

The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters

Volume 25
Number 1 *Parameters* 1995

Article 19

7-4-1995

Does China Threaten Asia-Pacific Regional Stability?

Karl W. Eikenberry

Follow this and additional works at: <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters>

Recommended Citation

Karl W. Eikenberry, "Does China Threaten Asia-Pacific Regional Stability?," *Parameters* 25, no. 1 (1995), doi:10.55540/0031-1723.1740.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by USAWC Press. It has been accepted for inclusion in The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters by an authorized editor of USAWC Press.

Does China Threaten Asia-Pacific Regional Stability?

KARL W. EIKENBERRY

From *Parameters*, Spring 1995, pp. 82-103.

Nowhere has the collapse of Soviet power had greater consequences for security issues than in the Asia-Pacific region.[1] The Cold War witnessed two very different US-led approaches to countering the USSR. In Europe, America was able to forge an enduring collective alliance among nations that shared a commitment to Western liberal political values and open trade regimes. In Asia, however, the potential partners of the United States were divided by historical animosities, dissimilar developmental strategies, incompatible security interests, and fundamentally different philosophies of governing. Consequently, the United States implemented its policy of containment in the western Pacific through a series of bilateral and limited multilateral security treaties and pacts.[2] Thus, even with an abrupt end to the Cold War, we find NATO, although under stress, still cohesive. In East Asia, on the other hand, the implosion of the Soviet Union removed the stimulus that linked the defense concerns of the key players and dampened traditional rivalries.

It should surprise no one that the People's Republic of China (PRC) is at the center of the post-Cold War security calculations of all East Asia regional actors. China, which has the largest population of any nation, dominates the Asian landmass with an area slightly greater than that of the United States.[3] Chinese family-oriented Confucian culture, which places high premiums on education and hard work, provides a strong foundation upon which PRC modernization efforts are rapidly proceeding.[4] China's growing economy, by some calculations, is now surpassed in size only by that of the United States and Japan.[5] Additionally, the PRC maintains more soldiers under arms than any other nation.[6] At the same time, considerable caution attends most analysts' estimates of the PRC's long-term stability due to the scope of the Chinese people's political disaffection, as well as doubts about the ability of the Communist Party leadership to maintain unity after the passing of Deng Xiaoping.

This conjunction of uncertainty and vast potential power has led to widely varying evaluations of the role the PRC is apt to play in the security of East Asia. A Republic of Korea National Defense College faculty member calls China's defense buildup a "disturbing factor" to Asia-Pacific security.[7] A Russian journalist notes that although his country enjoys neighborly ties with the PRC, "It should not be forgotten that [Chinese] local museums and historical maps show a good part of the Russian land as having been taken from China by force." [8] The *Hindustan Times* warns that Sino-military developments are "causing worries," while a senior Japanese Foreign Ministry official expresses concern that the rising budget of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) could trigger "a vicious circle in which Asian countries would strangle themselves in a contest of military might." [9] In contrast, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahatir counsels the countries of the region to not be unduly worried by Chinese defense spending, and PRC Defense Minister Chi Haotian has decried the "China threat theory" as "ridiculous tales of the Arabian nights." [10] This broad range of views poses a difficult question: Is China a threat to the peace of the Asia-Pacific region through the first decade of the next century?

An understanding of the Chinese expression for "threat" (*weixie*) helps inform this study. The word consists of two characters: *wei* is defined as "strength" or "power"; *xie* implies "to force" or "to coerce." [11] The root meanings remind us that the concept of "a threat" entails an awareness of both capabilities and intentions.

This examination of the PRC's likely effect on the stability of East Asia begins with a discussion of China's capabilities, primarily focusing on its sources of military power. This is followed with a much more problematic inquiry into Beijing's intentions. Synthesis of the two dimensions of *weixie* suggests some inferences about the nature of the "China threat" to Asia-Pacific stability and leads to implications for the foreign policy and military strategy of the United States.

