

The Case Study of the Meng, Wan- Zhou Event and What It Stands for to the United States of America and Chinese Governments

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Abstract

Huawei, being a globalize Chinese telecommunications equipment manufacturer and the biggest 5G network patent holder, has been on international news for a very long time since the Sino- U.S. trade war has started. The blizzard gets even worse when Canadian law enforcement arrested the CFO of Huawei- Meng Wan- Zhou by the request of the U.S. law enforcement accusing the crime of espionage. The situation was definitely really bad for a telecom company aiming at the global market of 5G network. The data leak rumors were all over the world.

What makes me even interested is that the announcement made by the U.S. and Chinese government. By looking through two major newspaper in both countries, I hope to see not only the official statements made by the governments but also able to expose what is the true ideas behind the statements and movements. This is a case study of the whole event and an analysis on the Washington Post and the People's Daily.

The U.S. government led by President Trump fights hard with Chinese government, they tried all kinds of ways to benefit U.S. in the trade war they created. It is hard not to believe the whole plan on the arrestment was a bigger plan for staying upper hand in the trade war.

Keywords: 5G Network, Huawei, Ren Zheng- Fei, Espionage

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INTRODUCTION

Background

In December 12th 2018, Meng, Wan-Zhou the CFO of Huawei, was arrested by Canadian police in Vancouver International Airport at the request by the United States.¹ She had been accused by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York for conspiracy to defraud multiple international institutions. Meng, Wan-Zhou attended a bail hearing from December 7th to December 11th in Vancouver where she was released on a 10 million bail with an additional condition, she was asked to hand in all her passports which means she needed to stay in Canada. The U.S. government had a deadline for the extradition until January 30th 2019.² The Department of Justice Canada confirmed that the U.S. government had formally requested the extradition of Meng, Wan-Zhou.³ Though U.S. government had already filed the request of extradition, the Canadian government had until March 1st, 2019 to decide whether to authorize an extradition hearing.⁴ On January 28th, 2019 Meng was also charged for multiple fraud and selling equipment to Iran by U.S. Homeland Security and other officials. Not only Meng has to

¹ "Extradition in Canada," ed. Department of Justice Canada (Ottawa2018).

² Darryl Dyck, "U.S. Faces Deadline to Extradite Huawei Exec from Canada," *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation* Jan 19, 2019.

³ Jesse Ferreras, "U.S. Sends Meng Wanzhou Extradition Request to Canada — but There Are Several Steps Left," *GLOBAL NEWS* (2019).

⁴ Laura Kane, "Canada Has One Month to Decide Whether to Hold an Extradition Hearing for Meng," *The Star*, no. Business (2019).

face multiple charges but also the company she served- Huawei was charged for theft of trade secrets by U.S. governments.⁵

On December 19th, 2019, Chinese government called for a meeting with the Canadian ambassador- John McCallum, the Chinese claimed the arrest of Meng was a terrible mistake. China's Foreign Ministry warned Canada's ambassador in Beijing to release Meng, otherwise might summoning him to lodge a "strong protest."⁶ Though Chinese government protests about the whole event, Canadian government proceed the extradition of Meng on March 1st, 2019⁷.

Motivation

Taiwan as neighboring country on the east coast of China and having a great relationship the U.S., the trade war between these two countries deeply effects Taiwan. Huawei being a leader of 5G technology had been heavily punished by the U.S. government, Meng, Wan-Zhou being the founder of Huawei's daughter has a very sensitive role in the trade war. There has been a lot of rumor about Ren, Zheng-Fei the CEO of Huawei and the motivation about U.S. government asking the arrest and extradition of Meng, Wan-Zhou. Some people believed the arrest arranged by U.S. government is trying

⁵ "Chinese Telecommunications Device Manufacturer and Its U.S. Affiliate Indicted for Theft of Trade Secrets, Wire Fraud, and Obstruction of Justice," ed. The United States Department of Justice (2019).

⁶ David Ljunggren Ben Blanchard, "China Calls on Canada to Free Huawei Cfo or Face 'Full Responsibility' for Consequences," *The Washinton Post* (2018).

⁷ Emily Rauhala, "Canada to Proceed with Extradition Case against Huawei's Meng Wanzhou," *ibid.* (2019).

to achieve some political achievements. The first one is to put pressure on the “Made in China” plan by punishing Huawei. The second one is to gain even more chip to bargain with the Chinese government in the trade war.

