



**VISION TIMES**

2017 Special Edition

# THE GIANT AWAKENS

A Collection of Insights into Chinese Government Influence in Australia





PHOTO (ABOVE): ZIPEI XIA  
COVER PHOTO: YAN XIA

## Vision Times Media Corporation (Australia)

*Vision Times* is an independent Chinese media group that arose as one of the top 10 most visited Chinese websites in the world after it was first launched in 2001. Backed by a track record of serving the Australian-Chinese community for over a decade, *Vision Times* produces highly-regarded and informative publications featuring unbiased coverage and insightful stories.

We offer Australia's most comprehensive Chinese platforms including printed news, a bilingual magazine, websites and WeChat. With 160 vibrant editorials, we are one of Australia's most influential and widely distributed Chinese publications with over 100,000 readers nationwide.

*Vision Times* is distributed in 22 cities, in 17 countries and regions across the globe, including Australia, New Zealand, the United States of America, Canada, Europe, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and Peru.

www.visiontimes.com.au  
www.visiontimes.com

Editor@visionchinatimes.org  
Sydney | Suite 106, 379-383 Pitt St, Sydney NSW 2000 | (02) 9283 9224  
Melbourne | 4/48 Rutland Rd., Box Hill VIC 3128 | (03) 9005 3689  
Perth | Unit 2/6 Douro Place, West Perth WA 6005 | (08) 6365 2012

*Disclaimer: The views, beliefs and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the various authors and do not reflect the views, beliefs and opinions of Vision Times Media Corporation (Australia).  
Copyright statement: The articles within this publication can only be reproduced with the permission of the individual authors. Copyright of photographs used throughout this publication belong to individual photographers and cannot be reproduced without permission.*

## Foreword

**Influence** /'ɪnfluəns/ [mass noun]: The capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behaviour of someone or something, or the effect itself.

The Chinese government's vast sphere of influence has been a widely debated topic over the past few months. In many instances, discussions have blurred the lines between **China** – a country with a rich history of 5,000 years – and the **Chinese government** – currently controlled by the Chinese Communist Party.

China's culture, its arts and trade relations with Australia, have had a significant influence on Australia's development as a well-integrated multicultural society. The cultural and economic contributions of the 1.2 million Chinese living and studying in Australia cannot be overstated.

Yet as the giant awakens and the Chinese government flexes its financial muscles globally, its influence seemingly comes with covert and overt censorship, control and attempts to silence dissent, which many perceive as a head-on collision with Australia's democratic values.

Is influence from the Chinese government a problem for Australia? How much influence can Australia accept? Is there a bottom line?

We invite over twenty leading China experts and community commentators to discuss their views on the influence of the Chinese government and the resulting impact on Australia as a nation in this spectacular collection of eye witness accounts, personal narratives, opinions and analysis in *The Giant Awakens*.

Enjoy – and let us know your thoughts!

Yan Xia  
Chief Editor

October 2017

## Contents

<b>National Security and Foreign Interference</b> Rory Medcalf	3
<b>Party Time: It's About Values, Not Race</b> James Leibold	6
<b>Growing Influence: Silent Changes in Our Community</b> Chun Wing Fan	7
<b>Our Universities Are a Frontline in China's Ideological Wars</b> John Garnaut	8
<b>Resist Infiltration and Safeguard Australian Values</b> Chongyi Feng	9
<b>Interference with Academic Activities in Australian Universities</b> Jinjiang Zhong	10
<b>Chinese Students Aren't Simply Tools of the Party-State</b> Merriden Varrall	11
<b>Chinese State Infiltration: The Inside Story</b> Yonglin Chen	12
<b>Australian-Chinese Living Under the Red Shadow</b> Baoqiang Sun	14
<b>Against Chinese Illiberalism</b> Adam Ni	15
<b>Our Future Is Shaped By the Freedoms We Uphold</b> John Deller	16
<b>Human Dignity and Its Enemies</b> John Fitzgerald	18
<b>Attempts to Divide the Australian Tibetan Communities</b> Kelsang Gyaltzen	20
<b>Chinese Reporter Expelled During Australia Day Celebrations</b> Jiazhen Qi	21
<b>Beware the China Alarmists Out There</b> Linda Jakobson	22
<b>What Does China Say About PRC Influence in Australia?</b> Jackson Kwok	23
<b>Influence Creep? Australia Well-Equipped to Hold Its Own</b> Elena Collinson & James Laurenceson	24
<b>The Fall of Chinese Community Groups, Politicians and Academic Freedom</b> Xiaogang Zhang	26
<b>Grassroots Influence by Beijing's Running Dogs</b> Ruan Jie	27
<b>Obsession with China's Influence Is Hurting Australia's Public Diplomacy Agenda</b> Wanning Sun	28
<b>What Is the CCPNR and the UFWD?</b> Zheng Zhang	30
<b>Confucius Is Turning in His Grave</b> Feiyan Xia	31



PHOTO: VISION CHINA TIMES PHOTOMONTAGE



RORY MEDCALF

## National Security and Foreign Interference

*Speech delivered in Sydney (12 September 2017) & Brisbane (15 September 2017)*

Criticism of Chinese Communist Party influence is not about ethnicity. We need to guard against any risk of this issue turning into one of suspicion or xenophobia directed generally at Australia's Chinese communities.

to influence our politics and independent policymaking.

This includes propaganda and censorship in much of this nation's Chinese-language media as well as channels of interference through intimidation of dissident voices and the establishment and mobilisation of pro-Beijing organisations on Australian soil. There is also the troubling question of political donations and their motives.

This time last year, Labor Senator Sam Dastyari stood down from the Opposition front bench following revelations that a Chinese billionaire had paid a legal bill for the Senator and covered a debt for travel expenses.

At the time, media reports linked these donations to Senator Dastyari directly contradicting his own Party's position on the South China Sea, quoting him as stating at a press conference alongside said billionaire that 'The South China Sea is China's own affair,' and that on this issue 'Australia should remain neutral and respect China's decision.'

While this was extraordinary enough, there are other even more disturbing reports. One involves an offer to provide the ALP with \$400,000 at the height of the 2016 election campaign. According to the report, the offer was withdrawn following Labor's Defence spokesperson restating the Party's position that in government it would be open to conducting freedom of

navigation exercises in the South China Sea, an issue of critical sensitivity to China.

This was one of the revelations in forensic media investigations by Fairfax Media and ABC TV's highly respected Four Corners program.

It has also been reported recently that Australia's main political parties have received close to \$6 million in donations over the last few years from individuals associated with the Australian Council for the Promotion of the Peaceful Reunification of China.

The Council, in turn, is reported to have connections to the United Front Work Department, an organisation which reports to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

Now, of course, what is not clear is the precise calculation behind each such donation, and those calculations may vary from case to case.

Several explanations are possible.

One, of course, is that those making the donations have such admiration and respect for Australia's democratic political system – so distinct, as it is, from the Chinese party-state – that they would like to invest in its dynamism and longevity. Unlikely.

Another possible reason is that this is partly about buying profile, status and access for personal and commercial reasons. One donor has been quoted in the Chinese media as

saying that this is akin to buying protection from 'bandits'.

There is also the possible explanation that enthusiastic individuals, with what they may see as patriotic Chinese intent, are freelancing by making donations that they think will resonate well among the powers that be in the People's Republic of China.

Another possible explanation is that political donations are encouraged by the Chinese Communist Party, as part of its wider efforts at influence abroad.

Each of us is entitled to draw his or her own conclusions from all of this.

But whatever the mix of motives, one thing is clear. The

If we over-react to any Chinese economic threats and self-censor on issues perceived to be problematic for Beijing, it will not protect Australia from further pressure – it will signal that such pressure works.



This is about silencing dissent.  
It is not ordinary soft power.

donations were enough for the Director-General of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) to take the highly unusual step of directly warning the major parties that they and Australia's national security could be compromised by such donations.

For the head of ASIO to take such a step suggests he was genuinely worried, from a national security and national interest point of view.

Security agencies cannot take effective action on any of this because it has been entirely legal – all they can do is raise the alarm.

It is now up to the political class to decide whether there is, within Australian democracy, enough self-respect to function without money linked to the Chinese Communist Party. This, after all, is a massive, secretive, self-interested and foreign organisation, with interests that can sometimes clash directly with Australia's.

Also disturbing are attempts to silence critical Chinese-Australian voices.

Take the troubling case of a highly-regarded Sydney academic, Associate Professor Chongyi Feng, from UTS, who was detained earlier this year in China while on an Australian Research Council-funded visit.

Professor Feng has now explicitly identified his 10-day interrogation as being an effort to, quote: 'shut me down and set an example to dissenting views and critical voices among the Chinese diaspora and beyond'.

This could be read as a crude signal of intimidation – telling Chinese Australians not to criticise Communist party interference in Australian domestic affairs.

Professor Feng is an important voice – he demonstrates that it is not just Australia's security agencies who are concerned about the Chinese Communist Party's interference in Australia's domestic affairs.

Indeed, much of the worry about such influence is within this country's diverse Chinese communities. If, as a nation, we chose to ignore such concerns, we would be effectively treating such dissenting voices among our Chinese-Australian population as second-class Australians, whose freedom of thought and freedom of expression do not warrant protection.

That is why it is to the credit of the Australian Government that it made representations on the Chongyi Feng case. It is fair to assume that his release was in large part a function of the public outcry about his detention, as well as Australian government pressure. He certainly believes so.

In the media space, there is also cause for concern. Several leading Australia media outlets have signed distribution deals with the Party's Propaganda Department.

The Australian public can now enjoy censored and propagandist Chinese publications – like *China Daily* – simply by looking at the attractive liftoffs inserted in your copy of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age* or *The Australian Financial Review*.

To be fair, this is not especially effective propaganda. It may even be a waste of Chinese government money, given that these same newspapers continue to publish objective and critical investigations into Chinese influence-buying.

But it is disturbing to think that, in time, the business model of Australia's venerable quality press will be propped up by such funds, and that sooner or later the directness and incisiveness of their China reporting may become muted. After all, the sudden withdrawal of such funding could become an act of leverage and coercion.

What is more hidden from the English-speaking Australian public, and more worrying at this stage for our country as



PHOTO: YAN XIA

a whole, is Beijing's effort to control and shape overseas Chinese-language media.

Additionally, the use of WeChat and Weibo by many Chinese speakers in this country means that the Communist Party can censor what they are reading without having to own Australian-based publications at all.

As respected China scholar John Fitzgerald points out, what is exceptional here is not that China is seeking to engage with the more than one million Australians of Chinese origin. Engagement with a diaspora community is a normal and healthy thing for any government to do – Ireland does it, India does it, Australia does it, China can and should too. What is extraordinary is the level of influence, sometimes manifested through intimidation, that the Communist Party has over Chinese language media in this country.

This is about silencing dissent. It is not ordinary soft power. All nations project the 'soft' power of attraction, of winning the debate.

We should welcome and indeed facilitate Chinese voices in a transparent and evidence-based contest of ideas about this country's future.

But a picture is emerging of excessive influence through money, censorship and coercion. This is neither the soft power of free expression nor the hard power of military force.

Instead, it is the sharp power of intrusive influence. It undermines the principles of trust and mutual respect that are meant to inform worthy efforts by both nations to build a durable and comprehensive relationship.

It is vital to underline at this and all junctures that criticism of Chinese Communist Party influence is not about ethnicity. We need to guard against any risk of this issue turning into one of suspicion or xenophobia directed generally at Australia's Chinese communities.

There needs to be reassurance given to Chinese Australians that they are included, welcomed and cherished as integral to the social and political – as well as economic – fabric of this multicultural nation.

To reiterate, it is vital to remember that many Chinese Australians are anxious about the role of the Chinese party-state inside this country.

They are also understandably worried about the harm the actions of a small number may do to the reputation of the Chinese diaspora here, whether citizens, permanent residents or students.

So the issue of foreign interference needs to be addressed in a context of respect for the rights of Chinese Australians. That means this needs to be an issue that is seized and owned by the moderate, bipartisan centre of Australian politics. This way, the issue cannot be captured by extreme voices or be distorted, misconstrued or falsely portrayed as one of xenophobia.

The Chinese community makes an enormous contribution to this nation and is Australia's greatest asset in engaging with China.

Prominent voices in this community are leading the pushback against Communist Party orchestration of influence – in media, in politics, in society and on university campuses.

In our conversations about how to respond to this

It is now up to the political class to decide whether there is, within Australian democracy, enough self-respect to function without money linked to the Chinese Communist Party. This, after all, is a massive, secretive, self-interested and foreign organisation, with interests that can sometimes clash directly with Australia's.

interference, we need to be careful not to assume that the Chinese Communist Party is all-powerful.

The risk is that we will buy the story that our economy is so comprehensively dependent on China that Australia cannot afford to cause China much difficulty on security and political issues, even when our interests diverge.

Indeed, perceptions of Australia's vulnerability to Chinese economic pressure are exaggerated.

Economic pressure from China that would have the biggest impact on Australia – most notably through iron ore trade – would also impose restrictive costs on Beijing.

Privately or publicly, Beijing criticises or complains to Canberra frequently over multiple issues.

But the accompanying threats tend to be implicit or general – that the bilateral relationship will suffer some unspecified deterioration if Australia does not heed China's wishes.

Even where Canberra has seriously annoyed Beijing, such as by supporting legal rulings on the South China Sea, Beijing has not directed economic pressure specifically at Australia.

Before Beijing resorted to serious economic measures, entailing costs to itself, it would likely take political steps like cancelling diplomatic dialogues.

If Beijing felt it needed to send an economic signal to reinforce its displeasure, its initial response would likely involve non-tariff barriers over quarantine and safety standards, or making life difficult for businesses operating in China, with limited long-term economic impact on itself or Australia.

Beijing has adopted this approach towards South Korean business interests, yet has not succeeded in its goal of changing Seoul's stance on missile defence cooperation with the United States.

Economic vulnerability is often as much about perception as reality – and it is in China's interests for Australia to imagine itself highly vulnerable.

Already, some voices in business, academia and the media focus on the possible economic impacts of annoying China.

The perception of economic harm can have an outsized effect on domestic interests, creating pressure for rapid political compromise.

If we overreact to any Chinese economic threats and self-censor on issues perceived to be problematic for Beijing, it will not protect Australia from further pressure – it will signal that such pressure works.

As the recent border standoff with India, and the failure by Beijing to compel South Korea to abandon its missile defences indicates, other countries in the region can resist pressures from China when their interests diverge.

For its part, Australia is discovering that its paramount China challenge is not a few thousand nautical miles away in the South China Sea. It is right here at home.

So, what do we do about it?

The political class needs to take a set of decisions in the interest of Australian sovereignty, in the interest of Australia's independent policy, to restrict and limit foreign influence in Australian decision making.

Pressure is building not only

for transparency, but also for significant law reform.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Attorney-General George Brandis have initiated a comprehensive review of Australia's espionage and foreign interference laws.

This review is vital, as these laws seem flimsy and outdated.

It is essential to define what about foreign interference counts as criminal, what is more in the realm of unacceptable diplomatic practice, and what is merely a side-effect of the many benefits of global and regional connectedness.

On donations, it seems obvious that we need to get foreign donations out of our political system. Both major parties (and indeed the Greens) have committed to the idea, and the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters has looked closely into it.

Again, this needs to be a negotiated, bipartisan solution.

It is essential to define what about foreign interference counts as criminal, what is more in the realm of unacceptable diplomatic practice, and what is merely a side-effect of the many benefits of global and regional connectedness.

There is a rare opportunity now for consensus on this much-needed reform, in the interests of national security, credibility and self-respect.

Foreign interference in Australia is not solely a national security issue.

It is a fundamental test of Australian social inclusiveness, cohesion, equity and democracy that we ensure all in this country have freedom of expression, freedom from fear and protection from untoward intervention by a foreign power.

So far, 2017 has seemed a bruising year for Australia's links with China.

But rather than a crisis, this is a long-overdue reality check, from which a healthier and more sustainable relationship can emerge.

What we are really seeing in Australia is a new maturity in relations with China, moving beyond the base motivations of fear and greed that have too often distorted our national conversation about one of the world's great civilisations and powers.

The new China narrative is informed by Australian sovereignty, confidence and vigilance – and an aspiration to build a durable relationship grounded in non-interference.

Now the Australian political class is much more willing, more so than even a year ago, to draw the line about unacceptable levels of foreign influence.

The challenge now is to avoid complacency. This problem is now out in the open. But it is far from over.

Professor Rory Medcalf is currently the Head of National Security College at the Australian National University. He was the Director of the International Security Program at the Lowy Institute from 2007 to 2015. Prior to that, Professor Medcalf was a senior strategic analyst with the Office of National Assessments. To read more visit: [goo.gl/XGAaH7](http://goo.gl/XGAaH7)





PHOTO: ZIPEI XIA

## Party Time: It's About Values, Not Race

JAMES LEIBOLD

We need to stop speaking about 'Chinese influence' in Australia.... Our focus, in contrast, should be on any meddling by the Chinese Communist Party and its often shadowy organs in our society.

Over the last year we have been engaged in a frank, and at times contentious, debate over 'Chinese influence' in Australia. Some would have us believe that 'Chinese values' are different from those espoused by most Australians. In other words, that race and culture predetermines our beliefs, opening the way for a unique 'China model'.

This model will be on display next month when delegates of the 86 million-member Chinese Communist Party gather in Beijing for its 19th Party Congress. Here Xi Jinping, the leader of this authoritarian Party-state system, will remind his citizens that the Party's dream is China's dream, and call on people of Chinese ancestry, regardless of where they live, to work towards the great revival of the Chinese race.

Xi and other Chinese Communist Party leaders frequently appeal to racial ties when calling on the overseas Chinese to actively contribute to this venerable mission. In June, Premier Li Keqiang told overseas Chinese business leaders that 'the Chinese race is a big family, with the sentimental attachment to one's country, motherland and ancestral home surging through the veins of every descendant of the Fiery Emperor and Yellow Emperor'.

