The background of the cover is a traditional Chinese landscape painting. It depicts a misty mountain range with a river in the foreground. A large tree with vibrant blue leaves stands on the left, while a tree with orange and red leaves is on the right. In the distance, a traditional Chinese building with a tiled roof is visible. The sky is filled with soft, grey mist and several small black birds in flight. The overall style is characteristic of traditional Chinese ink and wash painting, with a focus on natural elements and atmospheric perspective.

THE RED AND THE GREEN CHINA'S USEFUL IDIOTS

Patricia Adams

The Red and the Green: China's Useful Idiots

Patricia Adams

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About the author

Patricia Adams is an economist and the executive director of Probe International, a Toronto-based NGO that has been involved in the Chinese environmental movement since its beginnings in the mid-1980s through the publication of books such as *Damming the Three Gorges* and *Three Gorges Probe*, a news portal published in English and Chinese. As editor of the English language translation of *Yangtze! Yangtze!*, the book that helped inspire China's democracy movement, and as an author and contributor to books and journals on China's environmental crises, she is an authority on China's environmental policy. Ms Adams, a founder of the World Rainforest Movement and the International Rivers Network, has testified before Congressional and Parliamentary Committees in the US and Canada, and has often appeared in major media, including the BBC, CBC, NPR, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, the *Globe and Mail* and *National Post*.



Introduction

For those who were under the illusion that China's Communist regime is a force for good in the world, the last few years have been a wakeup call. Under President Xi, China incarcerated over a million Turkic Uighur Muslims in 're-education' camps, unleashed the coronavirus pandemic on the world, violated its treaty with Britain by ending Hong Kong's self-rule, exacerbated its territorial disputes with virtually all its neighbours and has vowed to invade Taiwan.

Through these eye-opening actions, among others, public opinion throughout the West has changed dramatically. Whereas the majority previously saw China favourably – as a benign giant – nowadays only 15% of Australians, 14% of Swedes, 22% of British, 23% of Canadians, 25% of Germans, and 22% of Americans still feel the same way, according to a Pew survey published in October.¹ Most now recognize that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) lies, cheats, steals, threatens, and kidnaps in order to get its way in business and diplomatic relations, and that the regime is hostile to rules-based institutions. As catalogued by the Center for Strategic and International Studies' Bonnie Glaser, Western countries cannot assume Chinese goodwill:

Canada is among the countries, of course, that have been targeted for harming Chinese interests and offending Chinese sensibilities. The arrest of Canadian citizens and the ban on imports of Canadian canola oil and other agricultural products are just the latest examples of Chinese economic coercion aimed at punishing countries that harm Chinese interests.

The list of target countries is long: Norway, for granting the Nobel Peace Prize to Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo; Japan, for arresting a Chinese ship captain after he rammed a Japanese Coast Guard vessel in disputed waters; the Philippines, for confronting Chinese fishermen operating in Scarborough Shoal; and on and on, as well as South Korea for THAAD [Terminal High Altitude Area Defense], etc.²

The Greens and the Reds

The big exceptions – those who have yet to have their eyes opened to the dangers posed by the CCP – are Western environmentalists and their funders. Rather than becoming cautious about China's role in the world, these groups lavish it with praise for its environmental efforts, using superlatives such as 'herculean'³ and 'momentous'.⁴ Greenpeace announced that 'Prioritising sustainability will cement China's legacy as it assumes a larger role on the global stage.'⁵ WWF said that 'The new aspiration announced by President Xi reflected China's unswerving support and decisive steps to enhance climate ambition.'⁶ The Natural Resources Defense Council's Barbara Finamore even wrote a laudatory book entitled *Will China Save the Planet?*⁷

The environmental gushing for China is reciprocated by the regime, with CCP media organs such as *China Daily* and *Xinhua* dedicating full-page articles to celebrating the environmental movement's partnership.⁸

