



Topic Overview

Hundreds of years ago, Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte once stated: “China is a sleeping giant. Let her sleep for when she wakes up she will move the world.” Wake we have, and the world has not reacted kindly. The People’s Republic of China faces intense political and economic backlash at home and abroad that you will help navigate as part of the CCP’s top leadership. It will not be easy. Xi is looking to be re-elected for an unprecedented third term and in order to do so he will have to tackle a looming debt and housing crisis that threatens to derail the country into recession. He will have to stand up for the Chinese People, showing no weakness in dealing with the Taiwan Issue, the threat of AUKUS, or foreign-sponsored dissension in Hong Kong. The famous Belt Road Initiative which sought to create a new silk road has had some embarrassing and costly failures, and Xi will hope to reset the BRI with new partner countries and a renewed emphasis on Green Energy. He will have to continue promoting technological devotion to being the best with green tech, space exploration, as well as a growing and formidable nuclear stockpile. Finally, he will have to look westward, working to combat a US and Europe that is increasingly anti-CCP in geopolitical demeanor and an Eastern European landscape that seems to be devolving into chaos. Remember, this cabinet cannot afford to look weak; our nationalistic and patriotic public demands a strong response to international slights, and our opponents will seize on perceived failures or cowardice. These tasks are daunting, but this cabinet will have no choice but to show the world what an awakened sleeping giant looks like.

Historical Background

One hundred years ago, the Communist Party of China (CCP) was founded by Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao in the French Concession of Shanghai. The Party’s initial growth was quite slow, but during the chaos of the Second Sino-Japanese War it was able to win over supporters to oust the weakened Nationalist Chinese Government under the Kuomintang (KMT). By 1949, the CCP had driven the KMT from mainland China and onto the island of Taiwan. Both the CCP and the current government of Taiwan claim to be the legitimate government of each other’s territory to this day.

After declaring victory on October 1, 1949, the CCP declared the foundation of the People’s Republic of China under the leadership of Mao Zedong. The legacy of Mao in

contemporary China is complicated. While he is credited with founding the current system of government, and many of his policies in education created long-term benefits for the people of China, his rule was also marred by many high-profile policy failures that resulted in the deaths of millions of people. Chief amongst these policy failures was the Great Leap Forward. The Great Leap Forward was a policy of forced industrialization at the expense of agricultural production that caused famines throughout China. Further exacerbating the population problems caused by the Great Leap Forward, Mao introduced a One-Child Policy in China that continued for many decades. Mao's Cultural Revolution also created a culture of suspicion by encouraging the youth to report allegedly subversive acts committed by their professors, parents, or superiors in the workplace. While the Revolution may have eliminated many genuine subversives, it is possible that it removed many talented academics and earnest reformers like Former Premier Deng Xiaoping.

While the days of Mao are long gone, much of his legacy still lives on within China. While the state no longer engages in foolhardy policy like melting down pots and pans to meet steel production quotas, China is still a country with an economy dominated by state-owned industries that produce little profit. Though the state has relaxed the One-Child Policy, the gender imbalance it created, due to a widespread practice of aborting daughters, has left China with demographic issues that are unsolvable even with an increased birth rate. Red Guards may no longer roam the grounds of schools looking for nonconformists to beat up, but criticism of the government in China can result in stiff criminal penalties and harassment by state officials.

Yet, in spite of these difficult beginnings and continuing difficulties, China has embraced many of the free-market principles of its neighbors and Western countries. Starting in 1977, under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, China allowed for private enterprise amongst its own people and allowed for Western countries to invest and do business with the country. Instead of pursuing an autarkic development strategy along the lines of Maoism, Deng turned China into a trade-focused manufacturing economy. Since this time period, China has undergone an unprecedented period of economic growth, turning it from an economy that was once the size of Mexico's to one of the world's largest.

Though China's economic development has followed a clear trend since the late 70s and early 80s, its political development is less clear. While there have been brief attempts at liberalization throughout the 1990s and 2000s, and even brief flirtations with constitutionalism, the recent tenure of Premier Xi Jinping seems to have dashed many predictions of liberalization.

Since coming to power in 2012, Xi Jinping has been a transformative leader in China. He has spearheaded China's increasingly aggressive foreign policy in the South China Sea as well as China's economic diplomacy initiative known as the "One Belt One Road" policy. Under the "One Belt One Road" policy, China has built up infrastructure ranging from roads to rail-lines to ports in countries throughout Asia, Africa, and even a few in Europe¹. While this project

¹ <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-massive-belt-and-road-initiative>

promises to potentially create economic growth for the countries involved, some worry that it will create a debt trap and potentially pave the way for Chinese military presence in the regions in question. One thing is for certain, the Belt and Road Initiative has been emblematic of China's increasing turn outward for growth and resources.

