

# Amidst Uproar Over Nancy Pelosi's Visit to Taiwan, Media Ignores Aggressive U.S. Navy Action in South China Sea

In order to force high-tech companies to decouple from the People's Republic of China and reverse U.S. decline, U.S. imperialism needs a political/military crisis with China

By [Sara Flounders](#)

Global Research, August 19, 2022

[CovertAction Magazine](#) 18 August 2022

Region: [Asia](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Militarization and WMD](#)

All Global Research articles can be read in 51 languages by activating the "Translate Website" drop down menu on the top banner of our home page (Desktop version).

To receive Global Research's Daily Newsletter (selected articles), [click here](#).

Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) and subscribe to our [Telegram Channel](#). Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

\*\*\*

*Why has there been almost no coverage of U.S.-led naval maritime exercises in the South China Sea at the same time multi-millionaire Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi was visiting Taiwan?*

*Consider what is being said, as well as what is totally omitted, in the U.S. coverage of China's naval action around Taiwan.*

*The U.S. naval command RIMPAC (Rim of the Pacific Amphibious Assault Training) was carrying out maneuvers involving 170 aircraft, 38 ships, 4 submarines, and 25,000 military personnel from all the G7 imperialist countries.*

*Some 19 other Asia Pacific countries were pulled in for symbolic participation. RIMPAC is the world's largest international maritime exercise.*

*This aggressive maritime action took place from June 29 to August 4. In other words, it was going on as Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi was visiting Taiwan.*

*The shaping of information is all-pervasive. Whether it is FOX News, CNN, AP, The New York Times or The Washington Post, the multibillion-dollar media are part of and totally intertwined with U.S. military industries.*

They collaborate in hiding U.S. war plans and provocations.

They also neglect the history which suggests that the U.S. has never had the best interests

of the Taiwanese people at heart.

Taiwanese rapper and anti-imperialist commentator Zhong Xiangyu [explains](#):

“The U.S. government has never been a protector of Taiwan. The U.S. Navy was the first country to attack Taiwan with a warship in 1867. The U.S. Navy supported Japan in invading Taiwan in 1874. The U.S. government sold weapons to Japan during the Sino-Japanese War, leading to China’s defeat and forcing China to cede Taiwan to Japan in 1895.

“Today Taiwan separatism is not true independence. It just means serving U.S. interests in a hegemonic, unequal relationship.”

## China’s right to self-defense

The media coverage of China’s military drills around Taiwan never describe them as self-defense. The media display absolute unity, blocking any mention of China’s right to safeguard its national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Every statement or action taken by China is relentlessly described as “threatening,” “provocative” or “expansionist.” The same words are used again and again in news articles and politicians’ statements.



Typical CNN story that puts China as the aggressor and fails to provide proper context for the conflict over Taiwan. [Source: [foxnews.com](https://www.foxnews.com)]

There is only one accepted political line. The media repeat that China is irrational, paranoid, belligerent, menacing and overreacting.

U.S. actions, even military maneuvers in which thousands of troops employ jet bombers and aircraft carriers, are described as “routine rotations” or normal schedules—that is, if the mainstream media report on them at all.

The Chinese media are always described as state-controlled propaganda. By comparison, the U.S. corporate media are always defined as free and democratic.

This is so relentless that it impacts even social forces who oppose U.S. militarism and endless U.S. wars.

## Routine threats by U.S. Navy

RIMPAC is planned and coordinated by the U.S. Navy's Third Fleet. According to its commander, their massive training is meant to deter escalation by China's military.

Only part of the Third Fleet is engaged in RIMPAC. The fleet's total size comes to a combat-ready force of more than 68,000 people, 100 ships and 400 aircraft.



