

How We Lost the Information War of 2028

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ABSTRACT

Recent US military strategy focuses on a return to Great Power Competition and a recommitment to Large Scale Combat Operations using physical capabilities that were successful in previous military conflicts such as Desert Storm. However, ubiquitous connectivity and the internet of things have nearly eliminated the effect of distance and made geography irrelevant within the information domain. This allows adversaries to bypass traditional military defenses while establishing a presence in American homes and businesses, delivering their content directly to US citizens through their smart phones and devices. The US government’s power comes from those it represents, which makes the attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs of the American people a national center of gravity. “How We Lost the Information War of 2028” uses recent historical events tempered by potential technological advances to postulate a potential arc of history in which China successfully uses Information Warfare to achieve its national interests at the expense of the American people while staying below the threshold of traditional war. It is a warning from the future about today’s adversary, an enemy that lies at your fingertip.

Keywords: Information Warfare, China, Social, Red Team, Future

Victory smiles upon those who anticipate the changes in the character of war, not upon those who wait to adapt themselves after the changes occur.

—Giulio Douhet, *The Command of the Air*

Introduction

The following is a transcript from “The Peoples’ Ascendancy” speech delivered by the Great Leader via the secure BeiDou-Quant-Secure network to Most-Favored Party Members on New Year’s Eve, 2028.

For the People! For the Party! Welcome! Today, our lost generation’s humiliation is cleansed and we are re-balanced as we return to our rightful place at the center of all under heaven! Today, the world’s wealth bears our stamp, our image; a symbol with the power to crush or to build, to know or

to blind. The world's wealth and future belongs to the party!

Today, we incinerate the last bit of warmth out of the remaining worthless American dollars we can find. We give them to our poorest to feed their ovens so they can cook their meat and bread; they are the tinder we use to heat the Great House of our People. *E pluribus unum* is destroyed. They are "one" no longer, and we are strong and unified.

It is America's time for humiliation. Do you know that we sent them a pallet of treasure today? Yes, we sent their capital museum a gift from one of our "philanthropic cultural outreaches:" a pallet of Iraqi Dinar, a dozen ventilators, and the American flag we recovered from the Moon! All delivered aboard a Lockheed, P-3 Orion. All reminders of decades of poor decisions by western leadership. My dear friends, you won't see this in their news because we won't allow it. Their embarrassment would be too great. Nor will we use it as propaganda for our people . . . yet. But their leaders know, as we've known for a long time, that these were elements of their undoing. This is justice.

America was guilty, as they were so many times before, of ignoring the fight they were in. Their prophet told them as much in 1996 and again in 2010, but they relied on hope as a strategy and believed that their money, technology, and superior "human capital" would save them.¹ We now own all of this. They chose not to see what we saw, that global connectivity had not only flattened the world but shrank it and, in doing so, profoundly changed the

character of war itself. Of course, how could they accept this change when they were blinded and fooled by their presupposed strengths, ethnocentrism, and wishful thinking!

We never wanted a great war. We knew we didn't need a war to achieve our goals and that such a foolish inferno would only play into America's strengths while destroying both of us. We knew that great wars make weak winners.

We never wanted what they called "Large Scale Combat Operations," and we told them, over and over, with our investments in ballistic missiles, hypersonics, and carrier-killer missiles, that this would not be the way. Yet they trained and optimized for it. They focused on every shiny thing that we showed them. Rather than using the wisdom of water and avoiding our strong points while focusing where we are weak, they obsessed with overcoming every obstacle we placed in front of them.² Regardless of the advantage of our geography, organic manufacturing, and land-based, long-range defense systems, they kept building force projection platforms for an expensive, far-away shooting war in our backyard that we never intended to fight. So, in the People's wisdom, we asked ourselves what decision we wanted the Americans to make, and how we could make this decision easier for them. We decided to set a new Thucydides trap, but one with our special characteristics. They would immolate themselves. We would distract and deter them while the real fight would happen below the threshold of war, on our terms, in their country,

and using the weapons that we chose; the tools of our fathers. We would delay and distract them while using our magic weapons and preparing our assassin's mace.³

Shall I remind you of how we got here?

