

Foreword

Whether you are a businessperson, a policymaker, or a layperson interested in learning more about China, by picking up this book you have afforded yourself the unique opportunity to eavesdrop on a fascinating conversation about one brave American's interaction with the Red Dragon.

Americans are grateful for the risks and sacrifices freely given by their military brethren, who never know when their country will call upon them to serve in combat. But less visible to the public are those American citizens who engage in overseas commerce—and live with concern, exposure, and personal risk on a different kind of battlefield. *Their* engagement in principled free enterprise can contribute to greater prosperity as well as advance the interests of American core values to the benefit of free people everywhere. In many instances, such men and women are our 'commercial' ambassadors who contribute to an international framework intended to promote access to open markets, free trade, and economic stability, inspired by the 'rules-based system' as we know it, one that fashioned an engine for development, lifted generations out of poverty, and powered a dedicated focus on the improvement of the human condition. Hard bargaining on level playing fields with true commercial counterparts is how free markets should work inside this system. But when sovereign governments slip into the fray in the guise of commercial enterprises, the 'game,' 'the organizing principles of the system,' and the proverbial 'goal post,' all change. American businessmen and women are then playing on decidedly unlevel fields—and do so at commercial and personal peril. US businessmen and women can become targets for other countries'

intelligence and security services. Occasionally, the consequences rise to the national level.

To survive (much less thrive) in this commercial ‘combat’ with foreign sovereign commercial entities, American business adventurers must use not only the traditional tools of business, but also an appreciation that their counterparties are more than just business adversaries. These valiant merchants must learn to navigate complex environments and crosscurrents of laws, cultures, personalities, and politics. Misappreciation of these elements, or missteps, or malign acts by the adversaries can wipe out the accomplishments of years of work, sometimes with a single change in foreign leadership.

The People’s Republic of China offers opportunities that attract both bold entrepreneurs willing to stake their futures on their hard work and global industries seeking economies of scale for production processes.

In *Dancing with the Dragon*, Steve Fiffer teases out Patrick Jenevein’s story of ambitious but disciplined efforts to build not one but two “unicorn” companies, each worth more than a billion dollars, only to lose both to the exercise of sovereign greed and flexing of sovereign might.

But the story tells much more than just that. Jenevein uses the twists and turns of his encounters with Chinese leaders to reveal lessons learned and articulate approaches that work to constrain bad faith behavior directed by the Communist Party of China.

- William J. Haynes II, General Counsel of the Department of Defense (2001-2008) and Admiral (Ret.) Patrick M. Walsh, Commander, US Pacific Fleet (2009-2012), Vice Chief of Naval Operations (2007-2009)