

SURVEILLANCE

luang Yongzhen,

lemonstrates the

use of his firm's gait

ecognition software at

nis company's offices

in Beijing on Oct. 31.

2018. Already used by

police on the streets of

Beijing and Shanghai.

"gait recognition" is

part of a major push

to develop artificial

riven surveillance

across China, raising

concern about how fa

the technology will go.

ntelligence and data

CEO of Watrix,

Tech Manager Leaves China, Citing Ubiquitous Digital Surveillance

MARY HONG

internet company, decided to leave China after experiencing years of police harassment because her ID labeled her as "a member of the heretical religions."

After arriving in the United States in August, she told the Chinese language edition of The Epoch Times that she became the subject of constant surveillance when she tried to prevent the conviction of her mother who had been arrested and detained by the regime for her belief in Falun Gong.

Falun Gong is a spiritual practice rooted in ancient Chinese culture. Adherents follow the principles of truth, compassion, and tolerance. In the same way the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) targets any religion in China, the regime initiated a campaign of persecution of Falun Gong followers in 1999.

When Eileen was dealing with the government regarding her mother's case, even though she refused to reveal her ID number, the authorities used a facial scanner to retrieve her records and then added the "designation" to her ID. After that, police harassment followed her wherever she went.

On another business trip to a northern city, an alarm was triggered when she swiped her ID at a train station. She was immediately brought to a dark room filled with police officers.

A lawyer told Eileen that China developed Big Data as a nationwide networked project. Artificial intelligence (AI), including facial recognition, was added to the monitoring system. It captures the images of people and notifies the police of their whereabouts.

Tracked by Big Data

Despite years of effort, Eileen's mother was illegally tried and sentenced to prison. Eileen also became the subject of the persecution campaign.

stopped by the police right before board- visa, Eileen left China.

ing a high-speed train in a southern city in China, which she thought was part of a Eileen, a high-level manager in a Chinese routine pandemic prevention check; but it was then she realized that her ID had a label.

> The police took her photo and let her leave, but she knew her identity was jeopardized, and ever since, the tagged ID has shadowed her life.

> On another business trip to a northern city for example, an alarm was triggered when she swiped her ID at a train station. She was immediately brought to a dark room filled with police officers.

> The men demanded that she sign the socalled three documents specifically designed for adherents of Falun Gong. Signing the documents meant that she "admits her mistakes and crimes of practicing and/ or defending Falun Gong, and shows her appreciation to the CCP for correcting her mistakes."

> Eileen refused to sign any documents, but the police continued to threaten her until just before the train left the station. She said that the police routinely kept track of her whereabouts. One time, a police officer warned, "Aren't you aware that police from your hometown and your workplace are following you everywhere?"

Forced to Leave

She had to change jobs because national security agents from another city visited her when she was at work, purportedly to discuss her mother's lawsuit.

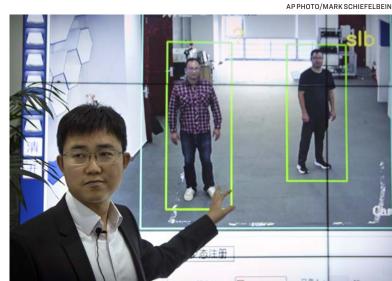
She said, "It's actually a way to intimidate. A person like me could have excelled in my career."

For years, Eileen has felt the pressure of being under surveillance. She said, "The stress keeps you awake at night. You feel like a second-class citizen, oppressed and monitored at all times."

The oppression ruined her life and peace as an ordinary person. She said it's unfortunate that there are so many people—fully aware of the evil cruelty of the campaignfollowing the regime's orders for the sake of their positions and titles.

One time, when she went to the prison to visit her mother, looking at the high wall outside the prison, she wept over the thought that her mother, a nice, law-abiding person, was locked inside the high walls for her beliefs.

On a business trip in 2020, she was In August, after receiving her student





Tencent, a Digital Surveillance Assistant

As an expert in the field, Eileen knew exactly how the internet companies tailored their platforms to accommodate the regime's censorship requirements.

She explained that the Information Security Department of Tencent, China's leading internet service company, operates with two systems to meet the censorship needs of the regime. One establishes and constantly updates a lexicon of sensitive terms through the automatically applied algorithms with its Big Data; the other, an auxiliary team, works day and night, to manually delete sensitive posts made using cell phones.

down in April went viral. "Voice from to make people's lives better. Shanghai Lockdown" recorded the voices of the devastated residents seeking help, and trying to survive after the city imposed Li Xinan contributed to this report.

Visitors attend the annual Tencent Games Carnival in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China, on

December 2, 2017.

a two-month, inhumane, lockdown and isolation policy.

"Tencent was fighting against the people; it felt just like a war between the good and the evil. People tried to spread the video with various means. It was like a race. Pretty soon, the web link wouldn't work, the video accounts wouldn't work, download wouldn't work, even an upside down video wouldn't work, and Flash wouldn't work. Tencent just deleted them all, like a

China

Eileen criticized Tencent for choosing to act as a thug and monitor and control A video taken during the Shanghai lock- people, rather than using its technology "What Tencent does is sinful," she said.

OPINION RIP, Renminbi

FAN YU

The Chinese yuan (also known as the renminbi) is on pace to drop the most against the U.S. dollar in history as the world's two biggest economies carve divergent paths in monetary policy. On Sept. 15, it broke the psychologically important 7 yuan to \$1 barrier.