There has been a lot media reporting about this international event, each news company has their own viewpoint but still sticks to what happened but the Washington Post and the People’s Daily had very different view on the whole event, this makes things very interesting due to through the People’s Daily it is easy to figure out how Chinese government want the event to turn out. On the other hand, the Washington Post not being controlled by the U.S. government people are able to see things much clearly without bias.

There’s no secret the state owned news- People’s Daily is a big speaker for Chinese government, they reports news based on what the Chinese government wants. The Washington Post being a news company set in the capital of America has a different situation, Washington Post stays neutral. I tried to compare these two significantly different news company to see what is the biggest different about the whole event.

Research Purpose

This study further explores the event of Meng, Wan-Zhou the CFO of Huawei, and tries to analyze the reason the U.S. government wanted to extradite Meng so desperately. Then try to find out what U.S. government really gains from the arrest.

Research Hypothesis

1. The whole event is more of a political move than a legal procedure.

Huawei has an important role in Made in China 2025 plan, through hypothesis we try to find out what is hidden behind the legal excuse, is it a political strategy to pin the Made in China 2025 plan by extradite Meng, Wan-Zhou to the U.S. for trial.

Contribution

This study tries to show what the U.S. government really wants to achieve by arresting Meng, Wan- Zhou, and show how important Huawei is to both the U.S. and China.

Through analyzing it is possible to find out that the U.S. government's political intention and also might be able to predict the future plan for Chinese government to avoid being contained. Knowing how Chinese government react and change plans for the Made in China 2025 plan, will give Taiwanese government and enterprises a clearer view to set a better goal not only being able to avoid getting accidentally punished by the U.S. trading policy and might as well profit from the big China market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Huawei and The 5G Market

5G network is the fifth generation of mobile network, faster and less delaying comparing to the 4G network. The biggest difference about 5G is it could support mutable technology such as artificial intelligence, intelligence home appliances and electronics, virtual reality...etc. Not only personal devices, 5G network can combine with transport network, communication network and also security network. This amount of platforms being able to connect with 5G network makes the U.S. government and some scholars worried about Chinese government might be able to access the device platforms that 5G network create due to Huawei has the largest amount of 5G network patents and signal towers they built. Huawei by owning 34% of the 5G patent in the world has already started investing and building some 5G basic equipment in many countries all over the globe.⁸ Though, CEO of Huawei- Ren, Zheng- Fei denied all rumors about Chinese government can have access to Huawei's network and data base.⁹ There is no way for Huawei to refuse to hand in network data to Chinese intelligence agency according to espionage and national security laws in the country.¹⁰ Also, the background of Ren, Zheng- Zheng as he being a

⁸ "Top 10 5g Standards-Essential Patents Owners Worldwide," *China Daily* 2019.

⁹ "Huawei: Where Is the Line between Private Business and the Chinese Government?," *The Irish Times* (2019).

¹⁰ Arjun Kharpal, "Huawei Says It Would Never Hand Data to China's Government. Experts Say It Wouldn't Have a Choice," *CNBC* (2019).

former People's Liberation Army, also a member of communist party, doesn't help Huawei from clarifying its' data security theft by Chinese intelligence agency. Most of the western intelligence agency graded Huawei with low trust rate and had Huawei being banned in countries like the U.S., Australia and New Zealand. Huawei being publicly banned by the U.S. government causes the market share shrink dramatically and forced Huawei to pull most of the investment out of the U.S.

Made in China 2025 Policy

Made in China 2025 is a program announced in May 2018 by Chinese government in order to transfer their industries to a higher value- added manufacturing sectors.¹¹ It is basically a program for countries in developing to play catch up with those fully developed. Made in China 2025 involves government subsidies, invests in innovation. The program covers 4 advantages and 10 key sectors.¹² The 10 key industrial sectors include: Information technology, Robotics, Green energy and Green vehicles, Aerospace equipment, Ocean engineering, Railway equipment, Power equipment, New materials, Medicine and Medical devices and Agriculture machinery. The biggest target for local manufacturer is to develop product with its advanced technology. China created a huge sub-contract

¹¹ Kristen Hopewell, "What Is 'Made in China 2025' — and Why Is It a Threat to Trump's Trade Goals?," *The Washington POST* (2018).