The Communist Party speaks of a strong and wealthy China, one where the authority of the party is beyond question. In Xi's China, citizens are prohibited from discussing seven 'false ideological positions,' including universal values such as freedom, democracy and basic human rights. The media is told they must 'reflect the Party's will and

safeguard the Party's authority,' while citizens are blocked from freely surfing the internet for ideas and values that might contradict the Party's view, or threaten its rule.

Yet the desire for freedom, equality and justice are not limited to a single country or race. In 1948, the Chinese educator Chang Peng-chun helped to draft a core set of universal values, which were debated and then endorsed by forty-eight countries across the globe, including culturally and racially diverse countries like Australia, Egypt and China, in the form of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Many of these values – such as freedom of speech, assembly, and religion – are enshrined in the Constitution of the People's Republic of China. Yet, in Xi's China, these rights are frequently violated, with constitutionalism now defined as one of the seven forbidden topics.

The values of the Chinese Communist Party – not its people – are incompatible with these universal truths. There are many Chinese supporters and defenders of these rights, including Australian academic Feng Chongyi, jailed Hong Kong student leader Joshua Wong, Taiwanese activist Lee Ming-cheh, and the over 360 human rights lawyers and activists detained or imprisoned on the Chinese mainland over the past two years.

The Australian National University strategist, Professor Hugh White, claims, 'China's values are very different from ours,' while suggesting that Australia might need to negotiate its own rather 'vague' values if we want to live

peacefully with an increasingly powerful China. Others, such as the wealthy businessmen Huang Xiangmo feel 'malignant tumors' of racism and McCarthyism runs throughout Australian society, making it hard for Australians of Chinese descent to contribute to the political process.

When discussing 'Chinese influence' in Australia, the race issue is always lurking in the background, and needs to be addressed head-on.

First, we need to acknowledge the long history of racism in Australia as it relates to people of Chinese heritage and other non-whites. The White Australia policy continues to casts a long shadow despite the successes of our multicultural society today. We must openly acknowledge this past and work to ameliorate the structural racism and inequalities that still mars our society today.

Second, we need to include more Chinese voices in our conversation about the changes re-shaping Australia, and many of the serious issues our country currently faces. At present, white male voices (like my own) still dominate the public discourse. We must actively encourage, even legislate for, more participation by women and non-white men in our public life. If we really espouse a universal set of values, all elements of Australian society need to help articulate them.

Finally, we need to stop speaking about 'Chinese influence' in Australia. The over one million residents of Chinese ancestry are part of the rich fabric of Australian life. They have long made significant contributions to our growth and prosperity. Our

focus, in contrast, should be on any meddling by the Chinese Communist Party and its often shadowy organs in our society. Our small democracy can ill afford to have Party operatives and their allies tell us how to think and act.

Our economic dependence on China and the growing economic clout of the Chinese Communist Party puts Australia in a tight spot. We cannot turn our back on China. Rather, we need to work closely with those who desire a more open, free and tolerant China, regardless of where they reside.

At the same time, we must be willing to say no: to stand up for these universal values even if it hurts our economic bottom-line; to defend those values that Nobel Laureate Liu Xiaobo was willing to die for. Moral relativism can end in a cul-de-sac of delusion and tyranny.

The alternative is life in a place like Xi's China where freedoms are circumscribed in the name of stability, and one's dreams are monitored by an authoritarian Party-state.

Moral relativism can end in a cul-de-sac of delusion and tyranny.

*James Leibold is Associate Professor in Politics and Asian Studies at La Trobe University. These are his personal views and do not represent those of his university. Dr Leibold's work can be accessed at: [goo.gl/ZY7Tt3](http://goo.gl/ZY7Tt3)*

## Growing Influence: Silent Changes in Our Community

As a Hong Kong expatriate living in Australia for more than 30 years, I have witnessed the infiltration of the Chinese Communist Party. In 1979, when I migrated to Australia, the Chinese communities were very simple and almost all the immigrants were from Hong Kong and Guang Dong province. These communities had little connection with the Chinese Communist Party at the time.

### Changes in Chinese community organisations

I worked in Hong Kong from 1985 to 1990. Upon my return to Australia in 1990, the democratic movement that began in China in 1989 was reaching its peak, and its influence was spreading overseas. A lot of Chinese nationals visiting Australia requested permanent residency due to this movement; all of them were against the Chinese Communist Party. This was confirmed when, in 1993, the Chinese Migrant Welfare Association conducted a survey of 2,000 Chinese students which revealed that 98% of respondents thought the Chinese Communist Party was not reliable. This as a sign of popular sentiment at the time.

However, things changed as time passed. A small number of those who had expressed anti-Chinese Communist Party sentiments and were granted permanent residency by the Australian government then tried to create disharmony within the Australian-Chinese communities.

Many well known Chinese community organisations, such as the Chinese Migrant Welfare Association, the Australian Chinese Community Association, and Chinese Youth League Australia started out as normal functioning community organisations. I was a member of the Australian Chinese Community Association in 1990. These organisations had nothing

to do with the Chinese Consulate at that time. Later, the Consulate started to invite members of the Australian Chinese Community Association for dinner. This is one of the ways the Chinese Communist Party infiltrate these Chinese community organisations. The influence the Consulate had on these communities was remarkable. Before the interference by the Chinese Communist Party, association members were all eager to help people, especially the elderly and the needy, because they felt they could contribute to the broader society this way. However, the culture has shifted significantly and current members have also been swapped to those who are agreeable to the Consulate. The influence by the Chinese Communist Party in the Chinese communities is increasing with each year that passes. For example, in attempting to rent a room for a forum to discuss Hong Kong's 10 year return to China (1997-2007), I tried to persuade the Chinese Migrant Welfare Association for two hours, without success. I was so disappointed, but I understood their hidden intentions in denying my request.

Nowadays, a lot of people no longer participate in community activities or events, especially forums for differing viewpoints, such as the 6.4 Commemoration event, which had very poor attendance. Those who did not go are among those who were previously persecuted by the Chinese government; but now many of them are willing to hold the flags of the regime to welcome Chinese Communist Party officials visiting Australia.

### Influence on Australian Immigration Department

In 2006, the majority of refugees at Villawood Immigration Detention Centre (IDC) were Chinese-born; many had fled the country due to the Chinese Communist Party's crack-down on religion and Eastern spiritual traditions. Among those persecuted were

Falun Gong cultivators and those of the Catholic faith. At the time, it came to light that external Chinese people had been granted special privileges at the Detention Centre, such as having access to the refugees for questioning. When this came to light, the Immigration Department was called to account. A request was made of the Department to expound on the identity and legitimacy of this breach of its responsibility to protect the vulnerable in their care.

In time it became known that those Chinese people were officials working for the Chinese Communist Party, and they represented the Chinese government when they met with the refugees. This is still a little-known fact; yet through the court of law here in Australia, all those who had been interviewed in this way were eventually granted permanent residency based upon this breach by the Australian government. The lawyer representing these refugees reported that the Immigration Department approved a request from the Chinese Communist Party to interview every Chinese refugee at Villawood IDC. This clearly violates Australia's international human rights responsibilities, as those refugees were pleading for protection from the Chinese Communist Party in Australia. This transgression was felt by the broader community. It was exasperating and extraordinary in its contradictions – even more so because it happened right in front of us.

### Influence on Australia's education system

It seems certain that the Australian government has been infiltrated by the Chinese Communist Party, and not just when it comes to refugees. The Chinese Communist Party's intentions run much deeper, and their tactics are broader and sometimes not readily identifiable. The Confucius



CHUN WING FAN

The Immigration Department approved a request from the Chinese Communist Party to interview every Chinese refugee at Villawood IDC. This clearly violates Australia's international human rights responsibilities.

Institute, for example, is a public education organisation with a strong presence in the Australian school system and an official affiliation with the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. Thirteen Australian high schools have opened Confucius Institute classes, and a similar number of Australian universities have created Confucius Institutes. The Canadian Parliament has already banned Confucius Institutes altogether – and this should certainly raise some alarm and cause investigation by the Australian government. In 2016, the Australian Department of Education and

Training advertised a position with the aim of promoting the Confucius Institute within the Department. The salary: \$150,000 p.a. It seems only reasonable to deduce that there must be a person in the Department of Education and Training whose purpose is to promote the Confucius Institute. And yet, it is uncertain as to why the remuneration would be so high. It seems that the Australian government may be accepting donations from the Chinese Communist Party to develop some of their projects. This is no different from endorsing the Chinese Communist Party's infiltration into our education system to influence Australian values.

### Influence on Australian-Chinese language media

Another point of contention is the Chinese media. Some Chinese newspapers in Australia are controlled by the Chinese Communist Party, and yet many people are not aware of this. Events that do not toe the Party line are routinely denied advertising space in these newspapers, even if we were willing to pay for it. One editor I spoke to admitted that they do a lot of business with companies that have connections with Chinese Communist Party departments, hence they are not able to accommodate different viewpoints.

Why have our Chinese communities changed in this way? I believe this is an important discussion to have, and that we should voice our concerns before things change too much more.

*Chun Wing Fan is a trained social worker and planner and is currently working for the Australian government as an analyst. Formerly president of the Chinese Migrants Welfare Association, 1992-1993, and a member of the Community Consultation Committee of Villawood Immigration Detention Centre, 2000-2010.*



To manage these risks our universities will need to reach out to alienated students, fix the failures of integration and improve their products.

PHOTO: YAN XIA

## Our Universities Are a Frontline in China's Ideological Wars

### JOHN GARNAUT

Universities... need to find a way to reconcile their scholarly values and principles with the political objectives of their dominant customer.

President Xi Jinping is returning politics to the commanding heights of Chinese education.

He's told teachers to "educate and guide their students to love the motherland, love the people, and love the Communist Party of China." He's rallied lecturers to "guard the party's ideology" and "dare to unsheath the sword." And, most challenging for us, Xi has made clear that his primary enemies are the liberal values that undermine his political system but underpin our own. "There is no way that universities can allow teaching materials preaching Western values into our classrooms," Xi's Education Minister explained.

The liberal values of freedom, equality and individual dignity are under greater strain in China than they have been for decades. The room for rational debate and open, evidence-based critical inquiry is shrinking. And the political rewards for blind patriotism – a racialised patriotism that conflates "the motherland" with "the party" – are high and rising.

The challenge for the democratic world is that Xi's deepening struggle against liberal values does not end at China's borders. To the contrary, Xi has been rebuilding and reinvigorating the old revolutionary machinery – core institutions like the United Front Work Department and its myriad platforms – to export his ideological battle to the world. "Overseas Chinese have red-hot patriotic sentiment," as Xi told delegates to the Seventh World Get-Together Meeting of Overseas Chinese Social Groups, early in his tenure.

The Communist Party's war against liberal values and its growing international reach presents Australia with challenges we've not seen before.

Last year the Ministry of Education issued new instructions to its counsellors at diplomatic missions around the world: "Build a multidimensional contact network linking home and abroad – the motherland, embassies and consulates, overseas student groups, and the broad number of students abroad – so that they fully feel that the motherland cares."

And nowhere are the challenges greater than at our universities.

In recent months we've seen denunciations of Australian university lecturers who have offended Beijing's patriotic sensibilities.

A lecturer at the Australian National University was excoriated on Chinese language social media channels for "insensitively" displaying this warning – "I will not tolerate students who cheat" – in both English and Chinese. He was forced to issue a long apology for any implication that the offenders spoke Chinese.

A lecturer at the University of Sydney was castigated for using an online map of the world which, if you looked extremely closely, showed an Indian demarcation of the Himalayan border. The lecturer apologised after being found guilty by a WeChat group called Australian Red Scarf – which focused on the lecturer's Indian-looking name.

And then there was the convoy of Bentleys and Lamborghinis

that wound its way past Sydney University and UTS before revving engines outside the Indian consulate on August 15, India's Independence Day. "Anyone who offends China will be killed," said one of the car door slogans, quoting from China's biggest grossing film, *Wolf Warrior 2*. Racial chauvinism is only one of the challenges that Beijing is exporting to universities. Look at recent controversies involving Cambridge University Press and its experiment with mass censorship. Or the enormous private donations to Harvard. Or the attacks on a Chinese student for praising the "fresh air" at the University of Maryland.

Singapore has just expelled a prominent professor of international relations – a Chinese-born US citizen – because he allegedly "knowingly interacted with intelligence organisations" and "co-operated with them to influence the Singapore government's foreign policy and public opinion in Singapore."

This case has implications for the integrity of academic systems everywhere. The professor's work, for example, features on the cover of the current edition of an influential Australian university magazine.

There can be no doubting the pressure on universities to fill classrooms with full fee-paying foreign students, generate private donations, and rise up the research rankings.

But they will need to find a way to reconcile their scholarly values and principles with the political objectives of their dominant customer.

How should university

leaders respond to the Party's latest instructions to "set up party cells in Sino-foreign joint education projects" – as set out in an edict from the Ministry of Education cited by the Beijing-based advisory China Policy. The edict goes on to ensure that cadres are properly compensated for the time-consuming work of "monitoring the ideological orientation of young faculty [members] and overseas returnees."

The reputational and commercial risks for our universities are potentially enormous. And there will be new legal risks to navigate when the Prime Minister and Attorney-General deliver sweeping counterintelligence reforms later this year. Mr Turnbull has made clear that he does not look kindly upon countries seeking advantage "through corruption, interference or coercion."

To manage these risks our universities will need to reach out to alienated students, fix the failures of integration and improve their products. They'll need full-spectrum resilience strategies to shore up vulnerabilities and uphold the principles of open and critical inquiry which they are built upon. Most of all, they will have to look at what the Chinese Communist Party is doing on their campuses and do a better job of hearing what it says.

*John Garnaut is founder of JG Global. He was previously advisor to Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and principal advisor for international policy at The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. For more information visit: [goo.gl/Y2ivVg](http://goo.gl/Y2ivVg)*

### CHONGYI FENG

The core values we defend are universal values, including democracy, freedom, rule of law, equality and dignity, all of which play a foundational role for modern civilisation.

*The following is a translated extract from Professor Chongyi Feng's speech at the Resisting Chinese Communist Party Influence Forum held in Sydney on 15 July 2017 organised by the Embracing Australian Values Alliance.*

After the establishment of the Embracing Australian Values Alliance (EAVA), the question arises as to what are Australian Values and how they are defined. The core values we defend are universal values, including democracy, freedom, rule of law, equality and dignity, all of which play a foundational role for modern civilisation.

Since the Cold War period in the 50s, the Chinese Communist Party has exported its "revolution" and autocratic ideology to countries such as Vietnam, Laos, Malaysia and Indonesia. By the end of the 80s, we saw the collapse of the communist bloc as a world system.

However, there are still a number of remaining Communist states today, including China, North Korea, Vietnam, Laos and Cuba. The Chinese Communist Party is the leader of all communist autocratic regimes. They stop at nothing to expand their frontiers and create an environment in which communist autocratic regimes can survive. In Australia, apart from buying off politicians, the Chinese Communist Party has exerted enormous influence on Chinese communities. They have taken control of Chinese community organizations, Chinese newspapers, as well as a number of politicians, scholars and people in the arts sector, so that they can form an extensive united front to defend the ideology exported overseas by the Chinese communist regime. The aim is to gradually change Australia's culture and politics, and to create an environment for the Chinese Communist Party's expansion of influence.

In theory, Australia is a multi-cultural society, but we must not fall into the trap of cultural relativism or moral relativism. If we uphold human rights,

should we be tolerating those who violate human rights? If we believe that democracy and freedom are righteous universal values, should we be tolerating autocracy, class differentiation and special privileges (enjoyed by Chinese Communist Party high-ranking officials)?

I see Chinese people, arriving in Australia after overcoming numerous difficulties, still living in the shadow of autocratic ideology. Whilst enjoying freedom here, they are also benefiting from the economic growth in China, filling their pockets with money. Many feel proud to share in the glory of the Party. Can they even discern the difference between China and the Chinese Communist Party? Meanwhile, those who are calling for freedom for the Chinese people have been ostracised by the Chinese community here.

There is a huge difference in attitudes from when I first came to Australia – there were large numbers of diaspora in the Chinese community who participated in pro-democracy activities. These people were treasured by universities, appointing them as heads of departments or involving them in various social activities. However, with the creeping influence of the Chinese Communist Party, these diaspora have gradually been marginalised in the last ten years and considered as negative assets, as institutions worry that their dealings with China will be adversely impacted.

In the Chinese community, the initial establishment of community and townsman associations were to help fellow or senior Chinese people through various difficulties. Responsible to the members, they worked together and helped each other. However, gradually these organisations have become running dogs of the Chinese Consulate, and their associations have also become an extension of the Chinese communist regime. The target of their services is no longer their fellow Chinese or senior people, but the Chinese Consulate.

These associations fall over each other trying to present themselves to the Chinese Consulates for favours, including the three associations mentioned by former Chinese diplomat Chen Yonglin: Australia Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China, NSW Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China and Sydney Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China. If one becomes the president, deputy president or member of a council, he would be acknowledged by the Chinese Consulate. Despite some overseas Chinese community leaders holding the same views as the Chinese Communist Party, many more behave this way for self-interest.

In our China political studies and research, we found the Chinese Communist Party regime to be a very peculiar monster. If we follow the communist regimes during the Cold War period which I mentioned earlier, their first slogan would be to eliminate capitalism. But now, the entire Chinese Communist Party regime is parasitic on capitalism and cannot keep away from it. China has combined communist ideology with the worst capitalism in the 19th Century and, as a result, the Chinese Communist Party is destroying the environment without restraint and try to make money at any cost; they do not have to care about extremely poor working conditions and are able to keep the wages very low while disallowing any dialogue with workers' unions. Of course these unions are also controlled by the Chinese Communist Party. They have used this method to create so-called efficiency and high profits.

