

WEEK 45, 2022

THE EPOCH TIMES

CHINA INSIDER

EUROPE'S HIGHEST COURT DENIES EXTRADITION TO CHINA

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The audience room of the European Court for Human Rights in Strasbourg, France, in this file photo.

PATRICK HERTZOG/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

USS Abraham Lincoln (L), and JS Kongo (front), sail in formation during a U.S.-Japan bilateral exercise at the Sea of Japan on April 12, 2022.

JAPAN MARITIME SELF-DEFENSE FORCE VIA AP

OPINION

After the Election: An Agenda to Address the China Threat

BRADLEY A. THAYER



If the Republicans win the House of Representatives and possibly the Senate on Nov. 8, they will have the opportunity to move against the China threat in a manner not seen since the Trump administration. To be sure, a Republican majority in the House will be limited if they do not win the Senate, given that the Biden administration will remain in office for two more years. The power of the purse will be weakened as well as if Continuing Resolutions are used for funding the government. This places an enormous burden on a potential Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.). Strong and consistent leadership will be required of McCarthy as only limited help on the China threat will be received from a potential Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.). Those are, indeed, major limitations.

Nonetheless, there is much that the new 118th Congress can accomplish on the China threat. Here are the parameters of an agenda. Fundamentally, Congress has to provide leadership regarding the China threat, this in-

cludes directing the U.S. government to combat it, and informing the American people about its activities, the threat to the homeland, and the birthright of the American people. Specifically, this involves combatting Wall Street's relationship with the Chinese regimes, bolstering defenses, and providing greater support for allies and partners.

First, and most importantly, Congress must provide leadership on the China threat since the Biden administration has not. This means that McCarthy will have to add to his portfolio the de facto national security adviser and secretaries of State, Defense, and Homeland Security, on the China threat. The most important measure will be to develop and execute a strategy for the defeat of the Chinese regime. It falls to McCarthy and his allies in the Senate, as there is no one else in the free world who possesses the authority or willingness to do so. Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.) and others have already announced that they take the lead on hearings on the China threat, these efforts should be joined if the Republicans capture the Senate, and should become a permanent sub-committee that becomes the focal point for the U.S. government in the absence of adequate attention from the administration.

It is clear that the U.S. Navy's shipbuilding capabilities are not able to replace losses the United States would incur in a war with China.

Second, Wall Street continues to fund China's rise by permitting Beijing to raise money on New York markets. Congress has to act through hearings to provide sunlight, oversight, and legislation to end Wall Street's relationship with the Chinese regime. This situation should never have been permitted to arise in the first place, and it is a scandal beyond measure and comprehension that it continues. An excellent place to start with the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). Millions of U.S. government employees, service members, veterans, and retired federal workers through their retirement savings are funding China. U.S. dollars are invested through TSP, the world's largest defined contribution fund with over \$730 billion, into Chinese Communist Party (CCP) controlled companies. As a result, U.S. government employees are funding the expanding power of their enemies. U.S. capital continues to flow into the enemy's coffers, and this outrageous situation must end immediately. Congressional hearings and oversight are necessary to ensure that this problem begins to be addressed.

Third, on defense, Congress needs to pressure the administration to have adequate conventional and nuclear force structure to meet its national security interests including commitments to allies. This requires working with the services to compel a change in mindset from counterinsurgency campaigns to attritional high-intensity wars against a peer rival. Congress must fund a navy with an adequate number of surface vessels, submarines, and sea lift to deter China's aggression and reassure allies. The Navy has to ensure it has a force that can incur losses in an attritional war with China. It is clear that the U.S. Navy's shipbuilding capabilities are not able to replace losses the United States would incur in a war with China. The Air Force and Indo-Pacific Command should be expanding strike assets within the theater and on its periphery. Congress needs to work with the administration to ensure that the Air Force has sufficient assets to fight an attritional war with China. The Army and

Marines must be prepared for a scope of missions in the Indo-Pacific, including amphibious, anti-surface, and deep strike missions that are far from the counter-insurgency missions of the last two decades.

In the nuclear realm, there must be a reversal of the Biden administration's decisions on retiring the B83-1 nuclear weapon and continuing development on the nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missile (SLCM-N), which the Biden administration announced it would not support in the October public release of the Nuclear Posture Review. Congress and the administration work to continue triad and nuclear command, control, communications (NC3) modernization.

Fourth, regarding U.S. allies and partners, Congress has to guarantee the credibility of U.S. commitments to allies and that the extended deterrent to them remain steadfast. The relationship with Taiwan must change to reflect its history as a U.S. ally, its military and intelligence role, and its economic and ideological importance in the struggle against China. Visits from senior Congressional officials to Taiwan should be routinized. At the same time, Congress should host Taiwanese officials, permitting Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen to address a joint session.

A Republican Congress provides a tremendous opportunity for Congress to lead on the China threat and to ensure that the next two years are not lost in combating the threat as the last two years have been. In the window of the next two years, it is Congress that must take the lead in the struggle against China until the 2024 election marks the return of a presidency that will work in tandem with Congress to defeat the threat from the Chinese regime.