¹² "'Made in China 2025' to Focus on Ten Key Sectors," *People's Daily* (2015).

manufacturing market drawing interest of foreign enterprises by its cheap labor and huge potential market. There's a significant growth on Chinese economic since China joined World Trade Organization, the manufacturing industries was booming then. The market grows bigger and bigger and China has reached the second-largest economy in the world. Though being the second- largest, the average of per-income comparing to the U.S. was still too low for China to become a developed country. Vietnam being a new strong manufacturing competitor has a lower labor cost comparing to China, causing Chinese labor market losing competitiveness.¹³ Chinese government made laws forcing enterprises to transfer technology to Chinese manufacturers, making the manufacturers able to develop their own technology base on others patent. U.S. government accused this kind of policy as 'stealing'.¹⁴

The Sino-U.S. Trade War

The Sino-U.S. trade war is a leading power struggle between Chinese government lead by President Xi, Jin-Ping and the U.S. government lead by President Donald Trump. The trade war started with President Trump ordered an investigation on China's unfair seizure of US intellectual property. This investment directly leveled the tariff on about 50 billion

¹³ Jason Fang and Michael Walsh, "Made in China 2025: Beijing's Manufacturing Blueprint and Why the World Is Concerned," *ABC News* (2018).

¹⁴ Robert D. Atkinson, "With China, Step One Is Admitting We Have a Problem," *Washington Post* (2019).

dollars' worth of Chinese imports.¹⁵ China and the U.S. are the two largest economy, the U.S. has imported a very big amount of goods from China, in fact, the biggest exporter to the U.S. is China. This creates a trade deficit situation. Without the tariff barrier, cheap Chinese products occupies the market with a huge competitiveness. On the other hand, some of the U.S. manufacturers move the production line to China in order to reduce the production cost. These manufacturers also have to face the technology transfer as they outsource their production line to Chinese manufacturers. This creates the reason why President Trump accuses Chinese enterprises and manufacturers are technology theft.

The investigation U.S. government started was a law named- Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974 also known as the 301 investigation or section 301. The main purpose for this specific investigation is to balance out the trade deficit or surplus in order to protect the enterprises in the U.S. from lacking competitiveness with foreign companies. The investigation authorized the President to take all appropriate action to fight against unfair or unreasonable trading situation like raising tariffs, reducing or limiting the import or export rate...etc.

¹⁵ Jeremy Diamond, "Trump Hits China with Tariffs, Heightening Concerns of Global Trade War," *CNN* (2018).

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter further more show how data was selected and collected also the method being used to analyze data and how the data support my arguments. The data collection was from December 2018 to June 2019.

Method of Data Collection

To collect the changing situation on the cross board arrestment, document analysis was the qualitative data collection method I used. I focused on journals and government documentaries mainly from the three countries involved in the Meng, Wan-Zhou event- Canada, U.S. and China. I search for documents followed by the timeline of the event and tried to collect data mainly from two different journals- Washington Post and People's Daily. There might be some limits when only using these two journals, normally government announcement is strictly controlled to avoid sending out the wrong message. This causes the real purpose hidden and hard to be clarify. Thus choosing representative journals from opposite side and collecting columns from both journals might give this study a better view of what both countries tend to show and what is the hidden purpose or profit underneath the movement and announcement. The points to be focused in the data collection process would be (1) what happened in the event; (2) how did the event happen; (3) how did the three governments react to the event.

Method of Data Analysis

This study used narrative analysis and discourse analysis as qualitative data analysis methods. Due to the various news press and official announcements being collected as data and the purpose of this study is to see the true thoughts about the participants from the event and political issue might not be seen that easy through raw materials like pure text, thus narrative analysis might not be able to thrust through the controlled announcement to the hidden thoughts, this study uses discourse analysis on the columns being collected from the two journals in order to analyze the true thoughts and the real meaning included in the news press and announcements.

DATA ANALYSIS

The Sino-U.S. Trade War in March 2018

The trade war between U.S. and China started in March 2018 since President Trump announced the raise on tariffs which was authorized by the result of the 301 investigation.¹⁶ According to the announcement made by President Trump, U.S. has been taken advantaged from China and other countries.¹⁷ He also seen the trade deficit as an evidence of the unbalanced market.¹⁸ As on the other hand, China being noncommittal admitting the deficit situation with the trade market with the U.S. doubted seriously on the strategic of raising tariffs. China being punished by the high rising tariffs might reduce the export rate to the U.S. according to the announcement and plan book by President Trump but since the raising tariff started, the deficit rate dropped not as quick as President Trump mentioned, in fact, the deficit still remains.¹⁹ So, as the number shows the situation is still not in President Trump's favor, how does the tariff raise keep going? Isn't that useless to change deficit into surplus? Actually in December 2018, the goods deficit increases from 9 billion dollars to 81.5 billion, as well as a decrease in the services surplus of 0.5 billion dollars to 21.8 billion dollars, China still has the biggest surplus to the

¹⁶ Enda Curran, "How the U.S.-China Trade War Got to This Point," *Washington Post* (2019).