In domestic affairs, Xi Jinping made his mark early with an anti-corruption campaign. Nonetheless, while the campaign did take down several high-ranking party members, some foreign skeptics have alluded that the campaign was a form of self-aggrandizement on behalf of Xi and served to increase and entrench his personal power².

More controversially, under Xi Jinping's leadership, China has been exercising an increasingly large degree of control over its Islam-practicing Uighur minority in the Autonomous Region of Xinjiang. There are widespread reports of the CCP rounding up Uighurs and placing them into camps to be "re-educated" away from their foreign culture and belief system that the CCP has deemed a threat to internal stability³. The CCP's own records indicate an almost 50% drop in the Uighur birthrate within a single year, possibly indicating a policy of forced sterilization.

In addition to this, a further hallmark of Xi's tenure has been the tightening of Chinese control over the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Hong Kong, initially a colony of the United Kingdom, was returned to China in 1997. The hand-over stipulated that though Hong Kong would join China they would be "One Country with Two Systems," with Hong Kong maintaining local democratic elections and the rule of law separate from the People's Republic. Under Xi and Hong Kong's appointed leader Carrie Lam, new laws have been introduced in Hong Kong that restrict freedom of expression and place more restraints on the local democratic norms of the city⁴. These moves have been met with fierce opposition from Hong Kong's local population as well as criticism from abroad.

Current Situation

Almost two years after the start of the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Pandemic, China has emerged less ravaged than many of its peer nations by the disease itself, but the economic effects of the pandemic have not passed Beijing by. After close to three decades of economic growth, the Chinese machine seems to have slowed down. An aging population, an increasingly authoritarian political system, a bevy of internal rebellions in Hong Kong, and increasing desires for separatism amongst the Uighur minority in Xinjiang have damaged China's prestige on the global stage. Yet in spite of these issues, China has not retreated inward and still continues to practice economic diplomacy in Europe and Africa. Within recent years, China has increasingly become at odds with the United States and has begun to see itself as a rival power; not merely a

²<https://www.fpri.org/article/2018/08/xi-jinpings-anti-corruption-campaign-the-hidden-motives-of-a-modern-day-mao/>

³ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-22278037>

⁴ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-50964278>

different country, but a different system that it seeks to advocate for at home and abroad. A new Cold War is brewing precisely as the world is beginning to warm.

In late 2019, a new coronavirus variant emerged in the Chinese city of Wuhan. Since then it has gone global and still continues to rattle many parts of the world. The aftermath of the pandemic has created a shortage of supplies and sluggish economic growth the world over. China, a country dependent on foreign trade, has found its titanic economic engine beginning to cool. To make matters worse, the bankruptcy of the large real estate company Evergrande has created chaos in China's building and real estate markets⁵.

To make matters worse, the effects of global climate change are becoming increasingly prevalent in China with river flooding and monsoons becoming more frequent. China's economy is still fragile and growing, and its 1.3 billion people rely on that growth to buy food and heat their homes in the cold winters. With a slowdown already underway, can China even afford to switch to renewable energy, or does this crisis present an opportunity to expand China's economic influence by becoming a premier salesman and producer of green technology?

While China was largely able to prevent mass catastrophe within its own country, the failure to contain Co-VID19 within its own borders has left China's prestige and international image damaged. Additionally, the United States, on a bipartisan basis, has become increasingly hostile to China's attempts at economic and diplomatic hegemony and has pledged to be more active in containing the country's ambitions. China's dreams of soft power seem increasingly out of reach, but the country has more tools up its sleeves than economic and military diplomacy. Industrial espionage and increasingly sophisticated cyber warfare capabilities are weapons of the new Cold War that China is well equipped to deploy to its advantage.

If China is to be victorious in this new Cold War, it will need to win over allies, or perhaps like Russia, it will need to create allies. One thing is for certain, China cannot simply allow for Western powers to continue to create more and more friendly governments around the world. While China is not so brazen as to use military force, it has many other tools at its disposal to get what it wants.

