chinese military scientists' theories were detailed in a 2015 book, first reported recently by News Corp's The Australian. The scientists advocated for the weaponization of pathogens, including SARS coronaviruses, to "cause terror and gain political and strategic advantage" over an enemy state.

The SARS epidemic from 2002 to 2003 infected 2,769 and killed 425 people outside of mainland China, according to data from the World Health Organization (WHO). Experts say the numbers inside China are likely much higher than officially reported.

The 261-page book titled "The Unnatural Origin of SARS and Genetic Weapons Based on Man-Made Viruses," was published in February 2015 by the Military Medical Science Press, a publishing house owned by the Chinese military, the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

"The development of bioweapons has entered into an unprecedented new stage in history," the authors wrote.

The authors went on to implore Chinese experts to "understand and pay attention to contemporary genetic weapons" for any possible future wars, including in the advent of a third world war.

The "contemporary genetic weapons" the authors wrote about refers to using experimental biotechnology and animal testing to modify the genes of pathogens, which could be tailored to target the specific genetic traits of enemy populations.

Deploying such bioweapons would be more advantageous than using conventional warfare and military actions, the authors argued, because military moves can be traced back to the state and result in international condemnation.

Genetic weapons, on the other hand, "can be concealed [in deployment] and it is hard finding evidence against them," the authors wrote.

"Even in the face of academic, virological, or animal evidence, [one can] deny, prevent [someone from raising the issue],

**'The development of bioweapons has entered into an unprecedented new stage in history,' the authors wrote.**

suppress [possible accusations], leaving international organizations and righteous people helpless."

Xu Dezhong, one of the two editors-in-chief of the book, was an analyst for China's national SARS prevention and treatment team at that time. His duties also included reporting to China's top military command, the Chinese Military Commission, according to Baikel, a Wikipedia-like platform run by Chinese search engine Baidu.

Xu was also a professor in the department of military epidemiology at China's Air Force Medical University. The school, formerly known as the Fourth Military Medical University, is located in Xi'an, the capital of central China's Shaanxi Province. Ten other scientists from this military university were listed among the book's 18 authors.

The other editor-in-chief was Li Feng, who was deputy chief of the bureau of epidemic prevention at the PLA's Logistics Department. It is unclear if Li still holds this position.

The book discussed at great length the potential fallout of a bioweapon attack and the optimum conditions to release such a weapon.

Any attack is likely to overwhelm the local health sector around ground zero, the book said. The medical sector would be under "enormous burden" because of the sheer number of patients, it said. In addition, the need to put patients under quarantine, as well as prolonged medical treatment, would further strain medical resources.

A stable flow of wind in one direction is important, the authors said, to carry the airborne pathogens of the bioweapon to the targeted area. Since these pathogens can be weakened under strong sunlight, it is better to release them at "dawn, dusk, night, or cloudy day," they added.

Further, the authors noted that rainfall and snow are not optimal conditions because this type of weather would "lower the effective concentration" of the airborne pathogens.

### Pandemic Origins

The book's disclosure comes more than a year after the outbreak of the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, commonly known as novel coronavirus, in Wuhan, China. The CCP's mishandling of the initial outbreak meant the disease spread globally, when it could have been contained, going on to claim more than 3 million lives worldwide.

As the world struggles to find the origins of the pandemic, a growing number of

voices are suggesting that the virus leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), and have demanded the CCP open up the institute for investigation. Beijing has denied these allegations but has not opened the lab's records to independent scrutiny.

David Asher, former lead COVID-19 investigator at the U.S. State Department, said in March that the virus could be the result of a bioweapon research accident at the WIV.

In January, the State Department released its findings into the WIV, China's only P4 lab (the highest biosafety level), concluding the institute "has engaged in classified research, including laboratory animal experiments, on behalf of the Chinese military since at least 2017."

The department said it had reason to believe that "several researchers inside the WIV became sick in autumn 2019, before the first identified case of the outbreak, with symptoms consistent with both COVID-19 and common seasonal illnesses."

The WIV was also found to have taken part in a state-funded project from 2012 to 2018, studying animal pathogens in wild animals. The project was conducted by a joint team of military and civilian scientists.

However, a March report by a team of Chinese and foreign scientists assembled by the World Health Organization dismissed the lab leak theory as "extremely unlikely." The report was heavily criticized, with 14 countries, including the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, expressing concerns about the findings, while calling for a "transparent and independent analysis and evaluation" into the pandemic origins.

### A Warning

Anders Corr, principal at the New York-based political consultancy firm Corr Analytics, in a recent op-ed for The Epoch Times, said the Chinese military scientists' textbook should serve as a warning of the potential for a "surprise bio-attack from China."

"Let's not wait for a surprise bio-attack. Shut down China's bioweapons programs now, by defensively decoupling from, and thereby minimizing, the country's STEM infrastructure," Corr wrote. STEM is an acronym for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

He added: "Add maximum economic and political pressure, to nudge China toward much-needed democratization. Only when the country democratizes should we allow it back into the international system."

