

David Rennie

Beijing Bureau Chief, The Economist

David Rennie is the Beijing bureau chief for The Economist, the world's most influential news magazine of business and politics. He moved to China in 2018 after six years as The Economist's US political columnist and Washington bureau chief. He offers a top insider's perspective on the biggest global trends of the moment, after spending the past decade writing weekly columns for The Economist, starting with its column on Europe (bylined "Charlemagne") then its column on Britain (bylined "Bagehot") and finally its column on America (bylined "Lexington"). This is his second posting to China, and he will be reporting on that country in all its depth and breadth, covering the extraordinary power wielded by President Xi Jinping, China's growing geopolitical might and the ambitions that lie behind such mega-projects as the Belt and Road Initiative.

As trade and security tensions mount between the West and giants like China, Rennie brings to bear decades of reporting from four continents, from the Oval Office to the trenches of Afghanistan. As Washington bureau chief he profiled presidential candidates and political leaders at the national, state and local level, including interviewing Donald Trump multiple times. He spent many months on the road, taking the view that American politics cannot be understood from an office inside the Beltway. He has traveled with U.S. cabinet secretaries on official trips around the globe to a dozen countries. Rennie's access to decision-makers and his near-constant world travel have given him a front-row seat as populist forces have upended governments and elites across the West. Few other commentators are as qualified to explore and explain the links between events like Brexit and the election of Donald Trump, the rise of China and what may come next.

Rennie became a full-time journalist after college, working for the London Evening Standard from 1992 to 1996. He joined the London Daily Telegraph in 1996, moving to the foreign department in 1998 with postings in Sydney, Australia, Beijing, Washington, D.C., and Brussels. From 2006 until he joined The Economist, he was also a contributing editor of the Spectator magazine. As a foreign correspondent David Rennie has reported from more than 50 countries. He has covered riots, earthquakes and, in 2001, the U.S.-led war against the Taliban in Afghanistan, where he embedded with Northern Alliance fighters. Rennie joined The Economist in 2007, writing its European column from Brussels. His early warnings that the E.U. also faced a crisis of democratic legitimacy earned him invitations to lecture at Harvard and Boston University in 2009 and the 2010 UACES/Thomson Reuters "Reporting Europe" award. From 2010 to 2012 Rennie wrote the magazine's column on Britain, based in London. As British political editor he travelled the world with the then prime minister David Cameron. In 2012 he wrote a short book on Britain's strained relations with Europe for the Centre for European Reform, a think-tank, predicting—four years ahead of the Brexit vote—that "British membership of the E.U. can no longer be taken for granted – especially if the euro-sceptics are accorded their wish of a referendum on membership." Rennie is a frequent guest on radio and television, working to put far-flung or complex issues into context for global audiences. He often appears on NPR and other US public radio networks, on such news shows as Morning Edition, All Things Considered and The World, and on such political panel shows as On Point, the Diane Rehm Show and its successor, 1A. He has talked about U.S. foreign policy, Brexit and other global issues on CNN, the BBC, PBS Newshour, the Charlie Rose Show and on CBS Face the Nation.