

Dissenting Opinion

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Although I have no problem with the factual research that has gone into specific sections of the report, I respectfully dissent from what I see as the report's overall inflated assessment of the current threat of Chinese influence seeking on the United States. The report discusses a very broad range of Chinese activities, only some of which constitute coercive, covert, or corrupt interference in American society and none of which actually undermines our democratic political institutions. Not distinguishing the legitimate from the illegitimate activities detracts from the credibility of the report. The cumulative effect of this expansive inventory that blurs together legitimate with illegitimate activities is to overstate the threat that China today poses to the American way of life. Especially during this moment in American political history, overstating the threat of subversion from China risks causing overreactions reminiscent of the Cold War with the Soviet Union, including an anti-Chinese version of the Red Scare that would put all ethnic Chinese under a cloud of suspicion. Right now, I believe the harm we could cause our society by our own overreactions actually is greater than that caused by Chinese influence seeking. That is why I feel I must dissent from the overall threat assessment of the report.