Capabilities

In the field of world politics, power is generally considered to be the capacity of a nation to control the behavior of other states in accordance with its own ends.[12] International relations theorist Kenneth Waltz suggests that "an agent is powerful to the extent that he affects others more than they affect him." [13] Such formulations make it clear that national capabilities or power resources are usually meaningful only when measured in relative terms. As political scientist Robert Jervis observes: "Knowing how much leverage one state has over another tells statesmen and analysts very little unless they also know how much leverage the other state has." [14]

When appraising the role of power, it is analytically useful to specify scope and domain. The former refers to the effects that matter, and the latter to those who can be affected.[15] To illustrate, the statement that the PRC has a great deal of capability tells us little. However, the assertion that China is able to employ its naval and air forces to gain control of the Spratly Islands (a specification of scope) in a conflict with Vietnam (a specification of domain), implies much. This inquiry will therefore examine the absolute capabilities (the scope) and relative power (the domain) of PRC military strength.

Absolute Power

Operationalizing the concept of military power is, of course, a troublesome task. The Chinese define *potential* military power as being determined by a state's political system, level of economic development, military strength, territory, population, and scope of natural resources.[16] Western thinking is generally consistent with that view, since Clausewitz's idea of the "people's share in the great affairs of state" is roughly analogous to the Chinese notion of the role of the political system.[17] This section concentrates on three generally robust indicators of military power: defense expenditures, force structure, and national wealth.

Defense Expenditures. The PLA's official budget has increased about 140 percent over the past six years, from around \$2.5 billion (US) in 1988 to \$6 billion in 1994.[18] This sharp rise in military expenditures is often cited by East Asian officials and security specialists as evidence of the threat China presents, or will soon pose, to regional stability.[19] The numbers are misleading for two reasons.

First, the selection of 1988 as a baseline year for PLA budget trend analysis heavily biases the outcome. In 1979, the cost of the brief but intense Sino-Vietnamese War drove PRC defense spending up to \$2.6 billion, a sum not surpassed until 1989 as PLA modernization was subordinated to other economic priorities by Beijing's leaders throughout the 1980s.[20] Thus, it is equally valid to say either Chinese military expenditures rose 135 percent between 1979 and 1994, or 140 percent since 1988. Moreover, the rather modest size of the 1979 starting point figure must be kept in mind. A linear rise in spending between 1979 and 1994 would equate to only about \$230 million per annum.

Second, official PLA budget figures are nominal and not discounted for the effects of inflation. Consequently, increases in military spending are overstated in real terms. PRC yearly inflation averaged around 5.1 percent during the 1980s and accelerated significantly in the 1990s.[21] By mid-1994, the urban consumer price index was rising at an annual rate of 23 percent.[22] While over the past ten years price increases due to inflation have outstripped the growth of military expenditures (reportedly 130 percent to 116 percent), undoubtedly reflecting some creative statistical interpretation, the fact remains that nominal budget trends do exaggerate the extent of the buildup of the Chinese armed forces.[23] The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), for instance, using real prices, estimates PRC defense spending to have risen only some 13 percent between 1985 and 1992.[24] Thus, it seems clear that any meaningful discussion of the recent expansion of PLA budget appropriations must be tempered with explicit recognition of baseline and inflation factors.

It can be argued that PRC official defense budgets, like those of the former Soviet Union, grossly understate actual outlays and are inaccurate gauges of spending levels. Chinese military allocations as reported to the outside world do not include the costs of research and development, modernization of defense industry plants and equipment, and various personnel compensation plans.[25] Nor is PLA revenue from its numerous commercial enterprises counted.[26] Conceivably, actual expenditure figures (by Western standards) could be as much as double those announced by Beijing.[27]

Nevertheless, there is good reason to speculate that one of the important reasons official outlays have been increased in recent years is to offset shrinking non-budget revenues.[28] Most notable has been the precipitous decline in Chinese arms sales, from some \$4.7 billion in 1987 to \$100 million in 1992.[29]

Three other points help to keep Chinese military expenditures in perspective. First, even if the IISS's estimate of 1992 PRC defense spending is doubled, per capita outlays would still be (in 1985 US dollars) less than \$40, contrasted, in that same year, with \$136 for Japan, \$268 for Russia, and \$964 for the United States.[30] Second, given the problem of inflation, as well as the Communist Party leadership's anxiety about PLA loyalty, a sizable portion of military budget increases since the Tiananmen incident in 1989 has probably been earmarked for improvements in soldier pay and quality of life.[31] Finally, with the relatively backward state of the PRC's defense industries, there simply would not be many high-tech, force multiplier items for the PLA to procure domestically even if funds were made available.[32]

Force Structure. Since its establishment in 1949, the People's Republic of China has made extraordinary progress in developing a credible defense posture. Despite the constraints of poverty, a large population, intermittent domestic political upheavals, and periodic international isolation, Beijing's leaders over the past 45 years have generally found the PLA capable of responding to internal and external threats and, when necessary, advancing limited foreign policy objectives by means of force.

