

# Xi Jinping Takes an Idea from Winnie the Pooh

*Shôn Ellerton, February 28, 2023*

*The true story of how and why the Chinese launched a spy balloon to the United States.*



Xi Jinping stirs from his deep sleep and clambers out of his generously sized but functionally unadorned bed with fervour and zest. The room is spacious but surprisingly bare and clutter free. Every item in the room has a practical purpose. There is no room for superfluous nonsense here and, thus, the mind must be freed from such innate distractions. After all, there is the need to think and decide how to lead a nation of more than a billion people.

He saunters over to his old wooden wardrobe, a remnant from nineteenth-century China when the British were there during the Opium Wars. It's not an item of furniture he would normally have, but there is something about it which captivates his attention. The intricate woven texture of the worked wood and the depth of the smooth veneer finish on the front panels, as if like a darkened and subdued mirror. He reaches for one of his distinctive grey suits tailored for him and him alone and slips it on. He admires his image by gazing back at his reflection, an effigy exalted as if portrayed by an oil painting.

Staring back at him is a man of great power but also a man of humbleness. He takes pride that the most powerful position, possibly that in the world, is not titled as a king, emperor, or president, but as the lowly title of the party's general secretary. But there is that paradox which confronts him daily. The serving needs to distinguish himself amongst others in a unique way in terms of dress sense and mannerisms. To be the unified voice of the clarion call of his nation to build a stronger China demands such distinction.

Xi Jinping knows full well in his mind that the West has succumbed to chaos, weakness and desperation. Being well-read on the Roman emperors, particularly that of Julius Caesar, the principles of divide-and-conquer have worked well to the advantage of China. The idiocy of American bipartisan politics, the rise of woke ideologies, the everlasting fearmongering of climate change and advent of new diseases, and such trifling issues like what pronouns to use and the seemingly difficult task of determining the sex of a human are afflictions of the degenerate West. And this makes Xi Jinping smile with smug satisfaction.

However, everyone needs a little entertainment, including that of Xi Jinping. While much of the world is immersed into the world of social media and perpetual streaming services, Xi Jinping recounts a children's book he once read and liked. It is none other than A.A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh*. Despite his disdain towards the West's decline and self-loathing, this book was written during quite another era in the West. An era that any leader would view as worthy of respect and admiration.

Xi Jinping begins to formulate a plan to test the West's weakness while, at the same time, foment humiliation within the circles of power in the West, or, at least, what's left of it. He remembers, at the beginning of *Winnie the Pooh*, the story of the balloon and the bees. The episode of Pooh Bear wanting a bit of honey guarded by a vociferous swarm of bees high up in a tree.

But how to get there.

By holding on to a balloon and floating up to the beehive to scoop out the honey. It was Pooh's decision to use a blue balloon to blend in the blue sky rather than a black balloon to look like a cloud with little in the way of thought that Pooh, a bear with little brain, would never be disguised regardless of the balloon's colour. Naturally, Pooh's plan failed when the angry swarm of bees took note of the invading floating bear.

But how to get down.

Pooh, deliberating the thought of letting go and doing himself a mischief called upon his chief-of-arms, Christopher Robin, to shoot down the balloon with a pellet gun. Christopher Robin, after accidentally shooting Pooh's bottom being of not particularly a good shot, did finally manage to bring the balloon down along with one humiliated slightly bruised bear.

What a great story!

Xi Jinping, in remembrance of a literary genius as Milne was, formulates a bit of a plan to humiliate the United States and its meddling regime, being led by a laughable duo of geriatric presidents whom, for differing reasons, seem to have no connection with reality, nor its people.

This devious and cunning plan involves balloons. This will be fun indeed!

Xi Jinping runs off to the Ministry of State Security in a flurry of excitement hardly being able to finish his breakfast but did, at least, manage to grab a couple of watermelon slices to munch on during the way. Eating right is important for Xi Jinping and being able to shed a few pounds will not only increase his physical agility and mental acuity, but to make him look just a little less like Pooh Bear himself. He overheard one of his generals mentioning this during a state banquet and then decided that the most appropriate punishment was to force him to eat English food for a month. The punishment backfired inasmuch that the general, a rather portly man himself, lost an astonishing twenty-five kilos and has now been made himself a celebrity on one of China's TV game shows.

Xi Jinping and his consort of close advisors sit together in a soundproofed room deep in the heart of an obscure drab-looking concrete structure on the outskirts of Beijing. They are served tea and cans of Fanta orange along with a few nibbles comprising some fruit and roasted peanuts. The collective jaws of his advisors drop when Xi Jinping reveals his little practical joke on the West. Indeed, one of the advisors, a stern-looking formidable character lost control of his teacup in surprise which ended up with hot tea being spilled on his lap followed by an audible gasp and a grimace of pain.

