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State of Insecurity: The Cost of Militarization Since 9/11

During the September 13, 2021 APA Justice monthly meeting, **Gisela Kusakawa** of Advancing Justice | AAJC cited a report released by The Institute for Policy Studies titled [STATE OF INSECURITY: The Cost of Militarization Since 9/11](#) on September 1, 2021.

According to the report, [t]wenty years after 9/11, the War on Terror has remade the U.S. into a more militarized actor both around the world and at home. The costs of this evolution are many, in terms of surveillance and the costs to individual privacy, growing xenophobia and racism and their costs to immigrants and people of color, mass incarceration, and the cost of hundreds of thousands of lives lost in war and violence, all in the name of security.

The financial cost of this militarization is calculated to be more than \$21 trillion over the past 20 years. They point to another set of costs — the opportunity costs of investing so heavily in militarization at the expense of social and economic investments.

As the country went to war and refocused domestic security spending on terrorism, few had any inkling of the far-reaching ramifications for the military, veterans, immigration, or domestic law enforcement. Today, the War on Terror has fed a sprawling security apparatus that was designed for counterterrorism but has also taken on immigration, crime, and drugs. One result is a turbo-charged militarism and xenophobia in both international and domestic policy that has driven some of the deepest divisions in U.S. politics, including the growing threats of white supremacy and authoritarianism. Another is a long-standing neglect of growing threats like those from pandemics, climate change, and economic inequality.

About \$732 billion of the militarized spending was on federal law enforcement. Domestic policy has also been increasingly militarized. According to the report, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) has conducted broad-based surveillance, infiltrated political groups, and monitored entire communities based on [their race, ethnicity, or religion](#) based on a 2017 Intercept report titled [Secret Docs Reveal: President Trump Has Inherited An FBI With Vast Hidden Powers](#).

For example, according to the Intercept report, FBI agents can decide that a campus organization is not “legitimate” and therefore not entitled to robust protections for free speech; dig for derogatory information on potential informants without any basis for believing they are implicated in unlawful activity; use a person’s immigration status to pressure them to collaborate and then help deport them when they are no longer useful;

conduct invasive “assessments” without any reason for suspecting the targets of wrongdoing; demand that companies provide the bureau with personal data about their users in broadly worded national security letters without actual legal authority to do so; fan out across the internet along with a vast army of informants, infiltrating countless online chat rooms; peer through the walls of private homes; and more. The FBI offered various justifications of these tactics to [Intercept] reporters. But the documents and [Intercept] reporting on them ultimately reveal a bureaucracy in dire need of greater transparency and accountability.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3hEijt9> and <https://bit.ly/3Cn8k3z>

On September 1, 2021, the New York Times Magazine published "[I Helped Destroy People.](#)" It tells the story of **Terry J. Albury**, an African American who joined the F.B.I. just before the 9/11 attacks, drawn in by the bureau's work fighting child exploitation. His role quickly changed after 9/11 however, and he subsequently spent over a decade working in counterterrorism. Around 2015, he began to deeply question his work. "This is not what I joined the F.B.I. to do," he recalled thinking. His doubts about the bureau's workings led him to leak classified information to journalists. On September 9, 2021, the New York Times produced a podcast titled "[I'm Part of Something That's Really Evil](#)" (40:39). In October 2018, former Minneapolis FBI agent Terry J. Albury was sentenced to four years in prison for leaking classified documents.

2021/09/13 APA Justice Monthly Meeting Summary and Video Posted

A [written summary](#) of the September 13, 2021 meeting has now been posted at <https://bit.ly/3kxkqxp>. A video of the main meeting is posted on YouTube at <https://bit.ly/3ki3jml> (48:00).

We thank Congressman **Andy Kim**, Professor **Anming Hu** and his wife **Ivy Yang**, Attorney **Phil Lomonaco**, **Nisha Ramachandran** of CAPAC, Professor **Mary McAlpin** of University of Tennessee Knoxville, Professor **Andrea Liu** of UPenn and American Physical Society, and **Gisela Kusakawa** of Advancing Justice | AAJC for their remarks, updates, and active participation in the meeting.