⁵<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/modern-land-shares-dive-after-some-bondholders-demand-early-repayment-2022-01-10/>

Key Terms

- Chinese Communist Party (CCP)
- 2016 EU-Turkey Deal⁶
- Asylum
- Asylum-seeker
- Exclusion Clauses
- Gender-related persecution
- Local integration
- Resettlement
- Dayton Accords
- Build Back Better World (B3W)
- Belt Road Initiative (BRI) or One Belt One Road Initiative (OBOR)
- Cold War
- Strategic Nuclear Warhead
- Nuclear Arsenal
- Nuclear Demilitarization
- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)
- Hybrid and Multi-Facet Conflicts
- Uyghur Muslims
- South China Sea (SCS)
- AUKUS Tri-lateral Security Partnership

Discussion Questions

- The CCP is facing a host of challenges domestically, including an impending real estate bubble, rising COVID case counts, and slower economic growth. Historically, the CCP has successfully managed to evade internal criticism by projecting an image of strength abroad, stocking national pride and bringing the Chinese people together. Are there limits or drawbacks to this nationalistic strategy and should the Xi administration play a more subtle role internationally than they have hitherto?
- The conflict with the US and with the Western world lies along multiple fronts. Militarily, the Chinese navy faces off against an AUKUS alliance in the South China Sea. Financially, the US has launched a counter-BRI program to wrest away influence from the Chinese BRI or OBOR program. Both the US and China have honed their cyber-warfare and espionage capabilities. Culturally, both superpowers compete on everything from the theater to the Olympic stage. Finally, the PRC government has made leaps and bounds with our nuclear weapon program. Given the impending economic slowdown this cabinet will have to make tough decisions on which front to prioritize and

⁶ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/eu-turkey-deal-five-years-on>

where to direct energy and effort. Which front will you prioritize, and how will you gain or retain our competitive edge over our rivals?

- The international uproar over Hong Kong has died down over the past few years and we have managed to quash many networks of internal dissent. What steps can this administration take to make sure we don't have another internal political crisis like the one seen in Hong Kong over the past decade?
- What action, if any, should this cabinet take with regards to allegations of civil rights abuses with the Chinese Uighur population?

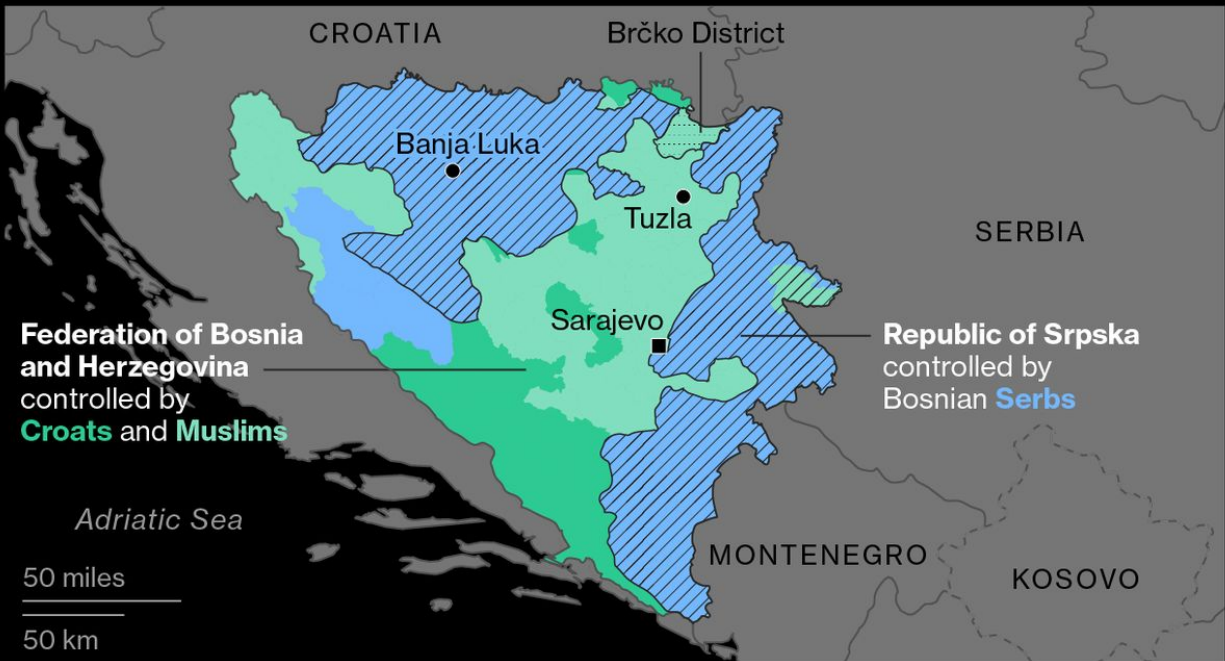
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An Uneasy Peace

