



RESEARCH PAPER

U.S.-China Trade Policies Under the Biden Administration: A Critical Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study looks at how relations between the United States and China have changed under the Biden administration. It draws attention to Biden's stance on current tariffs, prospective new discussions, and their effects on technology and global supply lines. A constant shift has been seen in US trade policies in 20th century for balancing economic priorities, political alignments and global dynamics. There's been a divide among republicans and democrats over trade policies, republicans favored high tariffs before 1960s and advocated free trade post 1960s while democrats advocated lower tariffs pre 1960s and leaned toward protectionism in post 1960s. A bipartisan emerged in 2016 under Donald Trump administration to counter Chinese influence and high tariffs were imposed under section 301 of U.S. Trade Act of 1974. The study uses a qualitative methodology to examine how Biden's policies affect economic situations and bilateral ties. Biden's administration seeks to rebalance U.S.-China relations within a framework of economic security and international collaboration, according to the literature assessment, which also addresses topics of economic nationalism and strategic competitiveness.

KEYWORDS Biden Administration, Economic Nationalism, Global Supply Chains, Strategic Competition, U.S.-China Trade

Introduction

In 1784, the United States established business ties with China. Soon after the American War of Independence, the Empress of China, an American ship, traveled to China and began trading. Later, American missionaries shaped both sides' cultural perceptions by attempting to convert Chinese people to Christianity. A large number of Chinese immigrated to the United States because they believed it was a land of opportunity, particularly during the California Gold Rush and the building of the Transcontinental Railroad. Some Chinese leaders, such as Sun Yat-sen, were influenced by democratic ideals and admired the American political system. U.S.-China cooperation against Japan, particularly following the Pearl Harbor assault, was facilitated by U.S. resistance to Japan's 1930s push into China. The United States provided China with economic and military support during World War II and pushed for China's admittance to the U.N. Security Council after the war (Cheng, 2012).

The United States of America recognized Taiwan as a sovereign state in 1949 but refused to recognize the Peoples Republic of China. Ping pong diplomacy and President Nixon's trip to Beijing marked the beginning of formal relations. During President Carter's administration, diplomatic ties were established in 1979. The One China position was reiterated during President Clinton's visit in 1998. Following 9/11, China aided the United States in the fight against terrorism, and commercial relations increased, particularly as China's economy boomed. China made its first emissions commitment when Presidents Obama and Xi signed a climate change agreement in 2014. But President Trump's tariffs on Chinese imports in 2018 sparked a trade war that ended with the Phase One agreement in

2020, paving the way for a complicated and mutually reliant relationship between the two countries (Onion, Sullivan, Mullen, & Zapata., 2012).

Growing concerns about China's authoritarian policies and effects on American jobs resulted from the country's economic progress, which turned it from a small player in U.S. trade ties in the early 1990s to a major rival by the early 2000s. As a result, China has taken center stage in American economic and foreign policy, reflecting a change in how the world is perceived to be threatened. President Biden's administration will have to make important choices when it takes office about whether to maintain Trump's Section 301 tariffs on Chinese imports and how to handle the current "phase one" trade agreement. It will also have to think about whether to start new talks on more complicated topics like subsidies and cyber intrusions. The administration must also navigate bipartisan support for strong sanctions against China while weighing the economic ramifications of imposing rigorous export controls and addressing human rights issues around forced labor in Xinjiang. (Lester & Zhu, 2020).

Framed by the slogan invest, align, compete, the Biden administration's China policy sees China as a long-term threat to the international order. It emphasizes strategic competition through increased U.S. competitiveness and international alliances, while acknowledging that continued engagement is necessary because of China's economic integration (Jimin, Biden's China Policy: Evolution and Characteristics, 2022). With tariffs on a big percentage of Chinese exports and an emphasis on tackling Chinese subsidies and boosting American competitiveness through investments and cooperation with partners like the EU, the Biden administration is essentially carrying on Trump's trade policy. The administration has demonstrated reluctance to explore deeper economic relations with Indo-Pacific countries, potentially eroding U.S. power in the area, and there is doubt about the World Trade Organization's ability to resolve trade concerns with China despite a commitment to it (Hillman, 2021).