Time marks of the [YouTube video](#) (48:00):

- [4:43](#) **Phil Lomonaco** describes legal reasoning behind Judge Varlan's acquittal.
- [10:07](#) **Ivy Yang** expresses her family's gratitude for the broad support they received.
- [13:22](#) Professor **Anming Hu** gives thanks and brief remarks.
- [15:07](#) Congressman **Andy Kim** shares his personal experience and addresses the questions of how we confront the ideas of loyalty and trust as a country, who belongs in this country, who is an American, and who has opportunities to be able to seek the fullness of what it means to be here in this nation that goes beyond just any individual case.

- [20:45](#) **Nisha Ramachandran** provides updates from CAPAC, covering (a) CAPAC guidance on Anti-China messaging and anti-Asian violence, (b) CAPAC statement on the acquittal of Professor Hu, (c) Letter from 177 Stanford faculty members to Attorney General Garland, and (d) Department of Commerce decision to eliminate rogue unit and continuing concerns of racial profiling.
- [25:35](#) Professor **Mary McAlpin** reports on the views and actions of the UTK Chapter of AAUP on Professor Hu's situation, including three primary areas of concern on (a) the FBI, (b) the University of Tennessee Knoxville, and (c) the government's targeting of international faculty.
- [34:26](#) Professor **Andrea Liu** shares her thoughts on the importance of professional societies and the recent actions and results of the American Physical Society on the advocacy of immigration, visa, science/scientist issues, and the "China Initiative," including a webinar on "Effects of Federal Immigration Policy on US Science and All Scientists."
- [40:43](#) **Gisela Kusakawa** reports on Advancing Justice | AAJC activities and (a) the need to focus on the correctness of Judge Varlan's ruling and the Department of Justice's over-reach, (b) Professor Hu is not alone under the "China Initiative," (c) Webinar on the criminalization of AMEMSA and Chinese American and immigrant communities, and (d) addressing the cyclical pattern of targeting based on the perception of Asian Americans being "perpetual foreigners" in the aftermath of 9/11.

Reports and Updates on The Unraveling "China Initiative"

On September 17, 2021, The Editor-in-Chief of The Diplomat published [Has the 'China Initiative' Run Its Course?](#) The comprehensive article raised the question: After a resounding legal defeat, will the Justice Department change stance on the controversial program? The initiative potentially covers a lot of ground, making it hard at times to know what officially counts as part of the "China Initiative." "No one has been able to explain to me how a case gets labeled a China Initiative case," [Seton Hall University Law **Professor Margaret**] **Lewis** said. "...By nature, it's a bit of an amorphous creature."

On September 16, 2021, LA Times published [Why Trump's anti-spy 'China Initiative' is unraveling](#). The article covered recently dropped "China Initiative" cases including visiting UCLA researcher [Lei Guan](#) and Professor Anming Hu. According to the report, **Michael German**, a former FBI agent who serves as a fellow for the Brennan Center for Justice's Liberty & National Security Program, said the recent dismissals revealed how weak many of the cases were. "Obviously, the FBI and Justice Department are under pressure to produce indictments against people with a so-called 'nexus to China' to match the political rhetoric sensationalizing the espionage threat from the Chinese government," he said. "Even FBI analysts appear to have felt the investigators' effort to connect these defendants to the Chinese military was overwrought."

On September 16, 2021, the Washington Post published on its front page [As cases fail, security initiative's aim is questioned](#). According to the report, to federal investigators, [Qing Wang](#) was

an example of China's growing effort to co-opt scientists in the United States — part of a vast campaign to steal American secrets and technology. But a string of dismissed cases including Wang's has amplified concerns among some lawmakers and activists about whether prosecutors have been overzealous in pursuing researchers of Chinese descent. The issue goes beyond whether the government is bringing prosecutions it can win. Critics say the cases raise the question of whether a program designed to address a national security threat posed by the Chinese government has strayed, targeting researchers on lesser allegations of fraud without compelling evidence that they pose a danger to the United States.

The Washington Post

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Tumult on boosters is latest trial for FDA

BY LAURIE MCGINLEY AND DAN DIAMOND

Peter Marks, the Food and Drug Administration official overseeing coronavirus vaccines, was preparing Monday for a critical meeting on booster shots later in the week when he received a text from a friend. "Oh, my God, it never stops!"

Marks asked what the friend was referring to. "The Lancet article," came the reply, according to the friend, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the article.