China possesses the world's third largest nuclear weapons arsenal, including 80-plus intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) and 20-plus intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).[33] Additionally, China's air force operates about 180 aircraft capable of delivering nuclear bombs, and China's navy has one nuclear-armed submarine (SSBN) with 12 ballistic missiles.[34] Considerable resources continue to be committed to the strategic forces. By the end of the century, China might be deploying accurate, mobile, solid-fuel ICBMs, perhaps with capabilities on par with the Russian SS-25.[35] China also is expected to field ICBMs with MIRV warheads within the next 15 years.[36]

The PLA's conventional capabilities are also impressive, somewhat enhanced by recent efforts to improve mobility and acquire force projection weapons and equipment. The 2.3-million-member ground forces have 12 motorized infantry or armored divisions, the navy commands a 6000-man marine brigade, and the air force has an organic airborne corps of three divisions.[37] The air force has improved its aerial combat potential with the 1992 purchase of a squadron of 24 Su-27 fighters from Russia; moreover, some observers speculate that China may procure additional Su-27s and possibly other sophisticated attack and command and control platforms in the near future.[38] Aircraft range and loiter times also have been extended with the acquisition of midair refueling capabilities from Iran.[39] Finally, the navy continues a steady transition from coastal defense to a blue-water force. It has developed surface warfare, logistic, and communications systems to the point that it can effectively provide muscle to back Beijing's South China Sea territorial claims against regional contenders.[40] And while the much-rumored purchase of an aircraft carrier from Russia or Ukraine has not materialized, the fact that some East Asian security experts have seriously considered it a possibility indicates the progress Chinese naval forces have made over the past decade.[41]

As with the case of PRC defense expenditures, however, assessments about the quality of the PLA force structure need to be placed in an appropriate context. Neither China's strategic nor its conventional capabilities should be considered daunting.

Where the strategic capabilities of the United States and Russia include a fully integrated triad of nuclear forces (bombers, sea-based missiles, and land-based missiles), the PRC, with one SSBN and a fleet of antiquated bombers, possesses only one functional strategic arm.[42] The vast disparity in size between the Chinese missile arsenals and those of the United States and Russia effectively limits Beijing to a second-strike, countervalue doctrine through the foreseeable future.[43] One PRC security expert has said that given such realities, the PLA's approach to developing its nuclear forces is "high in quality, few in number." [44] Thus, although Beijing's strategic arsenal is growing in size and versatility, it is extremely modest by superpower standards, and it will remain so at least through the first decade of the next century.

Turning to the PLA's conventional forces, it is evident that they can capably operate along or within their nation's borders. But whether or not they pose a threat leads to the issue of power projection, and therein lies a major weakness of China's military.

First, while recent PLA inquiries abroad about the purchase of advanced weaponry and military technology have generated much publicity, actual procurements and their effects on overall combat effectiveness have been minor. For instance, compare the one-squadron-size force of 24 Su-27s acquired from Russia with the 23 F-15 squadrons (approximately 24 aircraft per squadron) fielded by the US Air Force.[45] Additionally, the Chinese do not yet have an AWACS; their ability to effectively command and control an Su-27 squadron is thus problematic. Simply stated, the numbers are small, and the combat power is diminished by the inability of China's air force, as yet, to achieve the important multiplier effects that accompany sophisticated supporting C3I (command, control, communications, and intelligence), training, and logistic systems. Moreover, in contemporary warfare, it is often the synergistic effect from the simultaneous employment of a broad range of complex weapon systems that proves decisive in battle.[46] The Su-27 represents the only highly capable system in the Chinese air force inventory; full exploitation of synergism remains a somewhat distant goal.