Literature Review

Thomas J. Schoenbaum in *The Biden Administration's Trade Policy: Promise and Reality* critically analyzes Joe Biden's trade policy decisions in comparison to its antecedents. Author focused seven major sections of concern for US in trade policy formulation in which Biden Administrations was expected to focus or make changes. Trade paradigm of 21st century in focused on de globalization which includes openness to selective states for trade which author describes as whorls and more trade is with 1st and 2nd whorl as there would be lying more friendly countries. Biden's policy was to bring more manufacturing back to USA to increase jobs which prevented new trade agreements. Section 232 tariffs on steel and aluminum also affected allies including the EU and Japan. In response to supply chain problems and inflation pressures, the Biden administration has kept many of these tariffs in place, including the section 301 tariffs on China, while implementing selective relief measures and tariff exclusions, such as in solar products. China's rise since its 1979 opening has been a contested, state-driven ascent rather than a U.S.-welcome economic integration. (Schoenbaum, 2023).

Wang Jiangyu and Dawn Yamane Hewett in article *U.S.-China Trade Relations In The Biden Era: Trade war, Industrial Policy, and rule-based international order* explains that Joe Bidens policies toward China were less aggressive than that of Trump Administrations policies but he used already imposed tariffs to renegotiate new deals. Biden did not advocated trumps policies but followed because republicans and democrats both agree to be hard on China. Biden Admiration continued trump tariffs and focused on technological competition which included ban on TikTok, export controls of American technology, 5G, stepped investments in Chinese firms related to military and surveillance, semiconductors. Under the Biden-backed U.S. Innovation and Competition Act, more than \$250 billion is allocated to increase U.S. technical and industrial competitiveness, with \$52 billion going

toward semiconductor manufacturing and \$195 billion going toward research and development in critical fields like biotechnology and artificial intelligence. China's response to the Biden administration's call for a rules-based international order to hold the nation accountable for its trade practices creates a complex and unpredictable trade policy environment (Jiangyu & Hewett, 2022).

Zeno Leoni in article *The economy-security conundrum in American grand strategy: foreign economic policy toward China from Obama to Biden* explains the economy-security dilemma. Scholars like Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer advocate minimizing U.S. global duties because liberal hegemony sometimes clashes with national interests and realism principles. Biden's approach, which may be summed up in the words "invest, align, compete," prioritizes bolstering American internal power, establishing partnerships with foreign nations, and waging strategic competition with China in order to safeguard American interests. The Obama administration's regionalism and pragmatic, Wilsonian approach to foreign economic policy toward China are exemplified by the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which aimed to counter China's economic influence by enforcing stringent regulations on state-owned enterprises and advancing U.S. interests in the Asia-Pacific. In contrast, the Trump administration opposed China's state capitalism through a confrontational, nationalist strategy that focused on bilateral trade tariffs. Biden's foreign economic policy seeks to address the economy-security conundrum by bolstering supply chain resilience, re-engineering the liberal international order through partnerships, and implementing policies like the Build Back Better World (B3W) and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) to counter China's influence and advance U.S.-aligned standards. Biden's economic strategy seeks to create a US-led zone of influence by severing ties with China (Leoni, 2022).

Md Sajjad Hosainin article *US-China Trade Relationship under Joe Biden Administration: a Theoretical Prediction* explains that the two largest economies in the world, the United States and China, have an impact on the global economy and that their trade ties have an impact on the world as well. Expanding tariff exemptions on Chinese medical products, banning US investments in some Chinese defense and surveillance firms, and implementing a pragmatic approach that acknowledges the complexities of US-China economic ties are all crucial measures. Furthermore, in order to counter China's influence by supporting US technology companies and enhancing aid to other sectors, bipartisan support for the Strategic Competition Act places a high priority on examining Trump's policies and trade volume debates. Despite the two nations' mutual economic dependency, Biden's government has maintained Trump-era policies while prioritizing domestic investments to compete with China, raising concerns about prolonged trade conflicts and their impact on the global economy (Hosain, 2021).

Research Methodology

This research is focused on Trade Policies Toward China Under the Biden Administration. For researching this, different approaches would be used. Qualitative method would be used. Policy Documents, speeches, official statements would be analyzed to understand the themes of trade policy decisions. Data would be collected from secondary sources which include statements of US and Chinese trade representatives. Academic articles, editorials published since Biden took office would be analyzed to get insights of would be extracted from data analysis of documents. Analysis of editorials would help interpreting portrayal of policies to public and public sentiments regarding certain policies.