Western environmental organisations, in fact, enjoy a privileged posi-

tion in China. Following a 2017 law governing foreign NGOs,⁹ most foreign advocacy organisations – from human rights groups such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch to legal aid groups such as Chinese Urgent Action Working Group – were either extremely restricted or effectively banned. Prior to the NGO law, some 7000 foreign organisations operated in China.¹⁰ Today that number is 553, 50% of them trade associations and business lobbies and most of the balance split between health, education, relief, and science and technology; apolitical organisations whose work is not advocacy in nature.¹¹ Fewer than 4% of the 553 organizations that remain are what a Westerner would consider an environmental group, and all do Beijing's bidding.

As with other foreign organisations still permitted to operate in the country, green groups must be formally sponsored by a designated state agency or government department. However, despite the name, the sponsor is not passive, but instead is responsible for monitoring and supervising the environmental groups' work, sometimes even working hand-in-glove with them on joint projects. Supervision also includes 'regulatory talks' and inspections of premises. Foreign NGOs are required to submit annual plans for projects and use of funds to their sponsor for approval.

Foreign organisations must also agree to close supervision by the Ministry of Public Security.¹² Failure to comply with the provisions of the NGO law¹³ can result in seizure of assets, detention of staff, and a ban on future efforts to work in the country for five years, all without any recourse to appeal.¹⁴ Offences include activities that may 'jeopardise the national unity, security, and ethnic harmony of China,' 'harm the national interest, social public interest, or the lawful rights and interests of citizens, legal persons, and other organisations of China,' or that risk 'splitting the state, damaging national unity, or subverting state power.'¹⁵ Foreigners found to have breached the law can either be barred from leaving China or deported.¹⁶

As one example of the exercise of this law, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman suggested that former Canadian diplomat Michael Kovrig, with the International Crisis Group think tank, may have violated the NGO law because his employer was not legally registered in China,¹⁷ although that charge was later dropped. However, according to the country's normal practice that 'the law is whatever the CCP wants it to be,' Kovrig was eventually charged with 'spying on national secrets'¹⁸ and providing intelligence for 'outside entities.'¹⁹ Arrested in 2018,²⁰ he remains today in solitary confinement without regular consular visits and in conditions that Canada's *Globe and Mail* calls 'torture.'²¹

The embrace by environmental groups and their funders of the CCP is understandable. Their desire to rid the world of fossil fuels depends entirely on China, which accounts for more than 75% of the world's net global energy growth.²² Without the country coming on board, carbon-curbing efforts elsewhere would be futile, dashing the environmentalists' dream. Imagine their delight, and relief, to see Beijing mouth everything the environmentalists espouse.

The vast sums provided to the climate change cause provides an added incentive, nowhere more so than in China. Lavishly funded – one US-based charitable group, San Francisco-based Energy Foundation China, has provided over US\$330 million to US registered organisations operating in China – they are able to spare no expense in pursuing their efforts to rid the planet of fossil fuels.²³ In turn, funding for Energy Foundation China comes courtesy of other Western foundations such as William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.²⁴ The MacArthur Foundation's list of other China grants includes \$10 million each to Environmental Defense Fund and Nature Conservancy.²⁵

Apart from the power and prestige environmental activists enjoy in this role, many doubtless welcome the opportunity to use their research to promote their progressive goals. Given the perceived urgency of their cause – saving the very planet – they can easily justify turning a blind eye to China's aggression in the South China Sea or human rights abuses on the mainland.