The entire Western world has been dragged into the Chinese Communist Party's game. In the 80s, only a number of surrounding regions or countries, such as Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan, moved their manufacturing industry to China, because labour was cheap and they were offered

benefits such as free land and tax benefits. Later, the USA, Europe and Australia also moved their manufacturing industries to China.

When I first came to Australia, there were still many local garment factories, plastic manufacturers etc., but later they all disappeared, with most of them moving to China or Vietnam.

When Western manufacturing industries moved to China, vested interest groups united with the Chinese Communist Party regime to create a "myth": Neither Australia nor Japan, nor the Western world can do without China.

In fact, the 50s through to the 70s was a golden period for the Western world, with steady developments in all areas, including medicine and education. The Chinese Communist Party regime had never participated in the world market at that time. How could it be then, that no one could do well without China?

Why do we need to pay attention to Australian values (universal values) in this day and age? Because the existence of our humanity has a foundation based on values, without which we would not be humans.

Some local Australians and the younger generations have grown up in a privileged society where freedom and democracy are readily available to them from birth; therefore they do not value these as much, with some even being critical of having a democratic government. Together with our politicians, if we do not face up to the Chinese Communist Party regime and recognise their denial of human rights and suppression of the people, we will gradually forget these precious values. We would be walking a very dangerous path if consideration were only given to financial benefits, and that is why it is very important for us to establish Embracing Australian Values Alliance.

*Chongyi Feng is an associate professor in China Studies at the University of Technology Sydney.*





PHOTO: EMILY ZHANG

## Interference with Academic Activities in Australian Universities

JINJIANG  
ZHONG

In Australia, the Chinese Communist Party's activities are not limited to infiltration; the red tide of the Chinese Communist Party has also had a serious impact on our lives as well as social activities.

We often hear about the Chinese Communist Party's overseas infiltration. In Australia, the Chinese Communist Party's activities are not limited to infiltration; the red tide of the Chinese Communist Party has also had a serious impact on our lives and social activities. Their actions aren't limited to quiet manipulations behind the scenes. Rather, we feel that our lives here are being seriously affected and blatantly disturbed.

During the early 2000s, I studied and worked at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS). During my time there, I would often organize various forms of activities through the university. There are many examples of the Chinese Communist Party directly interfering with our academic activities on campus. I will give two examples here.

### Example 1:

In 2003, the Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China (ACPPRC) organised a relatively large event in Sydney. From what I heard, they spent 300,000 Australian dollars to invite former US President Bill Clinton to make a speech. Our democratic-movement organization also invited Wei Jingsheng from the United States. I applied through UTS to book a room to host Wei's speech and my colleague Peter helped with this application. Peter was a Cambridge University graduate and an associate professor at UTS.

One day after the event, Peter sought me out. He seemed anxious. He asked me what the hired room was used for. Although I tried to remain low-key, he still knew my involvement in the pro-democratic movement and was willing to help. But he was nervous. He said, "It is likely that I may lose my job." I asked him, "What is the matter?" He said, "Someone called me this morning from the Dean's office, enquiring about the details of the activities which took place in that hired room." I immediately gave him detailed information about our activities since the university was investigating into the matter.

We later heard that following our activity, the Chinese consulate had made a phone call to the university protesting the activity and Wei Jingsheng's attendance. The university was quite nervous as the following day the engineering college was to meet a six-person delegation from Beijing to discuss an Olympic Games-related project. The Chinese Communist Party wanted to introduce the technology from the Sydney Olympic Park solar energy facilities in anticipation of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and the university feared that our seminar would jeopardise their business deal with the Chinese government.

From this example, it became obvious that the Chinese Communist Party was directly interfering with Australia's free society through its business opportunities, even extending

to hiring rooms for a small scale seminar within universities.

### Example 2:

In 2007, when dissident Chen Ziming made his first trip to Australia, our friends from the democratic movement invited him to conduct an open seminar in the name of our university. Having learned from my previous experience, I did not book a room free of charge through internal channels at the university, rather I hired a room in the name of an outside organisation.

As we were to advertise the seminar, I knew that once news of the seminar were to become public, the Chinese Consulate would try to intervene through the university. As a safeguard, I asked for a written contract and ensured payment for the room hire. I was afraid that once the Chinese Consulate began to pressure the university, the university would yield. Once I had signed a formal leasing contract, I advertised the seminar in a newspaper. I was now certain that no problems would arise.

The university feared that our seminar would jeopardise their business deal with the Chinese government.

However, I never expected the UTS Facilities Hire to call me to cancel my lease due to 'other activities' in the room on the same day. I immediately went to see them, and asked them what kind of activities were being held in that room. The man did not answer my question. I asked him if the Chinese Consulate had called, he said that he couldn't comment.

It became quite obvious that after the advertisement of our activity, the news of Chen Ziming and Wang Juntao's intended visit to the university became widespread. The Chinese Consulate immediately tried to intervene. I showed the Facilities Hire the signed contract, telling them that the advertisement was placed, people were informed, and they were thus not able to compensate my loss. Due to my resolute attitude, the seminar was able to proceed as planned.

However, the university was still uneasy. The staff member who had leased the room to us seemed anxious. He attended on the day of the seminar to ensure that our activity proceeded smoothly.

The above are two examples of how the Chinese Communist Party is openly interfering with academic activities in our universities.

Dr Jinjiang Zhong holds a PhD in Electrical Engineering and is a PhD candidate at Cambridge University in Chinese Economy and Management. He is currently the Chairman of the Chinese Alliance for Democracy and the director of China Transformation Study Institute (Australia).



MERRIDEN  
VARRALL

This importing of Chinese academic culture has potential to disrupt the openness and critical analysis valued in Australian universities.

PHOTO: YAN XIA

## Chinese Students Aren't Simply Tools of the Party-State

Many Australians are becoming increasingly concerned about China's growing influence in their country. Media reports such as the Four Corners/Fairfax joint investigation aired in June this year argue that Chinese money is being funneled into our political processes. Others show that Chinese state-run newspaper inserts are promoting the official Chinese view on local and regional issues. There is also coverage about Chinese companies buying Australian farmland and natural resources.

This anxiety extends to Australia's universities, where, according to some media reports, Chinese "embassy stooges" monitor and report on Chinese students who fail to toe the Party line.

Concerns about spying within universities reflect the more complicated matter of how mainland Chinese students approach their academic life in China, and how that may be subtly being transferred to their Australian education.

With almost 150,000 Chinese students currently studying in Australia, up from some 125,400 in 2016, this importing of Chinese academic culture has potential to disrupt the openness and critical analysis valued in Australian universities.

In 2008-9, I taught international relations to undergraduates at a Chinese university in Beijing. My teaching approach drew on my own experience at universities in Australia and Europe. I structured the course so that students were given weekly readings which we would discuss together in class.

My time teaching in Beijing gave me a window into Chinese students' attitudes and behaviour. One thing that particularly struck me was the tendency for students to align themselves with the Chinese

government view.

When I began teaching, I was not given any guidance or warnings about the topics I could cover in the classroom, or the way I should teach. But throughout the year, I was given strong hints that my approach was inappropriate.

For example, at my midyear review, I was advised by my department leadership that my approach of "trying to teach through rumor and hearsay" was unsuitable. When I refused to change my methods, I was told that I would not receive my bonus and that my contract would not be renewed.

Those warnings came not only from the administration but from the students themselves.

On several occasions, my students – always very respectfully – suggested I use a different style of teaching. They did not like sitting in a circle and discussing ideas. They told me they would prefer a lecture-style format where I "drew on my expertise" to teach them what was necessary for them to know.

Overall, many of my students were uncomfortable with my approach to teaching, based as it was on critical analysis and picking apart expert opinion. This was particularly true for readings and class discussions that could be construed as critical of China.

Most students, for example, would reject any suggestion that China had not always been, and would therefore always be, peaceful. The majority would react angrily to anything implying that Japan was not an inherently aggressive and expansionist country.

Some students did tell me in private that they were afraid to express their real views in class. They said that they feared their peers would report on them and that they would receive a black mark on their record, if not now,

then some time in the future.

Those students who did engage in critical discussion were usually shut down by classmates who stuck firmly to the standard officially-accepted line.

In one session, two students gave a presentation that painted the Japanese in a negative light. One of their classmates wondered aloud whether Chinese people still needed to hate Japan. Another suggested that China may also publish textbooks with self-serving interpretations of history, as Japan does. Outrage erupted. One student furiously accused the two of "not loving China enough."

Students from mainland China tend to bring their learning experiences and preferences with them when they come to Australian universities.

In Australia, some Chinese students have said they fear speaking up in class because they worry their compatriots will report them to Embassy authorities. Some students ask to be placed in tutorial groups without other Chinese citizens so they can speak openly.

The recent ABC-Fairfax report gave the example of Lupin Lu, head of the Chinese Students and Scholars Association chapter at the University of Canberra. Ms. Lu said she would not hesitate to inform officials at the Chinese Embassy if she heard of Chinese students organizing, for example, protests against Beijing.

Sally Sargeson, an associate professor at the Australian National University, told Forbes magazine that every Chinese student she asked about this problem "said they know they are being monitored and adjust their speech so they will not get into trouble." It should be noted, however, that several Chinese students in Australia whom I

have spoken to say they have never experienced this.

The issue is a very complex one. When Chinese students self-censor or monitor and report on their peers, it is not necessarily because the Chinese state is bearing down on them. Rather, many Chinese students believe that speaking out against the officially approved view, on any topic, is inappropriate. Monitoring and reporting on peers who diverge from the party line is seen as the right thing to do. This does not necessarily mean, however, that they are automatons blindly following the Chinese state.

Universities have not adequately addressed this threat to debate and openness. Officials may be reluctant to take action because overseas students bring a lot of money to underfunded Australian universities. Because many Chinese students have internalized the importance of being aligned with official views, maintaining Australia's standards for free and open debate could be a challenge. There are a number of ways this situation can be addressed, the first of which should be for Australian universities to focus on understanding the problem in all its complexity.

*This is an edited version of an article first published in the New York Times on 31 July 2017. Reprinted with permission.*

Dr. Merriden Varrall is the director of the East Asia Program at the Lowy Institute. Before joining the Lowy Institute, Merriden was the Assistant Country Director and Senior Policy Advisor at United Nations Development Program, China. Merriden has spent almost eight years living and working in China, including lecturing in foreign policy at the China Foreign Affairs University and conducting fieldwork for her doctoral research. For more work by Dr Varrall, refer to: [www.loyyinstitute.org/people/experts/publication/merriden-varrall](http://www.loyyinstitute.org/people/experts/publication/merriden-varrall)

Many Chinese students believe that speaking out against the officially approved view, on any topic, is inappropriate.



# Chinese State Infiltration: The Inside Story



YONGLIN CHEN

China's thirteen-year-long campaign to win Australia's military compliance has succeeded.

*Its goal:* Strategic cooperation during conflict.  
*Its method:* Diplomacy and territory grabs.  
*The result:* Vast losses to security and pre-established international alliances.

More than ten years ago, as a diplomat with China's Consulate-General, I personally exposed the Chinese Communist Party's intrusion on Australia's sovereignty and publicly relinquished my post. In light of current media coverage of the same unresolved issues, I feel it important to revisit them again here. My hope is that all Australians will then be better equipped to resist the Chinese Communist Party's insidious influence and to safeguard their people and all that they value before it's too late. I see four broad categories of concern at play here: military/strategy, political, economic and cultural. The Chinese Communist Party has used these areas to intentionally corrupt Australia's character and those things that make us proud: our sovereignty, our democracy, our fair go ethic and our freedom of speech. And all this, for their own ends. It must be stopped.

## Military Infiltration: Stripping sovereignty

China's thirteen-year-long campaign to win Australia's military compliance has succeeded. Its goal: strategic cooperation during conflict. Its method: diplomacy and territory grabs. The result: vast losses to security and pre-established international alliances.

Although China has strategic partnerships with numerous countries, many Western countries have not really engaged in practical strategic cooperation with it. However, China has made significant progress in this respect with regards to Australia.

Communist China's strategic short-term goal has been to persuade Australia not to act on the US-Australia Security Treaty if there were ever war in the Taiwan Strait, and to encourage Australia to be more independent in its military and foreign policies. The US-Australia Security Treaty has been largely

marginalised, and even former Prime Minister Paul Keating has suggested that Australia should be more independent in its foreign policy.

We have seen this 'independence' play out already. In recent years, China has been in a territorial dispute with the Philippines to compete for marine resources and to strengthen its military forces in the Spratly islands and the South China Sea. The Philippines then filed a lawsuit to the International Court of Justice in The Hague for arbitration. China's presence in Darwin during this conflict has posed a great threat to the US-Australia alliance and Australian national strategy.

A Chinese-government owned company gained the lease of Darwin Port for 99 years. Darwin Harbour and Cairns are the two most important military bases in the north of Australia, as Australia has a natural barrier in the south and only a few neighboring countries in the north. Darwin Harbour is the most important passageway for foreign invasion, so whether in terms of traditional military strategy or modern strategy, the two harbours are extremely important as military bases.

It is thus very surprising that, when the Australian government and the Defence Ministry were consulted about the lease, they agreed without hesitation. However, when the media announced the deal, there was quite a big uproar in the Australian public. That a military base in Darwin Harbour could be so easily handed over is a fact that has touched the nerves of many Australian elites. They recognise that Australia's most important national security interests have been sold off.

Ninety-nine years is more than a lifetime for humans. This means that a whole generation of Australian people will not see the return of Darwin Port in their lifetime, or even the next one or two generations. For the Australian people, Darwin Harbour is no different to a sold

asset. What makes Australians even more astonished is that the leasing company Landbridge Group has a Chinese military background.

In addition, Australia's natural and energy resources would play a key role in providing steady supplies to China to guarantee its economic development for the next twenty years. China has already realised this fundamental goal. We can see huge amounts of resources, such as minerals from West Australia and South Australia, as well as large stretches of grazing land, have been purchased by Chinese government-owned enterprises and wealthy Chinese families connected with Chinese Communist Party power groups.

## Political Infiltration: Stripping democratic integrity

China has bought off many Australian officials and politicians, and the effect of such bribery has affected the normal operation of the Australian government – leading to policy and strategic mistakes. Both major parties in Australia are now seriously affected by political donations from China.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop was recently questioned in Parliament by Labor MPs as to why a company related to a Liberal Party political donor had set up a fund in her name titled 'Julie Bishop Glorious Foundation.'

The political donor in question is mining giant Sally Zou, who developed four mines in Australia and signed a 'potential \$100 billion' agreement with China National Gold Group Corporation on March 21, 2017. According to *The Australian*, Zou donated \$460,000 to the Liberal Party between 2015 and 2016.

Bishop admitted to meeting with Zou many times, but denied any knowledge of the Foundation. Labor backbencher Matt Keogh asked Bishop, "Does the Minister seriously expect the house to believe a Liberal

donor who she knows well set up a company in the Minister's name, the Julie Bishop Glorious Foundation, but never raised it with her on the many occasions that they met?"

On the other side of the political spectrum, former Secretary-General of the NSW Labor Party and Federal Senator Sam Dastyari has recently been revealed on ABC News as the key contact person for Chinese tycoon Huang Xiangmo.

Dastyari personally received money from Huang Xiangmo and so has the Labor Party. As a result, Dastyari spoke publicly in favor of China regarding territorial issues in the South China Sea, and what he said was in direct contradiction to the Labor Party's foreign policy and Australia's national interests. Foreign Minister Bishop accused the Labor Party in Parliament on June 13, 2017, saying, 'We now know that Senator Dastyari's about-face on the South China Sea had a price tag attached to it – indeed a reported \$400,000 was all it took for Senator Dastyari to trash Labor's official foreign policy position.'

Director-General of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), Duncan Lewis, has tried to address this problem, but to no avail. He issued a secret briefing to senior officials of the three major political parties in Australia, with particular concern about two migrant billionaires from mainland China: Huang Xiangmo and Zhou Zerong (also known as Chau Chak Wing), who had donated approximately \$6.7 million to Australian political parties. However, his warnings were ignored, and the parties have continued to accept their donations: The Coalition has received \$897,960 and the Labor Party \$200,000.

## Economic Infiltration: Stripping our goodwill

Lured by power-for-money, the former Australian Trade Minister Andrew Robb signed the China-Australia Free Trade



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Australia's natural and energy resources would play a key role and provide steady supplies in guaranteeing China's economic development for the next twenty years. China has already realised this fundamental goal.

Agreement (FTA).

The China-Australia FTA is beneficial to Australia in trade, however Australia has made several great concessions on national security and sovereignty: One is to allow a Chinese company to lease Darwin Harbour for 99 years; the second is to allow China's equity capital to invest significant sums in Australia's strategic industry, fragile agriculture and animal husbandry industries; and the third is to push Parliament to approve a bilateral extradition treaty. However, China and Australia have vastly different judicial systems and Australia would have to make significant concessions in jurisdiction in relation to the rights and interests of Chinese citizens in Australia.

The FTA brings with it many drawbacks: It allows China's elite power groups to gain profits from investments in Australia while Chinese farmers and herdsmen suffer a devastating blow. As China's agriculture and animal husbandry industries had already crossed their bottom line when China joined the World Trade Organisation, any further concessions made in the China-Australia FTA were seen as an opportunity for other countries to make the same requests of them and denied. Thus, elite power groups can make profits at the expense of the people, intensifying inequality and instability in China's rural areas.

At the same time, China's external military expansion and its intention to control Chinese citizens overseas is evident. Fu Ying, former Chinese ambassador to Australia, wrote a report to the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and made a number of proposals about the FTA negotiations in early 2005. She estimated China's economic loss yet emphasised that political and strategic returns were so great for China as to make it worthwhile. With this understanding, the China-Australia FTA negotiations were

initiated. They dragged on for ten years, and in the end, they put politics above economic gains and finalised the deal after Australia promised to make concessions in its jurisdiction.

