



## Australian Citizens Party

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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## Australia's exporters should be furious at the foreign agents destroying their best market

The breaking news on 11 December is an example of why Australia's exporters deserve to be furious. According to *The Guardian*, the International Criminal Court (ICC) rejected an application for it to open an investigation into claims China is committing "genocide" against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang. For more than two years the groups making these accusations have bombarded the world with reams of supposed evidence, including official documentation, satellite imagery and victim testimony, that China has detained "up to"—"as many as"—"more than"—a million Uyghurs (sometimes 3 million and even 5 million) in concentration camps. These claims are cited as proof that China is becoming more oppressive and totalitarian, and therefore Australia is right to stand up to it. Yet now the experts at the ICC have said there's not enough evidence to even open an investigation, let alone initiate prosecutions.

This is one shocking example of the deluge of exaggerated accusations and outright disinformation that has poisoned Australia's relationship with its biggest trading partner and put the hard-won markets of Australia's exporters at risk. Since the high point of the Australia-China relationship in 2014, when China's President Xi Jinping addressed Australia's Parliament and signed the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (CHAFTA), it has almost completely collapsed—now, Australian government ministers can't get their Chinese counterparts to return their phone calls. The shallow media explanation is that China has become more totalitarian and assertive under Xi; in truth, decisions by our "side", always premised on China being a "threat", drove the deterioration. And a small gang of think tanks, academics, journalists, and politicians loyal to the USA and UK and their Five Eyes spying alliance are responsible for it.

Following is the chronology of how we arrived at this position:

- The turning point in the relationship came in early 2016, not from any action taken by Australia or China, but from a decision in Washington, where the Obama Administration—following a decade of disastrous US warring in the Middle East—suddenly and insultingly named China and Russia as greater threats to the USA than Islamic State terrorism. The Turnbull government's 2016 Defence White Paper echoed the US formulation, and ASIO and Australia's other intelligence agencies, which as part of the Five Eyes intelligence alliance are subservient to US and British intelligence, started pushing the same line.
- The Australian news media, led by the Murdoch tabloids and foreign publications like the British *Daily Mail Australia*, started pumping out hysterical claims that China was buying up Australia, which were never true: China is only the [ninth-largest foreign investor in Australia](#), far behind the USA and UK, and even Belgium and Luxembourg! Such false reporting preyed on longstanding "yellow peril" fears and turned Australian public opinion against China.
- In its December 2017 US National Security Strategy and January 2018 National Defence Strategy, the Trump Administration concretised China and Russia as the "threats" to "US security and prosperity". Under the influence of ASIO-linked advisor John Garnaut, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull passed "foreign interference" legislation aimed at China and banned Chinese telco Huawei from participating in the rollout of Australia's 5G network, ostensibly on national security grounds. This ban was the first shot in the now tit-for-tat trade reprisals which are now crueling Australia's exporters.
- As the Citizens Party has documented in [The China Narrative](#), by researcher [Melissa Harrison](#), the other Australian organisation, besides ASIO, that has intentionally poisoned the relationship is the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), *which has been funded by the US State Department to do so* (as well as by the UK, the Netherlands, Japan, NATO, and the world's biggest weapons companies). With its US funding, ASPI has pumped out claim after claim against China, including sensational allegations of Uyghur genocide, Chinese infiltration of Australian universities, China as a strategic threat, and Chinese spying on Australia. In his August 2019 visit, ASPI's benefactor, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, pontificated to Australians: "You can sell your soul for a pile of soybeans or you can protect your people." Yet at the time Pompeo's boss Donald Trump was negotiating his mega-trade deal with China, finalised that December, in which China agreed to massively increase its imports of agricultural commodities from the USA—including barley, beef and wine, the very commodities China is now restricting from Australia. Not to mention huge volumes of soybeans!
- ASIO and ASPI are closely linked to the small gang of agitators in academia, the media and

Parliament who are intentionally and dishonestly destroying the relationship to ensure Australia aligns with the USA's strategic confrontation. These include journalists John Garnaut, Nick McKenzie, Chris Uhlmann and Andrew Greene; academic and author Clive Hamilton and his "research assistant" (and now ASPI "strategic analyst") Alex Joske, whose book *Silent Invasion* stoked baseless McCarthyite fears that Chinese-Australians are infiltrators loyal to Beijing; and politicians Andrew Hastie (who compared China to the Nazis), Kimberley Kitching, James Paterson, Anthony Byrne and Eric Abetz, all members of the self-styled "Wolverines", a juvenile gang who leave stickers of claw marks on the walls of Parliament House. While claiming to be committed to defending Australia's sovereignty, the Wolverines demonstrated their true loyalty by awarding the current US Ambassador to Australia with an honorary membership.

- Come 2020, as global trade collapsed in the pandemic, the share of Australia's exports to China rose—to almost 50 per cent! However, when the USA started to experience serious outbreaks of COVID-19, after not taking it seriously for months, the Trump Administration deflected from its failings by aggressively blaming China. Prime Minister Scott Morrison sided with the USA and called for an inquiry into the start of the pandemic in China, but went even further by demanding China allow access to international investigators with the equivalent of weapons inspection powers—an affront to sovereignty no country would accept, least of all the USA if the shoe were on the other foot.

China is far and away Australia's best customer, but under foreign influence, from the USA and UK and their Five Eyes network and loyalists in Australia, the Turnbull and Morrison governments have turned China into our enemy. Exporters should demand the Australian government stand up for our national interest, not a foreign strategic agenda.