Vice Adm. Scott D. Conn delivers remarks during a change of command and retirement ceremony after relieving Vice Adm. John D. Alexander as Commander, U.S. 3rd Fleet, aboard Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN-71) on September 27, 2019. [Source: [news.usni.org](https://news.usni.org)]

Moving into place as Pelosi visited Taiwan was the even larger U.S. Navy Seventh Fleet, the largest of its forward-deployed fleets. At any given time, it amounts to 50 to 70 ships and submarines, 150 aircraft, and more than 27,000 sailors and Marines.

The Seventh Fleet is led by the USS *Ronald Reagan*, accompanied by guided-missile destroyers, nuclear submarines and jet aircraft. This ship has now been joined by aircraft carrier battle groups of the USS *Nimitz* and USS *Theodore Roosevelt*.

It is comparable to a scenario in which Chinese destroyers were to sail into the Gulf of Mexico, off the coast of New Orleans and Houston.

The U.S. Pacific Fleet consists of approximately 200 ships/submarines, nearly 1,200 aircraft, and more than 130,000 sailors and civilians. The U.S. Navy maintains 11 carrier strike groups in international waters.

## Hiding in plain sight

Isn't this aggressive and threatening? Yet this vast and deadly armada is hidden in plain sight. It is barely mentioned, but even when hundreds of ships and aircraft are involved, they are described as simply participating in "routine" or "business as usual" exercises.

These continuing assaults are not top news, but they are reported in military news media, such as the *Navy Times*.

When the guided-missile destroyer USS *Benfold* conducted its third transit through the South China Sea in a week, the Chinese government was prompted to [label the move as a provocation](#).

The U.S. Navy's Seventh Fleet has so far this year sent an [average of one guided-missile destroyer per month](#) through the Taiwan Strait as a challenge to China.

According to [the Navy Times](#), China's foreign ministry protested:

"The U.S. military's actions have seriously violated China's sovereignty and security, seriously undermined peace and stability in the South China Sea, and seriously violated international law and norms governing international relations."

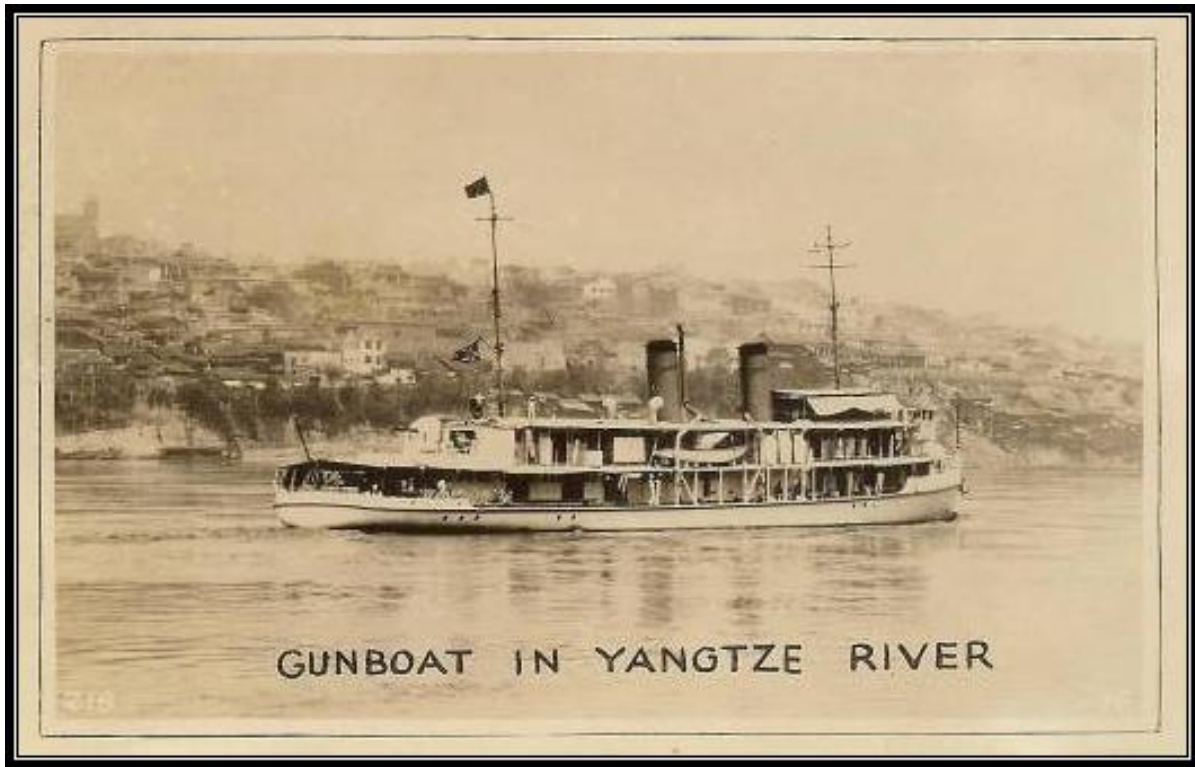
China's long-held position is that "the two sides of the Taiwan Strait belong to one China and should work together to seek national reunification."

