

Trump's Advisor Peter Navarro's Dangerous Agenda. Preventing "Made in China" from Entering the US Market?

By [Junaid S. Ahmad](#)

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Amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Trump administration has made numerous reckless decisions to combat the virus, demonstrating a deadly incompetence. Indeed, with even minimal intelligent preparedness in the richest country on the planet, up to eighty percent of the more than one hundred thousand deaths from the virus in the US so far could have been prevented.

Navarro is Trump's Advisor on Trade and Manufacturing Policy as well as National Defense Production policy.

Assigning Peter Navarro with the responsibility of managing the US production of emergency medical supplies is one such asinine decision. With Trump's little regard for common sense, it is no surprise that he chose Navarro for this job.

Trump seems to see himself in Navarro's ability to confidently (and laughably) assert his opinions in matters that he has no knowledge of or background in whatsoever. Navarro does not have either the experience of the private sector nor the skills or expertise of supply chain management – skills required for the task at hand. Also, his unconventional ideas about the economics of trade lack an iota of credibility even amongst the most rabid of either neoliberal or neo-isolationist economists.

Navarro strongly advocates the increase in trade tariffs in order to protect American manufacturers/manufacturing jobs and to help the economy. What he foolishly misunderstands is that this would not only harm the consumers due to price increases, but the economy and the manufacturers as well who need to import intermediate goods for their manufacturing. Anyone with a rudimentary knowledge of economics would understand this. His ideas, to emphasize again, are hardly agreed upon by anyone but he has been the chief advisor to the President on trade policy since 2016. To benefit from Navarros' abundance of economic rigmarole, the Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy was created, and he was appointed Director.

Through his position, Navarro was able to gradually advance his project of preventing Chinese products from entering the American market, to supporting heavy tariffs and effectively escalating a trade war with China. Tariffs have been imposed on goods worth billions of dollars imported from China. These policies have also been extended to countries like Germany, Japan, Mexico and South Korea. They are likely to retaliate with similar policies thereby curbing world trade and retarding economic growth, including, most of all, in the United States itself. That's how Navarro is helping Trump to 'Make American Great Again.'

Navarro's real notoriety springs from his unrelenting and bigoted vitriol against the Chinese. He has written a series of books on China including *Death by China*, *The Coming China Wars* and *Crouching Tiger: What China's Militarism Means for the World*. President Trump seems to gravitate toward Navarro precisely because of the message contained in these books, with Trump's particular favorite being the *Coming China Wars*. In his books, Navarro not only blames China for worker abuse, intellectual property infringement and currency manipulation but also selling cheap, dangerous goods to the United States in order to become the "planet's most efficient assassin."

The China experts, both in scholarly and journalistic circles, regard Navarro's writings on China as an absolute farce based on next to knowledge about the subject on which he loves to pontificate. He has hardly spent any time in the country and does not know an iota of Mandarin. His ideas essentially stem from the hatred that he has for the country. In five of his books, Navarro uses an imaginary character that he has named Ron Vara. Ron Vara is an anagram of his own name. He is used to affirm his own ideas about China. It is rather comical how Ron Vara accompanied Navarro to the White House and Navarro even created a fake email for him to support his ideas about increasing tariffs since he could not find any support elsewhere.

Since Navarro is managing the US production for emergency medical supplies, his ideas about trade, particularly with China, become incredibly relevant. Navarro is on a quest for making the United States completely self-reliant and avoiding any help from China. The need of the hour is to trade with China but unfortunately, it is also precisely the right time for Navarro to further his anti-China agenda. China has successfully controlled the spread of the virus and has aided many countries in the world to fight the virus. The United States could use this help as well. Navarro has been blaming China for the pandemic in ways such as naming the COVID-19 as the 'China virus', for hacking vaccine research, and for hoarding medical supplies and data on COVID-19 to profit from creating the first vaccine.

It is the perfect time to give rise to anti-Chinese sentiments to cease trade with China (to ostensibly make America self-reliant and bring manufacturing jobs back – all rhetorical pipedreams sold to a gullible support base of Trump), and provide a distraction from the incompetence of the Trump administration. People are confused, scared and dying because of the pandemic so it gives the perfect opportunity to feed racist sentiments into the population. Navarro's utter lack of expertise and willful ignorance to manage his newfound responsibility is one huge handicap, but, in addition, his racist tendencies are certainly bound to break down the pre-existing chain of medical supplies from outside of the United States. This diabolical agenda is going to cost millions of lives.

Navarro has not only abused his power to further his anti-Chinese agenda and accelerate the collapse of the global economy. But in an attempt to buffoonishly demonstrate how vast his knowledge is beyond simply economics – in an sycophantic manner to foolishly back Trump on his ideas, he has shamelessly argued with the leading infectious disease expert in the country, Dr. Anthony Fauci, on the use of hydroxychloroquine, an anti-malarial drug, for the treatment of the novel coronavirus. Navarro has no background in medicine or science. He still acquired the drug and promoted it to Americans even when Dr. Fauci explained that there was no evidence of the drug being beneficial in treating COVID-19. Upon being questioned about his qualifications for making such recommendations, Navarro said, "My qualifications in terms of looking at the science is that I'm a social scientist. I have a PhD. And I understand how to read statistical studies, whether it's in medicine, the law,

economics or whatever.”

Navarro’s incompetence is not only reflected in his ideas, writings and claims, but in his five election losses from his hometown in San Diego. In addition, his memo from the 29th of January that supported a Chinese travel ban in order to, according to ‘expert’ Navarro, to prevent about half a million people in the country dying from the disease was not taken seriously. Nonetheless, his incompetence, racist agenda, laughable reputation, sheer lack of empathy and plain disregard for common sense seems to merely make Trump like him more. He is addressed as “My Peter” by the President.

His current role requires establishing good relations to channel resources towards the United States. Instead, he is accelerating the collapse of an already crumbling global economy as well as provoking a dangerous conflict. He is playing with the lives of countless people not only in the form of the pandemic but a potential clash with China and the world.

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Dr. Junaid S. Ahmad is director of the Center for Global Dialogue and professor of Middle Eastern politics at the University of Lahore, Pakistan. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

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