The issue of the bilateral extradition treaty is another aspect of China's interference with Australian policies. When China's Premier Li Keqiang visited Australia, the Australian side promised to push the Parliament to ratify the bilateral extradition treaty, but many MPs, legal experts and academics believed that Australia should not sign this extradition agreement with China, because fairness and equality cannot possibly be guaranteed by combining the two judicial systems, and because it could be used by China to achieve its own ends. Australia is happy with the current arrangements in the bilateral judicial field so there is no need to sign any bilateral extradition treaty. Due to this strong opposition, Australian Prime Minister Turnbull eventually withdrew the proposal from Parliament.

## Cultural Infiltration: Stripping freedom of speech

The Chinese Communist Party controls freedom of speech in Australia through its Chinese language media, international students, and specially-created public education programs for Australian kids.

The Chinese media in Australia is equivalent to Hong Kong's largest Chinese language newspaper, *Sing Tao Daily*, which fully cooperates with the *People's Daily*, the official newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party.

Funded by ads from companies (usually extremely wealthy and Chinese), most Chinese media in Australia have become parasitic to the autocratic system of the Chinese Communist Party, even refusing to publish controversial topics for the Chinese Communist Party such as the June 4th massacre at Tiananmen Square or pro-democracy arguments,

for fear of bankruptcy.

Secretary-General of the Australian Defence Department, Dennis Richardson, warned before he retired that China was 'very active' in espionage, that its monitoring and coercion activities in Australia were equally disturbing, and that it did control certain Chinese media in Australia.

The Chinese Communist Party also control Australia's Chinese international students. In 2004 the Chinese consulate began to systematically register Chinese students and now own all students' contact details. In essence, all Chinese overseas students are placed under the 'protection' of the Chinese Consulate. Yet in fact, they need very little protection from the consulate because Australia has a very sound legal system in place.

When I worked at the Chinese Consulate, the Chinese Ministry of Public Security sent a notice to ask us to monitor local Chinese students so that they would not take to the streets. We felt very surprised, thinking: Australia is a country that allows free parades and assemblies, and yet the Ministry of Public Security in China told us to prevent such activities. My colleagues and I all felt it was a joke when we talked about the notice, and yet this way of thinking is typical in the autocratic atmosphere and environment in China.

In fact, every Chinese student association was set up by the Chinese Consulate, and they also hold their meetings in the Chinese Consulate. The Chinese students are very easy to control because they were all brainwashed in their formative years. They believe that loving the Chinese Communist Party is equal to loving China, and a lot of them are very happy to serve the interests of the Party.

The Chinese Communist Party also controls students through Chinese Government bureaucracy. For example, after students have graduated in Australia and want to go

back home, their graduation certificates must be authenticated and stamped by the Chinese Consulate; otherwise their certificates will not be recognised by Chinese employers.

The third method of cultural infiltration is in the classroom. China has established a number of Confucius Institutes in Australia and in recent years it has also set up numerous Confucius Classrooms in schools. It only needs to spend \$10,000 to get one going because most resources are provided by the schools themselves, including classrooms, teachers and relevant materials. It is extremely cheap for China to set up Confucius Classrooms in Australia. If we allow this to continue to happen, every school will have a Confucius Classroom, and this will be a very sad day for the Australian people, especially Chinese people in Australia. We do not need the Chinese Communist Party's agenda to be fed to our children. I came to Australia with a very important consideration in mind: I do not want my children to be brainwashed like I was. I do not want them to have to go through the long struggle to break away from the control of the Chinese Communist Party like I did. Not many people have the opportunity I have had: to leave.

My hope is that Australia will hold on to the things that make it great, and will truly value its sovereignty, democracy, fair-go ethic and the right to freedom of speech.

*Yonglin Chen is a former Chinese diplomat who defected in 2005 from his posting as the consul for political affairs in the Chinese Consulate in Sydney. Factors contributing to the defection, according to Mr. Chen, are the torture and death of his father during the Cultural Revolution, his witness of the Tiananmen Square Massacre and the persecution of Falun Gong by Chinese Authorities.*



# Australian-Chinese Living Under the Red Shadow



BAOQIANG SUN

In Sydney, there are now countless choirs and dancing troupes. Their underlying objective is to propagate the Chinese Communist Party's ideology among Australian society. Each performance had to be approved by the Chinese Consulate and undergo strict censorship.

Below is my personal experience that illustrates the pervasiveness of the Chinese Communist Party's overseas infiltration, including the monitoring and control of Chinese citizens overseas.

Not long after I arrived in Australia, I began working at a Chinese restaurant. Around that time, *Vision China Times* published "Female Shanghai Prisoner," a series of short articles based on my personal story. *The Epoch Times* newspaper also published an article I had written criticising the current social and human rights situation in China. Once, a fellow Shanghainese asked me curiously, "Why don't you use a pseudonym for your articles?" Amused by his question I burst into laughter and told him, "I even dared to use my real name in Shanghai, why should I use a pseudonym in Australia?"

My boss came to me one day and said, "A stranger came to the restaurant today and stealthily asked me whether Baoqiang Sun was working here. He was not a customer. You should be more careful."

The following week, my boss and her husband had a sudden change of attitude towards me. They said to me, "Please, we are simply running a business. We do not want to inflict any trouble upon ourselves." I understood that the Chinese Consulate must have somehow been involved. I had no choice but to resign.

I was previously a member of a senior tour group that used to gather in Sydney on Fridays. Having learnt my lesson from previous experiences, I did not casually disclose my name to others. One time, during a conversation, the tour guide

mentioned that she liked my articles. Another member of our tour group then responded, "Baoqiang Sun is sitting right beside you." Our tour guide looked at me, shocked. A few days later, the tour guide called me and murmured, "Someone in our group demanded that you be expelled." I repudiated, saying that our tour group should stay out of politics. I asked who was behind this decision. The tour guide told me, "she is very well connected, she hasn't worked a day since coming to Australia, and she is supported by some sort of fund under the Chinese Consulate. She has closely monitored everything you have said to our tour group, and she is pressuring me to expel you. I am under a huge amount of pressure because of you."

I told her that I thought it was unfair that the woman knew so much about me, yet I did not even know her name. The guide responded, "I won't tell you her name, no matter what. I should not have even called you. If my husband finds out, we'll have a big fight." She hastily hung up.

My husband and I used to sing with the St George Choir. The director of the choir was also from Shanghai. He was the victim of persecution by the Chinese Communist Party, so he had to run away, and came to Australia. After the Chinese Consulate took control of the choir, he became so obedient that even the songs written by him would be handed over to the Consulate for censorship. Every time we had activities, he would make comments such as that we had "such a good place for rehearsal, and it was all owing to Ms. X, please choose her as the candidate MP in the election," and he would make this heard by everyone. As a result, Ms. X

became the only option by the Chinese voters and the whole choir unanimously voted for her.

In Sydney, there are now countless choirs and dancing troupes. Their underlying objective is to propagate the Chinese Communist Party's ideology among Australian society. A friend of mine is a famous musician, and regularly performs in Hong Kong and overseas. He would regularly contribute to causes that helped prisoners of conscience in China. As a result, he became a victim of constant threats by the Chinese Communist Party and was told that if he continued his support, he would not only be prevented from going overseas, but also from performing with local choirs and dancing troupes. The Chinese Communist Party successfully silenced him.

A hospital located in a predominantly Chinese district leant our choir a meeting-room, ostensibly to enrich the life of its senior citizens. However its real motive seemed to involve ideological control over its residents. To illustrate, no Falun Gong newspapers were allowed into the meeting room. Each performance had to be approved by the Chinese Consulate and undergo strict censorship. The seniors in the photography club were all high-ranking officials in China. They received sizeable pensions from the Chinese government, while not disclosing this in order to receive welfare payments from the Australian government too.

The Sydney Chinese Zhi-Qing Association's (SCZQA) president became subservient to the Chinese Communist Party in order to further his business interests in China, allowing the SCZQA to come under full control of

the Chinese Communist Party. Their performances include nationalistic songs about violence and class struggle written during the Cultural Revolution, as well as communist-themed group dances reminiscent of China's Red Guards.

In order to protest and boycott the Chinese Communist Party-endorsed ballet *Red Detachment of Women*, we drove over 800km to Melbourne. During this protest, a man walked over to us, sneering, "You only have a few dozen people to protest the ballet, yet we assembled 3000 Chinese people with one call-out to protest the South China Sea Arbitration." He swaggered off.

Needless to say, compared to the veiled propaganda previously employed by the Chinese Communist Party, the more recent tactics in infiltrating Western societies have proven more brazen and shameless. We must be vigilant. The Chinese Communist Party has utilised its enormous resources to infiltrate and occupy Australia, from political donations to Confucius Institutes, controlling Chinese students and Chinese communities, with the goal of undermining the universal values central to Australian democracy.

*Baoqiang Sun is a writer who was sentenced to 3-year jail in China due to her open criticism of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. She escaped to Australia in 2011 as a refugee.*

PHOTO: ZIPEI XIA



PHOTO: ZIPEI XIA



ADAM NI

An enduring Australia-China relationship cannot be built on trade and investment flows alone. In the longer term, this relationship needs to be based on mutual trust and respect for the liberal values that sit at the heart of Australian society.

## Against Chinese Illiberalism

The rising influence of the Chinese Communist Party in Australia is challenging Australian institutions, values and the way we live. This influence can and often does affect Australian political and economic deliberations and public opinion. It also manifests in the way that Australian governments, companies and public institutions behave in dealing with China.

When our political and business leaders stay silent in the face of Chinese violations of human rights, international norms or Australian interests, they are sending a clear message of acquiescence. Not only are they saying it is okay for China to act in a certain way, but the decision of acquiescence is changing who we are as a people and the values we espouse as a nation.

It is time for a frank conversation about Chinese propaganda and political operations in Australia. The stakes have never been higher. The cost of turning a blind eye to these operations carries detrimental consequences for Australia's national interests, social harmony, and democratic values.

What kind of beast is the Chinese Communist Party, and why should we be concerned about its rising influence in Australia? The Chinese Communist Party is the authoritarian regime that controls the most populous country in the world. The Party is powerful, corrupt, and accountable to no one but itself. It denies the basic human right of

freedom of speech, association, and religion to its citizens. It allows no independent judiciary and media, and very few independent civic organisations. The Party seeks to control everything through a combination of propaganda, brute force, and economic incentives. It crushes dissents with cruel efficiency when it feels threatened, and suffers no opposition to its political orthodoxy. This is the reality of a China governed by the Chinese Communist Party.

While China has done well economically in recent years, the regime continues to oppress its citizens through violation of their basic human rights. These are the rights that we take for granted in the liberal West, such as the rights of political participation, assembly, worship, and free speech. In fact, the freedom of thought and expression has shrunk significantly in recent years under China's current leader, Xi Jinping. This includes tighter control of media, universities and cyberspace.

The 'China Dream' espoused by Xi is a dream of a powerful Chinese state. It is a vision of material abundance, ideological conformity, and pervasive social control. In this dream, the rights and dignity of individuals are secondary to the glory and security of the Party-state.

These oppressive tendencies run contrary to Australia's openness, inclusiveness, and democratic values. China's illiberal values have no place in a liberal country such as Australia and we must be vigilant in the face of the increasing activity

The extensive reach of the party-state is silencing and intimidating alternative voices in the Australian-Chinese community that do not adhere to the Party line. This is unacceptable.

of the party-state on Australian soil.

Increasingly, Beijing is exporting its illiberal values and toxic nationalism to Australia through propaganda and political operations. In addition to allegations of interference through political donations by Party-linked businessmen, the Chinese Government is also expanding its hold on the Chinese-language media in Australia. It aims to silence dissenting voices in the Australian-Chinese community and use it as a leverage to shift wider public opinion and affect political deliberations in its favour. Sadly, most of the Chinese-language media have been pulled into China's orbit to a more or lesser degree because of economic incentives and pressure from the Party. The extensive reach of the Party-state is silencing and intimidating alternative voices in the Australian-Chinese community that do not adhere to the Party line. This is unacceptable.

In addition to controlling and censoring news media, the Party also tightly controls and censors social media platforms such as WeChat and Weibo. This means that Australian citizens using Chinese social media platforms in Australia in conversation with other Australians could be censored if they do not tow the party line. This extraterritorial censorship and content manipulation are counter to the free and open debates that underpin Australia's democratic tradition. What right does Beijing have to limit freedom of speech in Australia?

Why should the average

Australian care? Every one of us should care because Beijing's propaganda and political operations in Australia run counter to the liberal values underpinning Australia's democratic society. Each time we acquiesce to Beijing's bullying and decide not to speak out against China's violation of human rights and international norms, we are helping to feed the fire of illiberalism. Each time we stay silent when Beijing violates the rights of an Australian, our freedom as a people is diminished. By staying silent, we are turning away from the liberal values that sit at the core of the Australian way of life.

What can we do about it? We should clearly point out Beijing's abuse of Australian hospitality and its discrimination of the Australian-Chinese community through censorship and attempts at political control. We should speak out with a loud voice. Our choice to speak out against Beijing's illiberalism is not without cost. In fact, it may well have very real economic and political costs for Australia. But an enduring Australia-China relationship cannot be built on trade and investment flows alone. In the longer term, this relationship needs to be based on mutual trust and respect for the liberal values that sit at the heart of Australian society.

*Adam Ni is currently researching Chinese strategy and security at the Australian National University. He can be found on Twitter as @adam\_ni. The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and do not reflect the view of the Australian National University.*



# Our Future Is Shaped By the Freedoms We Uphold



JOHN  
DELLER

If as a nation, Australia focuses on an ethical and moral base for trade, and gives voice to the values of our democracy and way of life, despite protestations from a foreign power, then Australia may prosper on its own terms.

The recent ABC Four Corners investigation 'Power and Influence,' and accompanying reports published in Fairfax media have shed light on how the Chinese Communist Party is infiltrating Australia. In 2016 at a China Matters conference in Perth WA, Stephen FitzGerald, a former Australian ambassador to China, also noted that Chinese Communist Party-directed interventions in Australia are "challenging fundamentals of our system like freedom of speech and the media and enquiry, and the very validity of our political system."

This challenge to our freedoms in Australia is well-known to many Australians of Chinese and non-Chinese background who practice the meditation discipline Falun Gong (also known as Falun Dafa), since the persecution of Falun Gong began in China in July 1999.

It is not widely known that Falun Gong was initially supported by the Chinese government following its public introduction by Mr Li Hongzhi in 1992. The teachings of Falun Gong emphasize ethical behaviour, high moral standards, personal growth, and responsibility for one's own actions. In December 1993

at the Asian Health Expo in Beijing Mr. Li was awarded the Most Acclaimed Qigong Master award and in March 1995 Mr. Li was invited by the Chinese ambassador to introduce Falun Gong at the Chinese Embassy in France. In 1998 the State Sports Commission estimated that upwards of 70 million people practising Falun Gong in China, including government officials, officers in the armed forces, and university lecturers.

However, former Chinese Communist leader Jiang Zemin opposed the popularity of Falun Gong and its renewal of an ancient spiritual discipline in the Chinese tradition of "cultivation" or "self-improvement" based on the principles of truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance (*Zhen, Shan, Ren* in Chinese).

To support his campaign to eliminate Falun Gong, Jiang implemented a massive media operation to demonise Falun Gong to all levels of society throughout China.

In addition, Jiang also directed Chinese Embassy and Consular staff to spread the official anti-Falun Gong propaganda to government leaders and influential people throughout the world, extending the persecution outside of China.

## PRESSURE BY DECREE

This persecution extended to Australia. "Good relations" with China, including trade, were linked to Australia's acquiescence to the Chinese Communist Party's line on Falun Gong. This was emphasised in March 2002 during a press conference in Australia, when China's then Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan told Australia to refrain from supporting the activities of Falun Gong to preserve friendly and cooperative relations with China from being damaged in any way.

During Tang's visit, the then Foreign Minister Alexander Downer issued certificates to prevent Falun Gong protestors from having fixed or large banners across the street from the Chinese Embassy in Canberra. By August 2002, an Australian-based consortium had a contract to supply China with liquefied natural gas worth up to \$25 billion. The issuing of Mr. Downer's certificates did not cease until December 2006, after a legal challenge by Falun Gong practitioners in the ACT Supreme Court proved a success.

State Members of Parliament have also been directly pressured by Chinese Consulates in Australia to not have any contact with Falun Gong. In 2007, *The Age* newspaper in Melbourne reported that in August 2006 Victor Perton, a Liberal member of State Parliament at the time, had sent an email to all 128 state MPs, inviting them to a briefing on a report about allegations of organ harvesting in China. Within hours, the Chinese Consul-General in Melbourne, Liang Shugen, apparently had a copy of Perton's email. What surprised Perton was that one of his colleagues would send his email straight to the Consul-General and that the Consul-General then sent an email to all state MPs, pressing them not to attend the briefing.

In August 2015, the Sydney Morning Herald reported that the Chinese Consul-General in Sydney, Li Huaxin, had written to the president of the NSW Legislative Council, Don Harwin and asked him to forward the correspondence to all NSW MPs. The Consul General's letter described Falun Gong as a "downright anti-China group" and pressed MPs not to attend a briefing at NSW Parliament House on international human organ harvesting and trafficking. Nine State MP's, who had previously confirmed their attendance, then cancelled after receipt of the Consul General's letter.

In addition to being the representative body for Falun Dafa (Falun Gong) in Australia, the Falun Dafa Association is the local presenter of the New York-based Shen Yun Performing Arts on its annual global tour.