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

Bradley A. Thayer is co-author of "Understanding the China Threat" and director of China Policy at the Center for Security Policy.



ORGAN HARVESTING

Nursing Community Urged to Stand Against Chinese Regime's Organ Harvesting Crimes

DOROTHY LI

A lack of media coverage, silence from the medical community, and fear of Beijing's retribution, are among the reason why nursing communities around the world are unaware of the Chinese regime's murdering of innocent people for their organs.

These comments were made by Géraldine Monti, who has been a nurse for more than 30 years in France, at a nurses summit on combating and preventing the forced removal of organs from unwilling donors in China. Held on Nov. 1, the virtual event was organized by Doctors Against Forced Organ Harvesting (DAFOH) and the Academy of Forensic Nursing.

"The killing of innocent people for their organs is the most egregious act," said Deborah Collins-Perrica, director of nursing affairs at DA-FOH, an advocacy group based in Washington.

However, "in China, the practice is approved as sponsored by the government," Collins-Perrica said. "It is managed by the police and with military oversight."

After yearlong investigations, an independent London-based tribunal confirmed in 2019 that state-sanctioned forced organ harvesting has taken place in China for years "on a significant scale." The panel of lawyers and experts, known as the China Tribunal, concluded from witness and various other testimony that such actions amount to crimes against humanity, with persecuted Falun Gong practitioners being a primary organ source.

Describing China's organ transplant trade as one of the world's most profitable industries, Collins-Perrica said it generates a billion dollars a year for the Chinese regime.

As Chinese people are reluctant to donate organs due to "distrust in the political system and cultural taboos," Collins-Perrica said the Chinese regime expanded the availability of organs for transplants by harvesting organs from living prisoners of conscience.

The health care professional cited the persecution of Falun Gong as an example. Falun Gong, a spiritual practice consisting of meditative exercises and moral teachings based on the principles of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance, became hugely popular in China in the 1990s, with an estimated 70 million to 100 million adherents by the end of the decade.

Viewing the popularity of the spiritual practice as a threat to its power, the ruling communist party launched a nationwide persecution in 1999. Since then, millions of Falun Gong adherents have been thrown into prisons, labor camps, and brainwashing centers across the country where they are subjected to torture,

forced labor, or even forced organ harvesting.

"The victims who are exploited, abused, and prepared for organ harvesting undergo medical testing while in political detention," Collins-Perrica said. "This created an organ on-demand system that can deliver fast-track transplant organs within days of notice."

"Now a patient from another country waiting for a life-saving organ transplant can go online and find advertisements for Chinese transplant centers," she continued. "They can call those hospitals and secretly make their own arrangements for a transplant."

"This [the business of selling organs to transplant tourism] stands as the most disturbing medical practice in the world."

Now is the time to align physicians, nurses, and all health care providers around the world to abolish forced organ harvesting.

Debra Holbrook, president-elect, Academy of Forensic Nursing

Lack of Awareness

Monday's virtual event was "the first time this unique form of human trafficking is being publicly brought to the attention of the nursing community," according to Collins-Perrica, a former psychiatric clinical nurse for the U.S. Department of Defense and Veterans Health Administration.

Monti, who serves as secretary of the European branch of DAFOH-France, said most did not understand the seriousness of the crime and the impact on the medical world.

"Currently, in the medical world, there is little or no mention of the forced removal of organs from living Falun Gong practitioners. Why is this?"

"First, there is certainly a lack of information. I find that very few caregivers are aware of these crimes. Despite the articles published in international scientific journals, the caregivers' media never mention it."

"Secondly, we sometimes hear: 'China is very far away!' Caregivers may not feel concerned for the victims, the nurses, or the doctors as, 'After all... it's their problem!'"

"Where are our values, our ethics? Can we allow a patient waiting for an organ to have an innocent person killed so that he can have an organ? No, I think this is not acceptable."

The third reason, according to Monti, is the silence among medical professionals and institutions. She said that nurses in most countries

often follow the advice of doctors, national health strategies of the government, or advice from prominent medical institutions.

"Fourthly, and more specifically in the field of transplantation, health care providers may be afraid of the impression these crimes will give to patients and, as a consequence, of harming organ donation campaigns in their own country."

Additionally, Monti said others may not be willing to discuss forced organ harvesting due to their involvement in training Chinese medical professionals or other economic or political reasons.

Take Action

Yet, neutrality and silence to the crimes of forced organ harvesting, Monti said, will only encourage the oppressor.

"If we continue to remain silent, it means that we—as health professionals—accept that innocent and healthy Chinese citizens are killed for their organs."

"If we accept that Chinese citizens are killed for their organs, doesn't that mean that we also accept to lower our human values, our ethical values, and to break our laws? Is this not the destruction of our ethics? What about Chinese research papers on transplants? Can we accept unethically obtained data?"

"If we look even further: can we accept the destruction of our human values and our democratic societies?"

Monti urged nurses in the democratic world to stand up to the Chinese regime's crime against humanity.

