



Arrogance of power the real reason preventing US from improving ties with China

By Zhu Feng Published: Jul 12, 2021 04:55 PM



China-US relations have been tense since Donald Trump's presidency and ties show no signs of easing. On the contrary, the Biden administration is going further and further along the road of inheriting Trump's China policy.

Robert Lawrence Kuhn, chairman of The Kuhn Foundation and recipient of the China Reform Friendship Medal, writing for the Global Times, said that "There

are multiple, tortuous issues between China and the US. But if I have to pick, at this moment, the most insidious, it would be one on each side. In the US, some call for the CPC [Communist Party of China] to be removed from power, a direct interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state, and in China, some would seek to control information and influence discourse in other countries via economic and diplomatic pressures and other means."

Such a view does reflect one reason why China-US relations are where they are today. But this is not the most fundamental reason. The most essential reason is the US' Cold War mind-set against China.

President Joe Biden deliberately highlighted during the G7 summit in early June that the main contest in the world is the liberal democracies' "contest with autocrats," with China as a representative of so-called autocracy. This is wholly a Cold War mentality. Taking China as an enemy to the US-led West, how can Washington improve its relationship with China?

Therefore, to realize any improvement in China-US ties, it is most important that the Biden administration should view China's changes calmly, pragmatically, and objectively. China's changes have provided the world with a Chinese model and Chinese path, which is nothing similar to what the US calls universal values. Instead, it can be an unforced alternative for the world to realize prosperity and peace.

If the US persists in refusing to acknowledge that 1.4 billion Chinese people have been striving to find their own way leading to prosperity and national strength, the US will always continue asserting its hegemonic status. In the meantime, Washington will always view its diplomacy and international relations through the completely conflicting mind-set of "those who are not with us must be against us."

Kuhn has a deep understanding of China. Such being the case, his views can reflect the West's long-standing misunderstanding about China. The so-called "seek to control information and influence discourse in other countries" is nothing but a forced counterattack of China against the West's increasingly escalated war of words. Such misunderstanding is the result of the West's traditional arrogance of power, such as white supremacy and Western centrism.

Nationalism and populism are on the rise in the US, and the Biden administration's policies are being held hostage because of it. The current political and social divisions in the US are the most important reason determining the Biden administration's China policy. Hence, the fundamental variable in today's deterioration of China-US relations is the political and social divisions in the US.

Against this backdrop, some US-led Western countries have launched attacks to smear Chinese people's patriotism as nationalism, completely ignoring the fact that those seemingly nationalist words are normal expressions of Chinese people's emotions on the internet, and the fact that China's policies remain rational and predictable. In fact, the nationalism and patriotism of every country is a foundation of national identity. But in this case, the US is playing the role of both referee and athlete. This is a double standard that we cannot accept.

China and the US stand to gain from cooperation and lose from confrontation. But the US has never realized the importance of this point, therefore it is almost impossible for Washington to handle its relations with Beijing on such a basis. What the US has shown in front of China's rise today is still an arrogance of power. It is not willing to really face up to the reasons for China's success and the tremendous efforts made by the brave and industrious Chinese people to practice reform and opening-up.

It is impossible to expect Americans to look squarely at the national qualities behind China's success. As long as such sentiments persist, the perception of China in the US will remain on a wrong track for a long time.

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