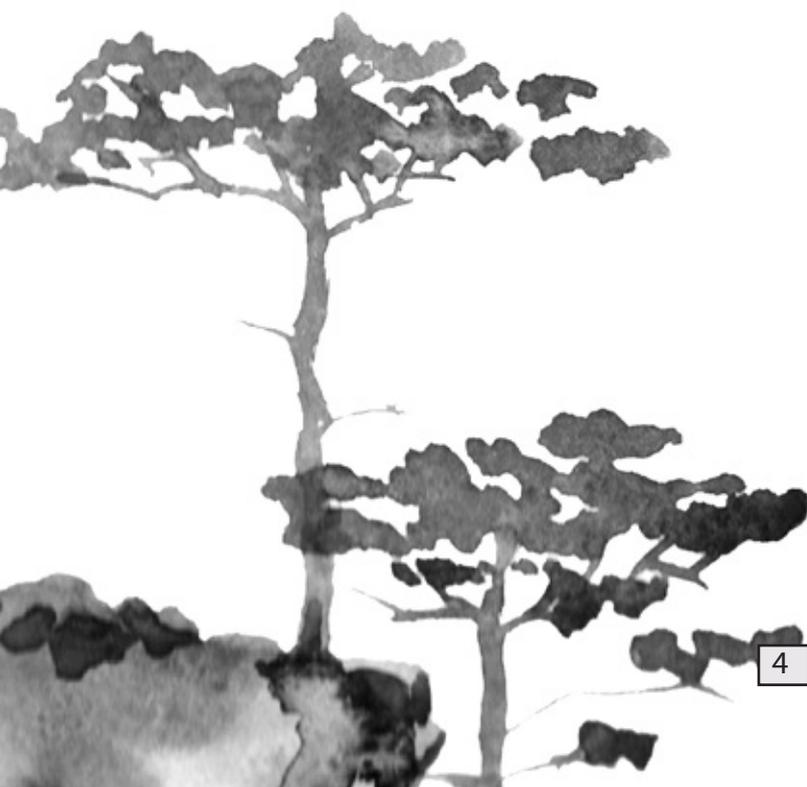
China's embrace of Western environmentalists is also understandable. To borrow a line attributed to Lenin, these environmentalists are the CCP's

'useful idiots'. The Communist government not only monitors their activities in China to ensure their compliance with government policy, it also exercises the ability to direct the agenda that the environmentalists will carry out via the Communist government's de facto control over the use of funds.

The CEO and President of Energy Foundation China, for example, is Ji Zou, a Chinese national with a long career as a senior official in China's communist government. As noted on the organisation's website, Zou previously served as a deputy director-general of China's National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation, under the government's National Development and Reform Commission, the Chinese government's super-planning agency. Between 2000 and 2009, and between 2012 and 2015, Zou was a prominent member of the Chinese climate negotiation team leading up to the Paris Agreement, and between 2013 and 2014, he served as a China representative to the United Nations Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing.²⁶

Zou, as a paymaster for the Western environmentalists, decides what projects to fund, enabling him to effectively solicit work desired by his former employers in Beijing from the Western environmental organizations, who give it their imprimatur of legitimacy. Moreover, the Chinese government doesn't even need to fund this work.

While critics of the CCP's many malign activities give it a black eye, the environmentalists' glowing reports of China's environmental leadership paints the country in a favourable light and acts to put Beijing's critics on the defensive. Environmentalists, in fact, have become the highest profile cheerleaders for the communists, helping to divert attention from the regime's worrisome pursuits. Chief among these is China's appropriation of fossil fuel resources in the South China Sea and elsewhere in pursuit of its goal of displacing the United States as the dominant global economic and national security superpower by 2050.²⁷



The Reds and the Green

Environmentalists' claims that China is committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2060, ten years after it has become the world's dominant economy, is pure fantasy. China today relies on fossil fuels for 86% of its total primary energy consumption (58% from coal, 20% from petroleum and other liquids, and 8% from natural gas).²⁸ Rather than curbing its appetite for fossil fuels, Beijing is voraciously seeking more.