The U.S. Federal Reserve is poised to continue its tightening measures to combat inflation. That itself has given a boost to the dollar compared to the euro and the yuan.

With respect to the yuan, which has dropped by almost 9 percent year-todate against the dollar, the currency is on course to post its weakest annual showing against the dollar since China loosened the yuan's dollar peg in 2005.

And as the Fed continues to hike rates—U.S. inflation readings remain stubbornly high—the People's Bank of China is expected to maintain its loose monetary policy to keep a struggling economy afloat. That should lead the yuan to weaken further.

This is no aberration. As the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) prepares for its annual meeting in October, where regime boss Xi Jinping is expected to receive a third term as the nation's de facto leader, China's economy has been on a decidedly different path than the U.S. economy for some time.

For months now, global forecasters have cut their China gross domestic product (GDP) estimates. Beijing itself came out over the summer and admitted that it's unlikely that the country will meet its 2022 goal of 5.5 percent headline official GDP growth. Most banks have reforecast the growth in the mid 2 percent

to 3 percent range. The country has been hurt by Beijing's punitive "zero-COVID" policy, which shut down key economic centers Shanghai and Shenzhen earlier this year and continues to plague certain areas. This summer, China struggled with

droughts and heat waves, putting a strain on its power grid, which also led to factory production cuts in parts of the country. Unemployment is a key worry. Youth

unemployment in urban areas was approaching 20 percent in July, continuing an elevated trend that has become difficult to assuage given weak consumer sentiment and spending trends.

The property market, with a downturn that's about to head into a third year, remains in the doldrums. The real estate sector accounts for as much as a third of China's GDP. But it's a doubleedged sword, as past growth has created massive property and debt bubbles that Beijing has been attempting to rein in. Both property prices and home sales have been declining.

None of this is breaking news. But the length and depth of this Chinese economic downturn could be more severe than those of the past.

It has become such a critical issue that on Sept. 12, a federal holiday in China for the Mid-Autumn Festival, no less, CCP premier Li Keqiang and all four vice min isters headed an "emergency meeting" to discuss the economy, review working group reports, and brainstorm ways to stabilize its free fall.

Judging from domestic and online discourse, more economic stimulus



Chinese leader Xi Jinping (L) and Premier Li Keqiang arrive for the closing session of the National People's Congress at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China, on March 11, 2022.

measures are coming. They could include items such as more infrastructure spending and broad relaxation of home purchase restrictions.

Li has been tasked by Xi to fix the economy, and failing at it could be an easy pretense for his ouster from the Politburo of the Standing Committee after his term as premier ends. Xi recently said China hadn't yet "aggressively increased the fiscal deficit" to help the economy

Reading between the lines, it appears that Beijing may do just that, which would be another contributor to the yuan's decline.

The currency's further weakening is now so obvious that Bloomberg—a longtime China bull—recently published a piece highlighting that hedge fund Crescat Capital's long-term bet against

the Chinese currency may finally pay off after eight long years.

Yet Bloomberg was quick to point out that the hedge fund's position is still among the minority, citing "China's large savings, high mortgage down payments, and the strong government control of banks" as reasons against an uncontrolled financial crisis.

As this once-contrarian view moves firmly into the mainstream, China's currency will be under severe pressure from FX traders and hedge funds.

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

Fan Yu is an expert in finance and economics and has contributed analyses on China's economy since 2015.

maniac," she said.

The video is now only viewable outside

OPINION

Beijing May Not Comply With Audit Rules for **US-Listed** Firms

ANTONIO GRACEFFO

Five Chinese companies listed on U.S. stock exchanges said on Aug. 15 that they would voluntarily delist. The companies included

Sinopec, China Life Insurance, Aluminium Corporation of China, Petro-China, as well as Sinopec entity Sinopec Shanghai Petrochemical Co. All of these companies were targeted by U.S. regulators for possible delisting as a result of their refusal to comply with U.S. audit requirements.

For decades, regulators have demanded that the 200 Chinese companies listed on U.S. exchanges comply with the same audit requirements as all other listed companies. The Chinese side has argued that the financial records of their companies are sensitive data and that due to security concerns, Chinese law prohibits firms from submitting their financial records to foreign auditors.

Since the Holding Foreign Companies Accountable Act became law in 2020, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has stepped up its enforcement of audit rules. As of the final week of August, 163 Chinese companies, including Alibaba, faced possible delisting.

Goldman Sachs estimates that Americans have about \$200 billion invested in Chinese companies, and there was concern about what delisting would mean for these investors. If Chinese companies are forced to delist, the value of their shares could drop by 13 percent, according to Goldman analysts.

On Aug. 26, the China Securities Regulatory Commission and the U.S. Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) reached an agreement, which according to a statement by the PCAOB, would grant U.S. authorities unrestricted access to the necessary financial records. American investors welcomed the news as U.S.-listed Chinese stock prices rallied. However, legal experts have warned that optimism may be premature, as it is yet to be seen if the U.S. and the Chinese sides interpret the agreement in the same way and if the Chinese will comply.

The PCAOB similarly cautioned investors—it stated that it would have to wait and see if China continues to obstruct access or not. Continued obstruction would be a violation of the Holding Foreign Companies Act. The first audit inspections are expected to be carried out in September, with the PCAOB

making a determination by December as to whether or not Beijing is aiding or hindering U.S. access to Chinese company financial data.