Shen Yun's efforts to revive China's traditional culture, which is in essence a culture of cultivation of one's inner self within the lineage of Buddhist, Taoist and Confucian teachings, has met with ongoing harassment from the Chinese Communist regime. This is because Shen Yun presents the spiritual depth of traditional Chinese culture which the Chinese Communist Party has sought to eliminate, and because Shen Yun was established in 2006 by artists who practised Falun Dafa.

The Chinese Embassy and Consulates in Australia also pressure Members of Parliament and theatre managers around Australia not to attend or accept bookings for Shen Yun shows.

In March 2008, *The Age* reported that the Chinese Consul-General in Melbourne wrote to Victorian politicians urging them not to accept invitations to see the classical Chinese dance performance *Shen Yun* and stated, "In view of the



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

good relations between China and Victoria it's my sincere hope that you will not attend the performance and will also avoid any future contact with Falun Gong and its affiliates."

In 2010 and 2014 the Chinese Consulate in Sydney issued press releases to other Consuls-General and NSW MPs titled *Facts about Falun Gong and the so-called "Shen Yun Performing Arts,"* deriding *Shen Yun* and labelling it a political tool of Falun Gong.

More recently, two Chinese Communist Party propaganda articles against *Shen Yun* appeared in the (paid) *China Daily* supplement in Melbourne's *The Age* newspaper on January 13, 2017.

## PRESSURE BY PROFIT

In addition to formal pressure from Chinese authorities, the impact of Chinese business tycoons with reported links to the Chinese Communist Party has been felt since the year 2000. The 2017 Four Corners-Fairfax investigation referred to secret briefings by ASIO's Director-General Duncan Lewis in 2015 to senior officials in the Liberal, National and Labor parties, warning them about accepting foreign-sourced political donations.

It is well-documented, even on Chinese Communist Party websites, that the Australian Council for the Promotion

of Peaceful Reunification of China is one of many overseas branches of the China Council for the Promotion of Peaceful National Reunification, which was established by the Chinese Communist Party Central United Front Work Department and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

Most Australians would not realise that the United Front Work Department has a high place within the Chinese Communist Party hierarchy under the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee. In addition to its role within China it is tasked with developing political and business ties overseas, and trying to influence foreign nationals to accept the Chinese Communist Party's views.

In an article in *The Conversation* in June this year, Associate Professor Feng Chongyi, of the University of Technology, Sydney, described the united front strategy as having two parts, "One is unity among friends under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. The other is the life-and-death struggle against enemies of the state."

Tragically, peaceful, meditative Falun Gong practitioners have been cast as 'enemies of the state' under the Chinese Communist Party's campaign to eliminate them.

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND POLITICS

In Australia, human rights are a legitimate area of political debate, and indeed a current focus with Australia's bid for a seat on the UN Human Rights Council in 2018. In China, only the Communist Party decides on matters of politics and labels any group that exposes its human rights abuses as an "anti-China political group."

Conflating the Chinese Communist Party with China, the nation and the people, is one of the greatest deceptions the Chinese government has committed against the long-suffering Chinese people.

Falun Gong practitioners care about the people of China and the people of Australia.

Over the past 18 years, we have learnt a lot about the machinations of the Chinese Communist Party, and we are seriously concerned that the Australian government has not fully understood the threat that accompanies engagement with the Chinese Communist Party and its envoys.

We acknowledge that in China there are good people who want to end the persecution of Falun Gong. How can Australia help? The same way Australia can help protect the people of Australia from a corrupting Chinese Communist Party influence.

Stop and consider what is

truly good in human life. If the sole focus is on making money we may end up rationalising any behaviour no matter how immoral it is, or who is hurt in the process. Consider the explosion of the billion-dollar organ harvesting and transplant industry in China under the Chinese Communist Party's control.

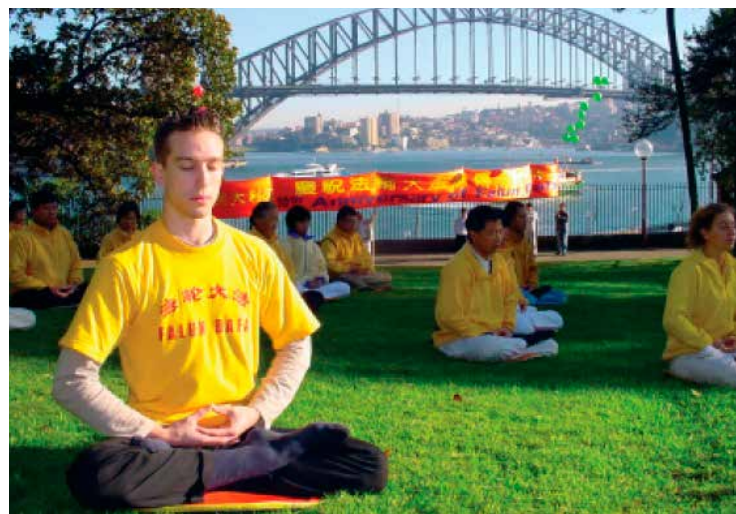
If as a nation, Australia focuses on an ethical and moral base for trade, and gives voice to the values of our democracy and way of life, despite protestations from a foreign power, then Australia may prosper on its own terms.

The human rights challenges facing Falun Gong practitioners, both in China and in Australia, are an important part of the conversation about how Australia-China relations will develop, and what sort of future Australians want for their country.

John Deller is the Honorary Secretary of the Falun Dafa Association of Australia Inc. For more information visit: [www.falundafa.org](http://www.falundafa.org)

To read the Investigative Report on the Control of Overseas Chinese and the Implementation of Global United Front Strategy by the Chinese Communist Regime: [www.upholdjustice.org/node/181](http://www.upholdjustice.org/node/181)

PHOTO: SUPPLIED







JOHN  
FITZGERALD

An enemy mentality designed to suppress dissent in China could, if Beijing got its way, undermine all societies that value dignity and freedom, and disarm the states that protect them.

## Human Dignity and Its Enemies

Liu Xiaobo wrote eloquently and often about ‘simple human dignity,’ just as he found it. And he found it in the darkest of places: in working with the grieving mothers of young people killed in the 1989 Beijing massacre, in occasional glimpses of warmth between guards and prisoners amid the grinding routine of prison life.

Liu died eight years into an eleven-year jail term for speaking and writing about the value of human dignity and the political and social conditions required for it to flourish. It’s true that he wasn’t a celebrated figure in his own country, as foreigners with close ties to Beijing point out eagerly and often. This could be because people in China do not care for human dignity. Or it could be because human dignity cannot be upheld or celebrated openly in China without provoking the indignation of the Communist Party and the fury of its public security agents.

Either way, Liu’s ideas, his life’s work and his recent passing have barely been noted in China’s party-controlled media. When they have reported it, the character of the coverage reinforces Liu Xiaobo’s message to the West.

Chinese reports of Liu’s death betray what he called an “enemy mentality.” They point to Western perfidy in awarding Liu the Nobel Prize and to duplicity on Liu’s part in allowing the West to make him, in the words of one critic, “a pawn in its game to undermine China,” designed “to tarnish China’s image on the world stage.” Nothing better illustrates the lesson Liu Xiaobo

wanted the world to heed in his lifetime than claims such as these, demonstrating the party’s hostile anti-foreign enemy mentality in the wake of his death.

Liu’s primary message for the West was this: An enemy mentality long perfected by China’s Communist Party to suppress China’s citizens has now gone global. Liu and other rights activists are branded domestic enemies of the People not because of anything they have done themselves but because of their alleged association with foreign conspirators. The liberal West is Beijing’s real and only enemy. Today, Liu’s simple message has been refracted and reinforced through Beijing’s grim and condescending reports of his death.

Those outside China who see Liu Xiaobo’s personal struggle for dignity and freedom as a remote Chinese affair should listen up. Far from conspiring with knowing enemies in the West, Liu Xiaobo was concerned that the liberal West had not an inkling of the enemy mentality that Communist officials were cultivating and propagating within China. An enemy mentality designed to suppress dissent in China could, if Beijing got its way, undermine all societies that value dignity and freedom, and disarm the states that protect them.

### “I have no enemies”

Reactions among Chinese overseas to news of Liu’s passing reinforce this message – including reactions among Chinese-Australian friends and Independent Chinese

PEN Center representatives. Censorship may have limited Liu Xiaobo’s impact within China but he is widely remembered among people of Chinese descent in countries where the press and social media allow them to publish as they please. Chinese overseas remember Liu for many things, including a naive attachment to principles at the price of his own liberty, but above all for his signature statement “I have no enemies.” Liu Xiaobo was best known for denying Beijing’s “enemy mentality” any traction in his own life.

Shortly after Liu’s death, roaming freelance writer Wu Qiang explained that the meaning of Liu’s “I have no enemies” statement lay in his “continued insistence on non-violent resistance and political opposition, despite being sentenced to eleven years in prison.” Liu’s signature statement made sense as “the only way to preserve space for political opposition in a highly authoritarian state.”

True, but Liu’s statement arguably does more than this. For a Leninist state, the most infuriating citizens are those who refuse to grant their self-proclaimed “enemies” in authority the privilege of recognition. Human dignity involves mutual recognition of equality, Leninism mutual recognition of hostility. The politics of enmity that drives the Chinese government today demands mutual recognition among opponents: fierce denunciations on the one side, cowering admission of guilt on the other. Only with

highly visible foes can a self-appointed single-party state claim a mandate to mobilise and represent the People in their never-ending struggles with a spectral enemy. Who needs a Leninist vanguard party when there is no enemy? The citizen who stands up and says “I have no enemies” undermines not just the party’s style of politics but its raison d’être.

Today the Party is systematically silencing independent thinkers, lawyers, writers, academics, journalists and newspapers that draw attention to the party’s abuse of power, wealth and privilege. It attacks them as agents of hostile foreign forces and it parades many on TV where they are compelled to make abject public confessions of conspiring with hostile forces in the West.

All this is fabricated. In his lifetime Liu asked the West not to yield to such nonsense. In death his message takes on greater urgency.

Liu pointed out that China’s wealth presents new and grievous threats to liberal democracy through the application of what Liu called “cheque-book diplomacy” and economic leverage:

*International mainstream society must pay close attention to this reality: in its contest with the free world, the authoritarian Communist Party of China is already completely different from the traditional totalitarian Soviet Communist Party... It is not hard to see that, with its bulging wallet, the CPC regime’s cheque-*

*book diplomacy across the world has already enabled it to become the blood transfusion machine for other authoritarian countries – using economic and trade interests to divide Western alliances, and using large markets to entice and threaten Western capital.*

Liu was denied the right to speak, to write or to publish on the metastatic growth of this anti-Western enemy mentality during his final years in prison. In a way he didn’t have to. Over his final term of confinement, Beijing did his speaking for him. Abandoning all reticence, it openly declared unflinching hostility to the universal rights and principles that underpin human dignity and to those countries that would protect and uphold these rights. The outcome is a battlefield mentality in China that now pervades every field of public policy, directed most immediately against domestic critics within and outside the party, but no less threateningly against the “hostile foreign forces” allegedly conspiring to bring China down.

Liu Xiaobo’s warnings are not hyperbole. If we grant China’s Communist Party the courtesy of believing that it means what it says, then we are in for difficult times. Liu agreed. “It would be a mistake to take this hyperbolic language as empty talk,” he wrote. “Someday it could well be a basis for action.”

If Beijing means what it says, we need to listen carefully. We also need to speak up. The advantage Australia enjoys

The advantage Australia enjoys in dealing with a secretive, authoritarian and intrinsically hostile Leninist state is that Australian citizens can speak out openly, freely and courteously in defence of human dignity and freedom. Liu Xiaobo did so at the cost of his freedom and his life. It costs us nothing.

China is certainly not our enemy. Still, the Chinese Communist Party insists on regarding all who value human dignity and freedom as its enemies.

PHOTO: YAN XIA

in dealing with a secretive, authoritarian and intrinsically hostile Leninist state is that Australian citizens can speak out openly, freely and courteously in defence of human dignity and freedom. Liu Xiaobo did so at the cost of his freedom and his life. It costs us nothing.

How would Liu Xiaobo advise us to respond? Should we turn the other cheek, as he did, and declare, “We have no enemies”?

China is certainly not our enemy. Still, the Chinese Communist Party insists on regarding all who value human dignity and freedom as its enemies. Here too we could draw inspiration from Liu’s comments from prison.

*Let’s face it, the only way to live in dignity, inside this depraved society we inhabit, is to resist. That being so, to go to prison is really nothing more than to maintain simple human dignity, it’s really nothing to brag about.*

— Liu Xiaobo, “Letter to Liao Yiwu,” January 13, 2000

For those who have no enemies, one plausible way to live in dignity is to follow the path pioneered by Liu Xiaobo: to resist those who would make enemies of us.

*This is an abbreviated version of an article first published in Inside Story [www.insidestory.org.au/human-dignity-and-its-enemies/](http://www.insidestory.org.au/human-dignity-and-its-enemies/) Reprinted with permission.*

*John Fitzgerald is Professor in the Centre for Social Impact at Swinburne University of Technology.*



# Attempts to Divide the Australian Tibetan Communities



KELSANG  
GYALTSEN

Tibetans cannot be divided simply by using the same outdated Chinese Communist Party tricks and methods of winning over opportunists.



PHOTO: ZIPEI XIA

In 1959, after a massive uprising against Chinese Communist occupation of Tibet, Tibetans were brutally suppressed by its military forces. Under the leadership of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, the Tibetan government officials and over 80,000 Tibetan people escaped across the Himalayas and rehabilitated in exile in India, Nepal and Bhutan. The Tibetan government was then established in exile. Many Tibetans travelled even further, and today Tibetan refugees are scattered and rehabilitated in more than thirty countries.

The first Tibetan migrants into Australia arrived in 1972. In 1996, when His Holiness the Dalai Lama visited Australia, the Representative Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which is known as the Tibet Information Office (TIO), and Australian Tibet Support organizations negotiated with the then Australian Immigration Minister and subsequently the Australian government began to accept a few Tibetan refugees and their families under the Special Humanitarian Project (SHP) - an ongoing program. However, the Tibetan Government in Exile, with special consideration, prioritized this opportunity to those ex-Tibetan political prisoners and their families. There are currently about 2,500 Tibetans living in Australia with 1,500 in Sydney, 500 in Melbourne and the rest scattered in other cities.

Despite the small population of Tibetans in exile, our existence and solidarity, influence and good international standing are quite visible wherever there are Tibetan communities. This is mainly due to Tibetan people's unity and strong spirit of working towards Tibet's freedom, and love for our culture and nation. Despite bad conditions and low levels of education, the common experience of political torture by the Communist regime in Tibet makes us strong and determined. It is not easy for any

motivated outsider to penetrate and create disharmony amongst Tibetans in Australia by means of political donation or financial bribery.

So how does the Chinese Communist Party penetrate and divide the Tibetan community?

## 1. Threatening the safety of their families living inside Tibet

The majority of the families of Australian Tibetans live in Tibet. If Tibetans living in Australia participate in activities such as the Birthday Celebration of the His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the International Day of Human Rights, the Celebration of Nobel Peace Prize Day to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Tibetan Democracy Day and 10th March Uprising Day, it will affect their relatives in Tibet, their admission to work as Tibetan Civil Servant of CTA Dharamsala or their joining the army. Civil Service and Military Recruitment advertisements clearly state: "Those people whose immediate or subordinate relatives serving in Dalai group or participating in free Tibet movements, shall not apply."

## 2. Refusal to grant visa to visit one's family

The only way Australian Tibetans are able to visit relatives back in Tibet is to obtain a visa through the Chinese Embassy. There are three conditions for granting visas:

First, admitting wrongdoings: being deceived into participating in protests against China as well as escaping to India and later Australia.

Second, promising from now on not to participate in any political activities.

Third, do not join the Tibetan Community Association which is pro-Dalai, and do not give 'freedom donations' to the Tibetan Information Office. Some Tibetans were refused a visa because they teach Tibetan at language schools operated by Tibetan communities. In the case of couples, one was granted a visa

because they were Caucasian, while the other was refused simply for being in the photos with the Dalai Lama while he was giving public teachings and talks.

In the case of a failure to fulfill the above three conditions, many Tibetans have to give up on going back to their homeland to visit their parents, leaving behind huge regrets when their parents pass away.

## 3. Establishing pro-Chinese Communist Party associations

On 24 November 2013, a so-called Australian Tibetan Friendship Association (澳大利亚藏族同胞联谊会社团) was established in Australia. Initially the motivation was to forge mutual communication between the Chinese people and the Dalai Lama along with the Tibetan Information Office. However, due to being too intimate with the Chinese Embassy and organizing activities with other pro-Chinese Communist Party organizations, many Tibetans realise they have been deceived and misled and have already withdrawn. Although this very small minority has been disgraced in the Tibetan community, they are still quite active with the help of the Chinese Embassy in Canberra. The first reason is that the Chinese Embassy provides a lot of convenience for them. They can enter China freely and often attend events organised by the Chinese Embassy such as China's National Day celebrations. Secondly, if they want to apply for a Chinese visa, their applications will be approved with reference letters issued by the president of this so-called Australian Tibetan Friendship Association Paljor Tsering, and the vice-president Tinley Rinchen. Thirdly, they act as the propaganda channel of the Chinese Communist Party by publicising the three above-mentioned conditions for obtaining a Chinese visa.

Finally, after my arrival in Australia, I witnessed this Association's organization of two events. The first one took place in Dee Why on the July 10, 2016. It was the first Sydney celebration of Tibet's traditional Sho-ton Festival. I noted most VIPs were of Chinese Han ethnicity and from various Chinese community associations. Although news reported more than sixty Tibetan and Chinese participants, from the photos we can only see Chinese people dressed in Tibetan clothes.