A second constraint on the PLA's capacity for force projection is the PRC's weak indigenous technological and industrial base. Chinese military R&D, production technologies, and weapon systems generally lag 10 to 20 years behind the West and Japan.[47] Today's armaments have become so complicated and entail the integration of so many intricate subsystems that China faces enormous challenges in its efforts to reach the cutting edge. The air force's difficulties in designing and producing the Jian-8 II Finback fighter illustrate the magnitude of the tasks ahead. Begun in 1964, the J-8 program has led to the production of over 3000 aircraft, with a fourth generation Finback currently under development and projected to be fielded by the end of the decade.[48] Yet the authoritative PRC journal *Modern Weaponry* notes that the "engine and onboard equipment have not advanced [and the] development of the model and major components is uncoordinated." [49] It rates the current model's firepower and control systems as 15 years behind "foreign levels." [50] Such is the nature of the design, test, and validation problems that the PLA confronts as it labors to supply its ground, naval, and air forces with world-class equipment.

Yet a third obstacle to Chinese endeavors to build a power projection capability is the technological and operational demands that are linked to the ongoing revolution in military affairs. As the major global actors begin to fully exploit the opportunities of the information age, the PLA finds itself significantly disadvantaged.[51]

China's military officer corps, disconcerted by the results of the Gulf War, seems acutely aware of the problem.[52] PLA National Defense University researchers emphasize that warfare has evolved from a historical stage during which quantity dominated quality, to one in which the reverse is true.[53] They candidly state that PRC weaponry is inferior to that of the developed countries, that its technology lags even further behind, and that the quality of the PLA's personnel is yet a more serious handicap.[54] The newspaper of the armed forces, *People's Liberation Army Daily*, reported that participants at a military forum in 1993 concluded that whereas the PLA has traditionally looked at tactics from a "strategic angle," it must now do so from a "technological angle"; to downplay the role of science would be to "try to catch a sparrow with blindfolds" (a Chinese proverb meaning to engage in self-deception).[55] Whether the PRC can eventually close the technology gap is not in question; the point remains, however, that the process will be a protracted one.

National Wealth. The military power a society can generate is dependent not only upon the size of its economy, but on the proportion of wealth that it can allocate to defense expenditures. The former is measured by a nation's GNP, whereas the latter is largely a function of GNP per capita.

Attempts to derive widely agreed-upon estimates of the size of the Chinese economy and per capita wealth inevitably founder upon problems related to currency conversion, purchasing power parity, and statistical data accuracy. Assessments have differed by as much as a factor of ten.[56] Many economists believe the official figures of PRC aggregate and per capita GNP are somewhat or even grossly understated.[57] Pending further reforms in price structures, currency exchange mechanisms, and trade policies, the problem of calculating China's wealth will remain formidable. Nevertheless, certain key economic statistics less subject to dispute do indicate impressive gains over the past 15 years. For example, the PRC's economy grew at an average annual rate of 9.4 percent during the 1980s and continues to expand rapidly; China's gross domestic savings stood at a remarkable 39 percent of GDP in 1991; its international trade has more than quadrupled over the past 15 years; and Beijing's international reserves in late 1993 stood at \$22 billion.[58] Moreover, the return of Hong Kong to PRC sovereignty in 1997, along with deepening trade ties with Taiwan, would seem to further enhance China's financial prospects.[59] Barring severe political turmoil (a

possibility that cannot be dismissed lightly), it is clear the armed forces will be able to modernize at an accelerating pace as a key beneficiary of the PRC's burgeoning economy.

Formidable impediments to development, however, cannot be wished away. The population will grow another 350 million by 2025, increasing demand for jobs, housing, education, and social welfare spending.[60] The shocks of rapid urbanization, market reforms, inflation, and a loosening of political control have led to unemployment and underemployment, corruption, and periodic worker and peasant discontent.[61] The people, despite steady improvements in their standard of living, remain poor, and the government, chary of political unrest and eager to appease, may be inclined to favor consumption-oriented fiscal policies. The energy import bill has escalated sharply in the past few years and will continue to rise, at least in the near term.[62] While the potential of the PRC's human capital is enormous, currently less than two percent of China's adults have graduated from universities.[63] Finally, the sector of the national economy that has proven most resistant to market reforms and efficiency is precisely the defense industry groups.[64] So, while it can be said that if China remains on its current economic growth trajectory, it will be a global superpower by the middle of the next century, conjectures about outcomes in international affairs five decades hence should be heavily discounted. For the next 10 to 15 years, the PRC will remain hard-pressed to translate economic gains into significant payoffs for its military.

Relative Power

As mentioned earlier, national power is meaningful only when discussed in terms of both scope and domain. We now turn to the latter, to judge PRC regional force projection capabilities on a comparative or relative basis.

