
The Commonsense Gazette

FRIDAY, APRIL 25th 2025

EDITION: 0018

THE AMERICAN CONSUMER CAN DEFEAT CHINA



Since WWII, our capitalistic, free enterprise system has made the US the world's wealthiest and most prolific consumer. This is our greatest source of power in our dealings with the Chinese, probably a more powerful weapon than our military. Our role as a consumer of Chinese exports was the catalyst that transformed China from a poor nation to our greatest rival on the world stage. The American Consumer built China's Military, China's Industrial Base and if that flow of wealth were cut off, there is no other country consumer that could fill that gap.

I would go so far as to say that, metaphorically, if from one day to the next, Amazon, Walmart and a few other box stores disappeared from the earth, China would not be able to adequately provide for their 1.4 billion population or sustain their armed forces.

With the patience and stealth of a Python, and a long-term strategy for world dominance, China is expanding its presence around the world with the intention to gradually apply the squeeze, until one day the US finds itself boxed in, no longer in control of its own supply pipelines and virtually at the mercy of the Chinese.

Their ultimate goal is to dominate the US and to impose the Communist Ideology on America. But what a conundrum! If our free enterprise, capitalist system was to be replaced by

the Communist model, with the means of production in the hands of the government, I believe Chinese leaders now realize that America would no longer provide that financial pipeline that sustains the Chinese economy. And once they had consumed the spoils of war, what could the Chinese do after they destroyed the goose that laid the golden eggs?

So, the Chinese have a dilemma. They need to preserve America, intact, as their greatest customer and cash cow. But, at the same time, they want to dominate the US, share in our wealth and take our leading position in world commerce. Perhaps the threat of China's military power is largely that, a threat. Could they be striving to dominate the US with a preemptive show of strength and by rattling the Sabre, not by invasion or destruction?

If Donald Trump decided that the American firms that left the US over the past four decades in a search for higher profit margins and now produce in China for their retail and Internet outlets in the US, should pay a 50% tariff on those goods entering the US, the China Threat would likely disappear.

If that happened, Americans would no longer be able to buy a T-Shirt at Walmart for \$5.00 or a screwdriver at Harbor Freight for \$1.85. We might have to pay \$8.00 for the T-Shirt and \$2.90 for the screwdriver but your neighbor may get a new job, and you reduced China's capacity to wage war against us. Let's be honest, how many times have you purchased an item produced in China that was so cheap you thought that just the freight to bring it to the states would have been more than the price?

For forty years, we Americans bought ridiculously cheaper Chinese goods while American workers got the shaft. We have enjoyed products so cheap that some people throw them away instead of washing them, but in all that euphoria,

we were digging a big hole for America. To add as little as 10% to the bottom line, Boards of Directors of American companies were closing 90,000 factories in the US, creating the Rust Belt and even transferring the production of the medicines that keep us alive into the hands of our enemy. What were we thinking? Now, we must restore our industrial base and remove China from Most Favored Nation Status with the WTO.

We are now joined at the hip with China. We have become dependent, and it will take enormous courage to gradually decouple this commercial relationship, but we must. We have been spoiled for decades, and the Chinese are betting that we are completely hooked, that the Web is too complicated, that we don't have the tenacity to see it through and that we can't do without "The Cheap Stuff".

Our dependence on China as the producer of goods vital to our day-to-day existence was a big mistake and is now a Millstone around our neck. Six past Presidents avoided tackling this fundamental issue because they knew decoupling from China would be very difficult. They knew it would require sacrifices of the American people, could temporarily upset the stock market and, because of our desire for instant gratification, could have a negative impact on the next election.

Donald Trump had the courage to open Pandora's Box and chart a course for America that could well save us from becoming subservient to the Chinese and will re-build our industrial base. But, as if it wasn't difficult enough, he is being attacked from all sides by Americans who just want to maintain an ill-fated Gravy Train until they can extract the last drop, with no regard as to how a negative commercial balance of payments increases our debt and cripple's future generations. They still think there is such a thing as a free lunch.

I have to tell you, the character embedded in "the Greatest Generation" would not have permitted them to react the way our society is reacting today. What has happened to us? A desire for short term gain has replaced discretion and civic responsibility.

So, it is a race against the clock for the mid-terms and the next Presidential election. If the Democrats can obstruct the progress of rebuilding our industrial base long enough to make Trump look bad at the next elections, the entire effort to revitalize our economy, lower taxes on our middle class, and reduce the national debt, all with income from tariffs, will be lost.

We, the American Consumer, still hold the power to determine our own destiny, but until we come clean and drastically reduce our consumption of Chinese goods, things will only get worse. Of course, the production of merchandise not economically feasible in the US can and should be shifted to other developing countries but must be removed from China.

I'm sorry to tell you, but we are not victims, we put ourselves in this position and deep down, we knew we were taking advantage of a situation that would come to haunt us later on. We could compare ourselves to the Glutton who consumed in excess until he died.

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