FBI targets Chinese-American media executive in expanding anti-China campaign

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In late July, the FBI carried out coordinated raids across Southern California targeting the home and offices of James Su, founder and CEO of EDI Media Inc., the largest Chinese-American multimedia company in the United States. Simultaneous search warrants were executed at the properties of San Bernardino County Supervisor Curt Hagman, Ontario City Councilmember Alan Wapner, and attorney Frank Lizarraga.

No arrests were made and the affidavits remain sealed. But the thrust of the investigation is clear from law enforcement disclosures: Federal authorities are examining whether Su's media operations, political donations and annual Chinese American Film Festival constitute undisclosed foreign agent activity on behalf of the People's Republic of China.

A naturalized US citizen, Su founded EDI Media in 1993 and built it into a multimedia platform spanning television, radio, digital publishing and the film festival, which has received endorsements from both American elected officials and Chinese state agencies.

In 2022, EDI Media registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) for its previous role printing and distributing the US edition of a publication affiliated with Chinese state media. Su has made legal campaign contributions to both Democratic and Republican candidates. According to his attorney, among those whose properties were searched, Su personally knew only Supervisor Hagman.

The anti-China campaign has escalated under successive administrations. The Justice Department’s “China Initiative,” launched in 2018, targeted academics of Chinese descent with espionage and trade-secret cases that largely collapsed. Charges against MIT professor Gang Chen were dismissed after the government's allegations unraveled, while Harvard chemistry chair Charles Lieber was convicted only of making false statements about a research relationship rather than espionage.

Under Trump’s second administration, the offensive has broadened. Since June 2025, at least six Chinese researchers at the University of Michigan and Indiana University have faced felony prosecutions carrying potential 25-year sentences for customs violations involving nonhazardous biological materials. Several have spent months in jail before accepting plea agreements and deportation. In March 2026, University of Michigan postdoctoral researcher Danhao Wang took his own life the day after being questioned by federal agents.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced in May 2025 that the United States would “aggressively revoke visas” for Chinese students. Beijing has since issued travel warnings after Chinese scholars with valid visas were detained and deported at US airports. The raids on Su expand this campaign from scientists and students to diaspora media figures and the public officials who associate with them. Any connection to China is increasingly treated as presumptive evidence of foreign subversion.

The class character of this campaign is exposed by what it leaves untouched. While the FBI raids a Chinese-American media company over its relationship to a state-affiliated newspaper, China's state-owned sovereign wealth fund, the China Investment Corporation, has invested billions of dollars in major American financial institutions, including Blackstone and Morgan Stanley, without provoking comparable scrutiny. Such investments are treated as ordinary commercial transactions and exempt from FARA requirements.

When Amazon complies with Chinese government censorship requirements to preserve access to the Chinese market, it is considered routine business. When a Chinese-American publisher distributes a newspaper connected to Chinese state media, it becomes the target of a national security investigation.

Yet the targeting of James Su is not simply an expression of anti-Chinese chauvinism. Su is neither a dissident nor an opponent of US foreign policy. He is a businessman integrated into American capitalism, a donor to both major parties, whose film festival has enjoyed official political support. He has done nothing fundamentally different from what major corporations do on a vastly larger scale with full

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legal protection.

The significance of the raids lies in the fact that they are part of the construction of a political and legal apparatus for criminalizing dissent. The Trump administration has repeatedly made clear that foreign policy is to provide the framework for suppressing domestic opposition.

In July, Rubio convened a State Department "Ministerial on the Resurgence of Political Terrorism," bringing together representatives from 66 countries. He declared that opponents of the existing order "can call themselves anti-capitalists, or anti-imperialists, Communists, or anarchists, or Marxists," but insisted that "the fundamental character is always the same." Calling on "the people of the civilized world to defend themselves," Rubio concluded, "It is time to crush this evil forever."

White House counterterrorism chief Stephen Miller followed with a fascistic denunciation of left-wing opponents as people who "look deformed in some way," whose outward appearance supposedly reflected their inner hatred.

Days later, the State Department released a 100-page document, *Cuba: the Capital of 21st Century Communism*, claiming that the civil rights movement, opposition to the Vietnam War, the New Left, the George Floyd protests and present-day opposition to ICE raids and the Gaza genocide were substantially directed by Havana in collaboration with Beijing, Moscow and Tehran. Domestic political opposition and geopolitical rivalry are fused into a single conspiracy, portraying workers and youth who oppose war and inequality as agents of hostile foreign powers.

Trump himself has repeatedly declared that the "enemy from within" is "more dangerous than China or Russia." A December 2025 memorandum by Attorney General Pam Bondi directed federal prosecutors to compile lists of organizations that could be prosecuted as "domestic terrorists" for promoting "anti-capitalism" and "anti-Americanism." On July 21, the House Ways and Means Committee subpoenaed the People's Forum, Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research and BreakThrough News over alleged ties to China.

The investigation of James Su fits squarely within this framework. The FARA probe, sealed affidavits and coordinated raids normalize methods that can readily be turned against any organization or individual opposing government policy. The precedent being established is that even tenuous connections to a designated foreign adversary are sufficient to transform political activity into a national security issue.

The purpose is to prepare for more war abroad and repression at home.

American imperialism is engaged in a widening global military offensive. The Trump administration has launched war against Iran, blockaded the Strait of Hormuz and escalated preparations for conflict with China. The American ruling class requires a $1.5 trillion annual military budget to sustain that confrontation.

Such a war drive demands the cultivation of an internal enemy and the legal mechanisms to silence opposition. Anti-Chinese chauvinism, from visa revocations to the China Initiative and now the raids on James Su, portrays Chinese nationals and Americans of Chinese descent as a fifth column.

But the target extends far beyond them. The legal precedents being established through FARA investigations, visa revocations and administrative detention are directed ultimately against the entire working class, anti-war activists and all forms of political opposition.

What frightens the American ruling class more than any foreign rival is the mounting social opposition at home and internationally. Millions have demonstrated against the Trump administration. Strike struggles have spread among educators, healthcare workers and other sections of the working class. As opposition to war, inequality and dictatorship grows, the ruling class is strengthening the instruments of repression.

The raid on James Su's home is an expression of this process. A businessman thoroughly integrated into American capitalism is being made an example, not because of any demonstrated crime, but because his prosecution helps legitimize the equation of opposition to US policy with service to a foreign power.

The working class must reject this reactionary framework. The defense of democratic rights is inseparable from the struggle against imperialist war and from the building of an independent international socialist movement of the working class.

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