The Taiwan Strait is part of the South China Sea, and China has claimed the area as its territorial waters. However, the United States has consistently said that it considers the strait to be international waters.

## Freedom of Navigation – imperialist piracy

"Freedom of Navigation" is similar to the grand term "Free Trade." It is not about freedom. Freedom of Navigation has meant unrestricted U.S., British, French and Japanese access to the looting of China.

Few people in the U.S. are aware of the fact that, more than a century ago, the U.S. Navy sent fleets of armored ships to patrol Chinese rivers and coastal waters.



c. 1932. [Source: [frankstaylorhistoryandroyalnavyhistory.net](http://frankstaylorhistoryandroyalnavyhistory.net)]

Special fleets of gunboats of the U.S. Navy and Marines patrolled Chinese rivers up to 1,000 miles inland. They were there to enforce U.S. trade interests and suppress uprisings. Armies of occupation from the U.S., Britain, France, Germany and Japan were stationed in Chinese cities.

“Concessions” were forced on China by brutal gunboat diplomacy and enshrined by onerous unequal treaties that made China pay imperialist countries huge indemnities and grant such “concessions” as control of its cities, major ports and largest waterways.

Britain, with U.S. and French participation, fought two Opium Wars in China to enforce its “right” to sell opium. The merchants called this “defending free trade” and “protecting freedom of navigation.”

It was the 1949 victory of the Chinese Communist Party that finally ended these “Freedom of Navigation” invasions into China’s mainland, opening the opportunity to rebuild a strong, united China which is increasingly able to defend its coastal waters and resist U.S. imperialist demands.

The corrupt and defeated former military forces, defending the rights of the old landlord class, withdrew, with U.S. Navy protection, to the island province of Taiwan. This was hardly a democratic process. It was a totally militarized U.S. occupation of the island.

China has held a consistent, well-understood position on its sovereignty and territorial integrity that is recognized internationally in all world bodies. China has repeatedly asserted its right to resolve this unfinished national reunification.

## U.S. violates signed agreements

Washington is openly violating three different signed agreements—Joint Communiques it



made with China in 1972, 1979 and 1982—affirming that China is one country and Taiwan is a province of China.

Any focus on these signed agreements of “One China” in the Western media today would expose that the U.S. has broken its promises not to interrupt China’s efforts to reunify the island peacefully.

Once in a while the truth slips in. Roger Waters, co-founder of Pink Floyd, an English rock band formed in London in 1965, is now on a final U.S. tour titled: “This is not a drill.” In an [interview with CNN on August 7](#), Waters refuted the narrative about Taiwan.

When CNN host Michael Smerconish said in the interview that “China is too busy encircling Taiwan,” Waters immediately said, “They’re not encircling Taiwan, Taiwan is part of China, and that’s been absolutely accepted by the whole of the international community since 1948.”