"As nurses in democratic countries, it is important to stand up to China, to defend the values of the nursing profession, medical ethnics, and freedom."

"Each of us has a role to play in stopping this practice, protecting patients, and defending the ethics of our profession."

Debra Holbrook, the president-elect of the Academy of Forensic Nursing, said the organization is committed to legislation and practice worldwide that abolishes all forms of human trafficking, including forced organ harvesting.

"Now is the time to align physicians, nurses, and all health care providers around the world to abolish forced organ harvesting," Holbrook said. "It begins in our communities, in our hospitals, and in a united position that we will, as nurses and health care providers, hold each other accountable, that we will respect all lives and honor our respective Hippocratic Oath, and that we will educate our legislators and our world leaders to end all forms of human trafficking, including forced organ harvesting."

Eva Fu contributed to this report.

CHUNG I HO/THE EPOCH TIMES



Falun Gong practitioners take part in a parade marking the 22nd year of the persecution of Falun Gong in China, in Brooklyn, N.Y., on July 18, 2021.

EXCLUSIVE

DeSantis Calls Out Chinese Firm’s Purchase of Florida Land for Primate Breeding Facility

DOROTHY LI & EVA FU

Gov. Ron DeSantis raised concern over the Chinese Communist Party’s growing influence in Florida amid scrutiny of a Chinese firm’s purchase of 1,400 acres of land in the state in the hopes of building a primate breeding facility.

JOINN Laboratories CA Inc. purchased the land in Levy County, Florida, for about \$5.5 million in July, state records show. Reports indicate the company plans to build a primate breeding and quarantine facility on the land.

Located in California, the lab is a subsidiary of drug developer JOINN Laboratories, a Beijing-based company whose founders have ties to the Chinese military. The lab’s purchase of the 10 parcels of land from L & T Cattle & Timber represents one of the biggest known Chinese acquisitions of U.S. land in recent years.

[T]his proposed facility is a prime example of the type of activity that we are acting to prohibit.

Gov. Ron Desantis’s office

DeSantis’ office told The Epoch Times that the latest Chinese land buy is an example of the activities the Republican governor is working to combat.

“The governor has been consistently opposed to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)’s growing influence in Florida, and this proposed facility is a prime example of the type of activity that we are acting to prohibit,” the governor’s office said in an emailed statement.

DeSantis is pushing for proposed legislation that would bar the purchase of agricultural land and lands near military bases by communist China and



Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis in Surfside, Fla., on July 03, 2021.

other foreign countries of concern.

“They [Chinese companies] pay a lot more than it’s [the land] worth; that’s why people are doing it. From a national security perspective, is that something that we wanna see?” DeSantis said on Sept. 22 at a press conference announcing the legislation.

“A lot of times, there’ll be companies that will put themselves out as private, but if you peel back the onion a little bit,

they’re basically controlled by the Chinese government,” the governor added. “We think that’s something that the U.S. as a whole needs to take much more seriously.”

The bill was part of a broader plan that DeSantis unveiled in September aimed at combating the “malign” influence from foreign countries, particularly communist China.

Standing behind a podium with a

“Stop CCP Influence” sign, DeSantis also introduced legislation to safeguard higher education institutions’ intellectual property from the CCP, and signed an executive order to prohibit Florida’s government agencies from procuring or using technology products and services from Chinese companies.

Scrutiny Over Chinese Ties
Levy County’s planning and zoning de-



A laboratory monkey interacts with employees in the breeding center for cynomolgus macaques (long-tailed macaques) at the National Primate Research Center of Thailand at Chulalongkorn University in Saraburi on May 23, 2020.

partment in September confirmed that it had been contacted by JOINN Laboratories over the possibility of building a primate quarantine and breeding facility on the purchased land.

In a statement on Sept. 22, Levy County said the purchased land is currently zoned for forestry-rural residential use only, which does not allow for the construction of such a facility. It added that any request for it to be rezoned was unlikely to be approved.

County officials told The Epoch Times that it had not yet received a formal rezoning request from JOINN Laboratories as of Nov. 3.

While the future of the property use is uncertain, the land buy has already drawn criticism over the biotech firm founders’ links to the Chinese military.

The purchaser’s parent company, JOINN Laboratories, is founded and controlled by Zhou Zhiwen and Feng Yuxia, a couple who both graduated from China’s Academy of Military Medical Sciences. The college is China’s leading medical research institution that was added to a U.S. trade blacklist in 2021 for allegedly supplying biotechnology to the Chinese military.

The land sale came at a time when Chinese firms’ buying of U.S. land is under considerable scrutiny.

An American subsidiary of Fufeng Group, a major producer of food additives in China with links to the CCP, recently purchased 370 acres of land

in Grand Forks, North Dakota, where it plans to build a corn mill.

The site is roughly 12 miles from the Grand Forks Air Force Base, which is home to sensitive U.S. drone, satellite, and surveillance technology. GOP lawmakers have expressed concern that the deal may pose risks to national security, giving the communist regime opportunities for espionage.