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ "U.S. Trade Deficit Soars to 10-Year High in 2018," *People's Daily* (2019).

U.S..²⁰ Though President Trump promised, the deficit situation hasn't improved when it comes to the data.²¹

As I mentioned in literature review, there were few critics doubting the purpose of the tariff raise. In economic viewpoint, more tariffs equals more expensive goods. China still being the largest importer to the U.S., adding tariff is a painful movement putting higher product price to the whole nation.²² It is fair to say the policy and strategic to turn deficit into surplus is a failure.²³

Another important point for the tariff raise was to scare the companies to get them back to the U.S. and create a larger need of labors. The 'America First' campaign seems to be one major point for President Trump to make sure that the multinational cooperation could base their production line in the U.S.²⁴ Despite the purpose might be good for American labors and workers, some off the biggest brands in the world have a very low interest with it and decide to maintain the same relationship with China and its various market.²⁵

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Ibid

²² Robert J. Samuelson, "Trump Is Not a 'Great Deal-Maker.' His Trade Issues with China Make That Obvious.," *Washington Post* (2019).

²³ Glenn Kessler, "Trump Keeps Claiming the Trade Deficit Is Going Down. It's Not.," *ibid*.

²⁴ David J. Lynch, "As Trump Fights with China over Trade, U.S.-China Economic Relationship Already Being Redefined," *ibid*.

²⁵ "Washington's Trade Protectionism Will Be Bad for Us Companies: Expert," *People's Daily* (2018).

The trade war has ups and downs since it started, and tariffs of multiple goods have been raised in order for the U.S. to cut a better deal. But comparing the data and what President Trump said his purpose was, most of the plans seem more political than financial.

The Arrestment of Meng, Wan-Zhou and The Data Security of Huawei

The arrestment of Meng, Wan-Zhou the Huawei CFO was done in a sensitive time in the process of cutting a trade deal for the Sino-U.S. trade war. This lives a big question mark for the real purpose for doing so. Meng was charged for fraud relating to business with Skycom and Iran, which the second was under U.S. sanctions.²⁶ Not only the timing of the arrestment is sensitive, the background of Meng, Wan-Zhou makes the story even more mysterious. Meng was the daughter of the CEO of Huawei. Ren, Zheng-Fei founder of Huawei has a background closely connect with the Communist Party of China (CPC) also as known as Chinese Communist Party (CCP). (In order not get confused, this study will refer the party as CCP.) Ren is also a member of CCP.²⁷ The identity of him and his employees' has already causing some doubts around the security of private data.²⁸

Although Ren has denied all rumors against the data security issue, the fact is he might not

²⁶ David Moscrop, "How Canada Can Reset Its Fractured Relationship with China — for the Better," *Washington Post* (2019).

²⁷ "How Huawei Became a Target for Governments," *ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid*

have a choice about whether handing out the data or not. China has authorized their intelligence agency to gain access to any data as long as it is nation security related.²⁹ It might not be that big of a deal Huawei might give their data to Chinese government if there wasn't 5G network technology. 5G network increases the potential risks from personal data security to national security level. After the arrestment comes along with various ban to the Huawei product and network.³⁰ Through the arrestment and the charges Meng has to face, it's hard not to say the arrestment is political decision. The Made in China 2025 plan was a plan showing China no longer wants to stay in a position of following but leading, this target going straight against U.S. President Trump's campaign with the leading position of 5G technology that could control multiple platforms was not something U.S. government willing to see. There is also an issue, the forced technology transfer law in China. All of the reason above creates the biggest doubt not only focusing on Huawei but China. The arrestment would make sense if it was seen as a move to pin down the Made in China 2025 policy than a movement to gain any serious benefit. It is like the technical foul in the international affairs.