The other event was the Tibetan New Year Forum which took place on March 5, 2017 in Sydney. Approximately ten Tibetans from all over Australia participated in this event. However, what we saw from the report is that apart from Changmao Wu, the President of the pro-Chinese Communist Party Australian Chinese Association, participants included Minister Wei Cai and Counselor Weiming Chang of Chinese Embassy, Vice Consul-General Xuejun Tong and Consul-General Can Wang of the Chinese General Consulate in Sydney. There were no mentions of any specific Tibetans attending this event. This shows that the event was not transparent, because even though there were Tibetans attending, they dared not publish it.

We are willing to talk with all Chinese and Chinese associations. We also know that Tibetan issues can only be resolved through meeting and dialogue between the Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and leaders of China. However, Tibetans cannot be divided simply by using the same outdated Chinese Communist Party tricks and methods of winning over opportunists, from people who make up less than 1% of the Tibetan community, to represent Tibetans under the guise of patriotism.

Kelsang Gyaltzen is the Chinese Liaison Officer of the Tibetan Information Office in Australia. To learn more visit: [www.tibetoffice.com.au](http://www.tibetoffice.com.au)



PHOTO: CAROLE LU



JIAZHEN QI

The Chinese Consulate is closely monitoring every activity of groups they label as counter to the Chinese Communist Party.

# Chinese Reporter Expelled During Australia Day Celebrations

In 2005, the Melbourne Chinese Federation held a luncheon in celebration of Australia Day. The Federation consists of over 50 Chinese sub-organizations. Among them is the Hainanese Association.

The luncheon was a lively gathering of over 500 guests. A few minutes before its commencement, Qin Xiao, a reporter from *The Epoch Times* newspaper, walked towards our table saying, "Helen, I'm leaving." Shocked, I questioned, "Why?"

"Secretary Zhang told me to leave immediately."

"For what reason?"

"Oh, it's better not to talk about this now," Qin answered hesitatingly.

At that very moment, a young man with glasses in his early 30s rushed over. It seemed that he was the Federation's Secretary-General, Zhang. He was quite aggressive, "I asked you to leave, why did you come here? Hurry up, get out immediately!"

I was still asking Qin for an explanation. Zhang was impatient and anxiously demanded, "Come on, leave quickly, if you do not leave, Consul Yang will get me into trouble!"

"Who is Consul Yang and what makes him so important?" I thought. Qin Xiao was very calm and left the event.

Secretary-General Zhang followed behind her, much in the fashion that Mainland police would escort prisoners. He stood at the stairs, and watched Qin

make her way out. This was the first and only time I witnessed a Chinese community leader act so rudely in public. Perhaps Zhang really had a background in the Chinese Public Security Bureau!

I quietly told my husband, Ian, what had unfolded. "They drove away the *Epoch Times* reporter."

I also informed the vice president of Hainan Association Qingqi Zhang (*Melbourne Daily* editor at the time, now deceased) of the scene that I had witnessed. After hearing my account, Ian looked displeased. He immediately stood up from his seat and attempted to leave, saying, "How can this happen here, this is Australia! While celebrating Australia Day, they're getting rid of reporters?"

I panicked, pulled Ian back and tried to calm him down, "Please sit down, Ian, we will talk after this finishes." The president of the Federation, Wenshan Chen, was giving a speech in fluent English, thanking Australia for allowing Chinese people to come here to enjoy democracy, freedom and a good life. He was also the president of the Hainan Association. He donated one of his houses to serve as a venue for the Association and had been very friendly to me, thus I was inclined to stay, out of respect.

However, Ian wouldn't listen to me despite my persuasion. Again, he tried to get up and leave, "Helen, I cannot stay here!" Breaking away from my grasp, Ian marched away with

angry strides past the podium where Chen was still giving his speech.

Out of respect, I did not want to make an early exit. My thoughts were to exchange views with him afterwards, but my husband had left so I decided to follow.

While I was walking pass the stage, a Chinese consulate official was speaking enthusiastically about how overseas Chinese can look to a strong Mainland for support. He must have seen me leave. I proceeded downstairs and walked out the door.

Ian was still outraged, "These people are taking advantage of Australia's freedom and democracy and doing things that are against freedom and democracy!"

I responded, "Yes. This should not have happened."

Ian continued, "I bet there are so many Australian-Chinese

who listen to the orders of the Chinese Embassy and Chinese Consulate!" These are irrefutable facts.

Later I learnt that on the day of the luncheon the Federation invited six guests from the Chinese Consulate in Melbourne. As soon as the VIPs sat down, they spotted Qin Xiao - the *Epoch Times* reporter.

Consul Yue'e Yang called over Secretary-General Zhang from the Federation saying, "Who should leave? Qin Xiao or the six of us?"

Secretary Zhang sought advice from president Wenshan Chen who decided, "Please ask Qin Xiao to leave of her own accord." Qin Xiao thus left "of her own accord." Consul Yue'e Yang also noted, "Jiazhen Qi is also here today. We are very unhappy with her. She has been very close with Falun Gong recently." "But she bought her own lunch tickets." She added.

I was shocked by how in the presence of over five hundred people, they could still recognise Qin Xiao easily, and even me - Jiazhen Qi, when I merely made one speech at a forum organised by Falun Gong. It must be that the Chinese Consulate is closely monitoring every activity of groups they label as counter to the Chinese Communist Party.

Jiazhen (Helen) Qi was sentenced to prison for 13 years during the Mao era. She now lives with her husband in Melbourne and is the author of a number of books including *The Blue Sun* and *The Black Wall*.





Picking apart what is detrimental to Australian values and what represents an alternative and inevitable facet of our deepening relationship with China can be demanding.

PHOTO: EMILY ZHANG

## Beware the China Alarmists Out There

LINDA JAKOBSON

We have probably glimpsed only the tip of the iceberg in our understanding of the inroads the Chinese government wishes to make into Australian society. As China's power grows we should be prepared for further attempts to wield influence.

The quandary over what to do about the People's Republic of China government influence in Australia has burst on to the political scene. For the past months there has been ongoing media commentary about the consequences of political donations by businessmen with Chinese connections; and a piece in *The Australian Financial Review* claimed that hundreds, if not thousands, of Chinese citizens in Australia are gathering information for Chinese authorities.

These are contentious issues, ones that cause unease within the government, among public servants and citizens at large.

China is not only Australia's largest trading partner and the source of growing foreign direct investment. Chinese-derived funds also support Australia's higher education sector, media organisations, research initiatives such as the Australia-China Relations Institute, and individual politicians and political parties. We have probably glimpsed only the tip of the iceberg in our understanding of the inroads the Chinese government wishes to make into Australian society. As China's power grows we should be prepared for further attempts to wield influence.

I have grappled with the sensitivities associated with Chinese influence in Australia since establishing China Matters, a public policy initiative, last year. We aim to inject nuance and realism into discussions about Australia's ties with China. Our goal is to advance sound policy. This week we convened 30 prominent

Australians to formulate policy recommendations on this issue.

Our board decided from the start that we do not accept money from People's Republic of China sources, either individuals or companies. China Matters relies on a mixture of Australian government and corporate funding. We sought membership in the Australian Charities and Non-for-profit Commission, which expects its members to make public their funding sources and operational costs.

China Matters, for the most part, discusses sensitive issues behind closed doors. This is to enable a frank exchange between people from different backgrounds and views without the sort of public uproar that has taken place following news reports of influence-buying by Chinese individuals and entities. Without doubt these cases serve as red flags. It is not in Australian interests to allow foreigners to influence the political process, nor should they be allowed to affect the curriculum at an Australian university.

But hysteria is not a response. These issues and the allegations associated with them risk tearing apart social cohesion and pitting Australians against Australians. The issues must be discussed and managed with common sense, an understanding of the facts and impartiality.

There are nearly one million Australians with Chinese ancestry. Close to a half-million residents in Australia were born in the People's Republic of China. There are 150,000 Chinese nationals studying here. No one should be allowed to stigmatise or implicate Chinese people on

the assumption that "Chinese" are on a mission for the People's Republic government. Anecdotal evidence suggests that members of diverse Australian-Chinese communities already feel they are being labelled by the tone of media reporting.

Others, in turn, feel squeezed. When people representing Chinese interests engage with Australian society, Chinese interests are often pitted against Australia's interests and values such as freedom of speech. They also call into question the essence of our political system while putting pressure on Australians of Chinese descent by appealing to solidarity among people who share a common Chinese civilisational heritage.

Obviously each case of influence should be examined on its own merits. Painting with a broad brush will only exacerbate xenophobic reporting and increase tensions among Chinese communities.

However, even picking apart what is detrimental to Australian values and what represents an alternative and inevitable facet of our deepening relationship with China can be demanding. When is a foreign official being manipulative? When is it part of what most diplomats do for a living, which is projecting a positive image of their country and its interests? An important first step is to demand transparency from Australian individuals and institutions, as well as from Chinese citizens and institutions that seek to influence Australian society.

We cannot lose sight of China's impact on Australian prosperity and the contribution of Australian-Chinese communities

towards a thriving multicultural society, while we must keep our focus on preserving the values that underpin Australia.

Black-and-white portrayals of China's interests are detrimental, whether overly positive or intensely negative. The insistence of the Australia-China Relations Institute that it takes "an optimistic and positive attitude" towards the China relationship is hardly a neutral starting point for unbiased work. In the same vein it is unhelpful that people at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute automatically assume actions in Australia by any Chinese state-owned enterprise is part of a strategic plan to gain influence.

There is no more complex but consequential challenge for Australian policymakers than getting Australia's relationship with China right. Nuance and realism, as well as perseverance and agility, will all be essential to navigate the maze of controversies of dealing with a society so different from our own.

This article originally appeared in *The Australian* on 23 September 2016 and is reprinted with permission.

Linda Jakobson is the CEO and Founding Director of China Matters. Her most recent book, written with Dr Bates Gill, is *China Matters: Getting It Right for Australia* (La Trobe University Press / Black Inc., 2017). From 2011 to 2013, she served as the Lowy Institute's East Asia Program Director. Before moving to Sydney in 2011, she lived and worked in China for 22 years and published six books on Chinese and East Asian society. For more information visit: [chinamatters.org.au/](http://chinamatters.org.au/)



JACKSON KWOK

Failure to understand these [diverse] perspectives, combined with sensationalist reporting, risks isolating the community and reinforcing the belief that they are a minority under siege.

## What Does China Say About PRC Influence in Australia?

On June 5, 2017, ABC's Four Corners aired a program investigating PRC government interference in Australia. The episode, titled 'Power and Influence: The hard edge of China's soft power', accused the Communist Party of China of attempting to infiltrate Australia's major political parties. Since airing, the controversial program has sparked a heated public debate about the nature and extent of PRC government influence in Australia. But how exactly have China's state media and Chinese-language news outlets in Australia covered this discussion?

Articles in the state-run *Xinhua News Agency* (新华社) and *People's Daily* (人民日报) referred only to the official statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which deflected any notion that the Communist Party was actively attempting to influence Australian politics. The ministry spokesperson described Four Corners' claims as 'unfounded, extremely irresponsible, and not worth refuting.'

The nationalist tabloid *Global Times* (环球时报) published an editorial which dismissed the Four Corners program as 'based entirely on speculation.' It also called on Prime Minister Turnbull not to 'humour this extreme and deliberately misleading report.' The editorial concluded that it was actually Western nations which were guilty of attempting to infiltrate China and interfere in its domestic affairs. Last week, *Global Times* reiterated this

position by publishing another commentary accusing Australia of spying on the Chinese embassy in Australia.

Closer to home, local Chinese-language news outlets are divided on how to approach the issue. Known for its pro-PRC position, the popular *Sydney Today* (今日悉尼) was relatively muted on the subject. It included no original reporting of the Four Corners program, nor did it run translations of articles from the mainstream media – its regular *modus operandi*. The only exceptions were op-eds by former foreign minister Bob Carr and Professor James Laurenceson from the Australia-China Relations Institute at the University of Technology, Sydney. *Sydney Today* instead relied on re-posts of PRC state media and links to official statements by Chinese Ambassador Cheng Jingye and the Media Federation of Australia.

Other Australia-based news outlets, however, have been more perturbed by the Four Corners episode. The independent *Vision China Times* (看中国) ran an editorial which warned the Chinese-Australian community 'not to be too optimistic about (their) future'. The article stated that the actions of a few had undermined the credibility and reputation of the greater Chinese community in the eyes of the Australian public. While diplomatic ties could be repaired through ministerial meetings and mutual economic interest, they warned that 'the pile of bills left by the storm of public opinion (would) be borne entirely by Chinese-Australians.'

Writing in the *Global Times*, an Australian Chinese scholar Xue Er was surprisingly critical of the two businessmen who featured in the Four Corners program – Dr Chau Chak Wing and Huang Xiangmo. Xue Er denounced Chau and Huang as 'political opportunists' who had sullied China's image. If their political grandstanding were to become mainstream, it would be 'detrimental to the Party, the country, the people, and even provoke pointless disaster upon the local Chinese community.'

Rather than engage in 'lazy, irresponsible and dangerous' patriotism that 'perpetuated suspicion amongst the local population,' the Chinese community needed to properly engage with the local discourse, Xue Er wrote. This would require 'establishing effective channels of communication with mainstream society, instead of simply taking to the streets.' Similarly, PRC government departments needed to realise that steady integration of overseas communities into their adopted countries was the true path to 'revitalising the Chinese nation.'

Though certainly not without its faults, the Four Corners program brought the critical issue of PRC interference to the forefront of public discussion. But it has also highlighted a clear disconnect between the Australian mainstream media and the Chinese-Australian community.

Rather than generalising, it is important to understand the various perspectives of a diverse and fragmented

Chinese-Australian community. A preliminary look shows that Australia's Chinese community is conflicted and concerned about the way the discussion is heading. Failure to understand these perspectives, combined with sensationalist reporting, risks isolating the community and reinforcing the belief that they are a minority under siege.

Recent coverage of the 2016 Census results – including alarmist headlines from major newspapers – has only served to reinforce this perception of persecution and exclusion.

Within the local Chinese-language commentary we can also see efforts to address this dilemma. In order to do so, the Chinese-Australian community must be able to engage in the wider debate taking place in Australia. This will require access to critical journalism in their native language. The prevalence of PRC state media and absence of critical Chinese-language journalism in popular domestic platforms such as *Sydney Today* are not conducive to mutual engagement.

The prevalence of PRC state media and absence of critical Chinese-language journalism...are not conducive to mutual engagement.

Jackson Kwok is a research assistant at China Matters. For more information visit: [chinamatters.org.au/](http://chinamatters.org.au/)







ELENA  
COLLINSON



JAMES  
LAURENCESON

Power only becomes influence when there is evidence that a target country has changed its stance or policy to be more in line with Beijing's preferences.

# Influence Creep?

## Australia Well-Equipped to Hold Its Own

Burgeoning trade, investment and people-to-people links have stirred debate about whether Australia has become vulnerable to Chinese government influence.

The Australian Trade Commission notes that the last time Australia had a bilateral trade relationship as significant as its one with China now was back in 1952-53 with the UK. Australia is second only to the US as a host country for large-scale Chinese overseas direct investment. And Mandarin is now the second most commonly spoken language in Australia behind English.

Yet in contemplating Chinese influence, Evelyn Goh, Professor of Strategic Studies at the Australian National University (ANU) makes a crucial distinction: there is a difference between power as resources and power as influence. As the world's second largest economy, and with the world's largest population, China plainly has resources. But power only becomes influence when there is evidence that a target country has changed its stance or policy to be more in line with Beijing's preferences.

Despite apparently having both the means and motives, a 2013 study of the effectiveness of China's economic statecraft by University of Sydney international relations expert James Reilly highlighted that Australia had not proven vulnerable to Chinese coercion. He returned to this conclusion this year in a talk to the Australia-China Relations Institute, stating, 'Beijing hopes to foster a domestic political climate in Australia that is supportive of Chinese investment and trade, something that China

actually has had a great deal of difficulty in doing in recent months. China is, I think, very unlikely to try to even leverage its economic influence in Australia through coercion and is even less likely to succeed.'

A survey of recent developments suggests this conclusion – that Australia has continued to be resistant to Chinese influence – rings true. Certainly, deepening links with China have not stopped the Australian government from vigorously supporting the US alliance or from criticising the Chinese government.

On the eve of his departure to deliver a keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore in June, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull declared that the Australia-US alliance was 'more important than ever.' This was despite murmurings from some prominent Australian voices about divergences in Australian interests and values with the current US administration. And in a leaked transcript of Prime Minister Turnbull's January 28 phone call with US President Donald Trump, the Prime Minister signed off with, 'You can count on me. I will be there again and again.' More recently, the Prime Minister said of the alliance in an August 11 interview, 'In terms of defence, we are joined at the hip.' He reiterated this in another interview on September 6, stating, 'Our alliance is absolutely rock solid. We confirmed and affirmed our alliance. We have America's back. America has our back. We are joined at the hip.'

Earlier this year in two major speeches to international forums

The point is obvious: When cases of nationalist agitation arise, Australian universities still possess the ready ability to preserve academic freedom.

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop enunciated support for a position where China's rise is balanced by an expanded US role in the Indo-Pacific region. She even delivered the blunt message that unless China embraced democratic institutions and habits it could not be counted upon to resolve disagreements in accordance with international law, nor could it hope to reach its economic potential.

It is true that Australia has permitted substantial Chinese investment in critical infrastructure such as electricity networks and ports. Critics have argued that the security vetting of these investments

has not been sufficiently rigorous or discerning, thus potentially undermining Australian decision-making sovereignty.

The 2015 sale of the lease to operate the Port of Darwin to a Chinese private company is used as their banner case. Yet a review into the Port of Darwin sale saw leaders of Australian security agencies rejecting wholesale the notion that there was any possibility national security could be compromised. In reference to claims that operating the port could facilitate spying by the Chinese state, then-Defence Secretary Dennis Richardson said, 'These issues, when you examine them, melt like butter sitting on a car bonnet on a hot day.'