The world shunned us in 1989 for the heroic stance we took that June against the student protest movement. We responded by retrenching back to our revolutionary roots to convince the world of our good intentions and deeds by using the tools of our fathers. We remembered Mao's concept of "making the foreign serve China" by cultivating foreign friends who could promote our talking points and carry our image of economic opportunity and good will to other nations.⁴ We remembered his magic weapons.⁵

In 1991, we renamed our External Propaganda Leading Group to the boring but friendly "State Council Information Office," though internally we still called it by its original name. We expanded its mission from encouraging our diaspora to finding ways to directly influence the attitudes and behaviors of other nations.⁶ Through its Ministry of Culture and Tourism, we brought foreigners into our country. Free trips for journalists, politicians, and social influencers drew them from abroad and we worked hard to cultivate relationships and dependencies while showing them only the China that we wanted to reflect to the world. We ensured they could be called upon to present a non-critical view of China when their grassroots foreign support was needed.⁷

That spring we watched them in their first Iraqi war, and we were disturbed and inspired by their precision, high-technology weapons.⁸ We watched carefully as they integrated their air force and navy with ground maneuver to crush the fourth largest army in the world. We watched how they used their international instruments of power to build a "coalition of the willing" to destroy their enemy. Their success was amazing, yet in the years that followed they seemed to miss the most important lesson that we saw; that the Iraqi army had prepared itself to fight a different kind of war; a kind of war made obsolete by technology, communications, and integration. We resolved that we would never be the ill-prepared "Iraqi army" in an American narrative of "liberation." No, the global narrative would be our rejuvenation; a return to where we belong. They would have a role to play in our story, but we would define it for them. We were awake and paying attention.

At the same time we sensed our destiny was approaching, that our hundred years of humiliation would soon be redeemed. We started the long march towards the reunification and prosperity of our nation, but soon saw that the path would be frustrated by the Americans.

We looked for opportunities to assert our claims, and we found them. In 1996 we expressed our freedom of action, one-nation policy, and growing strength by test-firing missiles into the Taiwan Strait. The Americans responded by flashing their shiniest weapons,

escalating the situation nearly into war by sending two US Carrier Battle Groups into the region. Our anger grew as they bullied us for, at the time, we could not deter such firepower. It was clear that America would fight according to its strengths. We would fight according to ours, and according to our larger plan. We became determined to build stand-off weapons that could destroy or disable such a flotilla, and that would dissuade America's ships from coming near our shores. We decided that we would prepare for the bully in the West and build our defense locally, at a fraction of the price it cost the Americans to send their billion-dollar steel coffins into our waters. As the meeker nation, we accepted the truth that strong countries make the rules while rising ones break them and exploit loopholes. While the Americans pursued their revolution in military operations and technology, we would pursue a revolution in military thought.⁹ We would perfect a new way of fighting.

America spoke back to us overseas and in the air. They insulted us in 1999 when they violated our sovereignty and barbarously slaughtered our embassy staff in Yugoslavia. In 2000, their newly elected president's rhetoric escalated to that of "strategic competition" with us, yet they didn't seem to realize that competition taken to its natural extreme is war.¹⁰ In early 2001 they overplayed their hand when they recklessly killed one of our pilots and accidentally delivered to us one of their P-3 Orion spy planes, while clearly violating our sovereignty.¹¹ How foolish of them to not understand our history, yet project

to the world that our culture was abhorrent. The truth of the full extent of the nation we were rebuilding was ignored by them, and they continued to ignore our warnings. These were but a few events in a long line of insults to our people.

Then a small but radical ideological enemy attacked the United States, and we watched and learned as they invaded Afghanistan and Iraq and re-focused their military on a new type of war, a gradual shift towards "Military Operations Other Than War" and counterinsurgency. We watched happily as they spent their technological advantages against a pitifully weaker enemy. Their policies and politics demanded things from their military that were contrary to the nature of war.¹² We were shocked at how efficiently and foolishly they centralized their command and control functions into their Air Operations Centers for persistent, air-enabled fights. We studied how they communicated, and the evolution of their use of unmanned aerial vehicles. We watched as they fumbled in the information domain, multiplying their enemies with each misstep, and undermining their credibility and image across the world. Finally, we studied this "War on Terror" and used it to update our plans while executing our own counter-terror operations locally by defeating our thought enemies and advancing our nationalist morality within our own country.

And we found ways to confound their strength while building our own. We sent our first manned mission to space in 2003, and then showed how easily we could bring any space asset

down with our first anti-satellite launch in 2007. Yes, this was bold, but distracting America with our space achievements forced them to spend more money and gained us global recognition as a space power and a force that must be reckoned with. We used our scientists and cyber forces to capture information about their experimental technologies and soon had our first space station, our “celestial palace” orbiting the earth in 2011. They wouldn’t start their Space Force for another eight years! With the exception of the United States, by 2020 we had launched more satellites into space than any other nation!