Over time, U.S. trade policy has changed dramatically to reflect changes in economic and political circumstances. Prior to the 1960s, Republicans, speaking for Northern businessmen, favoured high tariffs, while Democrats advocated low tariffs because of Southern agrarian interests. Republicans supported free trade during a post-1960s realignment, while Democrats represented multiethnic urban areas and took protectionist

positions until making a protectionist shift in 2016. Republican-controlled stable, high tariffs during the Restriction Era (post-Civil War) limited export profits from low foreign tariffs. With reciprocal tariff reductions backed by large social payments, the Reciprocity and Redistribution Era (post-Great Depression) arose under Democratic leadership, promoting free trade and the welfare state. Embedded liberalism-maintained stability throughout the post-World War II era (1940s–1970s), even in the face of economic changes such as the emergence of Europe and Japan as trading partners. Inadequate social transfers and pressure from international export behemoths like China sparked the present Era of Retreat in the middle of the 2010s. The Republican shift towards protectionism, which was characterized by increased tariffs and waning free trade commitments, concluded this bipartisan turn towards protectionism about 2016. Global trade dynamics and changes in political power have continuously impacted these developments (Bowen, Broz, & Rosendorff, 2022).

Results and Discussions

In contrast to his more recent predecessors (Bush, Obama, and Trump), Biden didn't develop a distinct ideological stance on US foreign policy. Instead than being motivated by certain personal ideas, his policies were shaped by structural forces. In handling relations with China in particular, Biden's policy was to strike a balance between security goals and economic requirements. In order to achieve a robust supply chain that supports geopolitical goals, Biden's plan centered on altering the global economic order through partnerships. Reducing reliance on China for essential products was a crucial component of Biden's executive order, America's Supply Chains (Leoni, 2022). Although there have been a few small improvements, Biden has kept many of Trump's protectionist policies in place and even introduced some new ones. Resolved a 17-year conflict involving substantial aircraft subsidies with the EU. Biden has ceased using trade war tactics to overtly target allies and market economies. Under Biden, U.S. trade policy run the risk of mimicking China's state-run economic methods by regulating American imports and investors. Under Biden, Trump's steel and aluminum tariffs, even on allies, are still mostly in effect (Lemieux, 2022).

One of the characteristics of J. Biden's administration's doctrinal documents was the way the geopolitical situation was interpreted through the lens of the ideological struggle between democracy and authoritarianism, as well as the US-China confrontation. The fact that both authoritarian (including US allies like Thailand and the Philippines) and democratic elements can be found in an area like Southeast Asia makes it all the more amazing (Stepanov, 2022)

In contrast to prior presidents like George W. Bush, Obama, and Trump, President Biden's foreign policy lacks a clear ideological legacy. But there are two structural elements that shape it. First, unlike Trump, who has made major departures from the principles of American grand strategy, Biden, a long-time member of the political elite, continues to base his foreign policy on these principles. Second, Biden inherited from Trump and Obama the "pivot to Asia" strategy and a domestic mistrust of China. With an emphasis on tackling the relationship between economy and security, his strategy for China combines aspects of the strategies of his predecessors. Biden's main message was that he was unhappy with the liberal international order (LIO) and wants to change it to better serve American interests. His approach focusses on fortifying alliances to re-engineer the LIO's geoeconomic structure. In order to improve resilience in the face of diplomatic tensions, Biden places a high operational priority on coordinating supply networks with geopolitical goals. The presidential order America's Supply Chains, which requires an assessment of the resilience of the American supply chain, formalizes this objective (Leoni, 2022).

Biden's approach to trade with China was less aggressive than Trump's, but it nevertheless builds on his basis. In response to internal political pressure from both parties

to adopt a tough stance against China, it portrays China as a competitor, a trading partner, and an important actor in tackling global issues (Jiangyu & Hewett, 2022).

