



China Doesn't Care What We Think of Its Alliance with Russia

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The geographic entity we refer to as “the West” containing Europe and North America, at best, views history through a 2,000-year lens, with the dominant North American part not even 250 years old. In stark contrast, China views history through a 5,000-year lens. Countless western empires have come and gone, as China slowly marched through history from its core on the Yellow Sea. From a Chinese perspective, what occurs in a year is a mere droplet of water in a large vat.

For example, Taiwan's establishment in 1949 represents less than 2% of China's 5000-year existence. While certainly an irritant and source of great friction with the West, Taiwan's existence isn't getting more secure with the passage of time, as China rises from the ashes of the Great Leap Forward. With its enormous population, resource-rich land, and growing nuclear and military strength, China has nothing but time on its side in its conquest to reclaim Taiwan, dominate Asia, and eventually become the sole hyperpower in the world.

From 1999 to 2016, China got everything it needed from the West to solidify the foundation of its economic and political dominance. Starting with its entry into the World Trade Organization, the stunning rise of major manufacturing hubs throughout China acquired through intellectual property theft and mercantilism turbocharged its economy enabling a substantial jump in per capita income across China and the rise of rich and middle classes that dwarf any country in the West. Its middle class (344 million) is bigger than the entire United States (330 million).

During that span, the West became addicted to both cheap Chinese workers and the 350 million Chinese with income to spend on luxury western brands and international travel. The dependence allowed China to launch its massive “Belt and Road” infrastructure initiative to entrap vulnerable foreign countries rich with rare-Earth metals with debt and to ignore western demands to curb carbon emissions and pollution, stop human rights abuses, and respect international boundaries in the South China Sea. Western pleas fell on deaf ears until President Donald Trump confronted China with blunt talk, steep tariffs, and a defense buildup.

You can believe it is utterly coincidental that Trump's success in reining in China's trade abuses and plans to dominate Asia, which culminated in the Phase One trade deal signed on January 15, 2020, was derailed by the Wuhan virus that escaped the Wuhan Institute of Virology sometime in the latter part of 2019. Keep in mind, of the many unexplained actions taken by China, the one most detrimental to the West was China's inexplicable decision to keep

international air travel wide open out of the Hubei Province at the same time it shut down domestic travel within China from that area. That single, intentional act insured the West would be economically crippled by the pandemic.

That single, intentional act also crushed Trump's magnificent economic resurgence that saw record job and wage growth, especially for the middle class and poor including record employment for blacks, Hispanics, the disabled, and Americans without college degrees; operational control of the Southern border; stock market highs; low inflation; energy independence and all of the benefits to consumers and businesses that came with that status; and foreign policy successes in the Middle East via the Abraham Accords that boxed in Iran, in North Korea with its cessation of ballistic missiles tests, in Russia by stopping the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, and, yes, in China as noted above. In January 2020, Trump was cruising to reelection despite the four-year effort of the Left and its media allies to use any and all means to take him down.

There is little doubt that had the Wuhan virus not crushed the world with millions of deaths and economic shutdowns, Trump would have been reelected in November 2020. That meant China would continue to face Trump in follow-on trade negotiations and his continued military buildup. Even with the pandemic, Mark Zuckerberg's \$500 million election interference, and the Left's warping of voting rules, Trump still only lost by 43,000 votes in three states. Instead of Trump, China got the clearly declining Joe Biden and his retreat team from the Obama Administration. Xi Jinping must have been thrilled with that result, as life for China was very good during the Obama years.

In the fourteen months of the Biden Administration, China has suffered no consequences for failing to meet its Phase One trade obligations, has continued its genocidal ways with the Uighurs, exerted itself more aggressively in the South China Sea, has started building 33 gigawatts of coal-fired power capacity—the most since the last year of the Obama presidency in 2016, paid no price for its culpability over the Wuhan virus pandemic, increased its production and shipment of fentanyl through Mexico that kills nearly 100,000 Americans a year, and, most consequentially, struck a close partnership with Vladimir Putin that paved the path for Russia's invasion of Ukraine. If Russia's war with Ukraine has proven one lesson, that lesson would be the after-the-fact powerlessness of the West to deal with an aggressor who possesses survivable nuclear capabilities.

China sees this lesson as clearly as we do. In conjunction with the weakness of the Biden Administration, that lesson likely means China will move to reclaim Taiwan sooner rather than later, with sooner defined as sometime between now and the next U.S. presidential election in November 2024. Keeping the West preoccupied with Russia over Ukraine makes this reality all the more probable. Thus, beyond buying Russia's oil and natural gas being banned in the West at a price it deems fair, China will do whatever it takes to keep the West entangled in Europe so that, when it launches its invasion of Taiwan, the West's ability to get engaged will be weakened and fractured.

It shouldn't escape anyone's notice that not one country or corporation has acted against China for its support of Russia. Given the significant financial and trade dependence so many western countries and companies have with China, isolating and sanctioning China over Taiwan will be much harder than what the West has done to Russia. If you think China cares what we think about its alliance with Russia, you need to look at the issue from a 5,000-year lens and realize China doesn't care what we think, as this episode is likely to be little more than a footnote in its history.