The project is currently stalled pending a review by the Committee of Foreign Investments in the United States (CFIUS), an interagency panel that scrutinizes foreign investments for national security risks. Fufeng has denied that the project involves any security concerns.

DeSantis, at the September press conference, also sounded the alarm on the project in North Dakota.

“Why are they [the CCP] doing that? Of course, they want to get intelligence; they want to know what’s going on here in the United States,” DeSantis said at Miami Dade College.

“Yes, there’s the danger of having this land misused for intelligence or military purposes. But put that aside, we saw what happened with COVID, when almost all of this stuff was made in China, why would you want them to be involved in our own food supply in our chain supply chain here in the United States?”

The Epoch Times has reached out to JOINN Laboratories CA for comment.



China’s DF-41 nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missiles during a military parade at Tiananmen Square in Beijing on Oct. 1, 2019.

SECURITY

China Refusing Talks With US About Nuclear Expansion: Pentagon Official

ANDREW THORNEBROOKE

China’s communist leadership is uninterested in reducing the risk posed by nuclear weapons, according to senior U.S. officials.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) continues to refuse to engage in nuclear nonproliferation and strategic stability talks, despite an announcement last year that the regime would cooperate with the United States on the issue, according to Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Alexandra Bell.

“As a first step, we’d really like to have a conversation with them about each other’s doctrines, about crisis communication, crisis management,” Bell said during a Nov. 1 fireside talk with the Atlantic Council, a Washington-based think tank. “We’re not in that space with Beijing yet. So, there’s work to be done to begin the conversation, we think, bilaterally.”

Bell’s comments came just weeks after CCP leader Xi Jinping swore that the regime would strengthen its own nuclear capabilities despite assurances made in November 2021 that it would engage in strategic stability talks with the Biden administration.

Beijing has instead resisted requests for arms-related talks with Washington, and Pentagon leadership believes that China is instead expanding its nuclear forces, going so far as to quadruple its arsenal to 1,000 warheads by 2030.

Dialogue Unlikely to Prevent CCP Nuclear Expansion

Former Under Secretary of Defense Walter Slocombe said that, while admirable, the Biden administration’s pursuit of communication for communication’s sake was unlikely to yield fruitful results with the CCP.

“I’m afraid I’m a skeptic about ‘dialogue’ as the answer to all these problems,” Slocombe said during a panel after Bell’s comments. “We talk to China. This document [the Nuclear Posture Review] talks to China. The Chinese talk to us by what they say.”

“Dialogue is fine but it’s not really going to move the ball very far.”

Slocombe said that U.S. efforts to counter Chinese nuclear development ought to focus less on deterring the regime from using a nuclear missile and more on preventing it from using the threat of nuclear missiles to coerce other nations.

He warned that China and Russia’s increasing reliance on nuclear weapons as a key part of their national defense and diplomacy strategies signaled the two powers were likely to depend on the threat of nuclear force to bully other states into behaving according to their will.

“It is often the case that countries, like

people, say what they would like someone to believe about what they think,” Slocombe said.

“I’m not saying the Chinese are lying any more than we’re lying but, I think that the central problem is the use of coercion.”

New US Nuclear Review Not Enough to Deter China

The Biden administration’s newly released nuclear posture review, unveiled as part of the administration’s National Defense Strategy, alleges that the CCP is expanding and modernizing its nuclear arsenal with the aim of threatening the United States and its allies.

Moreover, the document states it is doing so while cooperating to some degree with Russia, meaning that the United States will have to simultaneously deter two near-peer nuclear adversaries.

“That is the central question of the next four or five years: The ‘how do we address two nuclear peers problem,’” said Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Robert Soofer, who also served on the panel.

I’m afraid I’m a skeptic about ‘dialogue’ as the answer to all these problems.

Walter Slocombe, former under secretary of defense

“On the one hand they’ve identified this problem but there seems to be actions in the review that preclude options for dealing with the problem.”

Soofer said that, despite all the talk of competition and bringing China to the table, the Biden administration had terminated its pursuit of some capabilities that could be important in deterring China’s nuclear proliferation. One such example is nuclear sea-launched cruise missiles, despite recommendations by the military to develop the system.

With that in mind, he said, the administration would need to develop a whole new way of understanding and dealing with the CCP’s nuclear capabilities and strategy.

“The key phrase is ‘major nuclear power,’” Soofer said.

“By the time China deploys its 1,000 nuclear weapons, it won’t just be the numbers, but the fact that they have a full triad, and the fact that in addition to strategic systems they’re also going to have regional systems. It’s a whole new framework for addressing them.”

Reuters contributed to this report.

OPINION

Undetected Earthquake: Europe’s Highest Court Denies Extradition to China

PETER DAHLIN

Years in the making, the first-ever trial has been held by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) for a case concerning an extradition to China—and the decision, out just weeks ago, is extraordinary, and can best be likened to an undetected earthquake. Consequences will be felt across all of Europe, not merely the EU.