In 2016, the Australian Treasurer blocked the \$10 billion sale of a 50.4 percent stake in Australia's largest energy network, Ausgrid to two Chinese bidders, citing national security concerns. It was reported that this decision was based on the unequivocal advice of all Australia's national security agencies. The Treasurer also blocked the sale of cattle empire S. Kidman & Co. to a Chinese buyer on two occasions, simply stating that he did not consider the sale in Australia's national interest. The sale was only approved after the bid was restructured and Chinese interests were whittled down to a one-third minority stake.

In short, when the situation warrants it, Australia seems to have no qualms in rejecting Chinese investment. But it also has sufficient confidence in its regulatory processes to welcome investment when it serves the national interest.

Australia has also proven

that it can act when it deems its regulatory processes require strengthening. For example, the Australian government this year established a Critical Infrastructure Centre within the Attorney-General's Department to undertake assessments of federal, state and privately-owned critical infrastructure and advise the Foreign Investment Review Board of national security risks such as potential for sabotage, espionage and coercion. The Australian government has also initiated a review of Australia's espionage and foreign interference laws, with a view to introducing reforms before the year's end.

There is more evidence to support the assertion that Beijing has been successful in influencing other areas of Australian society, such as local Chinese-language media. Wanning Sun, professor of Media and Communication Studies at the University of Technology Sydney, observes that, 'China has made it clear that Chinese migrant media are the vehicle with which they seek to engage in a two-phase process of communication: first, the state Chinese media set out to influence diasporic Chinese media; second, the diasporic media are expected to influence the mainstream host media.' And she adds that in Australia's Chinese-language media, 'there has been a clear shift from media representations of China that are mostly critical to representations that are sympathetic or even supportive.'

But Professor Sun also concludes that 'there is little clear evidence that such 'localised' propaganda has a direct impact on Chinese-speaking audiences, let

alone the broader Australian community.' This is because Chinese audiences harbour an innate scepticism towards state propaganda and those that are better educated access news and current affairs from a variety of sources.

This year there have been increasing reports of Chinese government attempts to influence Australian university lecture and tutorial content through fermenting protests by Chinese international students. Objections to a Sydney University lecturer's use of a map showing Chinese-claimed territory as part of India resulted in an apology by the academic. So too did complaints against an ANU lecturer who translated a warning about cheating into Chinese language. Meanwhile, a Monash University lecturer was suspended following the inclusion of a question in a quiz that some students deemed made fun of Chinese officials.

Most recently, a Newcastle University lecturer was confronted by some Chinese students for listing Taiwan as a 'country' – a secret recording of which was provided to Chinese-language media. But in this case, Newcastle

In short, when the situation warrants it, Australia seems to have no qualms in rejecting Chinese investment. But it also has sufficient confidence in its regulatory processes to welcome investment when it serves the national interest.

University responded by rebuking the course of action taken by its students and made no demands the lecturer apologise.

The point is obvious: when cases of nationalist agitation arise, Australian universities still possess the ready ability to preserve academic freedom.

At the same time, some of the language used in mainstream media in response to these incidents that involve a small fraction of the 160,000 Chinese students in Australia goes beyond the available evidence. There is no 'war being waged by Chinese international students.' The Chinese student cohort does not embody 'racial chauvinism,' which one commentator now claims Beijing is exporting to Australian shores.

To be sure, Chinese students can – and do – come under pressure from the Chinese embassy, consulates and their peers to toe the party line, seemingly more so now than in the past. This means there is a genuine need for Australian universities to better connect with Chinese students and support their freedom of expression. But this is only made more difficult by promoting a simplistic

narrative which seems to demand that Chinese students either disavow their support of Chinese government positions or be dismissed and labelled as brainwashed by communist propaganda.

Australia needs to remain vigilant as its links with China grow. But the fact that instances of perceived Chinese government influence are so regularly identified and investigated, sometimes with only modest evidence found, is perhaps the most emphatic reason to be confident that Australia is in little danger of surrendering its decision-making sovereignty.

Elena Collinson is senior project and research officer at Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney

James Laurenceson is professor and deputy director at Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney

For more information, visit: [www.australiachinarelations.org](http://www.australiachinarelations.org) Twitter at @acri\_uts.



PHOTO: FOTOLIA



# The Fall of Chinese Community Groups, Politicians and Academic Freedom

Below are several of my first-hand experiences, and some second-hand information, obtained through investigation and research detailing the infiltration by the Chinese Communist Party into Australian society.

## The iron fist on the Chinese Community

When any Chinese community group obtains a certain degree of influence, it becomes inevitable that the Chinese Consulate exerts its control over it. For example, I had a few friends who helped found the Sydney Chinese Zhi-qing Association which developed quickly and achieved a fair amount of influence (*Zhi-qing* is a Chinese term that refers to displaced people who were forced to work in the rural regions as part of the Cultural Revolution between 1966-76). The Chinese Consulate quickly intervened. The President of the association, Zhaohui Xu brought two Consular officials to an Association Committee meeting. The Consulate informed Xu that the associate committee included pro-democracy advocates and Falun Gong practitioners amongst its members, and as a result the committee was dissolved.

The Sydney Chinese Zhi-qing Association was then reformed under the heavy involvement and control of the Chinese Consulate. The reform process included expelling every dissident. According to a 2013 report, a Chinese Consulate official delivered a speech during the first event after the takeover, emphasising “a series of achievements the Zhi-qing Association made after reformation.”

I recently met an elderly man who claimed that the Dong Guan Township Association has met with the same fate. This Association had several decades of history yet it has still fallen within the clasp of the Chinese Consulate.

Former Foreign Minister Bob Carr once claimed that



## XIAOGANG ZHANG

The Chinese Consulate...wanted to know why the Unity Party had selected a pro-democracy advocate as one of its candidates. If this continues, the Consulate threatened to mobilise the Chinese community to oppose the Unity Party.

there was no evidence of Consulate control over Chinese community groups, but the evidence is abundant.

During Chinese Premier Li Keqiang’s visit to Australia, the Chinese media *Sydney Today* published a report online stating that the welcome activities were led by the Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China, and detailed how well each Chinese community group had carried out their command.

The founding Chairman of the ACPPRC, William Chiu, has since passed. Last year the *Sun Herald* published a report

revealing Chiu as a member of the Communist Party in Malaysia.

## How does the Chinese Communist Party control overseas Chinese

Firstly, the Party entices individuals through benefits. For example the President of the Sydney Chinese Zhi-qing Association, Zhao Hui Xu has bragged about his return to China where he was greeted by provincial leaders and even had police motorcade to clear the roads for him. Xu’s successor was reported to have been invited to participate in the Jiangsu Provincial Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, and allowed access to Tiananmen Gate Tower on Chinese National Day. Although they are nameless in Australia, they are treated like statesmen in China.

Secondly, the Chinese government intimidates. For example, the Chinese government threatened the Sydney Chinese Zhi-qing Association that if any dissenters remained in management, members of the association would not be issued visas to China, and even their families in China would be implicated. Often, when individuals post critical comments of the Chinese Communist Party online, their families in the Mainland urge them not to speak up as the state security department would come knocking on their doors.

## Intervention in Australian Elections

In March 1999, around the time of the NSW election, my friends introduced me to Peter Wong, leader of the Unity Party. I was chosen as the Party’s Hornsby candidate. Soon after, the Chinese Consulate sought out Wong and wanted to know why the Unity Party had selected a pro-democracy advocate as one of its candidates. If this continues, the Consulate threatened, they would mobilise

the Chinese community to oppose the Unity Party.

Wong became anxious upon hearing this. He sought me out in private and said, “Can you guarantee the Chinese Consulate that you will no longer participate in the Pro-democracy movement? In exchange, the Chinese consulate will issue you a visa to go back to China.” I had tried to return to China to visit my ill mother during the previous two years but I was rejected.

I turned down the proposal. I told Wong that the only thing I could guarantee was that my involvement with the Unity Party had nothing to do with the Pro-democracy movement. I will not compromise with the Communist Party.

Australian government departments have rarely revealed such incidents to the general public. This is the first time I have openly revealed this incident, for I want everyone to know about the Chinese government’s direct meddling in Australian elections. The Chinese government has also tried to introduce its own loyalists as candidates. Among them include a former Chinese senator in Western Australia, Dio Wang, who even publicly endorsed the Tiananmen Square Massacre.

At the same time, Western politicians have also come under influence, including former Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke who shed tears for the Tiananmen Square Massacre, but later changed his attitude towards the Chinese government after doing business with China for economic benefits.

Incentives are not only limited to financial benefits but also sexual favours. One case happened to a former senior federal minister. Before he became a minister, he once travelled to China with other members of the Parliament. In China, they fell into a “trap” set up by the Party officials. After returning, they all spoke in favour of the Chinese

Communist Party.

## Interference in Academic Freedom through Confucius Institutes

Confucius Institutes number many throughout the world. A professor at the University of New South Wales once told me that the system was “very tightly controlled.” He wanted to adopt traditional Chinese teaching materials from Taiwan, but was forbidden, as under the Confucius Institute, only Mainland Chinese teaching materials were permitted.

The Confucius Institute is controlled by the Ministry of Education, a Chinese government sector. The 2012 Confucius Institute financial report revealed its funding to amount to an incredible 1.2 billion Chinese Yuan.

According to its 2016 report, out of the 1,587 Confucius Institutes and classrooms around the world, 1,237 are located in Europe, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. It begs the question, why is the Chinese government investing so much of its funds to further the ‘education’ of developed countries?

When put into perspective, it is really quite baffling. Last year, a woman named Yang Gailan, who could not support her four children in their education, tragically killed all of them and then took her own life. Tragedies of this sort are commonplace in China. Poverty is rife, the wealth gap is enormous, yet the government fails to adequately support its own citizens with quality education and other basic services. Instead, they pour funds into infiltrating western institutions to further their agenda and grip on the West in the guise of ‘educating’ people on Chinese culture.

*Xiaogang Zhang is a freelance writer, human rights activist, senior member and former Vice-Chairman of Federation for a Democratic China and former Secretary-General of Independent Chinese PEN Centre.*



## RUAN JIE

There must always be an imagined “enemy” from the West for the Chinese community to “struggle” against so that they can be “protected” by the Chinese Communist Party wherever they migrate.

# Grassroots Influence by Beijing’s Running Dogs

The Chinese community in Australia is diverse, both culturally and politically. It should be mentioned that the majority of overseas Chinese came from Mainland China; those who came from Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and Malaysia largely consent to the concept of freedom and democracy of the Republic of China and that of Western society.

I have resided in Australia for 20 years. Having come from Mainland China, I was once brainwashed by the fierce nationalism and political propaganda of my home country. I thus have an intimate understanding of the overseas Chinese who come from Mainland China.

## 1. Political divisions of overseas Chinese

Overseas Mainland Chinese hold different attitudes towards the Chinese Communist Party, and can be classified into four categories:

The first category consists of those who advocate democracy in the Mainland. They are critical of the Chinese Communist Party and courageously air their stance against the regime.

The second category consists of those who understand the malevolence of the Chinese Communist Party, usually because their family members have been persecuted by the regime.

The third category is ethnic Chinese who cling to patriotic sentiment. They confuse the Chinese Communist Party with China, unable to discern the ruling regime from the nation, leading to misplaced feelings of patriotism, believing that love for the Communist Party equals love for the country.

The fourth category consists of those who forge connections with the Chinese Communist Party to further their personal interest.

## 2. Pervasive control of grassroots Australian Chinese community

*Example 1:* One Chinese grocery store owner made a variety of free newspapers available in his store. However, he exclusively forbade *The Tiananmen Times* and *The Epoch Times*. According to the owner, no newspapers critical of the Chinese Communist Party were allowed; he proclaimed himself a patriot. The same man was at the front lines in rallies against the Australian government’s stance on the South China Sea. Sadly, he did not realise that while enjoying the benefits of freedom and democracy he sought to undermine these values by banning newspapers that advocated freedom and democracy for China.

*Example 2:* I once bought tickets to a mid-Autumn evening party organised by a Chinese community group. I was barred from entry upon arrival. When I questioned why, I was told that an official from the Chinese Consulate would deliver a speech at the party. Due to my opposing political view, I was deprived of my right to watch the show. If the party was by invitation only or free of charge, then I would have nothing to say. However, it was open to the public and it charged a fee for entry, yet I was still discriminated against on the grounds of my political opinion.

## 3. Cultural and political infiltration

In the last three decades, whilst expanding its economy, the Chinese Communist Party has been fighting to have its legitimacy recognised internationally. It has gone so far as to infiltrate and place itself deep within the economy, culture and politics of sovereign nations.

In Melbourne, a pro-Chinese Communist Party radio station runs a program every Sunday afternoon to broadcast its views on current affairs and listeners

are able to call in to air their opinions on certain issues. There will always be one or two callers saying “how great the Chinese Communist Party is,” “The Chinese Communist Party has solved the issue of feeding 1.3 billion people, and China has already become a democratic country but in a different way.” Once, a person called to say “We Chinese people in Australia have been discriminated against by other ethnic groups and such discriminations are present all the time...” This shows the prevalent “enemy mentality” instigated by Chinese Communist Party propaganda through Chinese language media within the Australian Chinese community. There must always be an imagined “enemy” from the West for the Chinese community to “struggle” against so that they can be “protected” by the Chinese Communist Party to wherever they migrate.

In the name of promoting Chinese culture, the Chinese Communist Party infiltrates various arms of society through bodies such as the Confucius Institute, performing arts groups and so on. For example, the *Red Detachment of Women*, a ballet that glorifies the Cultural Revolution and Red Guards, who are essentially anti-West and anti-Capitalist, was allowed to proceed in Melbourne last year. I had spent much effort protesting the concert, and even approached the governor’s office to express my opposition. However, taking advantage of the West’s fundamental freedom of expression, the ballet proceeded unimpeded by our opposition. If the roles were reversed and any Western country was to attempt to perform something anti-Communist in Mainland China, the show would not be allowed to proceed.

In 2011, I spent \$6,000 to celebrate the 100th-year anniversary of the Republic of China (Taiwan) at the Melbourne City Hall. The Chinese Consulate immediately responded by writing to the City Hall claiming that my event would cause riots and serious clashes. I was summoned by the Melbourne City Hall and spent hours explaining what the event was and why it would not cause any riots. We reached an agreement to increase security at the event and I was asked to pay for the extra security guards. Political infiltration is the most formidable in its purpose; one is to buy Australian local politicians, another to ensure there are politicians inside the political circle to serve and speak on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party. This is a great and direct harm to our national sovereignty, the integrity of our political system as well as the national security.

The 2016 Melbourne City Hall elections saw an unprecedented total of twenty-two ethnically Chinese candidates. Many of these candidates are originally from Mainland China. They were hosted at a meeting by the Chinese Consulate where they were given careful instructions. Junxi Su has close connections with the Chinese Consulate and hence was supported by over 150 Chinese community groups in Melbourne. Su participated in the parade protesting the Australian Government’s stance on the South China Sea. It is obvious she embraces the Communist Party. Overseas Chinese who long to see a free and democratic China should speak up to resist the infiltration of Australia by the Chinese Communist Party. The cancellation of the Chairman Mao tribute concert in Sydney last year was a successful example of our grassroots resistance of the Chinese Communist Party’s meddling hand. I hope that more members of the Australian Chinese community can stand up to shoulder the duty of safeguarding the democratic values of Australia.

*Ruan (Frank) Jie is editor of Tiananmen Square Times and chairman of the Chinese Democratic Party Australia.*



# Obsession with China's Influence Is Hurting Australia's Public Diplomacy Agenda



WANNING SUN

Successful engagement with the Chinese community is a litmus test for the effectiveness of multiculturalism as a national policy.

As a result of the arrival in Australia of new Chinese migrants from the People's Republic of China (PRC) over the past three decades or so, the diversity in demographic composition of the ethnic Chinese population has intensified. To date, the PRC is the largest overseas birthplace for Australians after the United Kingdom and New Zealand. Added to this, China has now surpassed Japan as Australia's biggest trading partner, in terms of both imports and exports. This means that China is one of only two countries, along with the United Kingdom, that not only have seen large numbers of migrants settling in Australia but also have proven to be crucial to Australia's economic survival.

However, unlike the UK, which was for a long time considered to be the "mother country" by many Anglo-Celtic Australians, China is not a liberal democracy. Unlike India, another supplier of skilled migrants to Australia and a member of the British Commonwealth, the Chinese generally do not share with Anglo-Australians a passion for cricket, and most Chinese migrants did not have English as a lingua franca prior to their migration. Thus, in comparison with their Indian migrant community counterparts, Chinese-speaking migrants generally experience a greater linguistic, cultural, and political distance from Australia's Anglo-Celtic mainstream.

It is this paradoxical situation—Australia's economic dependence on China, hand-in-hand with its perception that China's political, ideological, and cultural values are incompatible with Australia's—that explains the prevailing feelings of fear and anxiety that many Australians have about China.

## Chinese-language media in

## Australia

These feelings are no doubt exacerbated by the global discourse on the "rise of China," and mounting evidence of the Chinese government's efforts to shape international public opinion through the media. Like Narendra Modi's government, which actively pursues its diasporic communities—"non-resident Indians"—to contribute to India's national economy, the Chinese government also considers diasporic Chinese communities as public diplomacy resources and assets. Moreover, much more than the Indian government, the Chinese administration strategically engages with diasporic Chinese media which are now widely described in policy circles in China as the "vessels" that can propel China's public diplomacy agenda out into the world. Indeed, such efforts have begun to bear tangible outcomes in Chinese-language migrant media in various countries outside China.

In Australia, as elsewhere, China's state media have made significant inroads into the space of Chinese-language media over the past few years. We have seen cases of struggling Chinese-language media enterprises as being bailed out as a result of the largesse of the Chinese state media, as well as examples of lucrative deals, partnerships, and content-sharing arrangements between China's state media organisations and cash-strapped Chinese migrant media entities.