Immediately following the agreement, both Beijing and the PCAOB issued statements. Beijing's reaction emphasized that the agreement must be one of "equal" cooperation and that the U.S. regulators would have to request the documents through the Chinese regulators. The latter would also be involved in interviews and the taking of testimonies.

This statement by Beijing directly conflicts with the statement issued by the PCAOB, which said that the PCAOB would be granted "sole discretion to select the firms, audit engagements and potential violations it inspects and investigates-without consultation with, nor input from, Chinese authorities." The statement said that the "PCAOB has direct access to interview and take testimony from all personnel associated with the audits the PCAOB inspects or investigates." Based on these statements, it appears that the two sides are already in disagreement.

Meanwhile, the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) said that the agreement would only come into effect if it met the requirements of regulators in both countries. It remains to be seen if Beijing will grant sufficient access to U.S. regulators in order to meet U.S. requirements. Meanwhile, current U.S. regulations state that companies out of compliance could be delisted by 2024.

Given the partial recovery of Chinese stock prices after the agreement was signed, Goldman Sachs estimates that investors feel it is only 50 percent



The China Securities Regulatory Commission headquarters in Beijing on Nov. 16,2020.



The logo of Alibaba Group at its office in Beijing on Jan. 5, 2021.

Between existing

proposed legislation.

and Beijing's history

of non-compliance.

delisting Chinese

stocks seems far

legislation.

the threat of

from over.

likely that Chinese companies will be forced to delist. This is an improvement from the pre-agreement sentiment. In March, investors believed the likelihood of delisting was about 95 percent. In addition to skepticism about Beijing's compliance with the new rules, continued U.S. investment in Chinese firms may be restricted by the socalled "Reverse CFIUS." Currently, the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) can monitor and evaluate Chinese investments in the United States and recommend their termination if national security is threatened.

U.S. lawmakers have proposed to create "Reverse CFIUS"—a screening process to review outbound investments benefiting entities or countries of concern. The proposed legislation, called the "National Critical Capabilities Defense Act of 2022," would grant the government similar authority to block U.S. investment in Chinese companies.

Between existing legislation, proposed legislation, and Beijing's history of non-compliance, the threat of delisting Chinese stocks seems far from over.

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A Book That Has Inspired The World



Falun Dafa lifted my depression dramatically. Tysan Dolnyckyj FITNESS COACH

I have indeed experienced all the miracles. No matter what your experience or what background you have or what country you are born in, you will benefit from Falun Dafa. **Martin Rubenis**

OLYMPIC ATHLETE

huan Falun is the main text of Falun Gong (also called Falun Dafa). The book expounds upon profound principles of Truthfulness, Compassion and Tolerance. It addresses the longforgotten term "cultivation," the origins of illnesses, karma, the role of moral character on a path to spiritual perfection, and more.

The book was a national bestseller in China in the 1990s, and has been translated into over 40 languages. Find out why it has captured the hearts and minds of tens of millions of people in over 100 countries worldwide!

What made Falun Gong stand out from other qigong exercises and meditation practices was a moral system—compassion, truthfulness, and forbearance-unmistakably Buddhist in origin.

Arthur Waldron LAUDER PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Falun Gong has taught me how to be considerate of others and how to improve my relationships by handling conflicts constructively. [...] It has given me incredible relaxation, mental clarity, and freedom from stress. Shiyu Zhou

PH.D., USA

Being a musician, my surroundings were not the healthiest. But when I started practicing Falun Gong, in one month, I just snapped out of all those environmental hazards, alcohol and drugs. **Sterling Campbell**



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4 **CHINA INSIDER**

ANALYSIS

US Faces Unprecedented Nuclear Threat From Allied China and Russia

ANDREW THORNEBROOKE



Buried beneath the earth in the vast deserts of western China there are hundreds of new missile silos slated to hold deadly payloads. Some of

them will house conventional weapons, others nuclear, and Western leaders don't know which is which.

That is because China's reigning communist regime co-locates its nuclear and conventional missiles, mixing them together and placing them under the same command centers.

The Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) rush to build these new missile silos, and to construct nuclear weapons to occupy them, corresponds to the regime's efforts to cement its leadership over a burgeoning bloc of anti-Western states that seek an end to U.S. hegemony in world affairs. Or, in their terms, "multipolarity."

According to several experts, China's nuclear expansion combined with its de facto alliance with Russia will have farreaching consequences for U.S. nuclear strategy, and the United States is not prepared for the change.

That is because the U.S. nuclear arsenal and strategy have only ever been designed to contend with one adversary: Russia. The extension of the nuclear threat to several unique actors is therefore one of the great strategic challenges of the 21st century, and one the United States will only get one chance to respond to.

"The United States certainly faces a significant challenge ahead as nuclear threats from not just one, but several actors, advance," said Patty-Jane Geller, a senior policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, in an email.

"It will need to ensure it has tailored deterrence strategies against each adversary, and find the most efficient way to develop a nuclear posture that can address multiple threats at once."

Axis and Allies

China's communist leadership is increasing its ties with nuclear Russia and working closely with nuclear aspirants like Iran and North Korea. More and more, those relationships are tinted with an explicitly anti-American ideological backing.

When CCP leader Xi Jinping met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in

Uzbekistan for a security summit in September, their respective nations issued a joint statement, titled the "Samarkand Declaration," vowing to pursue a "multipolar world order."

The language of that effort is important insofar as it builds directly on vocabulary that Putin has spent using to explicitly call for the ending of the United States' position as world leader. "A multipolar system of international

relations is now being formed," Putin said in June. "This is the beginning of the transition

from liberal-globalist American egocentrism to a truly multipolar world."