## OPINION

# The Pandemic Has Not Stopped China's Military Buildup

RICHARD A. BITZINGER



The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted nearly all aspects of daily life across the globe, but when it comes to China's People's Liberation Army (PLA), the virus has hardly blunted the pace of modernization. Overall, the PLA is still on track toward meeting its goals of achieving "complete military modernization" by 2035, and becoming a "world-class" military by 2049.

In the first place, the pandemic hasn't really impacted Chinese defense spending. In 2021, Beijing plans to allocate 1.355 trillion yuan (\$202 billion) to the PLA. This represents a 6.8 percent increase over 2020 military spending, which grew 6.6 percent over 2019.

To be sure, the growth in Chinese military expenditures has tapered off somewhat since the heyday of the 2000s and early 2010s, when annual increases in defense spending averaged around 10 to 15 percent.

Nevertheless, in an age of near-zero inflation, annual defense spending increases of 6 to 7 percent are striking, and there are no signs of abatement. Certainly, no public figure in China is calling for cuts in military spending.

Consequently, Chinese defense spending outstrips all other Asian and all European militaries, including Russia, and in the 21st century, China has become the second-largest defense spender in the world.

Keep in mind, too, this \$202 billion number is only the official figure—hidden spending or "purchasing power parity" metrics could add additional billions to the "real" Chinese defense budget. That means a lot of money for buying new arms and engaging in cutting-edge military research and development (R&D), and, in fact, the pandemic doesn't appear to have slowed any of China's rapid pace of military acquisitions.

Military shipbuilding has been particularly prolific. In late April, for example, the PLA simultaneously commissioned three warships: the Type-075 (Yushen-class) helicopter carrier Hainan, the Type-055 (Renhai-class) guided-missile cruiser Dalian, and a fourth-in-class Type-94

(Jin-class) nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine.

The Chinese arms industry is busy building other ships as well, including a third (and perhaps even fourth) aircraft carrier and several new destroyers, frigates, and corvettes. The rest of China's military-industrial base appears also to have been left untouched, and the recapitalization and modernization of the PLA have proceeded unabated.

In fact, it appears that the only part of the Chinese defense industry that the pandemic adversely affected was the country's diesel-electric submarine (SSK) sector, which is based in Wuhan ("ground zero" for the virus).

The Wuhan shipyards were temporarily shut during the initial COVID-19 outbreak, but they soon reopened and began making up for lost time (including constructing eight SSKs for Pakistan).

Consequently, China's aggressive and concerted efforts to transform and expand its military forces have hardly been slowed. The PLA is in the midst of a massive, multi-decade dual-track ("double construction") modernization strategy of "mechanization and informatization."

The first part of this effort is nearly complete. The PLA now possesses the largest navy in the world, according to the U.S. Department of Defense, and the PLA Air Force is nearly entirely re-equipped with new fourth-generation and fifth-generation fighter jets, air-to-air refueling planes, and modern long-range transports.

Consequently, the PLA is shifting its focus to the next phase, which it calls "intelligentized warfare." "Intelligentization" particularly values artificial intelligence (AI) as a critical force multiplier, and as a result, Beijing is making strategic investments in AI in order to reap national security benefits. China is seeking to gain parity with other world leaders in AI by the early 2020s and become the global leader in AI by 2030.

Military-civil fusion (MCF) has become a key component of this strategy. MCF is a process of combining defense R&D with its commercial counterparts, and it is part of a long-term and "whole of society" strategic effort by Beijing to position China as a "technological superpower."

Chinese leaders want to use MCF

in order to position the country to compete militarily and economically in the next great industrial-technological revolution. Consequently, MCF has been an integral component of nearly every major Chinese industrial or technological initiative, including "Made in China 2025" and the "Next Generation Artificial Intelligence Plan."

Overall, the COVID-19 pandemic has made hardly a dent in China's increasingly globalized ambitions to become a major superpower, and to back that up with a modern, world-class military. Chinese defense spending growth hasn't been slowed, and Beijing has still been able to throw a lot of money at the PLA.

China hasn't moderated its militarization of the South China Sea, and it's expanding its military footprint into the Indian Ocean—including the establishment of its first overseas military base in Djibouti, on the Horn of Africa—and perhaps even into the Atlantic (the head of U.S. Africa Command recently asserted that the PLA is looking for a military port on Africa's west coast).

Altogether, the PLA is continuing to develop a robust anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) capability for near-sea defense, with the expectation of complementing this with a growing power-projection capacity into the Pacific, India, and (eventually) Atlantic oceans. China's drive to become a major global power continues unabated, and the COVID-19 pandemic has hardly dampened that campaign.

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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.*

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Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers line up during military training at Pamir Mountains in Kashgar, China, on Jan. 4, 2021.



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