Two questions are central to understanding this issue: First, is there a post-Cold War East Asian "power vacuum" whose existence might prompt Beijing's use of force? Second, are any of the particular regional actors especially vulnerable to a PRC military threat?

Is there a power vacuum in East Asia? The United States played a pivotal role in Asia-Pacific security from the end of World War II until the collapse of the Soviet Union. Regional alliances and treaties were primarily oriented toward Washington or Moscow, with Beijing serving as something of a wildcard. Has the precipitous decline in Russian power since 1991, and concurrently the significant reduction in the size of the American armed forces, led to an unraveling of the complex East Asian security ties that had so effectively checked local historical rivalries?

The idea of an Asian-Pacific power vacuum in the 1990s, of course, evokes images of the region between World Wars I and II, when the erosion of European colonial hegemony stimulated a *realpolitik* response from Tokyo.[65] The absence of strong or domestically legitimated states throughout the region increased uncertainty, lowered the costs of war, and contributed greatly to the eventual clash between Japan and the United States. Obviously, such conditions do not obtain in the Asia-Pacific region of our times. East Asia is, for the most part, composed of mutually recognized sovereign states. It is economically vibrant, with growth rates measurably higher than the global average; by the middle of the next century it is expected to account for 50 percent of world GNP.[66] Moreover, politically the states of East Asia are relatively stable. Although US and Russian military deployments throughout the area have decreased during the 1990s, the effect has been to make more explicit the fundamental strength, not weakness, of the region.

Additionally, America's role as the "honest broker" or balancer of security interests in the Asia-Pacific region did not necessarily end with the Cold War. To assert that it did assumes US power is rapidly waning in East Asia and American military forces are hastily being withdrawn. Yet America's aggregate economic strength remains formidable; the collapse of the Soviet Union did nothing to change this fact. It is also true that the United States has continued to reduce the size of its armed forces in the region. But since American forces committed to the Asia-Pacific theater during the Cold War were preoccupied with the Soviet Union, the demise of the USSR has appreciably increased *comparative* US regional armed strength despite reductions in American defense expenditures.[67]

PRC military officers and security experts themselves stress this point in making their own appraisals of the correlation of forces in East Asia. For instance, Guo Zhenyuan, of the influential China Centre for International Studies, writes:

The United States is the winner in its confrontation with the Soviet Union and is the only superpower in the world today. Though its strength has been considerably eroded by decades of confrontation with the

Soviet Union, it still enjoys superiority in the Asia-Pacific region and throughout the world. By readjusting its security strategy, the United States will be able to cut back somewhat while still maintaining its dominant position and leading role in the security structure of the region.[68]

Additionally, the Gulf War demonstrated to PLA commanders that the United States retains a formidable strategic deployment capability that will offset, to a degree, reductions in forward-deployed forces.[69] Finally, Chinese military thinkers openly acknowledge America's continuing influence in the area, especially Northeast Asia, pointing out that "the United States will continue in the future to be an important factor in the maintenance of [Asia-Pacific] regional stability." [70]

Are the regional actors vulnerable? While the overall distribution of military capabilities in the East Asia region can hardly be defined as a power vacuum, are there any particularly lucrative targets in the region against which the PRC might employ force in the years immediately ahead? Setting aside for now the issue of Taiwan, the possibility appears remote. The matter is one of where potential engagements would be fought. China's geographic expanse, large population, and substantial agricultural and industrial bases combine to make it virtually invincible against a conventional foe bent on occupying the country. The picture is quite different, however, for the PRC's use of force beyond its borders. Quite simply, the PLA's punch dissipates exponentially as the distance from the homeland increases; correspondingly, the relative strength of the potential target states grows. Even during the 1979 one-month limited war against Vietnam fought along China's southeast border, PRC armed forces suffered some 26,000 casualties pushing toward objectives only 15 kilometers beyond the Sino-Vietnamese frontier; C3I and logistic problems proved to be severe.[71]

