

The Foreign Influence Campaign against American AI

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Introduction

Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify on how malign actors conduct covert propaganda and foreign influence operations in the United States.

A war is raging between the world's two superpowers for AI supremacy. And China is pulling all the levers of state to win it, including foreign influence operations. I welcome the opportunity today to share my findings on the nature and substance of these operations, specifically those that have targeted America's AI buildout.

The US-China AI Race

That China wants to beat the United States in the AI race is a matter of public record.

As far back as 2018, Xi Jinping singled out artificial intelligence as “an important strategic handhold for China to gain the initiative in global science and technology competition.”¹ In the year prior, China's State Council released a plan designed to cement its “first-mover advantage in the development of AI” in pursuit of becoming the world's “primary” AI innovation center by 2030.² The State Council also signaled its intent, through AI, to secure “the commanding heights” of technological innovation.³

But Beijing talks to its citizens one way and to the rest of the world another. In global forums, and especially in American settings, China is keen to portray itself as an AI dove.

In June 2025, for example, China's leading English-language propaganda outlet, *Global Times*, called for international cooperation on AI and dismissed the US-China AI arms race as a "misleading narrative."⁴ In April of this year, Xue Lan, the CCP's foremost emissary on AI, parroted the same party line to lawmakers at an event right across the street from here at the US Capitol, telling them that "the first thing we may have to change is the inaccurate narrative that U.S. and China are engaged in an AI race."⁵ And over the summer, President Xi himself stated that AI development "should not be a solo performance by any single country but rather a symphony of global cooperation."⁶

China's Actions Reveal Its Motives

But such statements contradict the fact that China has smuggled billions of dollars of American-made semiconductors into its country to route around US export controls.⁷

They contradict the fact that China has used coordinated distillation attacks to undercut the competitive advantage of American frontier models.⁸

They contradict the fact that Chinese state media has been targeting American audiences for months with anti-AI and anti-data-center news content.⁹

They contradict the fact that Chinese actors have mounted complex bot campaigns impersonating American citizens across multiple social media platforms, all in an effort to turn US public opinion against AI and data centers.¹⁰

And they contradict the fact that nonprofits and political organizations with documented ties to China have been at the forefront of the anti-AI and anti-data-center movement right here in the United States.¹¹

My research for the last several months has been focused on documenting these facts, which clearly implicate the CCP and CCP-aligned political networks here in the United States in an ongoing campaign against American AI. In particular, I have documented three vectors of malign influence: first, China's English-language propaganda organs and social media campaigns;

second, CCP-aligned nonprofits operating in the United States that are supported by the Shanghai-based Marxist, Neville Roy Singham; and third, a Marxist-Leninist vanguard movement with extensive foreign ties known as the Party for Socialism and Liberation.

Chinese Bot Campaigns and State Media Efforts

First, consider the efforts of Chinese bot campaigns and state media targeting American audiences.

In June of this year, OpenAI reported disrupting an influence operation believed to be based in China. This operation used ChatGPT to manufacture American social-media commentary blaming AI data centers for higher power costs. OpenAI believes the source of the operation was a Chinese technology firm serving regional Chinese governments, though it states that the campaign ultimately failed to gain traction.¹²

Then in August, X disclosed a network of roughly 200,000 suspected fake accounts from China, including some 200 of which spread anti-data-center messages in American debates over electricity prices, grid reliability, and the costs and benefits of AI infrastructure.¹³

Alongside these bot campaigns, Beijing's English-language propaganda outlets have been openly campaigning against US AI data centers for months. These outlets include: China Global Television Network (CGTN), the PRC's state broadcaster; *China Daily*, the Chinese Communist Party's flagship English-language newspaper; and *Global Times*, one of China's popular English-language tabloids.¹⁴

An October 2025 CGTN video, for example, blamed "energy-hungry data centers that have sprung up due to AI investments" for a "major spike in energy prices" on "the West Coast, Mid-Atlantic, and New England."¹⁵ A March 2026 *China Daily* piece, headlined "AI boom sends electricity bills in US skyrocketing," argued that surging power demand from data centers is "a new source of economic strain" for American consumers.¹⁶ *Global Times* followed with similar coverage in April 2026, claiming US AI data centers face a "difficult birth" because of America's "unilateralist tariffs" and electrical-equipment dependence on China.¹⁷

While China uses state media to warn American audiences that data centers are environmentally and economically dangerous, it simultaneously subsidizes up to half of the energy costs of its

own AI data centers.¹⁸ Likewise, the same *Global Times* that frets about US power consumption in English celebrated, on April 26, a “week of breakthroughs” in Chinese large language models.¹⁹