In the case of coal, China has aggressively relaxed regulations that restricted domestic coal production, seeking to rapidly raise production capacity. 'In the first half of 2020 China approved 23 gigawatts-worth of new coal power projects, more than the previous two years combined,' reported AFP, citing Global Energy Monitor, a San Francisco-based environmental NGO.²⁹ The CCP approved 141 million tons of new annual coal mining capacity in the first half of 2019. In all of 2018, it approved 25 million tons.³⁰

Moreover, aiming to turn itself into a major petrochemical producer and exporter, China is investing heavily in next-generation coal facilities, such as its 35 coal-to-chemicals projects, at a projected cost of \$90 billion.³¹ Coal-to-chemicals production is more carbon-intensive than conventional petrochemical production, indicating a willingness to increase carbon dioxide emissions over a long operating life. China's coal-to-liquids program also indicates its long-term intentions. At the end of 2016, Shenhua Group brought online the world's largest coal-to-liquids plant, and it intends to triple its capacity by 2023. Likewise, China is encouraging the use of methanol, which is produced from its coal.³²

In 2018, more than 80% of the new energy fund launched by the Chinese Ministry of Industry and Information Technology went to subsidising fracking and coalbed methane.³³ The country's pursuit of coal includes expansion of long-range railway capacity, such as the Haoji Railway, commis-



sioned in October 2019, aiming to connect the country's coal-producing centres in the interior to its energy-hungry coasts.³⁴

President Xi may claim to be going off fossil fuels, but China is pursuing coal at a breakneck pace, with hundreds more coal-fired plants in the planning phase. In fact, says OilPrice.com, 'China has already added 11.4 gigawatts of coal power capacity just in the first half of 2020, which accounts for more than half of the coal capacity added in the entire world in the same six months.'³⁵ Despite the climate-friendly rhetoric, reports Quartz, 'in the short term, China is still moving full steam ahead on coal – its post-Covid stimulus spending on fossil fuels is three times larger than its spending on clean energy, including nearly \$25 billion on coal power plants and even more on mining and processing.'³⁶

In oil, China has an ambitious program to build refineries. The new capacity that began coming online in 2019 includes the Hengli refinery in Liaoning and Zhejiang's Rongsheng facility, both of which will have capacity to produce 400,000 barrels per day (b/d). Sinopec and Kuwait Petroleum's 200,000 b/d integrated refinery in Zhanjiang, a second phase of Zhejiang's Rongsheng plant, and the 320,000 b/d Shenghong Petrochemical refinery are slated to be online by the mid-2020s, while several other large refineries are in the planning stage.³⁷

Because those are not enough, China plans to attract more investment and technical expertise in its conventional upstream sectors by easing restrictions on foreign and private investment. 'Previously, foreign firms could not own a majority stake in a project and were required to be part of a joint venture with one of the National Oil Companies to develop China's oil and natural gas fields,' said the US Energy Information Administration (EIA).³⁸ Even before that loosening of restrictions, China's installed crude oil refining capacity had reached about 17 million b/d, ranking it second behind the US for capacity in 2019.³⁹

The increased capacity is needed to satisfy China's ever-expanding oil consumption. Last year, 'China consumed an estimated 14.5 million b/d of petroleum and other liquids, up 500,000 b/d, or nearly 4%, from 2018,' according to the EIA.⁴⁰ This growth in oil consumption growth accounted for an estimated two-thirds of incremental global oil consumption.⁴¹ China has become the world's largest crude oil buyer, and its oil imports reached record highs in 2019.⁴² To ensure continued supply well into the future, China has diversified its sources of crude oil imports, entered into long-term contracts with Saudi Arabia, its largest supplier, and increased its crude oil imports from Russia, its second largest, through new construction of pipeline and transmission infrastructure between the countries.⁴³

As with coal and oil, China is aggressively embracing natural gas. Over the past decade, the country's natural gas demand increased by about 13% per year, making it the world's third-largest consumer behind the US and Russia, and one of the fastest-growing natural gas markets in the world.⁴⁴

