

# FBI Escalates McCarthyite Attacks on Chinese Scholars, Scientists, Students

by Mike Billington

April 28—It is shocking, but not in the least surprising, that the same institutions that have carried out the failed coup against President Donald Trump on behalf of British intelligence—especially the FBI—are also directly engaged in a witch hunt against China, just as Trump is negotiating what he calls an “epic deal” between the United States and China. The scope of that attack has reached massive proportions over the past weeks, in an operation which can only be compared to the Truman-McCarthy witch hunt in the 1950s against imagined “subversives” working on behalf of “Godless communism” in Russia and China, supposedly aimed at “destroying the American way of life.”

While the lies against China’s historic Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) escalate around the world, the neo-conservative and neoliberal forces in the Congress, and even within the Trump Administration, are demanding that nations in Asia, Africa, South America, Central America and the Caribbean reject the infrastructure development projects being offered by China’s BRI, and even break relations with China. Meanwhile, the FBI has launched a campaign to demonize China’s scholars, students and scientists within the United States.

Over the past weeks, the FBI has overseen the revocation of visas held by hundreds of Chinese scholars and analysts who have worked for many years with their American counterparts to build understanding and cooperation between the world’s two most powerful economies, while also forcing major institutions to fire Chinese scientists working in the United States, many of whom have made major contributions to progress in medical and other scientific fields of great value to the United States and to the world. The justifications for these hostile and provocative actions are as vacuous as the lies about “Rus-

sian collusion” with Trump, peddled by the same lying and leaking FBI that has served British intelligence in the coup attempt against the President, preventing him from carrying out his pledge to build friendly relations with Russia and China.

On April 21, the *New York Times* revealed that the FBI had been revoking the visas of dozens of Chinese scholars. One of those scholars, Wang Wen, the head of the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies at Renmin University in Beijing, told the *Global Times* on April 19:

[Over 280 Chinese scholars] have had their U.S. visas canceled or obstructed, or have been ha-



Wang Wen, Executive Dean of the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies.

passed by FBI agents since 2018. . . . My visa was canceled after I attended a conference at the Carter Center in Atlanta. Before that, I went to the United States three to five times a year, normally for academic exchange events such as dialogues on trade and South China Sea issues between Chinese and U.S. think tanks. None of these are sensitive activities.

Wang Wen was given no reason for the revocation. He was told that he could re-apply for a single-visit visa (he had held a ten-year multiple-visit visa for many years), but when he went to the U.S. Embassy, he was told to provide travel records for the past 15 years, his family members' information, social media accounts, bank accounts and some other personal information, "for no reason, again," according to *China Daily* on April 24.

Wang Wen's Chongyang Institute in Beijing had sponsored a symposium on Sept. 29, 2015, in which Helga Zepp-LaRouche presented the Chinese edition of the *EIR* [Special Report](#), *The New Silk Road Becomes the World Land-Bridge*. Wang Wen made introductory comments at the press conference, and his Institute distributed the Report to other institutions around the country.

Wang Wen also told *Global Times* that "it cannot be ruled out that [the revocation of visas] is a move by a U.S. government department to expand its authority in order to seize power."

### **FBI Sees 'Whole-of-Society' Threat**

Several other leading scholars also reported that they had been stopped and interviewed by the FBI during one of their recent visits to the United States, and despite cooperating fully, had had their visas revoked, with no justification offered. One scholar, Lü Xiang from the China-U.S. Department at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), told *Global Times*:

It's ludicrous to reject Chinese scholars from entering the United States, based on FBI concerns that they are related to China's intelligence agency. The CASS is an independent academy which doesn't report to, or follow the orders of, any intelligence department. The United States is unreasonably anxious now and blocks the regular interaction of personnel. This is very unreasonable. I hope this is an anomaly of a specific historical period rather than something very serious. I have talked to some U.S. scholar friends about the incident. They are even more shocked than I am and cannot understand the U.S. government's move.

