

How Much of a Threat is Espionage from Chinese Immigrants?

This question was raised in a February 20, 2021 [National Interest report](#) by Alex Nowrasteh, Director of Immigration Studies at the Cato Institute. The Trump administration created the "China Initiative" in the Department of Justice in 2018 to counter a Chinese "economic blitzkrieg" to steal intellectual property, trade secrets, and technology to undermine the U.S. economy and national security. Massive amounts of government resources and taxpayers' dollars have been spent on this xenophobic initiative without much transparency and accountability.

Despite its tough rhetoric, the federal government has released no systematic data on espionage or provided estimates about how serious of a threat it is. On February 20, 2020, [The Hill](#) reported that "Rep. Jamie Raskin, who chairs the House Oversight and Reform Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, and Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus Chairwoman Rep. Judy Chu sent letters demanding documents about the two agencies' investigations into whether Chinese Americans were working as spies on behalf of China... While the two lawmakers acknowledged that there have been some confirmed cases of espionage, they questioned whether the focus on Chinese Americans amounted to racial profiling." There has not been a satisfactory response a year later.

On February 9, 2021, Cato Institute released a report titled [Espionage, Espionage-Related Crimes, and Immigration: A Risk Analysis, 1990–2019](#). According to the report, during that thirty-year period, about 1 in 6.5 million people per year in the United States committed espionage or an espionage related crime. A total of 583 of these spies were native-born Americans while the rest were foreign-born or had unknown origins. Only 184 of them were from China.

Based on the risk-benefit analysis, Alex Nowrasteh concludes in the National Interest report:

Ultimately, the government should try to reduce espionage where practicable, but the national security establishment needs to justify its worry with systematic evidence. My research supplies such evidence and makes it clear that circumstances don't justify Secretary of State Tony Blinken's recent [statement](#) that China "poses the most significant challenge of any nation-state to the United States." I've shown my work. It's time for those worried about Chinese espionage to show theirs.

02/24 Webinar on Building Coalition Against "China Initiative" Discrimination

Capacity for the webinar is limited. Register and join the event here: <https://bit.ly/3qbRcba>

On February 19, 2021, President Biden issued [a statement on the Day of Remembrance of Japanese American Internment](#). Seventy-nine years ago, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which stripped Japanese Americans of their civil rights and led to the

wrongful internment of some 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent. "I reflect on the bravery of so many Japanese Americans who stood up against this hateful policy, including civil rights leaders like Fred Korematsu who fought against Japanese internment and were a symbol of hope. Their legacies remind us all that civil liberties must be vigorously defended and protected," President Biden said in the statement.

Karen Korematsu, Founder and Executive Director of the Fred T. Korematsu Institute, is one of three distinguished panelists in the February 24 webinar. The others are Becky Monroe at the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and Dr. Les Wong, President Emeritus, San Francisco State University.

Preparing for Requested U.S. House Hearing

There have been many congressional hearings on economic espionage and trade secret thefts from the government's perspective, but not one on the racial profiling of Asian American and Chinese scientists. This may change soon with [the delivered letter](#) from Maryland Senator Susan Lee and Terry Lierman to Rep. Jamie Raskin, Chair of the House Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, calling for such a hearing on racial profiling.

A successful hearing will depend on authoritative and compelling witnesses and testimonies. The number of witnesses in a hearing will be limited. The APA Justice Task Force endorses Frank H. Wu, to be a witness to appear as a coalition representative of non-profit/tax-exempt organizations in this requested hearing. Frank is [President of Queens College](#). He has done extensive work on this subject, such as this op-ed for Inside Higher Ed: [Attacking Chinese on Our Campuses Only Hurts America](#).

Frank would not be appearing in his official capacity heading an institution of higher education. Please note Frank would need to communicate directly with you about this. There is no guarantee he will be asked to appear, nor that he would be able to appear on your behalf. This survey assesses interest. Frank is an attorney licensed to practice in Washington, D.C.; he will determine whether it is appropriate to enter into an relationship as your attorney — to reiterate, any work performed in this regard would be pro bono (free of charge).

If you wish to sign on with Frank, please complete the following form at your earliest convenience: <http://bit.ly/2Nvs1ll>

Individuals and organizations are also encouraged to submit their own written testimonies if/when the hearing takes place.

March 1 APA Justice Meeting

The next APA Justice meeting will be held on March 1, 2021. Tentative agenda for the meeting will cover the February 24 webinar, University of Tennessee Professor Anming Hu, attorney Peter J. Toren on the "China Initiative" and the Sherry Chen case, and updates from the Anti-Racial Profiling Project, requested House hearing, and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. Participation in the off-record meeting is by invitation only. Summaries of past meetings are available at <https://bit.ly/3kxkqxP>.

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