What was the plan exactly? To launch, not a blue or a black, but a white high-altitude balloon fitted out with a lot of antennas, panels and bits and bobs, making it look, as Milne would have described it, suspiciously like a spy balloon.

A few uncomfortable seconds passed by until, as if in unison, everyone applauded and burst out laughing. They all agreed this would make a complete mockery of the United States administration and its defence capability. For such an occasion, a youngish chap turned round and opened a drinks cabinet and brought out a nice bottle of Moutai along with some small shot glasses. They then had a big chuckle that it surely won't be long when the might of the American war machine will fade away into insignificance while its citizens fight each other over domestic politics, listen to Kamala Harris's *Deep Thoughts* and be taken in by Biden's unintelligible speeches.

The big day arrives for the balloon launch. Formidable indeed as it rises into the stratosphere assisted by the prevailing winds to traverse the vastness of the Pacific Ocean. In the coming few hours, bets are placed within the Party as to when the balloon will be discovered to make the evening news and when it's going to be shot down. Most concede that the balloon will probably be shot down not far within American airspace. Perhaps a couple hundred of kilometres, but surely no more than that. Even the United States wouldn't allow such an object, complete with its array of dishes, panel antennas and cameras get that far without being dispatched.

Meanwhile, near an ICBM missile array in the remotest corner of Montana, Ted Brubaker, one of the assistant commanding officers of the facility, was made aware of a report of very large white balloon of unknown origin drifting across the desolate landscape. Brubaker, a respected, well-trained and well-read officer reported his concern that, not only was this very large balloon drifting straight over them, but it was adorned with a variety of sinister looking probes, antennas and cameras. He made the necessary phone calls to the appropriate administration enquiring what it was. They did not have an answer, and Brubaker suggested that it be dispatched on grounds of national security. The Mickey Mouse brigade, as Brubaker likes to call the US Executive, informed them that it was merely a weather balloon and ordered the military to eat Ding Dongs and Twinkies and watch the weather balloon meander unharmed over the Montana prairies. They were duly informed that shooting down such an object might hit AOC's ranch house near Billings which is too high of a risk.

It was coffee time at the Pentagon and Walter, a young man with black sleek hair and a striking suit, observed from out of the window a glint in the sky. It was one of those crisp cool days; the poplars and their leaves gently rustling in the breeze. All quite pleasant. The glint returns and Walter stares at the sky but finding nothing visible reaches for a pair of binoculars lying on top of a nearby filing cabinet. Scanning the skies through his binoculars, he eventually finds the offending culprit in the sky. What looks to be like a very large white balloon with a lot of stuff dangling under it. Could this be the moment to impress his seniors at the office?

Walter runs down the endless corridors of the world's largest building and finds himself at the door of General Avilov. He knocks hastily and then summoned into a chamber lined with several large bookcases, most of which being filled with heavy reading material about war and other related matters on military strategy.

Strewn about were leather chairs, a desk and a few art deco style uplighters. Avilov, a defector from the Soviet Union during the late 80s, did not change his surname on advice by the administration, and despite the ridicule and ostracism he attracted, refused to do so. Avilov, a rather stoic and taciturn fellow, after hearing the afflicting intelligence by Walter, immediately informed the Executive that this unidentified object could be a real threat and must be gunned down immediately. Being from the old school during the last days of the Cold War between the United States and the former Soviet Union, Avilov knew too well of the dangers of aerial espionage.

Avilov was put on hold by one of the Executive assistant attendants and kindly asked to call back in an hour's time. The Executive was undertaking an issue of national importance in deciding whether to make it mandatory for companies in the United States to force their employees on using the appropriate pronouns of their colleagues. Avilov resigns in disgust and looks out the window and watches helplessly while the big balloon casually floats over the Pentagon. He reaches for the drinks cabinet and pours himself a generous shot of his finest Scotch.

After a few days, news reports from the West emerges as to some suspicious looking balloon. As with the bees in the story of *Winnie the Pooh*, it most certainly looked suspicious indeed. Xi Jinping and his comrades pile into a large room with large round tables fitted with lazy susans and tuck into a sumptuous feast with their eyes fixated on the US evening news from the big TV monitors on the walls. This was better than expected. Much to everyone's surprise, the balloon made it clear across the continental United States and eventually got shot down on the east coast. It was a resounding victory indeed. One of Xi Jinping's close advisors likened the humiliating episode as that of not being able to organise a piss-up in a brewery. Not even the might and power of the United States of America could make the seemingly simple decision to shoot down a balloon. Well, at least until it got to the other side of course!