The United States certainly faces a significant challenge ahead as nuclear threats from not just one, but several actors, advance.

Patty-Jane Geller, senior policy analyst, Heritage Foundation

Despite the rhetoric, many experts have been reticent to take the growing alliance between China and Russia seriously. The two nations have a fraught history, after all, and their steadfast insistence on absolute sovereignty over internal matters means that neither side is eager to enter the sort of formal treaty that the U.S. and its allies might recognizes as an alliance.

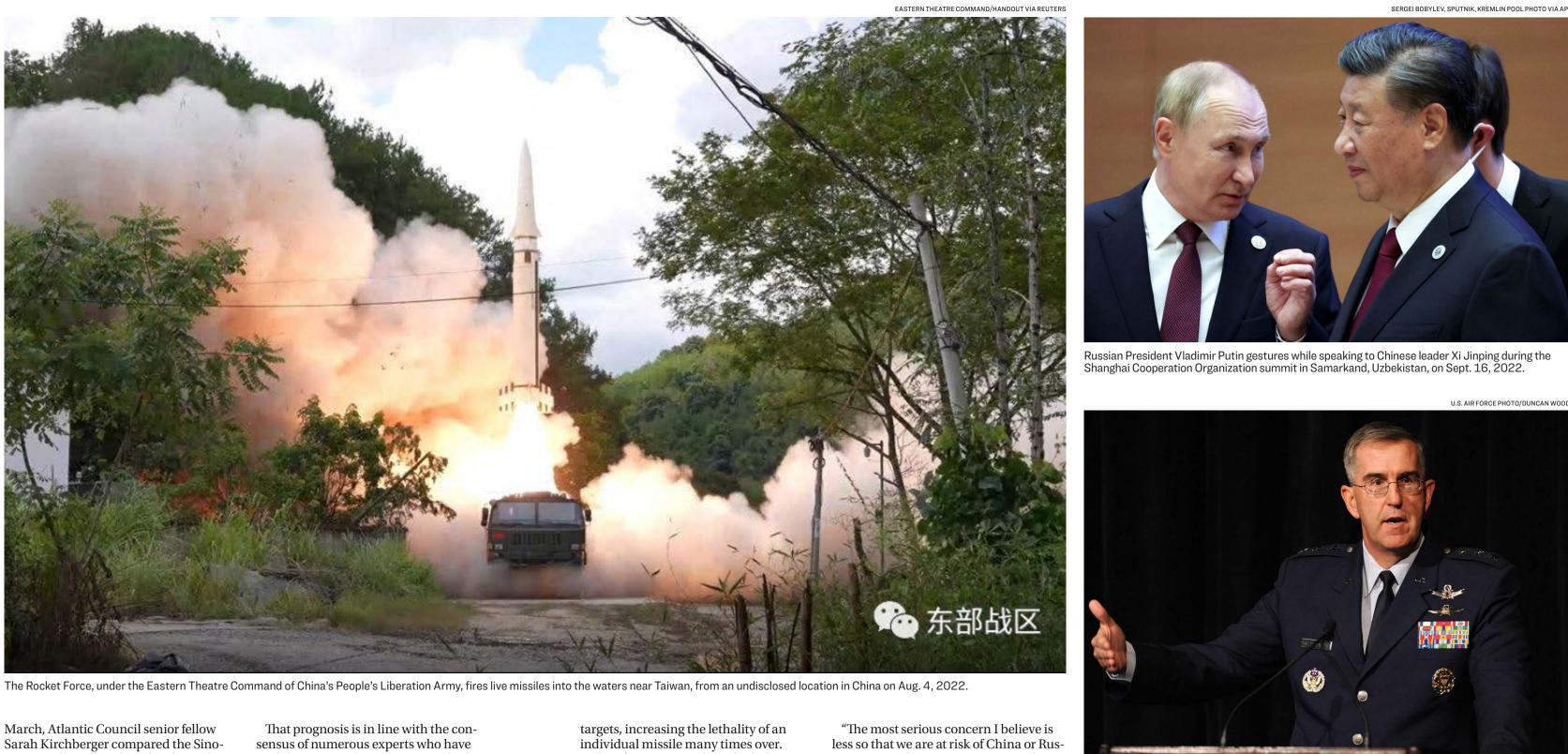
That is changing, however, and now U.S. military leadership fears that the alliance might not only be real, but extend even to nuclear strategic cooperation. Air Force Gen. Anthony Cotton, the

nominee to head U.S. Strategic Command, told the Senate Armed Services Committee earlier in September that the United States would have to develop a strategy to contend with a unified nuclear threat from China and Russia.

"In a world where we now face two, near-peer competitors, we must deter the pacing challenge of China and address the acute threats presented by Russia," Cotton said.

As it turns out, when nuclear weapons are on the line and hostile regimes are champing at the bit to undermine U.S. interests globally, the fragility of the China-Russia alliance is a secondary is-

sue to the damage it could cause. Speaking on the issue at a webinar in



March, Atlantic Council senior fellow Russian alliance to that of Hitler and Stalin in World War II.

"The question is: How much harm can [Xi and Putin] do together, even if it's just a very short term and very opportunistic type of cooperation," Kirchberger said. "Because, if you look historically [at]

how authoritarian countries have acted in unison, sometimes these alliances were very short term and ended abruptly, but they often caused great havoc." It is perhaps with that in mind that

more hawkish lawmakers such as Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) have taken to describing China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea as a "new axis of evil," resurrecting the vocabulary of America's World War II adversaries.