The article was a shock. The medical journal Lancet had just published a review by an international roster of scientists — including Marks's top two vaccine officials — that argued forcefully against administering boosters to the general public, at least for now.

The FDA is scheduled to meet Friday with its vaccine advisory committee to discuss whether to approve a Pfizer-BioNTech booster, the start of what the Biden



U.S. gymnast Simone Biles, left, McKayla Maroney, Aly Raisman and Maggie Nichols testified Wednesday on Capitol Hill during a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing about the inspector general's report on the FBI handling of the Larry Nassar sexual abuse investigation.

Biles blames system for abuses

BY DEVILIN BARRETT

Simone Biles and three fellow gymnasts offered gut-wrenching testimony to Congress on Wednesday, describing the abuse they suffered at the hands of doctor Larry Nassar and charging the FBI "turned a blind eye" as he isolated young female patients.

Biles blamed USA Gymnastics, the U.S. Olympic committee and the FBI for the long-running abuse by the doctor, who pulled at girls and women under the guise of medical treatments for the athletes. At times, the 24-year-old superstar's voice quivered as she told her mental health difficulties at the Tokyo Olympics this summer directly to the trauma of Nassar's abuse.

Gymnasts detail trauma at Nassar's hands, say FBI turned a blind eye

"I don't want another young gymnast, Olympic athlete to step individual to experience the horror that I and hundreds of others have endured — before, during and continuing to this day in the wake of the Larry Nassar abuse," Biles told members of the Senate Judiciary Committee as she sought back seats. "To be clear, I blame Larry Nassar, and I also blame an entire system that enabled and perpetuated his abuse."

published gymnast, was a bronze medalist in balance beam at the Olympics this summer but withdrew from most of the competition, citing mental distress.

Talking about her training and participation in the Tokyo Games, she said, "The fear of this horrific abuse continues to live with all of us."

Biles said she could think of no place more uncomfortable for her to be than before lawmakers and television cameras in the hearing room, testifying publicly about the abuse. She said the cause to the Senate "so that no little girl must endure" what she and her fellow gymnasts did.

"We have been failed, and we deserve answers," she said. "I truly feel like the FBI turned a

1 in 500
Americans have died of covid-19

The burden of death has been disproportionately borne by Black, Latino, and American Indian and Alaska Native people.

Newsom boosts profile with win

POSSIBLE BLUEPRINT FOR DEMOCRATS

Pandemic policies were an asset, not a liability

BY SCOTT WILSON

LOS ANGELES — Gov. Gavin Newsom's comprehensive defeat of the recall campaign against him was widely hailed as his strongest political position to date, but it also set the stage for a far simpler reelection race next year.

With Democrats outmaneuvering Republicans by a 2-to-1 margin in the state, there is a limit to how much can be learned from a California special election. But exit polling by Edison Research showed how broadly Newsom (D) managed to defeat the recall effort, with significant margins in his favor from women, college-educated voters and every racial and ethnic group.

The story of his race was that one of Newsom's perceived liabilities — his quick, strict approach to the pandemic, which determined the world's fifth-biggest economy — was perhaps the primary policy reason he won by such a large margin. Critics have been vocal about their fears of the pandemic's economic cost — even welcomed — their government's rules intended to keep them safe.

The result could offer a roadmap for other governors and state Democrats on attack: California was boosting aggressive strategies in hitting GOP tactics. Before voters were courted, charges of fraud.

As cases fail, security initiative's aim is questioned

BY ELLEN NAKAMURA AND DAVID NAKAMURA

CLEVELAND — Qing Wang was born in rural China, came to the United States to study and worked his way into the elite ranks of American science, becoming a respected heart-disease researcher — and, in 2005, a citizen of his adopted country.

Then one morning last year, an FBI agent knocked at his door in a suburb here.

Within hours, Wang was handcuffed, charged with concealing ties to the Chinese government on a federal grant application. The prestigious Cleveland Clinic, where he had worked for 21 years, fired him the same day.

To federal law enforcers, Wang, now 36, was an example of China's growing effort to co-opt scientists in the United States — part of a vast campaign to steal American secrets and technology. Over the past several years, the Justice Department has broadened its focus from company insiders, insiders



Cleveland-area researcher Qing Wang, left, was charged last year with concealing ties to the Chinese government on a federal grant application. All the charges against him were dropped in July.

