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**US FACING
UNPRECEDENTED
NUCLEAR THREAT**

FROM ALLIED CHINA AND RUSSIA

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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 far-reaching 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, 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."

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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 recognize 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 issue to the damage it could cause.

Speaking on the issue at a webinar in



The Rocket Force, under the Eastern Theatre Command of China's People's Liberation Army, fires live missiles into the waters near Taiwan, from an undisclosed location in China on Aug. 4, 2022.

March, Atlantic Council senior fellow Sarah Kirchberger compared the Sino-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."

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 three-party 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.

Multiplicity 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

targets, increasing the lethality of an individual missile many times over.

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.

China's 'Nuclear Breakout' Will Spill Over

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.

EASTERN THEATRE COMMAND/HANDOUT VIA REUTERS

SERGEI BODILEV, SPUTNIK, KREMLIN POOL PHOTO VIA AP



Russian President Vladimir Putin gestures while speaking to Chinese leader Xi Jinping during the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, on Sept. 16, 2022.

U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO/DUNCAN WOOD



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.

"The most serious concern I believe is less so that we are at risk of China or Russia 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 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 much-needed 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



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

GREG BAKER/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Feng Zhengguo 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

SOPHIA LAM

The 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 'reform 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 Zhengguo 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

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

Feng Zhengguo, former factory owner

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, under the rule of the CCP, we ordinary Chinese people are just like ants, insignificant and easily crushed, no matter how hard we work," 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.

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 environmental bureau would designate a certain supplier of environmental protection products," 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 Zhengguo'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 in an "illegal rally." He said that the police chief wouldn't report her to higher authorities 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 low-end 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 recalled that period of time.

"I felt very proud because I was able to offer job opportunities for about 40 people who were working with me," he said.

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

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.



Feng Zhengguo; his wife, Han Yanjing; and their daughter.

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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.



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

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ALEX KENT/THE US SUN/NEWS LICENSING



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

FEEDBACK FROM OUR READERS (Names not shown for safety reasons)

“Censorship on every level—EVERY TOPIC—has finally been matched by the bravery and determination of The Epoch Times in pulling back the curtain and exposing the total corruption, and bringing the light of truth to the world!”

“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.”

“Dear Epoch Times and the makers of the January 6th documentary, I am still in shock. The information presented is absolutely essential in grasping any kind of understanding of what happened that day. What excellent work it is!”

Many 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.

Censors can block us, but they can’t stop truthful reporting. It may start as a whisper that grows into a mighty shout, but truth always prevails ... as long as we have the courage to speak it.

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

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