The PLA, of course, is much more capable today than it was in the late-1970s; on the other hand, so are its neighbors, at least within the confines of their own territories and littorals. For example, the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force has 158 F-15J and F-15DJ fighter aircraft.[72] Even the smaller powers, drawing upon the wealth accumulated from sustained economic growth, are generally able to purchase arms that serve as effective conventional deterrents. Malaysia, for instance, recently decided to purchase 18 Russian MiG-29 and eight US McDonnell Douglas F/A-18D Hornet fighters, both world-class aircraft, placing the Chinese air force's acquisition of 24 Su-27s in better perspective.[73] Vietnam, the one Asian nation against which the PRC was not reluctant to apply military pressure over the past 15 years, was mostly distinguished during that time by its degree of international isolation (Moscow was an increasingly unenthusiastic sponsor after 1979). However, with Hanoi's ongoing integration into the East Asian political and economic system, Beijing will likely be required to adjust its means-ends calculations when weighing the use of force against its southern neighbor in the future.

Certainly, if the Asia-Pacific region were thrown into political chaos (some plausible scenarios, discussed later, could lead to such an outcome), the prospect of China committing forces beyond its borders would increase. As the national stakes rise in value, the price of war becomes less of an impediment to action. Yet absent such developments, it appears that the somewhat limited scope and domain of PRC military power, at least over the near term, will militate against Beijing's inclination to use its armed forces as a tool of compellence in its relations with its regional neighbors.

Intentions

A state's military power does not, in itself, constitute a threat to another nation. As noted earlier, it is power *and* intentions that matter. Canadians do not feel endangered by US military strength, whereas Pakistanis remain vitally concerned with the posture of India's armed forces. The problem, of course, lies in ascertaining what another state's intentions are.

Chinese strategic intention can be evaluated in two ways: by reviewing PRC military doctrine, and by speculating on the degree to which China considers maintenance of the international, and especially regional, status quo over the next 10 to 15 years to be in its interests. Both cases assume the state as a rational unitary actor.

Chinese Military Doctrine

Military doctrine is defined as "authoritative fundamental principles by which military forces guide their actions." [74] A set of approved, shared ideas about the conduct of warfare that guides the preparation of armed forces for future

wars,[75] military doctrine enables the researcher to surmise how a state envisions employing force in the future. Doctrine is generally correlated with the concept of intentions.

The sources of military doctrine evolve from a complex array of geographic, societal, economic, political, and technological factors.[76] The core unifying element, however, is a state's interpretation of the constraints and opportunities that obtain from its position in the international system.[77] For example, in the case of the PRC, the PLA doctrine from the mid-1960s through the mid-1980s of "luring the enemy in deep" and "people's war under modern conditions" reflected a realistic appraisal by Chinese military strategists of the vast disparity between the national power of their country and that of the Soviet Union.[78]

Two aspects of contemporary Sino-military doctrine are particularly helpful in analyzing Beijing's intentions regarding the use of military force in the Asia-Pacific region: the internal defense missions of the PLA, and the wide variety of external defense contingencies that Chinese strategists must address.

Internal Defense. The People's Liberation Army periodically has played a crucial role in maintaining China's domestic stability, and ultimately Chinese Communist Party control, at critical junctures in the PRC's relatively brief history. In the late-1940s and 1950s, the PLA secured both China's northwest (Xinjiang) and southwest (Tibet), and has periodically since then been called upon to counter local uprisings in those territories. During the late-1960s, PLA intervention at the height of the worst excesses of the Cultural Revolution checked the PRC's slide toward self-destruction.[79] More recently, the CCP leadership's grip on power seemed to hang in the balance until the massive intervention of the Chinese army during the June 1989 Tiananmen incident.

PRC military writings explicitly emphasize the armed forces' responsibility for maintaining domestic order. A typical article from the PLA General Political Department Mass Work Section notes that the basic functions of the army are (in the order listed): "1. safeguarding the country's stability; 2. defending state sovereignty and security; and 3. offering a fine, stable environment for the country's reform and construction." [80] General Liu Huaqing, Central Military Commission Vice Chairman, has underscored (as have all of the PLA's senior leaders) that the Chinese military must be ready to protect the "unity and security of the motherland." [81] The establishment of the 1.2-million-man paramilitary People's Armed Police in the mid-1980s had been intended, in part, to free the PLA to concentrate on external defense missions. [82] The events of June 1989 eliminated most of the progress that had been made to this end.

China's leaders remain committed to market reform and liberalization; they have discarded any other course of action as consigning their country to backwardness and ultimately undermining their claim to rule. They also are aware of the centrifugal forces and trends toward regionalization that will attend such policies. The PLA is viewed, in the final analysis, as the guarantor of domestic stability, and much of its energy is accordingly directed inward.

