

*New book says U.S. general  
called China twice over fears  
Donald Trump would launch a  
war*

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**According to the Washington Post, General Milley sought to assure Beijing that the U.S. was stable and not going to attack and, if there were to be an attack, he would alert his counterpart ahead of time**

Washington, September 15 (RHC)-- The top U.S. general secretly called his Chinese counterpart twice over concerns then-President Donald Trump could trigger a war with China as his potential election loss loomed and in its aftermath, according to The Washington Post newspaper.

U.S. General Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, called General Li Zuocheng of the People's Liberation Army on October 30, 2020 – four days before the election – and again on January 8,

two days after Trump supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol, the newspaper reported. Milley made the comments on Tuesday.

In the calls, Milley sought to assure Li the United States was stable and not going to attack and if there were to be an attack, he would alert his counterpart ahead of time, the report said.

The report was based on "Peril" -- a new book by journalists Bob Woodward and Robert Costa, which they said relied on interviews with 200 sources and is due to be released next week.

Milley also reportedly discussed with other top officials, including the then-CIA Director Gina Haspel and National Security Agency head Paul Nakasone, the need to be vigilant amid concerns Trump could act irrationally. Haspel was quoted as saying that they were in a "highly dangerous situation."

"Some might contend that Milley had overstepped his authority and taken extraordinary power for himself," the authors wrote.

Trump, in a statement, denied the story, calling it "fabricated." He said if the story were true Milley should be tried for treason. "For the record, I never even thought of attacking China," Trump said.

For his part, Republican Senator Marco Rubio called on President Joe Biden, a Democrat, to immediately fire Milley.

"I do not need to tell of you the dangers posed by senior military officers leaking classified information on US military operations, but I will underscore that such subversion undermines the President's ability to negotiate and leverage one of this nation's instruments of national power in his interactions with foreign nations," Rubio said in a letter to Biden.

Asked about The Washington Post report, White House Deputy Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre declined to comment and referred questions to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Defense Department.

Trump, a Republican, named Milley to the top military post in 2018 but began criticising him, as well as other appointees and former staffers, after losing the presidential election to Biden in November 2020.

The Post reported that Milley was motivated to contact Beijing the second time partly because of a January 8 call with U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who had asked the general what safeguards were in place to prevent an "unstable president" from launching a nuclear strike.

"He's crazy. You know he's crazy," Pelosi told Milley, the newspaper reported, citing a transcript of the call. According to the call transcript, the general replied: "I agree with you on everything."

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