²⁹ Kharpal, "Huawei Says It Would Never Hand Data to China's Government. Experts Say It Wouldn't Have a Choice."

³⁰ "How Huawei Became a Target for Governments."

The Response of the Meng, Wan-Zhou Event

The arrest of Meng, Wan-Zhou shocked the entire world especially China. Chinese government immediately called in the Canadian ambassador and claimed the arrest was a huge mistake and could sabotage the relationship between Canada and China. Huawei also made their points clear that Meng, Wan-Zhou their CFO is innocent for all charges. Both Chinese government and Huawei urged Canada and the U.S. to correct the mistake on the arrest.³¹ Through this opportunity China also warned the U.S. to stop its campaign against Chinese enterprises including Huawei.³²

While going through the announcements and the articles published by People's Daily, there are some significant difference comparing with Washington Post. People's Daily seldom mentioned the legal procedure about the whole event and they tend to write with their own perspective.³³³⁴³⁵ To a journal this kind of article and news is inappropriate and subjective. But consider People's Daily is one of the Chinese official media, the article published by them could be seen as what Chinese government wants the world and their people to see. People's Daily made a clear view about the perspective of Chinese

³¹ "China Urges the Canadian Government to Immediately Release Huawei Cfo Meng Wanzhou: Fm," *People's Daily* (2019).

³² "Beijing Slams Us Request for Huawei Cfo," *People's Daily* (2019).

³³ "Diplomat Says Meng Case Based on Politics," *People's Daily* (2019).

³⁴ "Chinese Embassy in Ottawa Urges U.S., Canada to Release Huawei Cfo," (2019).

³⁵ "China Says Canada Solely Responsible for Difficulties in Relations," (2019).

government, they claimed Meng was arrested because of political reasons by the U.S. government as means to bargain.

Washington Post on the other hand tends to give a clear update about the arrest and the crimes Meng has been charged for. The announcements made by U.S. government had clear and complete reason to ask for arrest and extradition by law but when we try to analyze the possible result on the trial, there is no actual benefits except the bail the judge might ask for. Due to the sensitive timing and no serious benefits for doing so, the actual purpose seemed to be mysterious. Also, Washington Post not being controlled by government allows expert columnist to express their opinion or their analyzed viewpoints which makes the data more comprehensive. By analyzing, I found most columnist believed that President Trump cannot change the trade deficit simply by raising tariffs also the chances for it to backfire is quite high. And the most important point, the arrest is a strategy to block the Made in China 2025 plan.

Comparing two opposite journals, the data collection could be coded to three different groups. The perspective of the U.S. government, the perspective needs legal cover to achieve their true purpose. The columnist of the Washington Post as the second group, presents the possible reason of the movement both governments took. The People's Daily could be seen as the speaker of Chinese government, the biggest mission it tried to achieve

was showing the Chinese what did the government and enterprises face in order to team up
other enterprises or people in their own nation to take action to defense themselves.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

By narrative analysis and discourse analysis we are able to have a peak on what the U.S. government try to achieve without being accused to be too peremptory. President Trump started the trade war to protect the workers and manufacturers in the U.S. and to make America great again as he said. The fact we analyzed through the study actually shows the move he had done didn't achieve as much as he said or promised, the raise of tariffs sounds epic by numbers yet it still can't change the import rate of Chinese goods. The tariffs even caught some multination enterprises in a swamp, a swamp that tries to force them to move out China to avoid the punishment but yet nowhere as competitive as the market China creates.

As we look at the China's side, we could easily see that Chinese government knows what is the U.S. planning for, what the U.S. up to, and tries to fight back to maintain the situation under their control. But it seems they did so much but yet achieve so little. Take Meng, Wan-Zhou as an example, because being shielded behind legal procedures, the only thing Chinese government could do is to blame the U.S. government arresting their people for political reason and urge Canadian government to release Meng, Wan-Zhou. Though President can't change the trade deficit situation, the U.S. government still shows an effective way to block the Made in China 2025 plan and even had a pretty good excuse to

ban Huawei from keeping the advantage of owning the most patent of 5G network technology.

Though the U.S. seem to have the upper hand in the current situation, it doesn't mean China has given up to transform the industry technology. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger. Taiwan being one of the ally of the U.S. and one of closest neighbor of China, we are as much as standing in the center of the storm, wherever we decide to go will affect us. This study is trying to clear up the situation for Taiwanese in order to avoid the next wave coming right at us.

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