

America's extensive economic, political, and military involvement in the global community means that the country has a wide range of potential national security threats. However, even with this multitude of potential threats one threat is more ominous than the rest, that threat is the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). To be clear, this threat does not necessarily involve Chinese citizens, rather the source of the threat comes from the actions of the leaders of the CCP. The threat of their actions is very real and many national security experts have been worrying about the CCP for some time now. For example, the head of national security for the United States John Ratcliffe said, "the People's Republic of China poses the greatest threat to America today" (Ratcliffe). If China is a threat to America, it does beg the questions, what will America be able to do to combat this threat? The following paragraphs will take a look at what the different levels and branches of government can do with regard to the CCP.

First, the three levels of government will be discussed to show what roles they can play in combating the CCP. Local governments are the smallest form of government in the U.S. and their impact in combating the CCP will be relatively minor. Their role may be minor, but local governments can still play an important role in helping America contain the CCP. Perhaps the most important thing that local governments can do is to source their purchases from American companies or from other allies of America. Local governments spend a lot of money on materials for their towns, if they can redirect their money away from the CCP by sourcing from American companies, then local governments can help lessen the CCP's economic domination. The CCP has been aggressively ramping up its economic involvement and this economic boom contributes to the regime repressing minority groups and third world countries. Additionally, the CCP significantly funds the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea, which continues to cause friction with military threats on a global scale, not to mention North Korea uses funding to

continue its practices of having generational labor camps (Brown 869). Additionally, local governments can use their influence to promote other institutions to purchase from American or allied companies. That being said, the most impactful thing local governments can do is to buy from companies not associated with China.

Moving on to state governments, they can play a somewhat more active role in combating the CCP because of their influence and size. Just like local governments, state governments can buy resources from American companies or allied countries, but they can also do more. One of the things state governments can do is institute policies that heavily vet students from the CCP before they attend state run universities. As many national security experts have pointed out, the CCP has engaged in wide-spread espionage, by stealing intellectual property from U.S. companies and universities (Glaser 26). If state governments can focus more of their efforts on keeping the intellectual property of their universities out of the hands of the CCP, this will help Americans and their allies. Ultimately, this is where the power of the state government stops because of their inability to strike treaties or enact tariffs.

State and local governments have important but limited powers in their roles of helping to combat the CCP, however, the federal government is by far the most powerful when it comes to impacting the CCP. The federal government can impose tariffs and trade sanctions against the CCP. The federal government can also use its influence to spread the word that the CCP is a threat to freedom. Due to America's strong allegiance with many countries, they are in a unique position to show other nations that the CCP has dark intentions (Bown). Another action the federal government could take is to take official stances on whether or not they accept the CCP as the true ruling party of China, they could assert that they believe Taiwan to be the main body of China and focus efforts on assisting Taiwan. Basically, the federal government has the most

power when it comes to combating the CCP because of their ability to negotiate with other countries, state and local governments are not allowed to do this based on the U.S. constitution.

If the federal government is the most powerful player in terms of the levels of government, then it is important to see how the three branches of the federal government can contribute to combating the CCP. The judicial branch cannot do all that much on its own. Because courts do not choose which cases are brought before them, there is not really a proactive action they can take as a governing body to influence the situation with the CCP. The only thing the judicial branch can do is to become aware of the threat that the CCP poses to America and use this awareness in their adjudicating of decisions. Because the judicial branches use judicial review to create laws, they cannot take actions on their own accord, so their role in helping combat the CCP is relatively small. Most of the power is divided somewhat evenly between congress and the executive branch.

A lot of the powers between congress and the executive branch are done in conjunction. In other words, one branch can't take a form of action, unless the other branch consents to that action being taken. For example, if the executive branch strikes a treaty with a potential ally, that treaty must be approved with a 2/3rds vote in congress. Therefore, any treaties that the executive branch forms must be approved by congress. Additionally, both the president and the senate can impose tariffs and each branch has means of blocking or altering each other's tariffs. That being said both the executive branch and the legislative branch can both play a role in creating tariffs and striking treaties to combat the CCP. The most powerful option both branches have is their ability to enter into conflict. The executive branch and congress have the sole power to enter into wars, congress must approve a war and then the presidents officially send troops by acting as commander and chief.

The CCP poses a significant threat to American national security and the security of many of America's allies. They pose this threat by continuing to support human rights violations, creating debts traps for third world countries, and by using espionage to commit massive intellectual property theft. The CCP also engages in massive propaganda campaigns that seek to undermine global trust in American and our allies (Brown). All levels and branches of U.S. government can help combat the CCP, but the federal government has the most power. Within the federal government the legislative and executive branch have the most power to combat the CCP. Although, the CCP poses a significant threat, this threat can be combatted without engaging in military conflict. Military conflict should be avoided at all costs, but every political and economic tactic should be employed to divert power away from the CCP. Thankfully, there are avenues for the American government to impact the CCP without engaging in war.

Works Cited

- BOWN, CHAD P. "Export Controls: America's Other National Security Threat." *Duke Journal of Comparative & International Law*, vol. 30, no. 2, Spring 2020, pp. 283–308. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=shib&db=a9h&AN=143517603&site=eds-live.
- Brown, James D. J. "Japan's Security Cooperation with Russia: Neutralizing the Threat of a China–Russia United Front." *International Affairs*, vol. 94, no. 4, July 2018, pp. 861–882. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.1093/ia/iyy031.
- GLASER, BONNIE S., and KELLY FLAHERTY. "Us-China Relations in Free Fall." *Comparative Connections: A Triannual E-Journal on East Asian Bilateral Relations*, vol. 22, no. 2, Sept. 2020, pp. 23–38. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=shib&db=aci&AN=146405223 &site=eds-live.
- Ratliffe, J. (2020, December 03). Opinion | China is national security Threat No. 1. Retrieved February 06, 2021, from <https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-is-national-security-threat-no-1-11607019599>