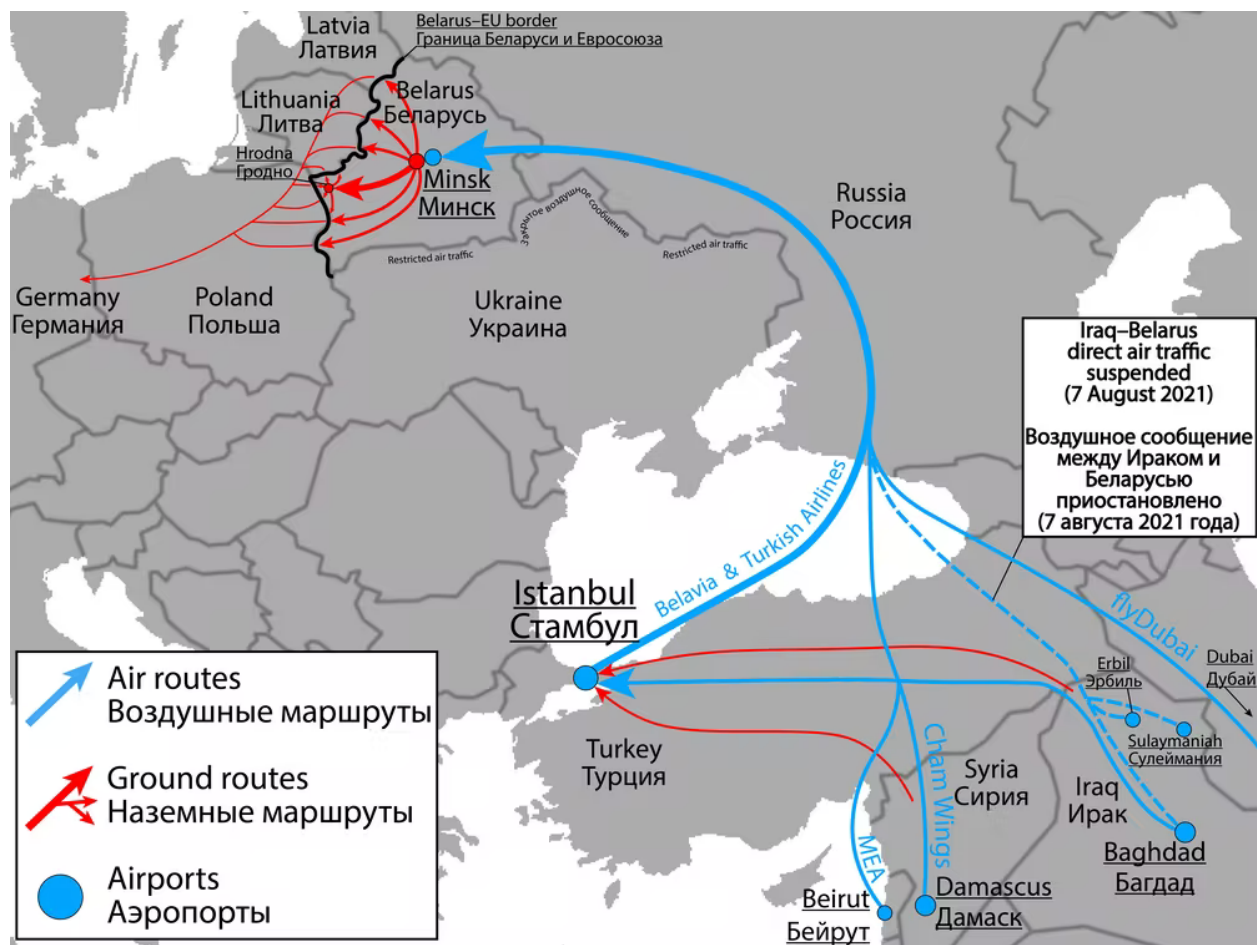
Bosnia has held together since 1995, though ethnic tension has never been far away