Five major pieces of legislation that are intended to solve important issues and boost the American economy serve as the foundation for Biden's economic plan. In order to lessen the negative consequences of the COVID-19 epidemic, the American Rescue Plan was put into place, offering financial assistance to local governments, businesses, and homes. By making significant investments in broadband, utilities, and transportation, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act aimed to strengthen the nation's economic base. Combating climate change, cutting healthcare expenses, and strengthening social security measures were the main goals of the Build Back Better Act, which subsequently changed its name to the Inflation Reduction Act. Additionally, by promoting scientific research and semiconductor production, the CHIPS and Science Act was introduced to strengthen the United States' standing in international competition. Last but not least, the Buy American rules prioritized American-made products and services in government procurement procedures in an effort to protect homegrown industries. Biden's plan to modernize and rebuild the American economy while tackling urgent domestic and international concerns was based on these legislative initiatives taken together (Kunath, Jürgen, & Thomas, 2022)

After months of negotiations, the CHIPS and Science Act (CSA Act) was signed into law in late summer 2022 with bipartisan support. Its goals were to assist advanced technology research and development and boost domestic semiconductor production. Despite its primarily economic aspect, the Act includes important geopolitical goals, such as strengthening supply chain resilience, lowering U.S. reliance on China in vital industries, and ensuring America's standing as a world leader in science and technology. The law gives the semiconductor industry about \$50 billion to draw in more private sector capital, with extra money going towards workforce training in STEM fields and research and development of important technologies. To maintain the U.S.'s technological and economic supremacy, its main goals were to cultivate a strong STEM workforce, promote innovation in cutting-edge technologies, and advance semiconductor manufacturing (Kunath, Jürgen, & Thomas, 2022).

Building on Trump's policies, the Biden administration has intensified the tech battle with China, focussing on high-tech sectors that were essential to rivalry between the United States and China. In order to lessen dependency on China, important steps include keeping sanctions on Chinese firms like Huawei, limiting their access to American semiconductor technology, and thoroughly examining American supply chains for vital technologies. Furthermore, an executive order was issued prohibiting U.S. investments in 59 Chinese enterprises associated with surveillance or military operations. Biden, however, also rescinded executive orders from the Trump administration that prohibited apps such as WeChat and TikTok, taking a more nuanced and non-aggressive stance while still emphasising strategic technology rivalry (Jiangyu & Hewett, 2022).

Introduced during Biden's campaign, the Buy American Program was created as a component of an investment program to encourage production of next-generation technologies and research and development. Its main objective was to support domestic industries by implementing procurement reforms and tailored trade policies. In order to prioritise American goods and services, the program has been executed by tightening federal procurement criteria. Domestic content requirements have been incorporated into important laws including the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Tax credits for electric vehicles (EVs) and incentives for renewable energy investments linked to U.S. manufacturing standards are noteworthy examples. Biden's policy added a wider focus on economic resilience and climate goals, even while the program builds on Trump's America First agenda by giving preference to American-made goods. These programs demonstrate Biden's dedication to boosting domestic sectors, reviving American manufacturing, and enhancing technological leadership (Kunath, Jürgen, & Thomas, 2022).

The bipartisan U.S. Innovation and Competition Act (USICA) is the main tool used by the Biden administration to offset China's technical achievements in an effort to increase American competitiveness. With \$195 billion going towards research in fields like artificial intelligence, robots, biotechnology, and 5G, and \$52 billion spread over five years to support semiconductor manufacturing, this legislation comprises a \$250 billion investment in science, technology, and research. The Act also authorizes sanctions against organizations involved in intellectual property theft or cyberattacks connected to China, contains "Buy American" provisions to encourage domestic production, and assigns the Secretary of State the responsibility of identifying Chinese state-owned companies that engage in unfair trade practices. That was a major change in U.S. trade policy, moving away from traditional free-market ideas and towards industrial strategy so that certain sectors might benefit from comparative advantages, much like East Asian developmental models do. This government-led approach prioritizes technological leadership, innovation, and bolstering indigenous industrial capacities. These actions demonstrated bipartisan animosity against China by emphasizing trade and technological competitiveness, while the change to industrial policy may alter the dynamics of international commerce and state-business interactions. China and other countries may use the Act as leverage in trade talks or disputes to criticize the United States for its selective industrial plans, which could lead to conflict (Jiangyu & Hewett, 2022).