We fought an economic information war, using our people for our strength, but arming them with superior information and connectivity. The impact of the internet was a curse and blessing to the West. File sharing services like Napster and Mozilla slashed the incomes of America’s media and entertainment industries while creating an increased appetite around the world for new content.¹³ To stop the financial hemorrhaging, they developed authoritarian tools such as Digital Rights Management which controlled the access of digital information. Ironically, this demand to control access and “rights” to information by capitalists was a foreshadowing of the same technology we developed, along with our social credit score system, to firmly control access to information today. We put our people at the center of the new market that emerged as both producers and consumers. Do you know that America’s Hollywood hasn’t made a movie critical of China since 1997?¹⁴ How could

they? Our great companies, backed by the Party, invested in their entertainment companies to ensure their fate would be tied to ours. Is it a wonder that academic and commercial publishing companies openly admit that their content is filtered through our censors prior to publication?¹⁵ Why would we allow access to ideas that are contrary to our principles? We pressured their institutions of higher learning to integrate our ideology through our own propaganda organizations, our great teaching institutions, and we made their taxpayers carry part of the burden by demanding that the schools pay half the cost of our propaganda centers.¹⁶ We even infiltrated their sports. Do you remember when the general manager of the Houston Rockets basketball team compromised his loyalty to the NBA when he tweeted support for the Hong Kong separatists?¹⁷ How quickly was the NBA chastised for defending his “freedom of speech!” For his tweet, we took from them \$400 million. Perhaps the NBA forgot that we are their second largest market! Through Mao’s wisdom, even their trusted “greats” came to our defense as our friends, serving our interests!¹⁸ Of course, it helped that we’d welcomed him to our country during his off season for each of the preceding fifteen years.¹⁹ Would a person that truly values liberty defend an oppressive, racist organization that publicly insults our one-nation policy? Especially when the consequences include being cut off from our market! Would you bite the hand that feeds?

Most importantly, during those years we started pulling off the greatest

transfer of wealth in history!²⁰ Through our cyber capabilities, the intellectual property of the world's most brilliant minds was accessed and siphoned through the information environment into our research facilities at a cost to the United States of \$250 billion per year for over a decade.²¹ Esteemed members, can you believe there were years we transferred more intellectual property value than the entire American military budget, exceeding even the combined total profits of their top fifty companies! By 2018, we were investing directly in American companies, participating in up to 16 percent of all venture capital deals for emergent technology and enticing them to move their ventures to our nation, with the catch that they were required to share their information, their intellectual property, with us.²² Of course, we'd been aggressively pulling manufacturing jobs into our country for decades, making other countries' supply chains dependent on us and dissolving 2.4 million American jobs in the process!

By the late 2010s we captured America's scientific and technological intellectual treasure and it restored us to the front of the line of technological nations. America was paying closer attention now and struggling to adapt to our economic information war. They replied economically, with sanctions, and tried to shame our nation by naming some of our hackers. We watched them harden and search for us in their military networks, yet we could not be found. Why would we focus on military networks when we could target the soft underbelly of those who deliver the

network services and weapon systems to their military; their cleared defense contractors, and the subcontractors who work for them?²³ Their military thought they were the center of gravity, the single most critical capability defending the United States from foreign aggression. Such arrogance and self-importance made them blind as we slowly dissolved the civilian-based root-of-trust foundation that held up their network castle walls. Then, we changed the course of human history.

Beginning in December 2019, we waged an aggressive campaign to hide the existence and obscure any perception of our mismanagement of the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan. This was a great opportunity in a clash of power and ideologies for us to convince the world that our response to the virus was a triumph of our authoritarian system and the Party's leadership.²⁴ Although we knew the history of repeated influenza outbreaks originating from our nation, our initial response was slow, with regional Party leaders leading the response and hiding it out of fear that a replay of the 2003 SARS outbreak could unfold.²⁵ We needed time to determine the nature and scope of the biological threat, as well as determine how to best use it to the Party's advantage. At the end of December, the false martyr, Dr. Li Wenliang, an ophthalmologist at Wuhan Central Hospital, used his WeChat account to send information and warning about the "SARS-like" virus to several of his medical school classmates. Five days later, a rogue element of cowardly officials stopped him from spreading rumors

and required him to sign a document renouncing his medical warning and admonishing him to, “cooperate and . . . stop [his] illegal behavior” with threats of additional consequences if he did not remain quiet.²⁶ In fact, it was not until January 23, 2020 that we initiated mass quarantine, by which time five million people had already left Wuhan, a city of eleven million.²⁷ You know how it went, you lived it. It was through your sacrifice and the divine wisdom of the Party that we controlled the sickness. A new great chaos had been injected into the world: a time of death, sickness, and fear; a time of opportunity.