External Defense. The PRC's land boundaries extend over 22,100 kilometers. The climates and terrains across this expanse include tropical rain forests, deserts, glacial barriers, mountain ranges, coniferous forests, and steppes. China's neighbors include three powers with whom it has fought in the past 25 years (Russia, India, and Vietnam); the increasingly unstable North Korea; and a host of countries beset with civil strife that has implications for ethnic minorities living within the PRC (Afghanistan, Burma, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan). Additionally, the PLA must consider the possibility of instability in Hong Kong after its return to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, and that of an armed clash with Taiwan. The United States, by contrast, has land boundaries about one-half that length (slightly over 12,200 km), and enjoys exceptionally good relations with its only two neighbors, Canada and Mexico. [83]

The point of this comparison is to highlight the extent of China's security dilemma. That the United States has a tremendous amount of power is evident. It should also be clear that having secure borders increases the proportion of power that the United States can project outside of North America. Current PLA military doctrine reflects the reality that the Chinese armed forces' immediate concerns are located near the PRC's frontiers, not in distant regions.

The PLA is emphasizing the creation of highly mobile, elite units, capable of bringing Chinese military power to bear swiftly at potential flash points along its vast borders, which do encompass much of the Asia-Pacific region. After the Gulf War demonstrated the enormous conventional firepower of armed forces equipped with high-technology weaponry and support systems, the *People's Liberation Army Daily* announced that "today's strategy is to first defeat

the enemy troops without a war, or [alternatively] to defeat the enemy troops by fighting small battles." [84] The Central Military Commission's "principles for strengthening the PLA" emphasize:

Recent local wars, especially the Gulf War, show that the defeated side was backward in modernization and weak in fighting capacity, although there were other reasons for this failure. . . . We must quicken our pace of modernization in order to keep up with the times and must not slow down. [85]

Consistent with these guidelines, large-scale training exercises have been conducted regularly in recent years in which mechanized, airborne, and marine units moved rapidly by transport aircraft, helicopters, rail, ship, and vehicles to hypothetical trouble spots, including the South China Sea region. [86]

One must remember, however, the constraints imposed by limited resources and expansive security obligations. General Liu Huaqing has said that the PLA doctrine of "active defense" does not call for the procurement of long-range weapons and the capability of performing global operations, but instead depends on the ability to keep China's territories "free of infringement." [87] Accordingly, PRC military leaders still feel compelled to rely on a large standing army, contending:

The main threat to the security of our country is limited warfare. However, our country is vast and has varied topography, long coastal and land boundaries, underdeveloped communications, and a low level of modernization of the army. It is necessary and appropriate to maintain three million troops at this time. [88]

Thus, in the main, the doctrinal literature and training regimens of the PLA's conventional forces simply do not seem to support assertions that China is intent on fundamentally contesting the regional security order in the near-term.

In addition, as the only openly declared Asian nuclear power, the PRC has generally displayed a commitment to preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, claiming adherence to the Missile Technology Control Regime, and signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1992 and the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1993. [89] While it has ignored the extended voluntary nuclear testing moratorium being observed by the United States, Russia, Britain, and France, the PRC is participating in the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty negotiations in Geneva and has not openly opposed moves to achieve a total ban on nuclear testing by 1996. [90] China also pledges no first use of nuclear weapons, and argues that all nuclear powers should renounce first use against non-nuclear states. [91] By and large, then, Beijing is not obstructing initiatives related to the control of weapons of mass destruction. China definitely seeks to improve its strategic strike capabilities; however, its pace of force development is tempered not only by the resource limitations noted earlier, but by the PRC's awareness that should it be perceived as opposed to all efforts to limit the size of its nuclear inventories, an uncontrolled regional nuclear arms spiral would likely result.

Is the PRC Dissatisfied With the Status Quo?

A second approach to judging Chinese intentions is to ask whether or not the PRC is dissatisfied with the international and regional status quo.

In his work on change in world politics, Robert Gilpin postulates that an international system is stable if no state believes it is profitable to attempt to change the system, and that a state will attempt to change the system if the expected benefits exceed the expected costs. [92] By such criteria, is China prepared to upset the security equilibrium in East Asia?

