

Hunter Biden's Laptops Scandal Exposes How Communists Work

Hunter Biden's abandoned laptop revealed much information, including Hunter's shady business dealings in Ukraine and China, raising questions about the extent to which President Biden was involved in his son's business activities. This ongoing scandal lifted the curtain of foreign governments' covert influence campaigns in the United States. No government has conducted such influence campaigns more effectively than Communist China.

To understand China's influence campaigns on foreign soil, one has to get familiar with a secretive Chinese government agency, the United Front Work Department (UFWD), or United Front. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) established UFWD in the 1930s, aiming to recruit famous intellectuals, writers, teachers, students, publishers, and business leaders who were not necessarily Communists.

These recruits promoted the CCP's agenda, influenced public opinion in favor of the CCP in territory ruled by the Nationalist Party, and helped the CCP secure the weapons, medicine, and other resources to overthrow the Nationalist-led government. Then-CCP leader Mao Zedong called the United Front a "magic weapon" for the CCP.

When Xi Jinping came to power in late 2012, he greatly expanded the UFWD and elevated the UFWD's status by having a politburo member, Ms. Sun Chunlan, head the UFWD. Today, the UFWD's headquarters in Beijing is located in an unmarked but heavily guarded building next to the CCP's leadership compound. This location says the highest power

in the nation directly endorses its mission and strategy.

UFWD workers are assigned to many government branches inside and outside China, including almost all Chinese embassies, which now include staff formally working with United Front. The UFWD is tasked with helping the CCP aggressively and yet covertly dictate its messages and narratives about China. UFWD's goal is to gather information and either win over or co-opt support for the CCP. It is to attack and neutralize potential dissent and opposition inside and outside China.

Influencing the Influencers

The UFWD's overseas influence campaigns rely on various methods, including establishing Confucius Institutes and controlling Chinese Students and Scholars Associations on college campuses in the west. But one of its most effective methods is to cultivate politicians, prominent business people, and well-known intellectuals in the west as "friends of China."

These "friends" then influence policies and public opinion in their home countries to favor China, while trying to minimize harm to China and silence any criticism of the CCP. This approach is called "influencing the influencers."

The UFWD's process of cultivating "friends" usually involves several tactics. UFWD knows how to make them feel important through excessive flattery, lavish trips to China, and access to high-level Chinese government officials. For foreign business elites and families of prominent foreign politicians, the UFWD has made sure they were rewarded financially either through bribes or preferential business

terms.

John Kerry and Henry Kissinger Connections

Isaac Stone Fish, a visiting fellow at the Atlantic Council and author of "America Second," recently [wrote](#) that one of the most influential "friends of China" the UFD has painstakingly cultivated is Henry Kissinger, former national security advisor and secretary of the State under Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford. Even though he retired from his government post long ago, whenever Kissinger traveled to China, he was always granted an audience with China's top leader.

According to Fish, Kissinger has been "actively dampening criticism of the [Chinese Communist] Party amongst his massive network." For example, Kissinger [suggested](#) the George H.W. Bush administration take "a lighter response to the June 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre." Kissinger was also [reportedly](#) "convinced the Trump administration not to meet with the Dalai Lama — Trump was the first president since Reagan to not meet with the Tibetan spiritual leader."

The Chinese government has also been cultivating relationships with family members of other prominent U.S. politicians. For example, Chinese companies, including some large state-owned enterprises such as the Bank of China (BOC), funded [80 percent](#) of the Bohai Harvest RST (BHR) investment fund, which was partly owned and directed by Hunter Biden and Chris Heinz, the stepson of former Secretary of State John Kerry, through their private equity fund, Rosemont Seneca Partners.

The Chinese government authorities approved the deal to establish the fund after Hunter Biden traveled to China with then-Vice President Joe

Biden in 2013. China's apparent motive was to buy influence in the United States through the children of two of the most prominent officials in the Obama administration.

Beijing's investment in BHR soon paid off. In 2015, the fund played a crucial role in securing approval by the Obama administration and the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) for the sale of the Michigan-based Henniges Automotive to one of China's leading military aircraft makers, the Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC).

Wall Street Influence

In addition to prominent politicians and their families, foreign business elites are also targets of UFWD's foreign influence campaign. Former Attorney General William Barr criticized American businesses from tech companies to Hollywood for becoming "[pawns of Chinese influence](#)." Probably no other sector has been more influenced by Beijing than Wall Street.

A China sovereign wealth fund, China Investment Corp (CIC), invested [\\$3 billion](#) in funding for Blackstone Group's initial public offering in 2007. The Chinese government [approved](#) BlackRock, another Wall Street firm, to start a private-fund business in China in 2017.

BlackRock's CEO Larry Fink received an award from the National Committee on United States-China Relations a year later, with Kissinger and Chinese Ambassador Cui Tiankai in the audience.

Not surprisingly, Blackstone CEO Stephen Schwartzman and Fink have been the most vocal cheerleaders for Beijing on Wall Street.

Schwartzman set up a Schwarzman Scholars program at Tsinghua

University, one of the most prestigious universities in China, [working closely](#) with Chen Xu, the CCP secretary at Tsinghua. Chen later became the deputy head of UFWD.

On behalf of Beijing, Fink [lobbied](#) index provider MSCI to include shares of Chinese companies traded on mainland China exchanges in its emerging-market index. Some investors were against such an inclusion, concerned about the lack of transparency in Chinese companies and the Chinese government's strict capital control. BlackRock also [offered its full support](#) when Hong Kong-traded Chinese companies proposed to require their boards to "seek advice on major decisions from Communist Party committees," according to the Wall Street Journal.

During President Trump's first term, the Chinese government [turned](#) to Schwartzman, Fink, and other CEOs of large Wall Street firms for help during the U.S.- China trade negotiations, promising to reward their efforts with more expansion of their firms in China.

Mutually Beneficial Influence Peddling

In addition to lobbying, Wall Street firms such as BlackRock have also channeled billions of dollars into Chinese companies. Some of the companies they funded are [allegedly](#) either involved in human rights abuses of Uyghur Muslims or have close ties with the Chinese military, presenting a threat to U.S. national security.

In his [piece](#) about Kissinger being played by China, Fish stated the UFWD's overseas influence campaigns have been so successful that some western politicians and business elites who became "agents" of the CCP don't even know they are agents of the CCP.

One way to address China's overseas influence campaign is to enforce the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA), [requiring](#) "those acting as the agents of foreign principals to publicly disclose that relationship and their political or other similar activities by registering with the Justice Department." But doing so may upset some very rich and famous American elites. Therefore, whether the Biden administration's Department of Justice has the political will to do so remains to be seen.

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