Smerconish tried to interrupt Waters, saying that China is “on the top of the list of human rights offenders.” Waters immediately shot back: “The Chinese didn’t go to Iraq in 2003 and kill one million people.”

## Pelosi and insider trading

The U.S. corporate media are united in hostility to China. At the same time, different media can favor either a Democratic or Republican presidency.

For example, *Fox News*, guilty of a daily barrage of racist stereotypes against China, was at the forefront of exposing Nancy Pelosi’s husband, Paul Pelosi, for his multimillion-dollar insider stock trading in a semiconductor firm just before Congress voted to give \$52 billion to chip manufacturers in the U.S., called the CHIPS Act.

Despite this scandal and her role as Speaker of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi met with the chairman of the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), the world’s largest semiconductor manufacturer and a beneficiary of the U.S. legislation.

TSMC plans to build a \$12-billion chip factory in the U.S. The semiconductor industry is a priority for the U.S. “containment” of China. At the same time, the U.S. government is using various sanctions to suppress Chinese high-tech companies and break chip supply chains away from China.

## Effort to reverse U.S. corporate decline

Wang Peng, a research fellow at the Beijing Academy of Social Sciences, explained: “The U.S. is using the CHIPS Act to force companies in countries and regions of key status on the global chip supply and industrial chains to play by U.S. rules, as well as encircling and suppressing chip industries in emerging markets.”

The [bill’s requirement](#) is for companies to pick one of only two choices: business ties with China, or subsidies from the U.S. government.

The problem U.S. imperialists face is how to force countries in the region to act against their own economic interests.

Taiwan's annual exports to China come to \$126.2 billion, almost double its exports to the U.S. of \$65.9 billion. South Korea's exports to China, at \$132.5 billion, far outweigh the \$74.4 billion to the U.S. Japan's exports to China come to \$163.8 billion, compared to only \$135.9 billion in exports to the U.S.

In order to force high-tech companies to decouple from the People's Republic of China, U.S. imperialism needs a political/military crisis with China. Every U.S. plan for sanctions on China starts with a manufactured crisis over Taiwan.

U.S. imperialism's strategy of restructuring and distorting the global economy to serve its own short-term interests of maximizing immediate profits has led to an aggressive U.S. expansion of NATO and provocations in Ukraine.

The immediate threat to U.S. hegemony was the EU trade with Russia of \$260 billion a year—10 times its trade with the U.S. The EU has also been the largest investor in Russia.

Breaking this growing economic integration of the EU with Russia, and at an even greater level with China, serves the long-term strategic interests of U.S. corporate domination that have been in place since World War II.

In 2021 China's GDP was roughly 10 times larger than Russia's. China is the world's top trading economy and the number-one exporter of manufactured goods. It is in an increasingly strong position to resist U.S. demands.

The desperate imperialist strategy to reverse the declining global position of the U.S. will be far more disruptive to the global economy.

This information on U.S. provocations must be dragged into the daylight by all the forces determined to prevent another imperialist war.

The role of the U.S. corporate media is to make imperialist threats seem palatable and entirely reasonable. This is possible only by blocking all past history of U.S. wars while using racism to smear and demonize China's legitimate, reasonable and lawful responses and countermeasures.

\*

Note to readers: Please click the share buttons above or below. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter and subscribe to our Telegram Channel. Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

*Sara Flounders is an American political writer active in progressive and anti-war organizing since the 1960s. She is a member of the Secretariat of [Workers World Party](#), as well as a principal leader of the [International Action Center](#). Sara can be reached at [flounders.sara16@gmail.com](mailto:flounders.sara16@gmail.com).*

*Sara Flounders is a regular contributor to Global Research*

*Featured image: Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer Benfold conducts routine underway operations in the Philippine Sea on June 24, 2022. [Source: [navytimes.com](https://www.navytimes.com)/no copyright infringement intended]*

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Sara Flounders](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)