The ECtHR is the court established by the European Convention on Human Rights. It’s a legally binding treaty for all its 46 member states, which includes all of Europe except Belarus and, since this year, Russia, which was expelled after refusing to follow one of its decisions. It’s the highest court of its kind for the nearly 700 million people in its member states.

So how can one case, one decision, be so influential? It all has to do with the person at the center of it, a Taiwanese citizen named Liu Hongtao.

Safeguard Defenders and I, personally, have been fighting extraditions from Europe to China for years, almost like an ambulance going around Europe to offer expert legal advice and appear in courts to block them. We are happy to be able to say that most of our cases have been successful, including in high courts. However, it’s merely putting out fires; it isn’t addressing the underlying process that makes these requests from China possible.

Despite eight calls by the European Parliament for all EU members who have such treaties to suspend them, there has been no actual movement to do so in these countries, whose political cowardice means no one will act—unless the EU as a whole acts first. Instead, one decision, by the ECtHR, has rendered all extradition requests from China meaningless, as no case can possibly be

successful after this precedent-setting decision.

It’s not a full victory, and a greater push to suspend the actual treaties is still needed, but it’s a great blow against the Chinese regime’s attempt to use European nations to undermine their own commitment to the rule of law.

Liu is an alleged scammer and on-line fraudster who lived in Spain with a large number of Chinese and Taiwanese. The ring was broken up in a joint Spanish-Chinese operation, and Spain rather quickly agreed to extradite the 208 Taiwanese captured to China, largely overlooking a review of their legal commitments before doing so. Liu, however, left Spain and was caught in Poland more than half a year later, in mid-2017. Since then, he has languished in a Warsaw detention center for more than five years awaiting his final decision. He’s not Tibetan, nor a Uyghur, nor does he belong to a persecuted religious group. He’s also not a dissident, human rights defender, or public critic of China or the Chinese Communist Party. He is, allegedly, merely a regular white-collar criminal. These are exactly the kinds of cases in which the Chinese regime has had the most success in seeking extraditions back to the mainland.

It’s because of this that the ECtHR’s decision is likely to make any extraditions, no matter what the person is accused of, impossible. The decision is crystal clear that torture and ill-treatment in China are so predominant that no extradition is possible, as it would violate Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The defense also wanted it deemed impossible due to there being no right to a fair trial (Article 6), but as the court made such a clear decision on Article 3, it chose to not review that allegation. This was a lost opportunity, as a clear decision on Article 6 would have been

The decision is crystal clear that torture and ill-treatment in China are so predominant that no extradition is possible.

a final nail in the coffin. But it’s nonetheless a significant victory that will alone make extraditions nearly impossible.

Ongoing cases in Cyprus and Italy are next in line, and this decision will likely play a key role in denying those as well. After that, the next step is, given the utility in ever securing extraditions, to get European countries’ ministries of justice to stop allowing extraditions at all, as such requests, even when the defense can be certain to succeed, can, as in the case of Liu, still lead to severe consequences, as he has now spent more than five years in custody. It shows how fragile the rule of law and basic rights can be even in a place like Europe. In fact, the court also decided that Poland itself had violated his right to not be placed into arbitrary detention, in an additional broadside against Polish authorities.