China's *Global Times*, a Chinese Communist Party publication run by the *People's Daily* [editorialized](#) on April 18:

The United States has gone too far. . . . Most Chi-

nese scholars studying in the United States understand the United States best, support China and the United States to develop relations, and handle China-U.S. frictions rationally. . . . An increasing number of Chinese people think that the United States is losing its senses and even going mad.

This attack on intellectual exchanges with China was launched in its current form by FBI Director Christopher Wray. During an appearance before the Senate Intelligence Committee on February 13, 2018, Wray was asked by the extremist neoconservative Sen. Marco Rubio about supposed Chinese "infiltration" of U.S. colleges and universities, including both students and professors. Wray responded:

I think in this setting I would just say that the use of non-traditional collectors, especially in the academic setting, whether it's professors, scientists, students, we see in almost every field office that the FBI has around the country. . . . They're exploiting the very open research and development environment that we have, which we all revere, but they're taking advantage of it. So, one of the things we're trying to do is view the China threat as not just a "whole-of-government" threat but a "whole-of-society" threat on their end, and I think it's going to take a whole-of-society response by us. So, it's not just the intelligence community, but it's raising awareness within our academic sector, within our private sector, as part of the defense.

Sen. Joe McCarthy and J. Edgar Hoover would be proud.

### **Chinese Medical Researchers Fired**

Indeed, another area of the "whole-of-society" attack by the FBI on U.S.-China cooperation is the critically important cooperation in scientific research and development. The cooperation between former Congressman Frank Wolf and the FBI in targetting Chinese scientists working at NASA (including legislation to restrict cooperation with China in space programs) is notorious as a case of the United States shooting itself in the foot, as China now takes the lead in several crucial areas of space science.

The FBI has also launched a major attack on U.S.-China cooperation in medical research. On April 19, it was announced in the *Houston Chronicle* that three sci-

entists at the MD Anderson Cancer Center had been fired, while at least another 20 were under investigation, accused by the FBI of stealing “American” research, and failure to report matters related to their ties to Chinese laboratories and research centers. MD Anderson is part of the Texas Medical Center of Houston (TMC), considered one of the best in the world. The Chinese government is in negotiations with the TMC to use its help and example in establishing a huge new medical center near Beijing. The *Chronicle* [noted](#) that over the past 18 months,

10 MD Anderson senior researchers or administrators of Chinese descent have retired, resigned or been replaced on administrative leave. Some purportedly left of their own accord, but supporters say a toxic climate and perception of racial profiling hastened their departure. Two of the researchers subsequently took positions at Chinese institutions.

In fact, scientists from China or of Chinese descent are under investigation by the FBI in literally thousands of research facilities across the country. The pressure on the clinics to investigate their scientific staff who have some connection to China began in 2015 under pressure from the Obama Administration. Dr. Francis Collins, the Director of the government’s National Institutes of Health (NIH), said this month that the FBI worked through the NIH to demand that the institutions turn over emails, computer and other work data of literally thousands of scientists, or face a cut in NIH funding. According to the *Chronicle*, Collins sent a letter to 10,000 U.S. institutions—repeat, 10,000 U.S. institutions—requesting that they help curb “unacceptable breaches of trust and confidentiality.” The letters were followed up with emails targeting specific individuals.

For any comparison, one must go back to the infamous story of Qian Xuesen, the brilliant scientist at the Jet Propulsion Lab in California in the 1940s, who worked directly with the nation’s leading rocket scientists. Qian was falsely accused by the FBI in 1950 of being an agent of communist China. He was stripped of his security clearance (and thus could not work on behalf of the U.S. science programs), but was also forbidden to leave the country to return to China, for fear he would take his genius with him! When he was finally released after five years of house arrest, he returned to China, disgusted with the degrading treatment he had received from the U.S. police-state



Public Domain

*Qian Xuesen*

apparatus. Ironically, he went on to become the father of China’s missile and nuclear weapons programs.