In order to help American manufacturing companies, trade unions, and their members, Biden frames his trade strategy as "worker-centered." Although presented as a global defence of workers' rights, this strategy frequently hurts international workers by limiting their capacity to compete with their American counterparts. While Trump's tariffs on imported washing machines increased by 25%, costing homeowners \$1.5 billion and increasing American producers' profits by \$500 million, Biden prolonged these taxes for two years on January 14, 2021, which benefited Whirlpool Corporation. Biden's renewal of solar panel tariffs in February 2021 hurt American solar installers while helping the small domestic solar manufacturing sector. While Trump's tariffs on imported washing machines increased by 25%, costing homeowners \$1.5 billion and increasing American producers' profits by \$500 million, Biden prolonged these taxes for two years on January 14, 2021, which benefited Whirlpool Corporation. Biden's renewal of solar panel tariffs in February 2021 hurt American solar installers while helping the small domestic solar manufacturing sector (Lemieux, 2022).

With domestic sourcing and final assembly criteria essential to its approval, the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) was the largest U.S. climate investment to date. In line with President Biden's climate pledge, the legislation sought to cut U.S. emissions by 50–52% by 2030 and supports significant, long-term action to fulfil the pledges made in the Paris Agreement. To further establish the United States as a leader in climate action, the IRA promotes renewable energy investment globally. But its protectionist clauses, which give preference to domestic vendors over foreign rivals, sparked questions about whether they comply with WTO regulations, which might hurt global trade relations. In response to trade partners' worries with the IRA, the Biden administration was executing its provisions in a flexible manner, including broadening the meaning of "free trade agreement" to include important mineral agreements with the EU and Japan. In order to cut U.S. emissions by 50–52% by 2030, the IRA combines tariffs, subsidies, and regulations. It was a key component of Biden's climate ambitions and has sparked energy investments worldwide. Local content regulations and selective agreements with more affluent countries, however, draw attention to conflicts between supporting homegrown sectors and abiding by international trade regulations (Kaufman et al., 2023).

Although China's large domestic and Global South markets support significant investments in self-reliance, including \$40 billion in its chip industry in 2023, open-source technology adoption, and Huawei's innovation with Made-in-China chips, the United States seeks to maintain its technological edge by limiting China's access to advanced technologies,

such as computer chips, attaining short-term success but facing uncertain long-term outcomes. These limitations are expensive, difficult to maintain, and run the risk of offending international business people drawn to China by its potential. They also create animosity, decrease international technological cooperation, and make American companies less competitive in the Chinese market, all of which could hurt American innovation. Furthermore, as over protectionism could impede American innovation, China's leadership in fields like synthetic biology and nanoscale materials highlights the advantages of trade. Restrictions may impede China's advancement, but it is unclear if they will be effective in the long run (Kim, 2024).

Biden has prioritized "rebuilding America" through infrastructure and industrial policies, emphasizing investments in domestic industries to reduce reliance on foreign supply chains and align trade policies with domestic economic development. This is in contrast to Clinton's pro-liberalization stance, such as with NAFTA, and Trump's overtly protectionist rhetoric. The Cold War-era administrations framed liberal trade policies as a symbol of American leadership, but Biden's trade policies emphasize pro-worker rhetoric, focusing on protecting American jobs and industries. Biden has adopted a cautious stance and has only taken modest efforts to lift the massive tariffs that Trump placed in order to put pressure on trading partners like China. Biden has also prioritized repairing ties with longstanding allies in order to present a unified front against China, departing from Trump's unilateral strategy and emphasizing the value of group efforts in trade and security. Biden's approach to global trade leadership has been moderate, avoiding the extremes of Trump-era protectionism and Cold War liberalization by striking a balance between alliance-building and protectionist tendencies. But the United States has made less headway in regaining its position as a major proponent of free trade as a result of taking this middle route (Scherrer, 2022).