Biden comes to defense of Milley after China revelation

Calls with foreign leader focused on concerns about Trump, stability

BY KARSON DEMERIAN AND JOHN WAGNER

President Biden on Wednesday drew his full support behind the Pentagon's top uniformed officer, who has come under fire after a new book revealed he privately conferred with his Chinese counterpart to avert armed conflict late in the Trump administration.

"I have great confidence in General Milley," Biden told reporters at the White House, following calls from former president Donald Trump and his Republican allies on Capitol Hill for the removal of Gen. Mark A. Milley as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Biden's declaration, coinciding with efforts by the chief spokesperson for the White House and the Pentagon to stage a similar defense of the embattled general, effectively ends speculation that Milley's assignment may be cut short. But the controversy surrounding his fitness for the job rages on — and thus far is falling mostly along party lines.

According to the book from Washington Post associate editor Bob Woodward and national political reporter Robert Costa, Milley spoke with Gen. Li Zhaohong of the People's Liberation Army twice once in late October and again in early January, after Trump's supporters laid siege to the U.S. Capitol in an attempt to overturn his election defeat. The domestic upheaval had shaken the government in Beijing, where leaders, according to the book's authors, worried that Trump appeared to be acting as erratically that he might order an attack on

IN THE NEWS



Alghan women protest Social media users are challenging restrictive Taliban dress codes with photos of vibrant traditional outfits. **USA**

THE NATION Nearly 7 million people bought ACA health plans during a six-month extended sign-up period. **ACA**

SpaceX launched the first all-civilian crew of astronauts from orbit on a planned three-day mission around Earth. **SpaceX**

THE BOY SCOUTS of America's latest effort to reach an agreement with victims of alleged sexual abuse filed opposition from a group to its bankruptcy case. **USA**

Pope Francis said the decision about granting Communion to politicians who support abortion rights should be based on a personal point of view. **Pope Francis**

THE ECONOMY It's a different playing field now for Tesla, which was close with two former administration. **Tesla**

THE REGION Two D.C. area children's hospitals reported a surge in cases of RSV, a seasonal respiratory virus usually seen in the winter. **D.C.**

A building proposed for Takoma Park has found an unusually powerful challenger: Maryland's former Governor Pooe. **Takoma Park**

OUTRAGES The Right Rev. John Shelby Spivey, so, was a divisive-defying Episcopal bishop and LGBTQ advocate. **Episcopal**

INSIDE

LOCAL LIVING Together again they help us meet our relationships as they make their return to in-person school. **Local Living**

STYLE A stand-up guy from Hollywood's Tinseltown is now in the middle of the night. **Style**

On September 13, 2021, The Hill reported [Stanford professors ask DOJ to stop looking for Chinese spies at universities in US](#). According to the report, the Stanford educators wrote in [their letter to Attorney General Merrick Garland](#) that the "China Initiative" program has since its launch in 2018 "deviated significantly from its claimed mission." The professors stated that the China Initiative is "harming the United States' research and technology competitiveness and it is fueling biases that, in turn, raise concerns about racial profiling." The report cited the case of Professor Anming Hu in which FBI agent **Kujtim Sadiku** admitted to falsely accusing Professor Hu of being a spy and of using baseless information to have Hu and his son placed on the federal no-fly list. The agent claimed that his investigation into Hu had nothing to do with the DOJ's "China Initiative" although Professor Hu is the first academic to go to trial under the "China Initiative."

On October 25, 2021, the trial of University of Kansas Professor **Franklin Tao** will begin in the U.S. Court for the District of Kansas. Professor Tao is the first academic indicted under the "China Initiative" and faces wire fraud and false statement charges, again nothing to do with economic espionage or trade secret thefts. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3fZWJvK>

Earlier this month, Texas A&M University Professor **Zhendong Cheng** was released on a \$100,000 bond. Professor Cheng was arrested in August 2020 and charged for wire fraud, conspiracy, and false statements under the "China Initiative." They again do not involve economic espionage or trade secret theft. However, Professor Cheng has been denied bail for more than a year. He tested positive for COVID-19 while incarcerated. The Human Rights Committee of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicines, the Committee of Concerned Scientists, and others had sent letters to the court in support of the motion to revoke the detention order. Read more: https://bit.ly/APAJ_Zhendong_Cheng

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