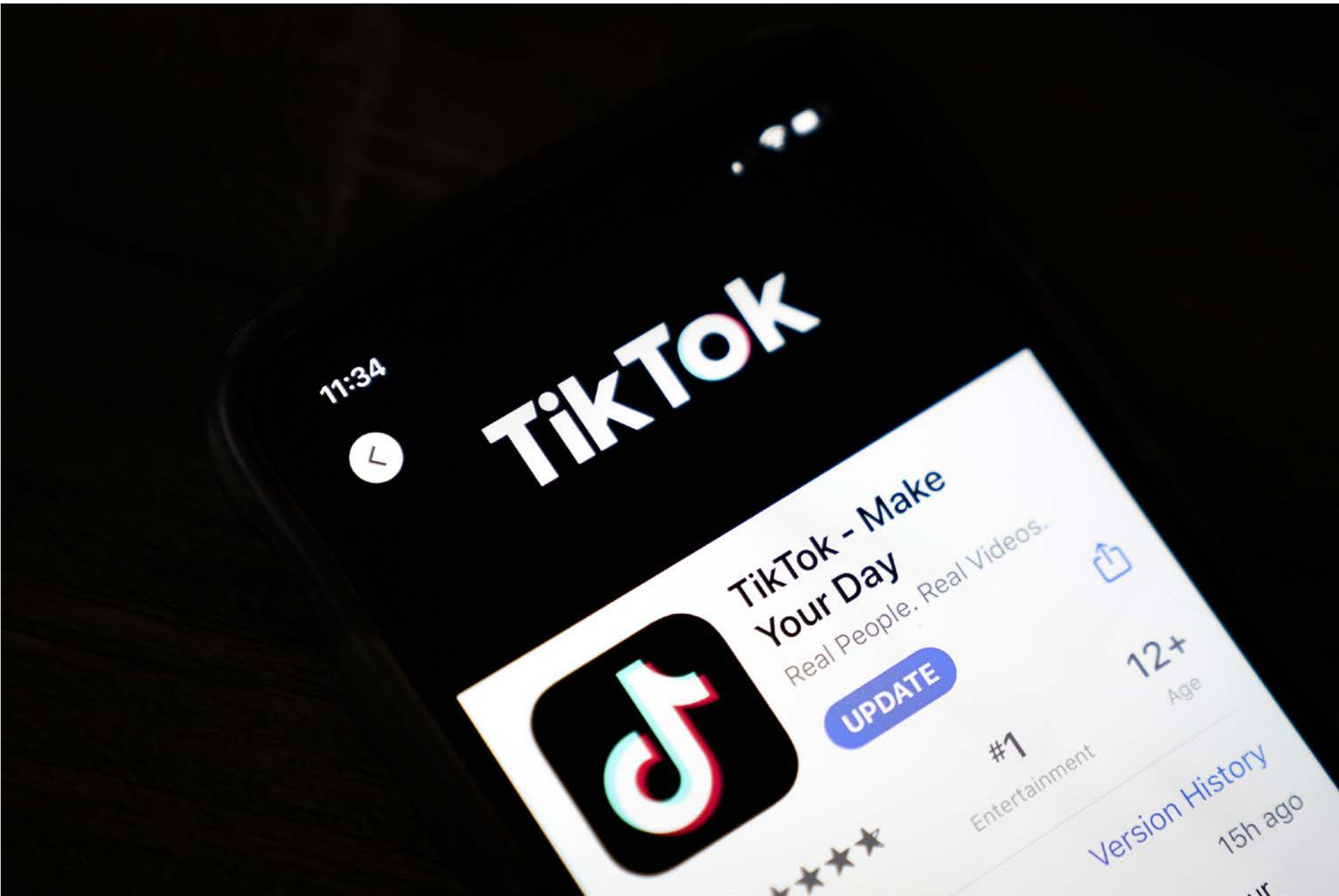
After a great decision, a great day for the rule of law and human rights in Europe, now it’s up to local media in these countries to pressure their ministries of justice and foreign affairs on this, to ensure prosecutors stop pursuing extraditions, and to create the political will in parliaments to suspend these treaties once and for all.

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

Peter Dahlin is the founder of the NGO Safeguard Defenders and the co-founder of the Beijing-based Chinese NGO China Action (2007–2016). He is the author of “Trial By Media,” and contributor to “The People’s Republic of the Disappeared.” He lived in Beijing from 2007, until detained and placed in a secret jail in 2016, subsequently deported and banned. Prior to living in China, he worked for the Swedish government with gender equality issues, and now lives in Madrid, Spain.



The courtroom of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France, in this file photo.



The download page for the TikTok app is displayed on an Apple iPhone in Washington DC, on Aug. 7, 2020.

DATA SECURITY

TikTok Admits Its Chinese Staff Can Access User Data in Other Countries

BRYAN JUNG

Chinese-owned video app TikTok admitted that its staff in China has the ability to access the private accounts data in the United Kingdom and the European Union. This comes after years of criticism from around the world, particularly in Europe, the United Kingdom, and the United States over concerns that personal information could be passed on to the Chinese regime. The app is coming under intense scrutiny by government authorities in the West, as its parent company, ByteDance, repeatedly denies that it is controlled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

TikTok Attempts to Explain a Privacy Loophole
The social media company released a press statement on Nov. 2, stating that its "privacy policy" was "based on a demonstrated need to do their job."

TikTok said in its statement that the policy applies to "the European economic area, United Kingdom, and Switzerland." The company relies "on a global workforce to ensure that our community's TikTok experience is consistent, enjoyable, and safe," for better user experience, said Elaine Fox, TikTok's head of privacy for Europe, Fox said that even though the social media app currently stores European user data in the United States and Singapore, "we allow certain employees within our corporate group located in Brazil, Canada, China, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, and the United States remote access to TikTok European user data." "Our efforts are centered on limiting the number of employees with access to European user data, minimizing data flows outside of the region, and storing European user data locally," she explained. She also claimed that the app does not collect precise location data from users in the United Kingdom and the European Union (EU). Fox said that employee access was "subject to a series of robust security controls and approval protocols, and by way of methods that are recognized under the General Data Protection Regulation." The new EU law will affect how companies use personal information and is slated to come into effect on May 25, 2023.

US Authorities Call for Another Crackdown on TikTok
Earlier this week, a top official at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the U.S. government's communications watchdog, called for TikTok to be banned in the United States. "I don't believe there is a path forward for anything other than a ban," Brendan Carr, a commissioner at the FCC, told Axios.

This is not something you would normally hear me say, but Donald Trump was right on TikTok years ago.

Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.)

I don't believe there is a path forward for anything other than a ban.