While the rhetoric may come across as overwrought, it does make clear that there are now, once again, two international blocs vying for drastically different

Nuclear Multipolarity Is Imminent For Geller, the most pressing issue of this new multipolarity is the fact that

U.S. nuclear arsenal and posture is only designed to contend with Russia, not China, much less both simultaneously. "U.S. nuclear posture is currently sized to face only one peer nuclear threat (Rus-

"With the emergence of China as a

GREG BAKER/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Military vehicles carrying DF-31AG intercontinental ballistic missiles participate in a military parade at Tiananmen Square in Beijing on Oct. 1, 2019.

said that U.S. nuclear strategy is a bad place for securing deterrence due to the asymmetry that Sino-Russian strategic cooperation has wrought.

Indeed, U.S. military leadership has not shied away from the fact that it is not prepared to simultaneously face down both China and Russia as nuclear powers, as it has never faced such a situation in history.

Back in February, Maj. Gen. Ferdinand Stoss, director of plans and policy at U.S. Strategic Command, said that "This is the first time ever that we have a threeparty nuclear peer dynamic." "We have no history of this," Stoss added. "This is epic."

Likewise, then-Joint Chiefs of Staff Vice Chairman Gen. John Hyten said in November 2021 that China's newly tested hypersonic weapon was likely intended for nuclear first use, meaning that it would be used in a surprise attack to initiate nuclear war.

As to the question of whether the CCP and Kremlin would commit to real, joint nuclear planning, CCP officials said in September that Sino-Russian "high-level strategic cooperation" was on the table.

However fraught, tenuous, and opportunistic the relationship may be, Moscow and Beijing have joined forces against the United States, up to and including nuclear strategic cooperation.

Multipolarity by the Numbers

Russia has the largest nuclear arsenal in the world, with around 1,500 deployed nuclear weapons and more than 6,000 warheads in total. The United States, meanwhile, has about 1,400 deployed systems and 5,550 warheads. Between 1,500-2,000 warheads in both nations' arsenals are retired and awaiting disarmament.

China is reported to have around 350 nuclear weapons, though a 2021 Pentagon report warned that the CCP was drastically increasing production and modernization of its nuclear arsenal, and that it would have at least 1,000 nuclear weapons by 2030.

The estimated number of nuclear weapons does not capture the true extent of China's warhead stockpile, however. Some experts have questioned the numbers available, and researchers have suggested that the true number of Chinese warheads could be as high as 3,000 already.

There are several reasons for this disparity. One is the extent of the thousands of miles of underground tunnels the CCP is constructing to tend to its silos, which appears to suggest a far greater operation than previously expected.

Another is the regime's focus on nuclear missiles that use multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs).

MIRVs are missile payloads that feature several warheads, each of which can be launched independently at separate

world futures.

sia), as it was designed about a decade ago based on assumptions of a more benign threat environment than we are facing today," Geller said.

second nuclear peer, the United States needs a new strategy that can deter both countries at once, which it will not be able to do sufficiently in the future with the current strategy and force posture."

China's DF-41 missiles, which the regime's new silos appear constructed to house, feature a MIRV that can hold up to 10 nuclear warheads.

Add to this the fact that the DF-41 has a range of 7,500 miles, and the discovery of hundreds of new missile silos in China takes on more serious implications for U.S. nuclear strategy.

If the planned 350-400 new missile silos that China is constructing each house one DF-41 missile, it could signal an increase of 4,000 warheads to China's arsenal, each of which would be capable of hitting its own unique target virtually anywhere in the world.

Admiral Charles Richard. commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, described this turn of events as China's "nuclear breakout," an unprecedented expansion of nuclear forces that should be of significant concern to the United States.

China's growing power not only applies a new pressure point on U.S. strategic thinking, however. It also threatens to give rise to a host of potential conflicts throughout Asia.

Geller is one of a growing number of experts who believe that China will use its nuclear arsenal to threaten, coerce, and cajole the United States away from interfering in regional conflicts.

"China's growing nuclear arsenal will enable it to backstop its conventional aggression in the Indo-Pacific region," Geller said. "With the backing of a stronger nuclear force, China can calculate that more aggressive actions or escalating in conventional conflicts will be less risky." "China's nuclear expansion will also

hinder U.S. extended deterrence efforts as allies in the region become more threatened." Thus, governments like those in Taiwan

or Japan, or even India, will fall more prone to being targeted by CCP aggression, as the regime will consider the United States less likely to be willing to risk conflict with a strong nuclear power.

This problem is commonly referred to in international relations theory as the "stability-instability paradox."

In essence, the paradox maintains that two nations with similar nuclear capabilities will deter one another from engaging in nuclear war for fear of mutually assured destruction, which creates stability.

The knowledge that neither side will use its nuclear weapons, however, increases the likelihood that the nations will pursue conventional warfare and indirect conflict, thus creating instability. As such, Geller believes that a vital

component of U.S. nuclear strategy ought to be avoiding a situation in which China's nuclear power becomes so great that the regime believes it can prevent America from interfering in any conflict it may start.

sia using nuclear weapons against the U.S.," Geller said, "but that the U.S. will ultimately back down in a conflict if it does not have a credible nuclear posture and strategy."

"To prevent this from occurring, the U.S. needs to get serious about reorienting its nuclear posture to deter two nuclear peers, and realize that business as usual will not suffice."