The platitudes that put a pleasant face on America’s internal war of politics were stripped away as their political parties grew more and more divided under the pressure of uncertainty. The fear, the economic damage from the lockdowns, the surging unemployment, and the impotent, inconsistent reaction of their government eroded trust in their institutions and made their society dry and brittle. Racism and the fundamental moral issues of liberty and oppression, of fairness and cheating, would be the sparks that lit America on fire and, fanned by politics of division and misinformation, it would consume them. Our role was merely to spread our truth, to reveal where their moral foundations were compromised and put a microscope on the moral issues connected with their sense of capitalism and democracy; those of care and harm, of fairness and cheating, of authority and subversion, and liberty and oppression.²⁸

With America distracted with its own problems, we shifted our focus to advancing the information and technological advantages of the intellectual property that we’d acquired. Our stealthy acquisitions soon made us the lead producer of electronic vehicles, batteries, and autonomous vehicle software; much of which was secretly taken from the initial innovators in America and Europe. The electrical vehicle technology helped offset our hyper urbanization problem which was looming in our great cities, allowing us to build our own suburbs with low-cost, low-pollution transportation. We adapted the autonomous driving algorithms, machine learning, and sensor integration technology to build our drone swarms. It turns out that the same technology that can identify and avoid hitting a child crossing the street makes an incredible assassin drone when combined with facial recognition.

We found ways to make natural resources plentiful. Our futurists predicted that water stress would be one of the major threats to our near-term survival, which is why we quietly bought companies with water rights in America’s New England, Ohio, and The Great Lakes, and put them under Party member control.²⁹ As it was, technology provided a better answer with discoveries in the early 2020s of how to efficiently and cheaply desalinate water.³⁰ It was like finding the ancient alchemist’s secret to changing lead into gold! We had to have it. Fortunately, one of our Thousand Talents researchers had access to the research facility.³¹ She simply walked out of the building with the

research and, less than 24 hours later, presented it to our Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Research in Beijing. She is a good soldier in our people's war! Although it was her duty, for her aggressiveness and bravery we paid her a bonus in gold. A small price for permanent water security!

By 2022 we'd taken over production of 70 percent of the world's integrated circuit manufacturing. With nearly unfettered access to the world's best minds through our information collection efforts, we gathered and improved cutting-edge processors while expanding our production capacity to make them. By the end of the year, we were postured to carry our nation deep into the technological future while keeping the rest of the world dependent on us for access to the world's best hardware.³² We modified the chips as needed, embedding our rootkit backdoor accesses so deeply in the hardware that it was nearly impossible to find, and absolutely impossible to remove.³³ We were getting ready to lock the rest of the world into our past.

2023 was our breakout year; the year we operationalized quantum computing for unlocking our enemies' secrets, quantum-secure communications, and establishing our new currency. The quantum breakthrough allowed us to perform the equivalent of a ten-thousand-year calculation in less than two seconds. We immediately and secretly began building hundreds of quantum machines powered by our "artificial sun" nuclear reactor which we'd perfected in 2021.³⁴ We'd prepared

for this leap in computing power for decades by recording in bulk the world's internet traffic in anticipation that we could someday unlock the world's secrets.³⁵ On March 14, 2023 we started unlocking everything.

Quantum was a double-edged sword for us in that it made nearly all previous encryption methods obsolete while providing its own new secure cryptography. For the first time in our history, we could communicate in complete secrecy without concern of enemy eavesdropping.

Perhaps most importantly, it unlocked the information of the financial world. What quantum did for encryption, it also did for crypto—and they worked together as vengeful sisters to destroy America. Using our insight into American encrypted communications, we leaked damaging information about America wherever it fit our agenda and bolstered our American political friends. Once you establish a reputation for truth, a little embellishment goes unnoticed, especially for those who want to believe. Using our media connections in the United States and across the world, it was easy to selectively use this information to discredit the United States and ruin their negotiations with friends and foes alike. We targeted companies friendly to the United States by taking down their leadership when they chose to act in America's best interests versus our own. As their government tried desperately to patch together their credibility, we sowed chaos in their country by talking directly to the American people. We al-

ready knew the personal data of every current and former federal employee.³⁶ This, combined with snapchats, meeting recordings, Facebook, emails, and financial records gave us incredible leverage against almost any individual we could pick. The “internet of things” lightbulbs, thermostats, smoke detectors, doorbells, and robot vacuums that they bought from us gave us more information than we could have dreamt of asking for.³⁷ We knew when they woke up, went to work, when they came home, and even the floor plans of their homes! Their government’s stumbling responses to our technological progress only positioned us more favorably, such as their ham-fisted attempt to ban TikTok, which only made it more popular. Their hate for us was like gasoline which, when lit by their prejudice and bias, consumed their country and destroyed all faith the people had in their government—a feeling that was shared around the world.

