



Breaking Through the Bamboo Curtain

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About the Author

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A Note About “Deterrence”

Requires 3 Things:

1. A credible **capability** to inflict unacceptable costs on the aggressor either through denial or retaliation.
2. A credible **will** to inflict unacceptable costs.
3. A credible and clear **communication of contingency** (if you do this, then I do that)

Therefore, conventional deterrence is **inherently unstable** in either form (denial or retaliation) because it is **contestable**. Nuclear weapons are the only deterrent threat with enough destructive potential to reach unacceptable costs. (The “crystal ball effect.”)

DETERRENCE DOES NOT EXIST OUTSIDE OF THE NUCLEAR SPACE.

Strategic Ambiguity, Taiwan, Ukraine

There was no deterrence failure in Ukraine because (a) no alliance commitment, (b) questionable will on the part of US & Europe, and (c) contestable conventional capabilities.

How to “secure” Taiwan?

1. Extend nuclear deterrence commitment (can be done privately)
2. Prepare to fight PRC and defeat them at the point of invasion.
 1. Can this be done without striking Chinese forces on the mainland? Probably not.
 2. Puts U.S. homeland at risk for strikes.

“Strategic Ambiguity” is most dangerous in terms of potential escalation. Communicate clearly our intent to protect Taiwan or that China can have Taiwan.

Reality Checks

The U.S. will enjoy no economic or technological advantage over the PRC.

Defense planning remains mired in configuring forces to either “deter war” or prevail should it occur.

PRC can employ information technology via algorithmic decision making to impose information control within China and generate mass disruptive effects on populations outside China.

Cyber planning clings to legacy approaches to military targeting, assuming that targets can be held “at risk” via cyber means, actioned at a time/place of our choosing.

But PRC is Not Ten Feet Tall

China faces **significant** economic, demographic, and operational challenges.

China **still depends** on Western technology, access to global markets, foreign direct investment, foreign manufacturing, importing key resources, security of critical infrastructure and fragile financial markets.

Information control requires pervasive surveillance, **which means information assurance cannot be attained.**

CCP-led system rests on **acute paranoia** and **hyper-nationalism.**

Bottom Line Up Front:

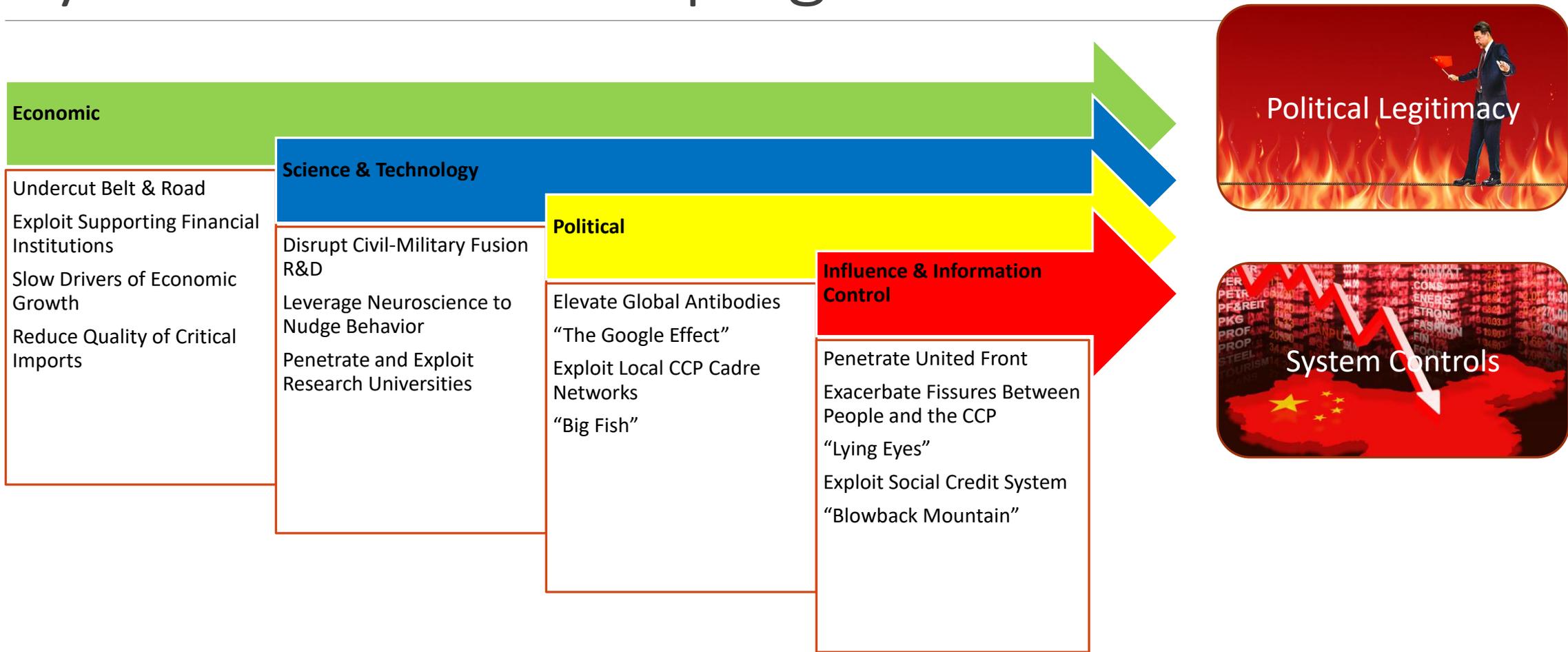
U.S. and Allies require a strategy to **alter the PRC's trajectory**.

Denial, Punishment, or “Integrated” Deterrence approaches are insufficient – Have to attack what the CCP values more: ***political legitimacy and system control***.

- Requires Political and Economic Warfare.
- Force CCP to shift resources away from power projection and toward internal control.
- Must inhibit and disrupt China's civil-military fusion program.

Cyber-enabled campaigns represent the best option.

Cyber-Enabled Campaigns



Campaign Requirements

Metrics to evaluate progress

Strategic latency & disruption evaluation and assessment

“Cognitive Warfighting” entity charged with directing and executing this campaign

Concerns and Objections

What hurts China, hurts the U.S. (and rest of world).

Attacking China's economic growth harms the Chinese people.

Invites retaliation or escalation if discovered.

May push CCP to be more aggressive.

The Defense Department does not “do” economic warfare.

Final Thoughts

Significant antibodies within the national security enterprise.

An emerging consensus on the threat China poses has not translated into an articulated end state or theory of victory, other than perpetual competition.

Cyber-enabled campaigns can have a disproportionate strategic effect when compared to their cost.

Campaigns require persistence and time to realize effects, so we must act now.

Questions?

THANK YOU!

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