To meet that demand, domestic natural gas production has been steadily rising, and the country's 13th Five Year Plan emphasises continued growth. In its determination to promote domestic upstream development of unconventional deposits, China reduced the resource tax on shale gas production, extended subsidies on all unconventional production and, for the first time, made tight gas (low-permeability natural gas found in reservoir rocks) eligible for subsidies.⁴⁵ Projects range from the South China Sea, where CNOOC, China's major offshore producer, plans to commission the country's second deepwater natural gas field, Lingshui 17-2, to the newly explored large Bozhong 19-4 natural gas and condensate field in Bohai Bay in northeastern China.⁴⁶

Because those domestic measures will be unable to sate China's immense appetite for natural gas, China's natural gas production has been steadily rising over recent years, and the country has become the largest natural gas importer in the world. To enable those imports, China has invested heavily in infrastructure. As of 2019, it had 21 LNG regasification terminals and is quickly building terminals along its entire coastline.⁴⁷

Natural gas is also imported overland, by pipelines from Central Asia and Burma, and increasingly from Russia through the Power of Siberia pipeline, which opened in December 2019. Through a 30-year natural gas deal signed in 2014, China will import an average of 1.3 Tcf per year from Gazprom's East Siberian fields.⁴⁸

China's domestic pipeline infrastructure is also being transformed in line with the government's goals. Last year, PipeChina was launched, allowing open access to the national pipeline.⁴⁹ In addition, says the EIA, 'in 2019, China began to allow foreign companies to invest in city natural gas distribution pipelines to facilitate greater investment levels and faster infrastructure development.'⁵⁰ The notion that China's Communist regime intends to become carbon neutral in 2060, when it is positioning its \$25-trillion economy to run on fossil fuels in the future, as it does today, is ludicrous.



Conclusion

As virtually all students of China now appreciate, the West was foolish to trust Communist China to change and embrace democracy once it had access to Western markets and Western values. *Glacier News*, reporting an interview with Garnett Genuis, Vice-Chair of the Special Committee on Canada-China Relations of the Canadian House of Commons, reported his view that China was incapable of reform:

A government that is genocidal and totalitarian is one that cannot be trusted. And I think it's becoming harder and harder to argue the contrary, in this current environment. Today, there's just no excuse for having your head that far in the sand and yet, you know, we still have too many politicians that do.⁵¹

Following the West's misassessment of China, according to Paul Evans, Professor at the School of Public Policy and Global Affairs of the University of British Columbia, China has only become more of a bad actor. 'Under Xi Jinping, China is more repressive domestically and along its periphery than at any time since Mao Zedong.'⁵²

As put by Bonnie Glaser, the foolishness of thinking China would share Western values can be seen in almost every aspect of its conduct:

China does not respect rule of law. It does not share liberal democratic values, and it does not protect human rights. It is seeking to alter the international system in ways that would be favourable to China and detrimental to western interests. China's tool of domestic governance, its detention of over one million Uighurs, its censorship of expression, and its social credit system should not be a model for the rest of the world.⁵³

For most, China is not a model for the rest of the world. For western environmentalists, sadly, all too often it is.

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About the Global Warming Policy Foundation

The Global Warming Policy Foundation is an all-party and non-party think tank and a registered educational charity which, while openminded on the contested science of global warming, is deeply concerned about the costs and other implications of many of the policies currently being advocated.

Our main focus is to analyse global warming policies and their economic and other implications. Our aim is to provide the most robust and reliable economic analysis and advice. Above all we seek to inform the media, politicians and the public, in a newsworthy way, on the subject in general and on the misinformation to which they are all too frequently being subjected at the present time.

The key to the success of the GWPF is the trust and credibility that we have earned in the eyes of a growing number of policy makers, journalists and the interested public. The GWPF is funded overwhelmingly by voluntary donations from a number of private individuals and charitable trusts. In order to make clear its complete independence, it does not accept gifts from either energy companies or anyone with a significant interest in an energy company.

Views expressed in the publications of the Global Warming Policy Foundation are those of the authors, not those of the GWPF, its trustees, its Academic Advisory Council members or its directors.

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