CCP-Aligned Nonprofits

Of equal concern is the open collaboration and message sharing that takes place between these Chinese state media outlets and US-based nonprofits funded by Neville Roy Singham. Singham is a Shanghai-based US expatriate, former Huawei consultant, and self-described socialist with documented Maoist sympathies.²⁰ The FBI first investigated Singham in 1974 over his connections to groups it described as engaged in “activities inimical to the US.”²¹ He is currently the subject of a federal criminal investigation, as well as multiple congressional inquiries into his alleged ties to the CCP.²²

The New York Times first investigated the Singham network in August 2023, documenting through tax filings and operational records how his nonprofits produce coordinated content closely aligned with Chinese government positions across nearly every major geopolitical issue. *The Times* called the operation a “global web of Chinese propaganda” running through US-domiciled nonprofits.²³

Singham is married to Jodie Evans, a co-founder of CodePink, the US anti-war organization that runs explicit anti-data-center and anti-AI campaigns.²⁴ In January 2026, for example, CodePink published an article titled, “The War Intervention: AI, Data Centers, and the Environment.” This article explicitly targeted US AI data centers, including Meta’s data center in Richland Parish, Louisiana, and its data center in Cheyenne, Wyoming.²⁵

Of note, the CodePink article characterized its campaign against data centers as a fight against “the new Cold War on China.” CodePink has used that framing before. On August 5, 2023, *The New York Times* published its investigation of the Singham network. Two days later, CodePink, the ANSWER Coalition and eleven other groups issued an open letter denouncing “McCarthyism” and defending opposition to “a New Cold War” with China. The next day, Xinhua ran a story amplifying it.²⁶ This is but one example among many of Chinese state media and Singham-supported nonprofits pushing the same talking points. Other examples include

anti-AI and anti-export-control content pushed by the Singham-funded Tricontinental Institute and its sister organization, Peoples Dispatch.²⁷

A Marxist-Leninist Group with Extensive Foreign Ties

Our research into the parallel propaganda campaigns being waged by both Chinese state media and Singham-funded groups raised a natural question: “What, if any, impact have these efforts had in stopping the data center buildout on the ground?” While it is difficult to track and measure the material impact of the narrative echo chamber created by Singham’s nonprofits, it is not difficult to track and measure the material impact of his political allies in slowing America’s AI buildout.

Deeply enmeshed in data center protests across the country is the Party for Socialism and Liberation (or PSL), a Marxist-Leninist group with extensive foreign ties whose stated mission is to dismantle American capitalism and whose leadership is drawn directly from the executives of Singham's nonprofits.²⁸ The same people who have managed Singham organizations like The People's Forum, the ANSWER Coalition, BreakThrough News, and the Justice and Education Fund sit on the PSL's central committee and at the top of its presidential ticket.²⁹ Under their leadership, the Party for Socialism and Liberation has convened hundreds of activists to push for permanent bans on data center projects throughout the country.³⁰

To put the PSL’s impact in concrete terms, it has been a critical mobilizer in efforts that delayed, scaled back, or blocked approximately \$23.6 billion in proposed AI-infrastructure investment, in roles ranging from lead organizer to one member of a broader coalition. Our research tracked 21 separate PSL campaigns across 14 states that have contributed to 10 data center moratoria, 1 permanent data center ban, and 4 rejected or scrapped data center projects.³¹

Conclusion

Before closing, I wish to be clear on one final point: our research findings do not indicate that opposition to data centers is wholly astroturfed. Indeed, much American opposition to data centers is indisputably authentic. But two things can be true at once: 1) There is a foreign influence campaign against American AI; and 2) Americans have genuine concerns about the data center buildout that need to be heard. Acknowledging the reality of the former does not

negate the reality of the latter. There are both organic and inorganic strains in the debate surrounding data centers and American AI. The goal of our research is to ensure greater transparency in the debate by bringing concerns of repeated foreign influence to light so that policymakers can make better informed public policy decisions.

Our research has shown that a group with foreign ties and dubious funding has embedded itself within a genuine opposition movement. A party that advances positions aligned with the Chinese government, amplifies its messaging, and seeks to abolish the US government through revolutionary means has distorted the discourse between public officials and American citizens on the topic of artificial intelligence and related infrastructure. The network's methods and motivations in waging this campaign are worthy of investigation. And I hope that this committee will be able to shine a spotlight on both.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my findings with you today. I look forward to your questions.

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Notes

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