Brendan Carr, FCC commissioner

He stated that there was not "a world in which you could come up with sufficient protection on the data that you could have sufficient confidence that it's not finding its way back into the hands of the [Chinese Communist Party]." Carr reported asked Apple and Google to remove TikTok from their app stores due to concerns about user privacy. "Commissioner Carr has no role in the confidential discussions with the U.S. government related to TikTok, and appears to be expressing views independent of his role as an FCC commissioner," a TikTok spokesperson told Axios in response to the FCC concerns. In June this year, TikTok said it had migrated U.S. users' information to servers run by American software giant Oracle in Austin, Texas. Last month, TikTok denied a report in Forbes that a Chinese-based team at ByteDance was using the app to track the locations of American citizens without their consent. The report said that ByteDance attempted to collect location data on an American citizen on at least two occasions. TikTok belatedly denied on Twitter that it intended to target U.S. government officials, activists, public figures, and reporters. "Forbes chose not to include the portion of our statement that disproved the feasibility of its core allegation: TikTok does not collect precise GPS location information from U.S. users, meaning TikTok could not monitor U.S. users in the way the article suggested," ByteDance told the BBC. TikTok programmers based in China were also accused of accessing private user information in the United States, including phone numbers and birthdays, reported BuzzFeed back in June. Another BuzzFeed article from July reported that the social media company told its workers to push pro-Beijing talking points to American users on its news app. ByteDance denied both of BuzzFeed's accusations. President Donald Trump, back in 2020, called for the app to be banned by U.S. authorities, which forced ByteDance to sell its American operations over concerns that personal data would be shared with Beijing. However, the executive order was halted by a federal judge before it was revoked by President Joe Biden in 2021.

President Biden Faces Bipartisan Pressure to Act on Security Concerns Over the App
It was reported by The New York Times in September that discussions were on-going between ByteDance and the Biden administration to resolve concerns regarding its app.

"I told everyone years ago that TikTok was a tool of communist China, and yet Biden invites TikTok 'influencers' to the White House," said Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), who sits on the Senate Intelligence Committee. After intense criticism, Biden ordered the Department of Commerce to review the national security threat posed by apps like TikTok from adversarial foreign nations such as China. However, massive use of TikTok by political campaigns for voter outreach during the U.S. midterm elections has put the controversy on the spot, reported The Washington Post. There now is growing bipartisan opposition to the use of the Chinese app. "This is not something you would normally hear me say, but Donald Trump was right on TikTok years ago," Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.) told The Sidney Morning Herald last week. "If your country uses Huawei, if your kids are on TikTok ... the ability for China to have undue influence is a much greater challenge and a much more immediate threat than any kind of actual, armed conflict," he said. Republican lawmakers on the House Oversight and Energy and Commerce committees said that "the data collected by TikTok on U.S. users, such as browsing and search history, biometrics, location data, and other metadata, would be a massive national security risk in the hands of CCP intelligence," reported Fox News.

European and British Authorities Begin to Investigate TikTok
Meanwhile, the British Parliament shut down its TikTok account in August after members of Parliament raised concerns about the risk that their personal data were being passed on to the CCP. They demanded that the app should be closed until TikTok gave "credible assurances" that the CCP would not have access to their data. TikTok is also facing a fine equivalent of \$30 million in the United Kingdom for failing to protect the privacy of children using the app, reported the BBC. The Data Protection Commission, Ireland's privacy watchdog, is also investigating TikTok over children's privacy and whether the app was in line with EU laws regarding personal data being sent to other countries, such as China, reported the BBC. TikTok is the most popular social media app around the world, and has been downloaded almost 4 billion times. Parent company ByteDance has made more than \$6.2 billion in revenue from in-app spending since it was launched in 2017, according to analytics company Sensor Tower, reported by the BBC.

OPINION

Chinese Slavery Beyond China

ANDERS CORR

Do mysterious people send you messages on social media that simply say, "Hi"? I never answer. Likely as not, they are scammers in Southeast Asia under the management of Chinese cybergangs. That little "Hi" is one of their strategies according to reporting this year from VOD, a Cambodian news outlet that deserves a Pulitzer. It creates curiosity in the scam victim, or "mark", that gets the conversation going. As many as 100,000 foreigners work for cybercriminals in Cambodia, according to its Interior Ministry secretary of state Sok Phal. Yet, the Cambodian government does little to close the scam factories in which they are often imprisoned. In a report this week, the Los Angeles Times claims "the Cambodian government has given Chinese crime syndicates free rein to bring in tens of thousands of foreign men and women who—according to human rights organizations and their own accounts—are held captive to work in crowded cyber scam mills."

