



Illustration: Liu Rui/Global Times

An absurd scene at G7 – the bandit leader ran for police chief

The Group of Seven (G7) Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' meeting that ended on Saturday did not name China in the joint statement, nor did it mention the so-called economic coercion that has been hyped for a long time. Nonetheless, it is hard to say the G7 is returning to rationality on the issue of China. It is more likely "retreating for the sake of advancing." The G7 has hinted that at the Hiroshima summit held from May 19 to May 21, the main statement is set to include "a section specific to China" with a list of concerns that include "economic coercion."

If this is the case, it means that after blatantly interfering in China's Taiwan question, the G7 is attempting to expand the front to contain China to a new area where politics and economy are integrated. This mainly reflects the intention of Washington, but Japan, who holds the rotating presidency of the G7 this year, has been more active and radical than the US in promoting joint actions and mobilization to contain China. The G7 is undergoing a functional transformation, and the Chinese people must keep a high degree of vigilance against it. This time, the G7 meeting was held at the door of China, and the Chinese could feel the new Cold War atmosphere emanating from there at close range.

Japan in particular should be warned. China has expressed its strong dissatisfaction with Japan on the negative trends against China at relevant G7 meetings and Japan's negative role in them, and lodged stern representations. How the G7 summit will be held depends on the attitude of the host country. If China is provoked, a considerable part of the account will be charged to Japan.

Speaking of economic coercion, there is a well-known case in which the US and Japan were the protagonists – the Plaza Accord signed in the 1980s. In order to reduce the fiscal deficit and trade deficit, the US forced the yen to appreciate sharply, leading the Japanese economy to enter "the lost 30 years." This pair of perpetrator and victim of economic coercion are now filing accusations against another victim. This not only exposes the arbitrariness of the perpetrators, but also reflects the complicated role played by Japan in Japan-US relations and the geopolitical pattern of East Asia. Japan is not simply a victim, but also an instigator and an accomplice.

China is qualified to oppose economic coercion, while the US is the least qualified. For many years, the US has engaged in countless practices of economic coercion, contributing to many textbook-level cases. The latest example is the "CHIPS and Science Act" that its Western allies feel indignant but dare not speak out

against. By forcibly creating a "small circle" of chips to exclude the Chinese mainland, not only is the global chip industry affected, but the global supply chain may also be "split into two." In this context, some European countries still follow Washington in hyping about China's so-called "economic coercion," this appears somewhat ridiculous. Isn't this aiding and abetting the oppressor and supporting the bandit leader to run for police chief?

China's so-called "economic coercion" hyped up by the US and its allies is nothing new. The most frequently cited examples are Lithuania and Australia. It must be emphasized that the two cases have nothing to do with "economic coercion." For example, Lithuania allowed the Taiwan authorities to establish a so-called "Taiwanese Representative Office in Lithuania" despite strong opposition from Beijing, which seriously violated the one-China principle and the political commitments made by Lithuania when establishing diplomatic relations with China. The Chinese government's resolute response to this is completely legitimate and inevitable.

Speaking of Australia, its previous government inexplicably provoked China on multiple issues related to China, dragging the China-Australia relationship to a freezing point. This inevitably had a negative impact on economic and trade cooperation. It is worth mentioning that when the Australian Labor government adjusted its policy toward China, it quickly brought about a turnaround in the China-Australia relationship. Australian Trade Minister Don Farrell has just completed his visit to China and "expressed satisfaction" with his talks with the Chinese side. We believe that through such mutual efforts to meet each other halfway, the differences and disputes that arise in the interaction between the two sides will be resolved. There is no such thing as "economic coercion" in this process.

The hype of the so-called "economic coercion" is actually "political framing." Some Western countries, including the US, have put the label of "economic coercion" on China, and there is another sinister intention, which is to morally blackmail China so that they can provoke and harm China's interests without any worries. They do not want to restrain their impulse to interfere in China's internal affairs, nor do they want to bear the price and consequences of their wrong actions. They don't respect China but want to gain unilateral benefits from China. How is this possible?

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Middle East does not need Big Mac US embassy aiming for regional chaos

What's the point of the US to build the second-largest embassy worldwide in such a small country as Lebanon? It is a strong signal to show that the US is in the Middle East to stay, through an exaggeratedly huge new command center, especially at a time when burgeoning detente and peace process are unfolding in the region, healing the wounds caused by Washington.

"A massive new US embassy complex in a tiny Middle East nation is raising eyebrows," CNN reported on Saturday. It became a news story because

a small country like Lebanon clearly does not need such a large embassy or a large number of diplomats. "It is likely that a significant proportion of the embassy staff will consist of intelligence and military personnel. In other words, the embassy's intelligence and military functions will far outweigh its diplomatic role," Ding Long, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times.

The US does not care that Lebanon's economy has been in turmoil since 2019 or that nearly 80 percent of the Lebanese live in poverty. But it does care about Lebanon's geographical position – bordering Syria to the north and east and Israel to the south. Experts believe that, as a traditional geopolitical center of the Middle East and the frontline of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Lebanon is viewed by the US as a frontier stronghold to contain Hezbollah and Iran. At the same time, Washington can also closely monitor Russia's military presence in Syria.

Upon completion, the US will be able to not only collect significant amount of military intelligence from the Middle East via the new embassy, but also take it as a crucial base for US special operations forces, Song Zhongping, a Chinese military expert and TV commentator, told

the Global Times, noting that these will help orchestrate color revolutions in Middle Eastern countries to overthrow anti-US regimes and foster pro-US opposition forces. "Rather than defining it as an embassy, it is more of a US headquarters," he said.

According to Ding, Washington is only decreasing its direct military involvement in the Middle East; it does not mean that the US is reducing its ambitions for hegemony there. The fact is the US is enhancing its diplomatic, intelligence, and other soft power means in the region. However, the US can hardly reach what it wishes.

One significant cause is that the US' Middle East policy is too self-serving and severely detached from reality. Take Lebanon, it needs development and stable neighboring environment to tackle its challenges as many people there are unable to afford basic commodities, including food, medicine and electricity, rather than a Big Mac US embassy, which is widely believed to be full of ill intentions and will create more regional chaos.

Meanwhile, when talking about the massive US embassy compound in Lebanon, a question can hardly be ignored – where is the money coming from, when the US has been facing debt ceiling crisis over and over again in the past years? It's the money from American taxpayers, it's also the money for tomorrow, which US borrowed from other countries.

What the Middle East needs from the US is turning American embassies to their normal function – carrying out genuine diplomacy and facilitate communication, rather than being strongholds for color revolutions or a headquarters for armed militants under the guise of "embassies," which, in the past, merely played the role as malignant tumor in the region, bringing disastrous consequences to the innocent local people.



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"With so many former ones saying the opposite of what the current ones are saying..., most ppl in the West still not able to catch what really is happening..."

@hhwldn, a Twitter user, on the UK's former head of Diplomatic Service Simon McDonald's recent remarks that the UK shouldn't make an enemy of China.

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