



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on December 1, 2021

Survey: Majority of Americans See China as “Greatest Threat”

The results from [the latest survey](#) conducted by Beacon Research for the Ronald Reagan Foundation, which were released last week, confirmed the “momentous shift” by Americans toward China first uncovered [by the Brookings Institution in March](#).

Three years ago, just 21 percent of those polled — one out of five Americans — considered China “the greatest threat to the U.S.,” according to Beacon. That percentage moved to 28 percent a year later, to 37 percent in February of this year, and now stands at 52 percent.



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In other words, more than half of American citizens now, finally, recognize China as the nation’s greatest threat.

It’s been a long time coming. When former CFR member Michael Pillsbury wrote *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China’s Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower* in March 2016, it was still largely a secret. His thesis began to gain traction when his book became part of the 2017 U.S. Special Operations Commanders’ Reading List. It became a best-seller at the *Washington Post* while *The New York Times* called it a “lodestar ... for those pushing for a more forceful response to the threat that China’s rise poses to the United States.”

The awakening was first announced by the Brookings Institution, part of the liberal establishment that has for years promoted the canard that if America treats China with respect, China will reciprocate. If the United States “plays nice” with the communists running that country, they will “play nice” back.

That lie has been exposed, and Americans are catching on.

As Gallup noted in March, “The share of Americans who see China as our greatest enemy has doubled in the past year, from 22% to 45%.” Pew Research Center reported at the same time that 67 percent of Americans “now have negative views toward China, up from 46% in 2018.”

After reviewing the various polls back in March, Brookings concluded:

It is evident that the past five years represent a hinge-moment in U.S. perceptions of Beijing. At the public as well as elite levels, the optimistic assumptions that guided our China policy for more than two decades have lost credibility.

One could argue that the lie was deliberate, but that is now beside the point. Beacon reports that more Americans consider the greatest threats come from within the country as a result of the infiltration of Chinese communists into American culture.

It reports that Americans, in the next five years, fear



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- Thermonuclear war (61 percent);
- Conventional military attack (55 percent);
- Cyber-attacks (88 percent);
- An attack on our space assets, such as satellites (61 percent);
- Terrorist attacks on the homeland (82 percent);
- Biological attacks on the homeland (78 percent); and
- Global pandemics (81 percent).

Nearly three out of four Americans (71 percent) fear a “war between the U.S. and China” in the next five years.

Most Americans think they know exactly where the present pandemic started, according to Beacon: 72 percent say it’s likely that “the coronavirus was developed by scientists working at a lab in Wuhan (China), but accidentally leaked, and that the Chinese government then hid and lied about the lead to international health public officials.”

Even Democrats aren’t immune to the revelations. In February, 20 percent of Democrats named China as a threat to the United States. Today, 44 percent of them do.

As Sun Tzu, the Chinese general and military strategist, wrote five centuries before the birth of Christ:

If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles.
If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.

Americans are finally coming to know the enemy. And they want something to be done about it. As Brookings noted back in March, Americans want to place sanctions on Chinese officials responsible for human-rights violations, they want to strengthen relations with allies in the region, they want the U.S. government to prohibit the sale of high-tech equipment to China, and they want to prohibit Chinese involvement in building U.S. communications networks.

This reflects the “momentous shift” in Americans’ attitudes towards China first discovered by Brookings back in March and confirmed by Beacon Research last week.



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