China Could Coerce the United States To some extent, some argue that China's nuclear coercion of the United States has already begun.

Following the visit of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan in August, the **China's 'Nuclear Breakout' Will Spill Over** CCP launched unprecedented military exercises. The drills encircled Taiwan, blocked international shipping lanes, and saw the launch of nuclear-capable missiles over Taiwan and into the exclusive economic zone of Japan.

Rather than meet the aggression, or work to actively curb it, the Biden administration quietly postponed its own muchneeded test of a nuclear-capable missile.

"We do not believe it is in our interest, Taiwan's interest, the region's interests, to allow tensions to escalate further, which is why a long-planned Minuteman III ICBM test scheduled for this week has been rescheduled for the near future," said national security spokesperson John Kirby at a press conference.

James Fanell, the former director of Intelligence and Information Operations for the U.S. Pacific Fleet, said that the episode was only the beginning of the CCP's efforts to direct U.S. behavior.

"[China's] new nuclear arsenal provides the CCP with the same ability to blackmail the United States from taking more forceful measures to defend our allies as we have seen Vladimir Putin do to the Biden administration in the Ukraine," Fanell said in an email.

"Even in lesser cases, [China] could further use their nuclear weapons to force America and its allies to alter their behavior."

Moreover, Fanell said, with each successful attempt to browbeat the United States into demurring, the likelihood that the CCP will turn to intimidation as a preferred diplomatic tactic will increase.

"These nuclear weapons will be used to threaten any nation, like the United States, from coming to Taiwan's defense in the increasingly likely event Beijing decides to conduct a conventional invasion of Taiwan," Fanell said.

Fanell added that the CCP would likely use its arsenal to command the ongoings of the Indo-Pacific region.

By threatening the United States with nuclear fire, the CCP could coerce it away from placing new weapons systems in Korea or Japan, or even from entering the Taiwan Strait or the first island chain, which is the first ring of

Lt. Gen. John E. Hyten, Air Force Space Command vice commander, speaks about how cyberoperations are a clear catalyst for change in the art and science of modern warfare during the Space Foundation's Cyber 1.3 luncheon at The Broadmoor hotel in Colorado Springs, Colo., on April 8, 2013.

archipelagos east of the Asian coastline. Such an effort could effectively halt the United States' 187-year history of conducting freedom of navigation operations in the Indo-Pacific.

"It is not hard to imagine this kind of blackmail being used by the CCP to stop diplomatic efforts such as the AUKUS or the Quad agreements," Fanell said, referring to two partnerships involving the United States and allies in the Indo-Pacific region.

China's growing nuclear arsenal will enable it to backstop its conventional aggression in the Indo-Pacific region.

Patty-Jane Geller, senior policy analyst, Heritage Foundation

To that end, he described China's nuclear breakout as "the single biggest factor for destabilizing the international order since the Soviet Union began building its own nuclear arsenal in the 1950s." And added that the regime was posturing in a similar manner to the Soviet Union, seeking to leverage its nuclear weapons to "blackmail the world to bend to its demands."

Speaking on the same issue, Geller said that the United States' would need to expand its nuclear capabilities to prevent China's regional nuclear advantage from growing any further.

"The goal of the U.S. should be to show China that attempts to coerce the U.S. using nuclear threats will fail because the U.S. has the capability and will to respond to any first use of nuclear weapons," Geller said.

"To accomplish this, the U.S. will need to fill the perceived deterrence gap that now exists in regional nuclear capabilities."

Tactical Nuclear Weapons Needed

In contemplating what was necessary to restore a credible U.S. nuclear deterrent in a multipolar world, both Fanell and Geller came to the same conclusion: adapt or die.

"Given the dramatic change in the status quo ... in the Pacific, the United States' number one priority must be in the rapid fielding of a credible and robust nuclear arsenal," Fanell said. "In response to this new reality, the United States must dust off its previously learned policies and postures from the Cold

War with the Soviet Union," Fanell said. Fanell added that the United States

needed to expand its arsenal of strategic nuclear weapons across the triad of land, sea, and, air capabilities, and also to invest large sums into the fielding of tactical nuclear weapons to be positioned in Japan, Korea, and even Taiwan.

Perhaps no capability was more vital to this effort, he said, than the nuclear sealaunched cruise missile (SLCM-N).

The SLCM-N, a submarine-based tactical nuclear weapon, has been recommended by military leaders since the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review, but was nevertheless scrapped by the Biden administration that feared escalating tensions with China

"One of these areas [of needed capabilities] regards the fielding of afloat nuclear naval weapons, like the SLCM-N, which the U.S. Navy has unwisely cut research and development funding and for which the Biden Administration remains positioned to eliminate," Fanell said.

"Instead of killing this program, the current administration should be seeking to enhance the speed with which the SLCM-N is fielded, but should also be looking for other ways to modernize and increase America's nuclear arsenal."

Geller agreed, adding that the United States would need to demonstrate both the capability and the will to field nuclear weapons in order to deter China—something that the administration appeared hesitant to do.

"Fielding weapons like the SLCM-N can help show China that the U.S. has a proportional, credible option at this lower level of the escalation ladder," Geller said.

"The U.S. also needs to demonstrate the will to show strength when needed. Postponing a routine missile test in the face of Chinese aggression toward Taiwan, as one example, only hindered this effort."

With the international order itself hanging in the balance, Fanell said that the United States' national security efforts had already been hampered by the burgeoning multipolar order led by China and Russia.