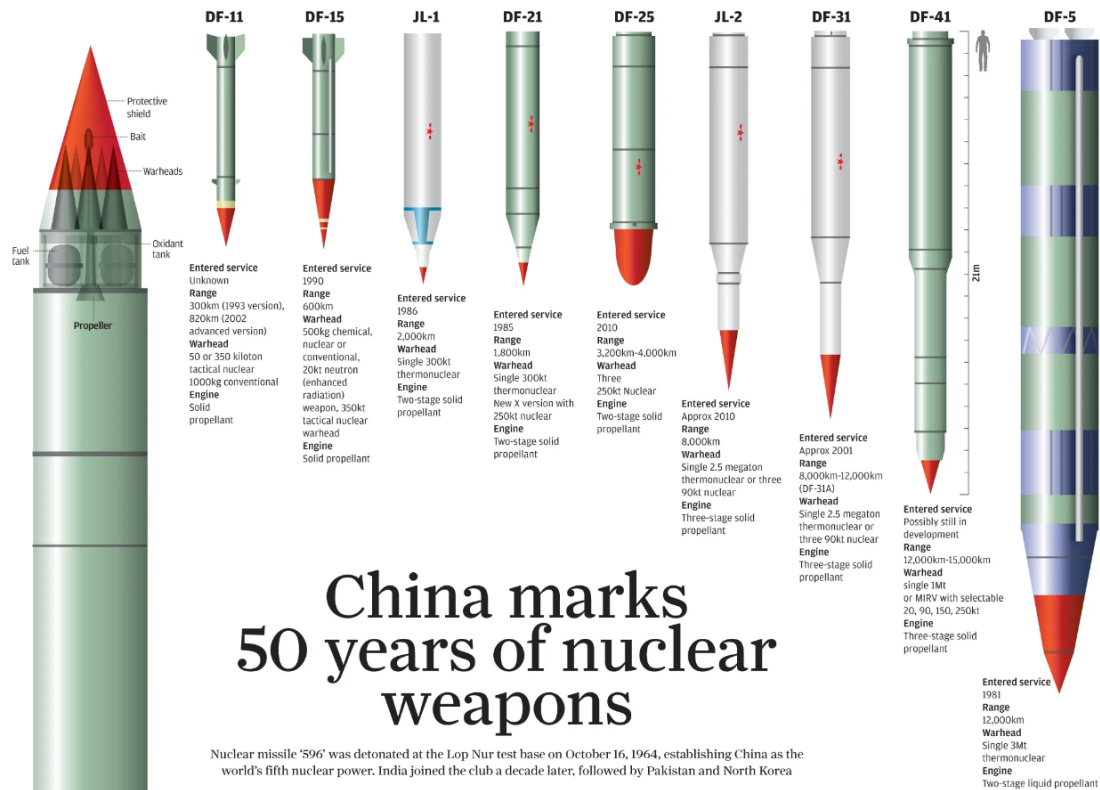
■ Bosnian Serbs ■ Bosnian Muslims ■ Bosnian Croats



Source: 2013 Census in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bloomberg

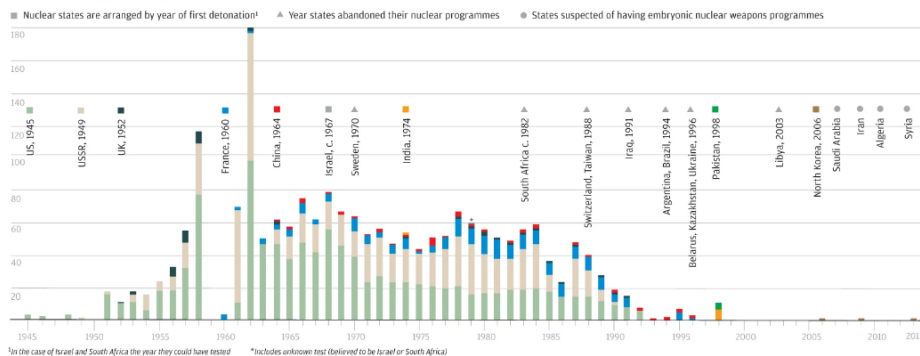




China marks 50 years of nuclear weapons

Nuclear missile '596' was detonated at the Lop Nur test base on October 16, 1964, establishing China as the world's fifth nuclear power. India joined the club a decade later, followed by Pakistan and North Korea

Nuclear weapons tests by country

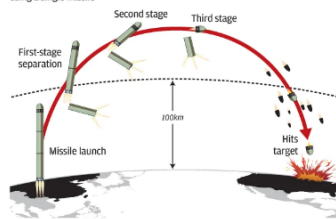


DF-41

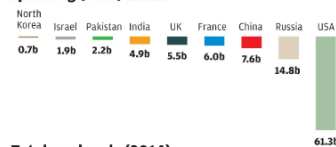
China's newest generation of intercontinental ballistic missile is the Dongfeng-41 (East Wind-41). With an estimated operational range between 12,000km and 15,000km this will be one of the world's longest range missiles. The defence ministry responded to reports in January, that it had tested a hypersonic missile delivery vehicle by saying any military experiments were "not targeted at any country and at any specific goals"

Wider reach

The DF-41 allows China to deliver up to 10 nuclear warheads 12,000km away using a single missile



Spending (2011) US dollars



Total warheads (2014)



Global distribution of nuclear weapons