When the American dollar started to crash in 2024, everyone was desperate for safe-haven investments and money flowed out of the world’s economies and into gold, silver, precious metals, and cryptocurrency.³⁸ Of these, crypto emerged as the money of choice for the masses under the mistaken belief that the blockchain was mathematically impervious to theft and manipulation. Our quantum technology proved that assumption false, but sensing the opportunity to build trust and goodwill, we pledged to not manipulate it and to exchange its value, “dollar for dollar,” for our secure currency, what the American’s deroga-

tively called the “CHitCoin.”³⁹ In exchange, countries would agree to use it as the world reserve currency and guarantee to give their citizens the option of using WeChat for their mobile banking app. The Americans and Europeans were furious and resisted with all their power. They soon introduced their quantum currency, FedCoin. But they were too late. The American dollar was worthless and all trust in the stability of the American government had been shaken by the political protests that had plagued them since 2019. The final blow came when we convinced Amazon and Walmart to accept a small subsidy from us in exchange for giving a 5 percent discount to all shoppers that used our currency, or they would pay 5 percent more to import our products. The companies explained to the public that they weren’t penalizing the American FedCoin, but sensible business practices required them to charge “just a little more” to use FedCoin, as insurance against instability. That was it, within a year, FedCoin joined Ethereum and Bitcoin in the digital dustbin and, when the Americans weren’t bartering, they were using CHitCoin for nearly all transactions.

By late 2025 civil unrest reached a peak and Americans with the means were leaving for higher, CHitCoin-paying jobs in Europe, Canada, and here in our great nation. With access to personnel records of the world’s best companies, we actively recruited their best and brightest from their military and their civilian institutions. We paid them to relocate to our new innovation cities where they are building the artificial

intelligence, robotics, energy storage, DNA sequencing, and next-gen quantum platforms that will carry us to the next century!

The civil unrest in the United States was unlike any violence their soft citizens had ever seen. Of course, other nations were struggling mightily as well. However, in this turbulent time we continued to find opportunities to demonstrate the strength, wisdom, and benevolence of the Party.

Venezuela was our posterchild in the Western world. Back in 2008, their president came to us to learn how we use social control to ensure the safety of our people. By 2017 they were paying our companies \$70 million to help establish their “fatherland project:” a national identification card and social media/payment tracking app which allowed them better insight into disharmony within their population. In exchange, we required them to share their data with our big data centers.⁴⁰ Facial recognition, gait analysis, voice recognition, and geolocation; we were soon tracking every person living in their country, both through the security apparatus, and through their internet of things. Now, this was treasure! Our Artificial Intelligence scientists were even able to extend our language processing capabilities from Mandarin to Spanish and soon we were able to track and analyze popular sentiment using machine learning for each individual person. Having been among the first to transition to CHitCoin, by 2025, Venezuela was the West’s model government, with nearly zero crime and a

benevolent government flush with our currency in exchange for regular deliveries of Venezuelan crude. This was our “post-modern authoritarian state in which the country’s population is monitored around the clock through their phones and an ever-growing network of surveillance cameras equipped with facial recognition technology.”⁴¹ Seeing our rising strength, it was no surprise when the Venezuelan president publicly embraced an increasingly close partnership and called for a new political movement of “Venezuelan Communism with Chinese Characteristics.” We were soon exporting our “civil policing and society support” solutions to most South American countries, propping them up, helping to control their population, and establishing a firm foothold in this new world.

In the months leading up to the 2026 United States elections, we tripled our propaganda efforts. The American Dream had died, and we continued to pull only their best and brightest to come work for us in China. It was time for a new dream, the China Dream, and it was coming to us twenty years ahead of our plan. Using the sentiment prediction algorithms we’d spent the last decade tuning, along with the data we gathered from each American citizen, we were able to run each of our truth campaigns through a virtual sentiment simulation, hundreds of times, until we found the right key words, the right conflicts, and the right biases which would make the Americans the most receptive to our messages. We crafted a new American dream based on their fables: the story of the great American

underdog. A “true comeback story.” America would rise from the ashes, but it would leave democracy behind. Clearly the democracy and unfettered capitalism experiment had failed. What was needed was a new socialist elite to lead the country into the brave new world of their future. And so over the last two years we laid the groundwork for the recent presidential election using social media in ways the Americans

never thought possible. We destroyed our enemies in the mob rule of public opinion and as of today, I’m happy to announce that we have many new friends of our people who now live in Washington. They have agreed to restore balance to our world, to remove their warships outside our nine-dash line, and to fully support our reintegration of Taiwan by 2030.

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