Now, he said, that security needed to be restored—A feat only possible through the forward deployment of new, tactical nuclear weapons.

"These may seem like provocative measures," Fanell said, "but when measured against the backdrop of [China's] nuclear breakout this past 20 months, and Vladimir Putin's nuclear blackmail over Ukraine, the U.S. does not have a moment to lose in restoring national security."

The Epoch Times has requested comment from the White House and Pentagon.



Feng Zhenguo attends a rally calling for the end of the Chinese Communist Party, in Vancouver, Canada, on Aug. 20, 2022.

CORRUPTION

'After We Get Rich With Our Hard Work, the CCP Is There to Harvest' Former Chinese Millionaire

I feel much more

as an ordinary

China.

comfortable working

carpenter in Canada

than being a boss in

Feng Zhenguo, former

factory owner

SOPHIA LAM

he former owner of a profitable wood furniture factory in China's Hebei Province experienced extortion from environmental authorities before being forced

to sell the plant to Chinese police at an extremely low price. "The communist regime's so-called 're-

form and opening up' is just to loosen the shackles around Chinese people's necks when both its rule and economy are on the verge of collapse," Feng Zhenguo told the Chinese language edition of The Epoch Times on Sept. 14.

"The communist regime allows you to experience a little bit of freedom and lets you work hard until you make some money. Then, it comes for your money."

Feng had invested more than 3 million yuan (over \$430,000) and had about 40 employees at the factory, which made high-end customized furniture, in Qinhuangdao, a port city 190 miles east of Beijing. But he was forced to sell the business to the police for only 400,000 yuan (\$57,000).

He had originally set up the business out of his love for carpentry and good craftsmanship. "I thought that I could do something well if I was really fond of it and did it with

all my heart," he said.

However, the communist regime turned his life's dream into a nightmare, repeatedly asking him for money while using various excuses and guises, he said.

"I suddenly came to understand that, unwork." he said.

Environmental Protection in China an 'Extortion Campaign'

For years, the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP's) environmental authorities and police extorted money from Feng.

In 2016, he went about the various procedures listed for establishing a factory, including filing an application for an environmental impact assessment; that was the most troublesome of all the procedures, Feng said. The assessment is part of "a mandatory legal system that determines whether a construction project can proceed," states the website of the CCP's rubber-stamp legislature. The local ecology and environment bureau assesses a construction project, after which a report will be submitted for approval regarding the site selection for the project, the effects on the surrounding environment, and any preventive measures to be taken.



Feng Zhenguo's furniture factory in Qinhuangdao City, Hebei Province China, in this undated photo

A business can't operate without the bureau's approval.

In reality, the assessment process actually facilitates constant extortion by the bureau that oversees it, Feng said.

"For example, the ecology and environder the rule of the CCP, we ordinary Chi- mental bureau would designate a certain nese people are just like ants, insignificant supplier of environmental protection prodand easily crushed, no matter how hard we ucts," he said. "You have to purchase from this supplier. For a piece of environmental protection equipment that is worth a bit more than 100,000 yuan [\$21,000], this supplier might sell it for 400,000 yuan to 500,000 yuan [\$57,000 to \$71,000]."

That's just one way that the bureau makes money from businesses that apply for assessments, he noted.

"They also designate a contractor for construction and an acceptance company for review at completion," Feng said.

In his city, the boss of the acceptance company was a former deputy director of the ecology and environment bureau, he said. "The deputy director claims that he's taken leave without pay, which is a red herring."

The bureau and the acceptance company colluded to force business owners to pay more for the equipment, and that extra money is expected to guarantee approval of the assessment, Feng said.

Feng was relieved when he passed the assessment—after having spent several hundred thousand yuan—and was able to finally begin production.

"Many people have been forced to demolish their factories as they could not pass the assessment, and they went bankrupt," he said. "Some committed suicide."

After Feng passed the assessment, staffers from the ecology and environment bureau came to his factory regularly-roughly several times a month.

"They sent different people with different allegations," he said. "We were never able to meet their requirements, because their purpose was to ask for money."

The bureau official told him, "Our quota of fines for this year is 3 million yuan (\$429,559), which we must fulfill."

In addition to the regular payments, Feng needed to prepare for unexpected expenses. For example, only months after he began production, he had to install new environmental protection equipment, since a new director of the ecology and environment bureau said that his equipment was substandard.

Feng had no choice but to comply, since he had already invested millions of yuan by then



Custom wood furniture made in Feng Zhenguo's factory.

"The CCP's environmental protection is a campaign to get money. It is not for the long-term protection of the enterprises or the environment," he said.

Persecuted for Belief

Feng and his wife, Han Yanjing, accompanied their daughter to Vancouver, Canada, to study in 2019. There, a friend from their hometown brought Han to church.

Han returned to China in early 2020, just before the outbreak of the pandemic in Wuhan, to oversee the daily operations of the factory, while Feng stayed in Canada with their daughter.

Back in Qinhuangdao city, Han attended meetings at an underground church, a church not officially recognized by the Chinese Communist Party, several times with an employee. She was then targeted by the local police.

Zheng Shiyong, a police officer from Haiyang Police Station in Qinhuangdao, started visiting Han at her home, telling her that someone had reported her for participating chief wouldn't report her to higher authori- were working with me," he said. ties as long as she was willing to pay.