The trade war between the United States and China represents a dramatic change in the world economy and reflects American concerns that China would overtake it as the leading economic force. China has boosted defence spending, welcomed a wide range of business opportunities, promoted private sector involvement under stringent government supervision, and controlled a growing cost of living. China's development has become a major concern for the United States, as the country's second-largest economy and goods challenge American dominance in the world, and it has a powerful military that is second only to the U.S. Underappreciated at first, China's rise led the Trump administration to launch a trade battle that still influences economic ties today (Hosain, 2021). Under Xi Jinping, China's industrial policy prioritises domestic technology development and self-sufficiency while, ironically, striving for further trade and investment openness through programs like sector liberalisation and the RCEP. China is now the leading destination for foreign direct investment (FDI) worldwide because to these policies, but Western remedies like export restrictions and tariffs have slowed productivity development and frayed ties with developed economies. On the other hand, China has improved its relations with developing countries through trade and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), but the BRI's progress has been hampered by partner countries' debt problems and global economic issues. Given the increased technological advantages of trading with developed economies, this calls into question whether China's trade approach can be sustained (KAUFMAN, SAHA, & BATAILLE, 2023).

U.S.-China commerce has been robust in spite of the current tech war and tariffs, and 2022 is predicted to establish a new record. Since neither nation can simply replace the other as a trading partner, this long-lasting partnership is supported by solid economic fundamentals. China's industrial capacity is still greater than that of Vietnam and other neighboring nations, despite the fact that some production has moved there due to their smaller scale and less favorable business environments. Similarly, China finds it difficult to obtain technological inputs from friends of the United States, such as Germany and Japan, which makes attempts to get around American prohibitions more difficult. This leads to an

unstable balance in which some investments and trade are curtailed while other economic transactions continue to flourish (Dollar, 2022).

Joe Bidens trade policies differ from its predecessors in a way that his policies are not personality driven and Joe Biden have a pragmatic approach instead of personality driven approach to foreign policy. His policies reflect continuation of most of Trumps trade policies. He didn't explore more options like China did through BRI (Belt and Road Initiative) in Indo-pacific. His approach was based on geopolitical realities and structural dynamics. His policies sought to balance between economic interests and national security goals of U.S. His policies differed from that of trumps policies in sense that he used tariffs to counter Chinese economic growth but hesitated to take a tough stance like Trump. Obama used TTP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) to counter China and used targeted tariffs and Bush administration advocated free market and trade liberalization. Biden continued to use predecessor's policies and introduced domestic policies to strengthen U.S. economy and increase domestic production so dependence on Chinese goods could be minimized.

Trump administration-imposed tariffs and he withdrew from many international agreements which resulted in strained relations with different states. Joe Bidens approach to move supply chains to other allied states help rebuild relations and can find other options to rely upon for trade instead of China. In short, Bidens policies restrengthened U.S. economy and help re-establish relations with allies and on the other hand Chinas access to western markets faces competition after American imposed tariffs to reduce its influence through trade but China has found alternative options in Global Souths developing economies and continues to plat its role as major economic power.

Conclusion:

To sum up, President Biden's foreign policy shows a change in emphasis towards striking a balance between classic American grand strategy and practical adjustments to modern world issues. His policy for China incorporates aspects of both of his predecessors and is positioned within a larger plan to safeguard American workers, promote innovation, and ensure economic stability. Biden's programs, such as the Buy American Program and the CHIPS and Science Act, emphasize technical leadership and domestic industrial rebirth, but they also draw attention to the challenges of managing the dynamics of international commerce, particularly with China. Despite disagreements, commerce between the United States and China is still very entwined, with both countries depending on one another for technical exchange and economic growth. But juggling national interests with international collaboration is a problem for Biden's cautious approach, which is centered on strengthening allies and modifying the liberal international system. Trade and technical policies will be vital in determining the future of international relations and economic power as the United States continues to struggle with its place in the world and China's changing role.

Recommendations

To combat China's unfair trade practices, a Trump-led administration should put an aggressive "America First" trade strategy first by enforcing stricter trade laws, reshoring vital industries, and using tariffs. Stricter export regulations, less reliance on Chinese commodities, and more stringent investment restrictions in vulnerable industries could hasten economic separation. Multilateral frameworks should be replaced by bilateral trade agreements, and pressure on China might be increased through coalitions with like-minded countries like Japan and India. The administration should make sure China complies with its agricultural import obligations, promote domestic energy production and rare earth mining, and broaden "Buy American" campaigns. Prioritising national security necessitates tighter immigration laws in STEM professions, more stringent regulations on Chinese IT firms, and improved cybersecurity. In order to ensure that the United States retains its

economic independence and opposes China's growing influence, public campaigns and practical, transactional diplomacy would mobilise support from both home and foreign sources.

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