### **A Communist Spy Under Every Bed**

It is clear that the current FBI attacks have the same perverted premise, and will have a similar detrimental effect on U.S. medical (and other) research—indeed, on scientific progress for the human race as a whole.

The current process began in August 2018, when the FBI convened a meeting of more than 100 leaders from the MD Anderson Cancer Center and about 20 other hospitals and health systems from across Texas. An FBI statement described the meeting as “the first step in a new initiative” which it planned to “replicate around the country.” The aim was to “establish, cultivate, and enhance public-private relationships to mitigate attempts by foreign adversaries to steal from our institutions for their benefit.” While China was not named at the time in the public statement, a follow-up meeting in Houston one month later featured Bill Priestap, the head of the Counterintelligence Division of the FBI, who made it clear that the target was China.

In testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee on December 12, 2018, Priestap, who was also at the center of the Russiagate scam against Russia and coup against President Trump, presented himself as an expert on Chinese culture and society—which would be laughable if that claim were not so dangerous. He said in part:

It is impossible to overstate the differences between the American and Chinese systems. China is an authoritarian, one-party state where the

Chinese Communist Party reigns supreme. At the Chinese Communist Party's direction, the Chinese government dominates every facet of Chinese life, through actions such as central economic planning, Internet and media censorship, and leveraging intrusive technologies.

The Chinese government is attempting to acquire or steal, not only the plans and intentions of the United States government, but also the ideas and innovations of the very people that make our economy so incredibly successful. . . .

They also aim to rewrite the rules to shape the world in their image, and they have already made progress on this front. The rules they write seek to guarantee the dominance of their businesses and root Chinese national power in the very fabric of an international system. . . .

Make no mistake: the Chinese government is proposing itself as an alternative model for the world, one without a democratic system of government, and it is seeking to undermine the free and open rules-based order we helped establish following World War II.

He apparently left out that China was fluoridating our water supplies to pollute our "precious bodily fluids"—unless that part was redacted.

### What's at Stake

It is crucial that Americans understand that this witch hunt against Chinese scholars and scientists is an attack not only on China, but on the United States as well, and indeed on the future of mankind. Scientific progress, like great art, is universal, contributing to the advancement of the human condition throughout the world, and for all time. Restricting and restraining such advances in human knowledge is, as it always has been, the centerpiece of Empire, of imperial domination, and is abhorrent to those who understand the American System developed by geniuses like Benjamin Franklin and Alexander Hamilton.<sup>1</sup>

1. Brian Lantz, "Is Science Subversive? The Potential of U.S.-China Collaboration in Science." *EIR*, January 18, 2019. Pp. 36-45. [https://la-rouchepub.com/eiw/public/2019/eirv46n03-20190118/36-45\\_4603.pdf](https://la-rouchepub.com/eiw/public/2019/eirv46n03-20190118/36-45_4603.pdf)



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*MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, Texas.*

Look at the accomplishments of the MD Anderson Cancer Center, the initial target of this expanding FBI operation, which employs scientists from around the world, proudly collaborating to cure cancer. The Center published a list of the "shared research outputs" with hundreds of institutions around the world. In China, this included: Sun Yat Sen University, 2,342 shared research outputs; Fudan University, 1,387; Tianjin Medical University, 1,250; Shanghai Jiao Tong University, 559; Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, 408; and on and on—dozens of Chinese institutions working together with the Center for a common goal of improving the lives of citizens everywhere.

On Nov. 3, 2018, the Chinese Consul General in Houston, Li Qianmin, spoke at the annual meeting of the Alliance of North American Chinese Physicians in Houston. "China attaches great importance to health care in its people-centered development," he said. "I believe overseas Chinese medical professionals can tap into your cultural background and achieve more in the cooperation of relevant areas."

