



CHINA REFORM MONITOR

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September 28, 2020 **Joshua Eisenman**

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GROWING CALLS IN WASHINGTON TO END "ONE CHINA" POLICY

China's increasingly threatening posture towards Taiwan has produced growing calls among Americans and U.S. politicians that the country should abandon its long-standing policy of "strategic ambiguity" and adopt an unambiguous embrace of the island, which China claims. This month, U.S. Congressman Tom Tiffany introduced a bill calling on the U.S. to end its "one China" policy, resume formal relations with Taiwan, and begin negotiations on a U.S.-Taiwan Free Trade Agreement. Writing in *Foreign Affairs*, meanwhile, Council on Foreign Relations President Richard Haass has argued that maintaining ambiguity "will not keep the peace in the Taiwan Strait for the next four decades," and called for the U.S. to "adopt a position of strategic clarity, making explicit that it would respond to any Chinese use of force against Taiwan." (*Foreign Affairs*, September 2, 2020; AEI, September 18, 2020; *Taiwan News*, September 18, 2020)

SENATE DEMOCRATS ANNOUNCE \$350 BILLION PLAN TO CONFRONT CHINA

Senate Democrats have introduced the \$350 billion America LEADS Act to confront China. The bill comes as U.S.-China relations spiral to their lowest point in years, with both American political parties in rare agreement that under Xi Jinping the country has become a threat to U.S. interests and global security. The Democratic bill would strengthen the U.S. medical supply chain, support new technologies like 5G and AI, and counter China's "predatory economic behavior" such as intellectual property theft, dumping, and currency manipulation. It would also direct the president to fully enforce sanctions laws targeting China's "malign behavior," allow certain residents of Hong Kong and Xinjiang to apply for admission to the U.S., and reaffirm U.S. commitments to Pacific allies. At a hearing this week focused on "countering China," Senate Foreign Relations Committee chair James Risch (R-ID) said he hoped the Democrats' bill would be combined with GOP legislation introduced back in July. "I'm hoping we can bring them all together into one bill that we can all get behind," Risch said. (*Korea Times*, September 18, 2020)

U.S., H&M CUT TRADE TIES WITH CHINA OVER FORCED LABOR IN XINJIANG

U.S. customs will bar numerous goods from Xinjiang including cotton, garments and hair products due to fears they were made using forced labor. China slammed the move as U.S. "bullying" and dismissed accusations of forced labor in its western province as "a complete fabrication." Meanwhile, Swedish clothing giant H&M announced that it would no longer source cotton from Xinjiang – China's largest cotton growing area. The company said it had conducted "an inquiry at all the garment manufacturing factories we work with in China aiming to ensure that they are not employing workers through labor transfer programs or employment schemes where forced labor is an increased risk." (*Channel News Asia*, September 16, 2020)

OUTGOING U.S. AMBASSADOR TO CHINA BLASTS BEIJING ON COVID-19

Outgoing U.S. ambassador to China Terry Branstad has issued a rare broadside against Beijing for covering up the origins of the coronavirus pandemic and the Chinese government's continued "unwillingness to admit wrongdoing." He blamed China's political system for the global outbreak: "Chinese system was such that they covered it up and even penalized the doctors who pointed it out at the beginning. So the result was what could have been contained in Wuhan ended up becoming a worldwide pandemic. I think President Trump believed the Chinese when they said what they said about the virus and then he and the rest of the world found out what they said was not true and misinformation and cover-ups occurred." (*New York Post*, September 18, 2020)

U.S., UK WARN TRAVELERS OF ARBITRARY ARREST IN CHINA

The U.S. and British governments are both warning citizens of a rising risk of arbitrary detention in China. The new UK guidance said China's authorities have detained foreigners, including Canadians, Australians, Japanese and at least one American, for "endangering national security." Washington's advisory, in turn, warned that China imposes arbitrary detention and exit bans to compel cooperation with investigations, pressures family members to return to China from abroad, influences civil disputes to gain bargaining leverage over foreign governments. U.S. citizens travelling or residing in China or Hong Kong may be detained without access to U.S. consular services. American citizens were also urged to "reconsider travel" to Hong Kong, because Beijing's "unilateral and arbitrary exercise of police and security power." (*Guardian*, September 15, 2020)