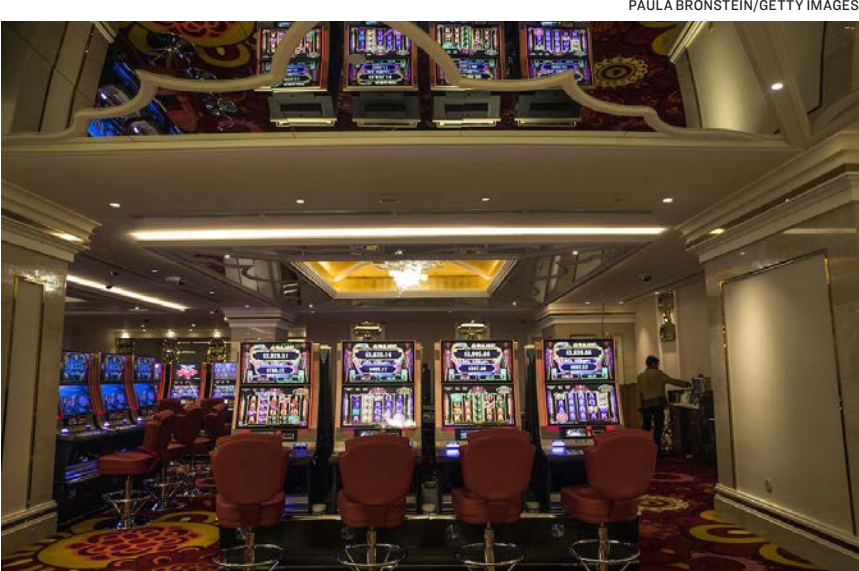
Chinese, Vietnamese, Malaysian, Taiwanese, Indonesian, Burmese, and Thai nationals are among those confined in the scammer compounds that sometimes grow as large as self-enclosed towns holding thousands each. Guards take passports from victims and stand guard at doors. Workers fall into debt peonage and can only buy freedom for as much as \$30,000 each. Some of the compounds are hotel or casino groups, including in Cambodia's capital city of Phnom Penh. The scams include gambling, romance, and pornography. Scammers who don't cooperate are beaten, electrocuted, sold, or worse. Workers sell for thousands of dollars each on messaging apps that include their photos. One had a man bloodied with missing fingers. A gang allegedly sent another to an underground blood bank that drew his blood so many times that, to find a vein and keep it flowing, they had to cut into his thigh. After news reports, the emergence of videos, and diplomatic pressure to free particular captives, Cambodian officials finally conducted raids in September. Thousands of slaves were freed, but for



Sailors stand guard at the Cambodian Ream Naval Base in Sihanoukville, Cambodia, on July 26, 2019.

Gangs detain their unwilling scammers within large business compounds that masquerade as hotel groups and technology centers.

A casino at NagaWorld hotel and entertainment complex in Sihanoukville, Cambodia, on Aug. 4, 2018. Chinese money accounted for about 30 percent of Cambodia's total foreign investment in 2017.



PAULA BRONSTEIN/GETTY IMAGES

the most part, the Chinese and Cambodian regimes are looking the other way. A few raids demonstrate the rule of law, but the scammers are bussed to less visible parts of Southeast Asia, including Myanmar and Laos. The Times alleges a cozy relationship between officials and Chinese syndicates that focuses attention on Cambodia's endemic corruption and relationship with China. Chinese police and China's embassy in Cambodia denied help to an enslaved Chinese man named Lin (VOD changed his real name to protect him) in a hotel complex controlled by gangs with links to legitimate Chinese companies and Cambodian officials. Lin was captured, his phone taken, and he was forced to work in a romance scam that targeted women ages 25 to 40 in places like Malaysia, Singapore, the United States, and Europe in an attempt to get tens of thousands of dollars from each. The detainee only got his phone returned as a reward for seeming to participate in the scam to win his captors' trust. Then he did internet research and made inquiries of officials and nonprofit rescue groups from the bathroom of the factory. Gangs detain their unwilling scammers within large business compounds that masquerade as hotel groups and technology centers. Chinese, Cambodian, and Vietnamese rescue teams help free detainees, including one renamed "Zhang" by VOD. "Zhang said he eventually got in touch with a Chinese entrepreneur-run rescue team, texting them daily until early November, when Cambodian military police came into the Sihanoukville 'Crown' compound and brought Zhang out," according to VOD. Sihanoukville is a seedy casino town on Cambodia's coast.

In another operation to "arrest" Chinese and Thai slaves, Cambodian police kept their processes, raids, and interrogations secret from Thai police, who initiated the action and wanted more direct involvement. Thai police issued 71 warrants for Thais, of which only 21 resulted in repatriation. Cambodian officials did not release the Chinese scammers that Thai police tried to arrest. Similar Chinese gangs are linked to Philippine offshore gaming operators (POGOs), in which local reporting reveals the enslavement of Chinese, Malaysians, and Burmese, for example, to chat up the marked victims into online gambling. Cyberslaves in the Philippines are bought and sold just as in Cambodia. Chinese gangs are extending modern slavery from the Beijing-supported versions of Uyghurs in Xinjiang, well beyond China's borders to Southeast Asia. This is our own future, if we allow the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to continue towards its goal of global domination. The export of Chinese gangs to the periphery of China is one of many ways that Beijing extends its malign influence.

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

Anders Corr has a bachelor's/master's in political science from Yale University (2001) and a doctorate 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. His latest books are "The Concentration of Power: Institutionalization, Hierarchy, and Hegemony" (2021) and "Great Powers, Grand Strategies: the New Game in the South China Sea" (2018).

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