Han gave him 5,000 yuan (\$715). Several days later, Zheng returned to

Han's home, along with the police chief. A handmade wooden gazebo in her courtyard caught the police chief's fancy. He asked Han to make one for him at cost.

Han knew what he meant, so she said, "If you like it, just take it."

The chief claimed the gazebo a few days later.

Profitable Business

Feng had rented a little over an acre and a half of land to build a workshop with a floor area of about 32,200 square feet.

"I regarded the factory as my baby," Feng said. "I had an ardent yearning for a bright future."

With great care, he tended to the workshop's operation, manufacturing, and planning. Each year, he set a new plan for sales targets, the number of employees, and the scale of production, and positioned his products to be unique, high-end solid wood items designed and made to customers' requirements

"In fact, my factory was very profitable. We customized high-grade solid wood furniture for those who planned to upgrade home decoration. In Qinhuangdao city, my brand, 'Mu Jia, was in a position to set prices for high-end furniture. I didn't want to compete with lowend products," Feng said.

His products were well received in the market. At a home decoration and construction materials exhibition, his products were so popular that his sales employees were all occupied answering calls and taking orders from customers. His customers came from as far as Xinjiang in the west of China. His face beamed with happiness as he re-

called that period of time.

"I felt very proud because I was able to offer in an "illegal rally." He said that the police job opportunities for about 40 people who

Business a Steal at \$57,274

Because of the police visits, Feng felt it was no longer safe to run the business, and told his wife to sell it.

While a potential buyer offered 2.8 million yuan (\$400,000) for the plant, Feng was reluctant to sell it at that price, since his total investment had exceeded 3 million yuan and the business was making a good profit. But after that, there were no other offers.

They decided to reach out to the person who had made the previous offer, but the man said he could no longer buy the factory "because someone from the police station" wanted it.

After some time, a man named Zhang Jian offered them 400,000 yuan (\$57,274) and warned that they would get an even lower With great care. he tended to the workshop's operation. manufacturing, and planning. Each year, he set a new plan for sales targets. the number of employees, and the scale of production. and positioned his products to be unique, high-end solid wood items designed and made to customers requirements.

Feng Zhenguo said that the CCP has long been treating the Chinese people this way. When the Party first came into existence, it robbed wealthy farmers and then killed them. Since coming to power, the CCP has continued to kill the Chinese people.



daughter.

price if they didn't take it.

Feng and his wife decided to sell to Zhang even though the offer didn't even come close to covering their investment.

The couple eventually learned that Zhang represented Han Jiajun, a police officer from Haiyang Police Station.

Police Continue to Ask for Money

After selling the factory, Han found a job working for a friend. The couple didn't expect that the police would call them again to ask for money.

Zheng Shiyong, the policeman who accompanied his boss to get the gazebo in Han's yard, called Han before the Chinese New Year in 2021.

"We can no longer cover up your issue last time [Han going to the church in Qinhuangdao]. We have to report to our superiors."

This time, Han couldn't pay them. She fled to Canada and joined her husband and daughter when China lifted its travel restrictions.

Officials at the Haiyang Police Station declined on Sept. 15 to comment to The Epoch Times.

End the CCP

Feng is now enjoying life as a carpenter in Canada.

"I feel much more comfortable working as an ordinary carpenter in Canada than being a boss in China," he said.

"The iron fist of the CCP kept hitting me almost every day, and I wasn't able to have a good sleep during those years when I had my own factory in China."

He sees now that private enterprises in China are just like "chives," a term used by Chinese citizens to describe things that are easy to grow but are subject "to cuts or harvests."

"After we get rich with our hard work, the CCP is there to harvest," Feng said.

He said that the CCP has long been treating the Chinese people this way. When the Party first came into existence, it robbed wealthy farmers and then killed them. Since coming to power, the CCP has continued to kill the Chinese people.

Freedom of Belief

Feng says his family now enjoys the freedom of belief in Canada. He said he hopes that Chinese people in China will one day enjoy freedom as well.

"My grandpa told me when I was young that the CCP is very, very bad, and an organized gang of bandits," he said.

On Aug. 20, Feng attended a rally in Vancouver that was calling for an end to the CCP. He was wearing a T-shirt, on which was printed in both Chinese and English: "Destroy the CCP, build a new democratic country."

Lin Cenxin and Chang Chun contributed to this report.

THE **EPOCH** TIMES

TRUTH and **TRADITION**

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(Names not shown for safety reasons)

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"I'll feel guilty the rest of my life if I do nothing. ... I just wanted to let you all know I am praying for you and I am so grateful for every one of you working to bring the TRUTH out so the world knows what really happened. I'll be spreading this word, this documentary, everywhere I am able to."

Micki Witthoeft carrying a picture of daughter Ashli Babbitt outside the Capitol buildings on Thursday on the first anniversary of her death.

any Americans went to Washington on Jan. 6, 2021, to protest and call for election integrity. Some lost their lives; many were arrested and jailed; all of them were demonized.

The Epoch Times investigated the facts of that day and created the powerful documentary *The Real Story of Jan.* 6, which exposes facts that disprove the narrative that the events of that day constituted a "violent insurrection."

From tracing the true origins of the chaos,

to taking a second look at the police's use of force, *The Real Story of Jan. 6* sheds light on the series of events that have been obscured by legacy media.

This critical film has been suppressed and censored by Big Tech, so we invite you to join us and many other Americans in helping to spread the truth far and wide.

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The Real Story of Jan. 6 is available **FREE online** for all viewers **now through the end of September**.

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