Very commonly misunderstood is the moral motivation behind China's attempts at global media expansion. One phrase that appears in China's policy discussions so often that it has taken on the appearance of a self-evident truth is the saying that 'the West is strong and we are weak'. This expression captures China's perception of the current dynamics of the global media

and communication sector and its own place within it. Another frequently-used phrase states that China is 'in a passive position and often gets beaten up'. In other words, what often dominates policy discussions is a deep-seated sense of injustice and grievance, imbued with the feeling of being "hard done by" in relation to the West—Australia included. China's soft power initiative, of which expansion into Australia's media landscape is a part, aims to increase China's media presence globally, with the main purpose being to reduce or even eradicate the "bias" and "prejudices" against China that are seen as pervasive in Western media. The overriding conviction that fuels this drive is that China has been robbed of its rightful voice in a world dominated by the imperialistic media power of the West.

Ironically, but perhaps not surprisingly, China's actions aimed at seeking redress for these perceived moral and discursive injustices have become new sources of anxiety for the West, reinforcing the West's fear of a "China threat." In the mainstream Australian media, China's efforts to globalise its own media have been read as a covert attempt to move propaganda offshore, to export communism, and to take over the symbolic space of the free world. China's expansionist impulses are seen as imperialistic in design and intent, with the ultimate goal being to achieve global dominance and "rule the world."

## Australian mainstream media response

For many years, mainstream English-language media and diasporic Chinese-language media have existed in parallel universes. While it is apparent that there exists a multicultural ethnic media sector "out there," with the exception of SBS's multicultural language

programs, this sector remains "ethnic." The implication of labelling and treating non-English-language migrant media as "ethnic" is that, except on controversial matters, its content usually does not register in the consciousness of the English-speaking mainstream, and it is widely assumed there is little need for two-way cross-fertilisation of content. Thus, the onus has always been on the ethnic side to translate the content of mainstream media into the ethnic language in question, but seldom the other way round.

Due to the language barriers that are reinforced by this attitude, non-Chinese audiences have typically considered Chinese-language media in Australia to be some kind of "black box," and for this reason, these media have existed mostly outside the purview of Australian media regulators, the business sector, Government bodies, and mainstream media establishments.

Over the last couple of years, and, in particular, during the past year, the mainstream English-language media's position vis-à-vis the Chinese media in Australia has swung from apathy and indifference to mild obsession. But the frameworks within which these discussions have taken place are mostly narrowly-focused at best, and sensationalist and alarmist at worst. In most cases, media reports have been more or less accurate about the extent and scale of the penetration of local Chinese-language media by Chinese state media. However, what they have left out of the discussion is whether the increased presence of China's propaganda equates to or translates into a direct impact on Chinese-speaking migrant audiences. Nor has there been a concerted attempt to explain the political and moral motivations

behind China's efforts. Due to these blind spots, the mainstream English-language media's coverage has to some extent contributed to fear and anxiety about the implications of China's rise, rather than seeking to understand and address these sentiments.

Of particular interest to mainstream English reporters are the speeches and actions of Chinese individuals who display pro-China nationalism—as in the case of a Chinese student rally in Melbourne against the Hague's decision—and Australia's position—on China's sovereignty claims in the South China Sea. Yet few of these journalists reflect on the possibility that such pro-Chinese nationalism is as much a response to their own narrowly-focused and one-dimensional reporting on China as it is the result of Chinese government's patriotic propaganda.

## Risk of alienating the Chinese community

Equally problematically, the mainstream English-language media have more or less related to Australia's Chinese-language media as the nation's Other. There is usually little interest in seeking perspectives and information from these media, except to look for evidence of differences from or even hostility towards Australian views, or to try and unearth pro-China—and sometimes actual Chinese government—perspectives.

Most worrying of all is the tendency, evidenced in some recent media reports, to accuse Chinese migrants and international students from China of being agents of influence on behalf of the Chinese government, thereby conflating the Chinese government with the Chinese people, and Chinese citizens

with diasporic Chinese communities.

The implications of an ever-expanding Chinese media sector, including digital and social media, in Australia are many and complex. To look on the "bright side," it seems that the Chinese migrant community in Australia are "spoiled for choice," since they have, within their reach, state Chinese media, Chinese migrant media, transnational Chinese media from other Chinese migration destinations, the Chinese-language media provided as part of Australia's multicultural media (SBS radio, television, and Internet outlets), and the mainstream English-language Australian media. At the same time, individuals in this community are sometimes—perhaps often—confronted with conflicting and competing perspectives on Australia and China, or in relation to other relevant global affairs. For instance, China's state media criticise the United States and Australia for meddling in the South China Sea dispute, whereas the mainstream Australian media criticise China for its aggressive behaviour in asserting sovereignty rights in the region. The tensions and dilemmas facing individuals from the Chinese migrant community become at best a source of cultural anxiety and frustration, at worst a trigger for social disharmony. Situations such as these can encourage the formation of a vicious circle of racism whereby the Australian mainstream media's coverage of China-related issues may generate negative and often visceral sentiments towards Australia among Chinese migrants, whose consequent sense of grievance—sometimes expressed in emotionally charged terms—may incur further mainstream prejudice against them.

## Chinese as key players in Australian public life

To dispel the spectre of such a vicious circle is crucial to Australia's national agenda of strengthening democracy, ensuring economic prosperity, promoting social cohesion, and practising effective engagement with China. Chinese migrants in Australia are voters capable of shaping outcomes in electoral politics. This is evidenced in the last Federal election, where pro-Coalition Chinese voters effectively used WeChat—currently the most widely used Chinese social media platform—to campaign against the Labor Party. Chinese Australians—whether they realise it or not—have also been active agents on behalf of economic growth. This is not only because, as individuals, they are enthusiastic consumers with high consumption power in the Australian economy, but also, and equally notably, because the Chinese business community in Australia is a key intermediary in business and trade relations between the two countries.

Furthermore, Australia's Chinese communities have been key stakeholders in the long history of racial politics in the nation. They have been both victims of, and advocates against, racism. At the same time, like every other community, they are also equally capable of entertaining cultural stereotypes and racial biases against others. Successful engagement with the Chinese community is thus a litmus test for the effectiveness of multiculturalism as a national policy. As a result, it has become a matter of pressing concern to turn the current tension between the Chinese community and the mainstream into an opportunity for building a more inclusive multicultural program which, as Andrew Jakubowicz, noted

Yet few of these journalists reflect on the possibility that such pro-Chinese nationalism is as much a response to their own narrowly focused and one-dimensional reporting on China as it is the result of the Chinese government's patriotic propaganda.

scholar of multiculturalism, argues, "validates difference while stressing common values associated with universal human rights," and which encourages rigorous, rational and respectful dialogue and debate.

Finally, political, social, and cultural actors aside, Chinese migrants can be enthusiastic promoters of goodwill on behalf of Australia in the cultivation of mutually beneficial Australia-China relations. To be sure, the Australian government has also noted the importance of diaphora diplomacy, particularly the need to draw on the linguistic skills, social networks, and cultural community connections of diasporic communities. But to prosecute this policy effectively has never been as important as it is now, given that China has been increasingly pro-active in its efforts to engage Chinese migrant communities as key assets of its own public diplomacy agenda.

The importance of cultivating a deeper level of engagement in Australian public life within the Chinese (and broader Asian) diaspora cannot be overstated. The more migrant community members feel that they are being treated with respect and are regarded as equal partners in the political and social processes of the nation, the more likely they are to reciprocate this respect and egalitarian treatment and fulfil their own duties and responsibilities as Australia citizens, and identify with and embrace the democratic values of their adopted country. The Chinese community is no exception to this.

Wanning Sun is Professor of Media and Communication at the University of Technology Sydney.

For more information visit: [www.theconversation.com/profiles/wanning-sun-2510](http://www.theconversation.com/profiles/wanning-sun-2510)



PHOTO: EMILY ZHANG



# What Is the CCPNR and the UFWD?

China Council for  
the Promotion of  
Peaceful National  
Reunification

United  
Front Work  
Department



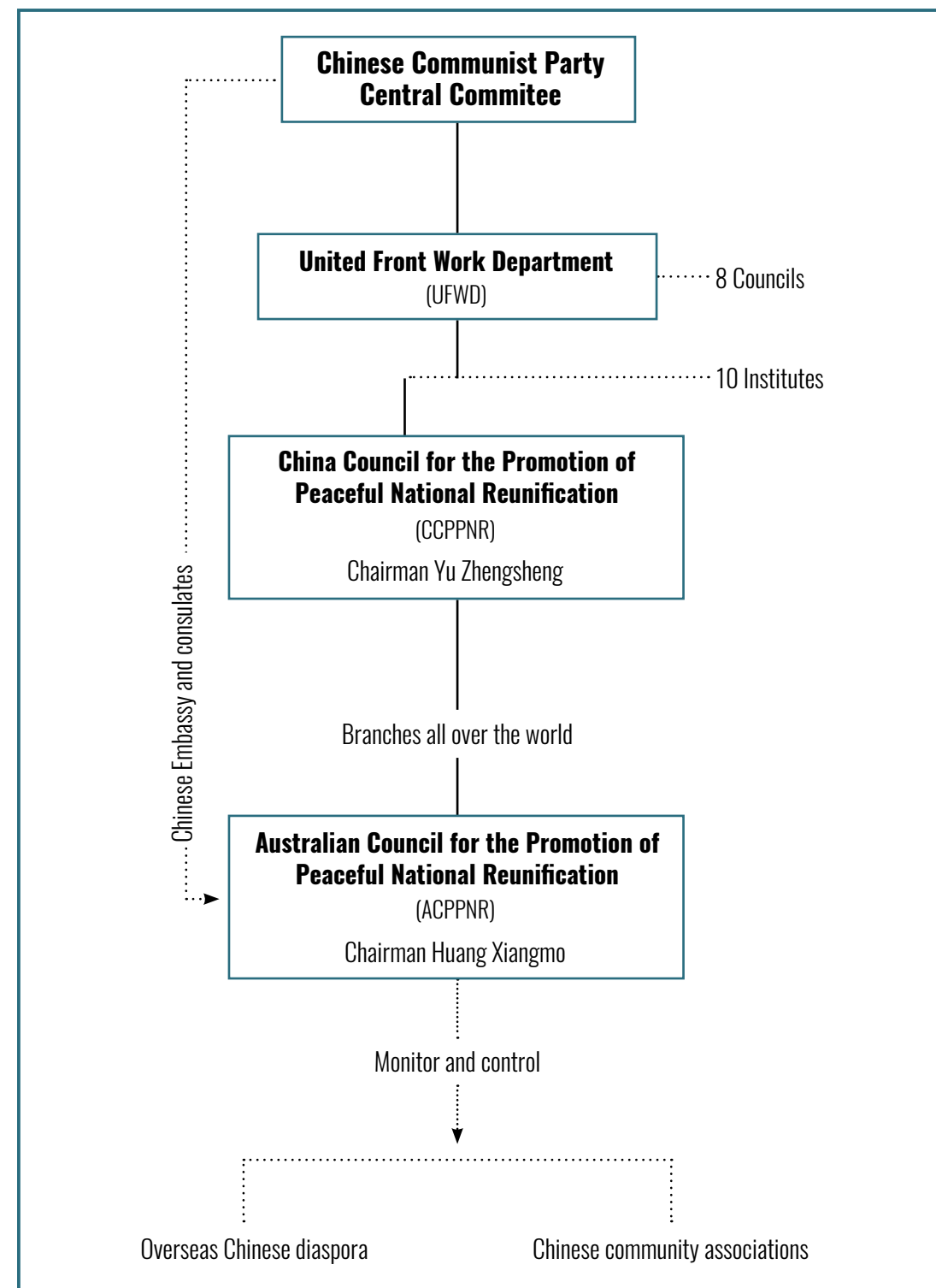
ZHENG ZHANG

The China Council for the Promotion of Peaceful National Reunification (CCPPNR) is headquartered in Beijing, China. The council's current chairman, Yu Zhengsheng, is a member of China's Politburo Standing Committee, while the executive vice-chairperson, Sun Chunlan, is both a member of China's Central Politburo as well as the head of the United Front Work Department (UFWD).

CCPPNR has branches around the world. In Australia, apart from the Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China (ACPPRC), there are also branches in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia.

The current head of ACPPRC is Huang Xiangmo, a Chinese citizen. A few Australian politicians serve as honorary advisors for this council.

The ACPPRC and the state and territory branches of the CCPPNR are all under the Chinese Consulate's supervision and command. The CCPPNR



serves as a prominent leader of all Chinese community associations, which enables the Chinese Consulate to establish comprehensive control, through the CCPPNR, over

these communities. In recent years, any large-scale protest or welcome activity has been organised and facilitated by the CCPPNR.

In the current administrative

structure of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the CCPPNR is part of the United Front Work Department. According to the CCP's public website, the

UFWD is an institution under the direct control of the Central Committee, and is headed by a government minister. The UFWD operates under the directives of the Party without implicating the Party's name. Outside of mainland China, apart from being responsible for Taiwan-related work, the UFWD is responsible for managing overseas student associations, Chinese communities and other related works.

The UFWD, which has a branch in every Chinese city, consists of 8 councils and 10 institutions. The CCPPNR is among these 10 institutions, and has branches in every major city around the world. In other words, the CCPPNR at each locale is directly led by the UFWD, while the CCPPNR is the overseas representative of the UFWD, in substance and form.

The UFWD was established before the civil war between the Chinese Communist and Nationalist parties. Its main objective was to train spies, collect intelligence, and plan and instigate campaigns by workers and students against the Chinese Nationalist Party government. During the civil war in China, the UFWD played a significant role within the CCP in defeating the Nationalist Party government and seizing political control.

Today's UFWD, through the CCPPNR, focuses on supporting and transmitting the influence of the CCP overseas, control Chinese communities and monitor the words and actions of overseas Chinese.

*Zheng Zhang is a political commentator on China.*



PHOTO: VISION CHINA TIMES PHOTOMONTAGE

FEIYAN XIA

The acceptance of the Chinese government's Confucius Classrooms is an act that "places profit before morality" - unfortunately this is already an unconscious acceptance of Communist values.

## Confucius Is Turning in His Grave

Ever since release of the SMH article Behind Confucius Classrooms, the Chinese government agency teaching NSW school students on 29 May 2016, major Chinese media outlets have translated and reported this article with many positive and negative commentary in a spectacular display of democracy at its best.

In order to verify the facts, a journalist interviewed Scott Smith, executive member of the Chinese Language Teachers Association of NSW Inc., who summarised the following:

1. the so called "Confucius Institute" does not have anything to do with the actual Confucius philosopher. None of the textbooks or classes teaches Confucianism. The name was used simply because he was the greatest teacher in Chinese history.

2. The main reason schools have signed contracts for Confucius Classrooms is due to \$10,000 funding by the Chinese Communist Party together with free assistant teachers and materials. There is money plus teaching resources, why not?

3. Confucius Institute teaches Chinese language, with no political motives.

4. Any sensitive topics to the Chinese Communist Party are omitted during class, such as Taiwan.

Do we really believe that \$10,000 per school from a foreign government can solve NSW Department of Education's funding problems? As part of this Confucius Classroom exchange, many principals and teachers may have been invited to visit China for education and cultural exchanges. During this visit, did they go to any remote Chinese villages? Many families in China can barely afford RMB75 a year to send their children to school. If the NSW Department of Education knew there are still hundreds of thousands of children in China who cannot receive an education due to dire financial situations, would they consider giving back the Chinese government's donation of \$10,000 per school so that these children in China can receive a basic education?

Confucius was a great pioneer in China's education system. He taught us that everyone is entitled to an education, no matter your social or financial status. The Chinese government today may think that children in Western countries have more entitlement to study Chinese than the poorest children in China; to all those Confucius Classroom fans out there, what do you feel when you stand in front of a Confucius statue? Can your conscience be bought by merely \$10,000?

In terms of Mr Smith's explanation that Confucius Classrooms only teach the Chinese language, this is a very superficial understanding of our Chinese culture. The Chinese characters being taught are those that have been altered by the Communist Party. The term "China" has also been changed to only mean People's Republic of China. Is the Republic of China (Taiwan) mentioned at all? When children are dancing in front of the red Chinese flag, have teachers given consideration to the other blue Chinese flag still flying in Taiwan? How would children from Taiwanese families feel? Unfortunately for the Chinese people today, traditional Chinese characters and culture can only be found in Taiwan.

Australian educators are not worried about the infiltration of Communist values, however, the acceptance of the Chinese government's Confucius Classrooms is an act that "places profit before morality" — unfortunately this is already an unconscious acceptance of Communist values.

*Feiyan Xia is a freelance news commentator focusing on China and Asia-Pacific issues.*



# VISION TIMES

**One name. Endless possibilities.**

## MULTI PLATFORM REACH TO AUSTRALIA'S CHINESE COMMUNITY



**PRINT WEEKLY**  
100,000 readership



**PRINT MAGAZINE**



**AUSTRALIA-BASED  
WEBSITES**



**WECHAT**



**NETWORKING EVENTS  
WITH AUSTRALIA'S  
CHINESE COMMUNITY**



**PRESS READER**

*Sit back and relax. Let us bring the Chinese market to you...*

**[www.visiontimes.com.au](http://www.visiontimes.com.au)**

### **SYDNEY**

106/379-383 Pitt St.  
Sydney NSW 2000  
(02) 9283 9224  
sales@  
VisionChinaTimes.org

### **MELBOURNE**

4/48 Rutland Rd.  
Box Hill VIC 3128  
(03) 9005 3689  
mel.sales@  
VisionChinaTimes.org

### **PERTH**

2/6 Douro Place  
West Perth WA 6005  
(08) 6365 2012  
sales.wa@  
VisionChinaTimes.org