Was this a subversive attempt to steal U.S. secrets, to advance Chinese ambitions to undermine the western world? What sick, twisted mind would argue that?

Li continued: "The Chinese side was impressed by Houston's strong development momentum and excellent investment environment. I believe that more and

more Chinese companies will come and invest in Houston.”

The Mayor of Houston, Sylvester Turner, also attended the meeting, saying: “Of the doctors that we have, the Chinese doctors who are here in the city, we are proud of each and every one of them. We have some outstanding physicians that had happened to make the city stronger and happier.”

Mayor Turner led a delegation to China in 2017, where they met with Li Pumin, the secretary general of China’s National Development and Reform Commission. Li told the delegation, “China needs a medical center like the Texas Medical Center,” adding that China was already utilizing Houston’s medical institutions for help in meeting the growing health care requirements of its 1.3 billion people.<sup>2</sup>

### Striking Fear

The Chinese scientific and scholarly community, as well as the Chinese-American citizens of the United States, are extremely concerned about this return of Cold War hysteria. At a meeting held by the MD Anderson Cancer Center administrators with their employees on April 22, hoping to calm their fears of racial profiling and illegitimate surveillance, one researcher told MD Anderson President Peter Pisters, according to *Science Magazine*, that the employees were worried about an “increasingly xenophobic and isolationist” federal government, as seen in the actions of the FBI. “How can you,” the researcher asked, “and I plead, please—reassure all of our employees that we as an institution and academia are not being manipulated as part of a centralized policy to practice and to act in ways that are diametrically opposite to our core values?”

The “Committee of 100,” a national, non-partisan leadership organization of prominent Chinese Americans in business, government, academia, and the arts for the past 30 years, issued a statement on April 7 titled, “Committee of 100 Condemns Chinese American Racial Profiling,” which reads in part:

The members of the Committee of 100—all United States citizens—are compelled to stand

up and speak out against the racial profiling that has become increasingly common in the United States, where Chinese Americans are being targeted as potential traitors, spies, and agents of foreign influence. . . . In the last few years, a few high American government officials, respected media outlets, and opinion leaders have stated or suggested that all Chinese persons in America should be suspected of wrongdoing. Overzealous criminal prosecutions in recent years of innocent individuals such as Sherry Chen and Xiaoxing Xi, like Wen Ho Lee before them, have embarrassingly fallen apart, while ruining lives for no reason. Such targeting of individuals based on their ethnic heritage or national origin violates our shared American ideals. It simply has to stop.

More than a year ago, the Director of the FBI testified before Congress to the effect that all Chinese students and researchers represented a “whole-of-society” threat to the American way of life. Although he had a chance to clarify, he chose to reiterate that he meant what he had said, that in his eyes, every person of Chinese descent should not be trusted. Likewise, some leading China watchers have expressed similar sentiments. They have warned that Chinese American organizations may be used by China’s government for illicit activities. The more sophisticated have disavowed any intent to stereotype. For Chinese Americans, however, the impact has already been chilling and negative: in scientific, business, political, academic and government circles, Chinese Americans are reporting being subject to greater scrutiny and discriminatory treatment in their work and daily lives. Racial profiling is wrong and un-American in our nation of democracy. It is imperative that those who are committed to the civil rights of all Americans disavow this kind of broad-brush racial stereotyping and fear-mongering.

We at *EIR* concur with this concern, and call on President Trump to include in his negotiations with President Xi Jinping, a pledge to put an end to the rogue operations of an out-of-control FBI leadership, as he has already pledged to do in regard to the Russiagate scam.

2. Brian Lantz, “Houston’s Mayor Leads Trade Mission to China.” *EIR*, December 29, 2017. Pp. 19-21. [https://larouche.org/eiw/public/2017/eirv44n52-20171229/19-21\\_4452.pdf](https://larouche.org/eiw/public/2017/eirv44n52-20171229/19-21_4452.pdf)