PRC leaders insist, not surprisingly, that "China will not constitute any potential or real threat. Rather it will always be a positive force for peace, stability, and development in the Asia-Pacific region. China's foreign policy of peace is one that can stand the test of time." [93] Yet the record is not reassuring; it indicates that Beijing clearly has a regional territorial agenda. As Sinologist Samuel Kim points out, China is an irredentist state with more territorial disputes than any other power in the world. [94] It has unresolved land claims against India, Russia, Tajikistan, North Korea, and Vietnam, and it has extensive maritime claims based on the continental shelf principle that involve Japan, the Koreas, Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Brunei. [95] The extreme negotiating position staked out in the territorial sea law passed by the Chinese National People's Congress in 1992 is especially disconcerting. [96]

Beijing has not been hesitant to use the PLA beyond its borders in pursuit of its foreign policy objectives. John Garver, an expert on PRC security matters, cites 15 instances of China's international use of force since 1949.[97] More worrisome for the future, Beijing has not renounced the possibility of using arms against Taiwan, officially declaring:

Peaceful reunification is a set policy of the Chinese government. However, any sovereign state is entitled to use any means it deems necessary, including military ones, to uphold its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Chinese government is closely following the course of events [that is, efforts to establish two Chinas] and will never condone any maneuver for "Taiwan independence." [98]

On the other hand, it cannot be argued in any convincing fashion that China is a revolutionary or reformist power. Its era of radical international activism of the 1960s and early 1970s coincided with a period when it was weak and playing only a marginal role on the world stage. The pursuit of ideological goals in the conduct of foreign policy is a luxury afforded only to those with little power (and little to lose) or with very great power (and much to expend).[99] China today is neither at the periphery nor the core; it is a middle-ranking state very much constrained by the distribution of power within the Asia-Pacific region. While on an upward growth path, it is still far from the point at which it might seek to rewrite the rules, in the fashion of, say, Germany or Japan in the 1930s.

Alternatively, it still appears that the PRC cannot be categorized as a profoundly disaffected nation. The PRC's rapid integration into the international trade and financial orders over the past 15 years has been remarkable for a state that pursued the goal of autarky for the first 30 years of its existence. It is a member of the World Bank Group and the Asian Development Bank, and it has applied for full GATT membership. China's exports and imports as a percentage of GNP grew from about ten percent in 1978 to around 30 percent in the 1990s.[100] Foreign direct investment climbed from a negligible level in 1980 to over \$4.3 billion in 1991.[101]

In the short run, at least, the pursuit of power and wealth do conflict, and the amassing and exercising of military resources entail costs that can undercut economic efficiency.[102] At present, given the favorable conditions presented by the international economic order, it is still very much in China's self-interest to work within a system from which it has profited so greatly.

The influence of international institutions, norms, and ideas on future PRC behavior regarding security issues should not be discounted. China certainly is less inclined to project its military power unilaterally than if the international system was simply a Hobbesian jungle.[103] The PRC has but a 45-year history in the community of nations, and its full participation in global and regional political, economic, and security regimes is a relatively recent phenomenon. Its behavior has increasingly reflected a respect for and commitment to world societal practices and standards. This is not to argue that somewhat fuzzy terms such as "international norms" constrain nations from employing the means necessary to defend their vital interests. For that matter, so-called global values are often best understood by examining the underlying distribution of state capabilities that give rise to and support these concepts; power and interest do count greatly.[104] Nevertheless, the employment of force that runs counter to world norms often entails significant reputational costs (witness the efforts of even a superpower, the United States, to lower such costs by building an international coalition in the 1990-91 Gulf War with Iraq). It is likely, therefore, that given its still limited resources, the PRC will be inclined to work strategically within world systems to settle less serious regional problems, rather than sacrifice its investment in future credibility for immediate but small payoffs.

Inferences About the Threat and Implications for US Policy

There are plausible conjunctions of events that could find at least parts of Asia engaged in the next 10 to 15 years in arms-racing, or even in the throes of war. Uncertainty, random events, imperfect information, and miscalculations all play important roles in international affairs and undermine the most sophisticated of forecasts. In 1979, none of those commenting on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan concluded that within 15 years the Iron Curtain would fall, the USSR disintegrate, and the Moscow-based communist challenge to the West disappear. So the question of China as a threat to Asian Pacific stability remains difficult to answer.

What are the scenarios in which Beijing might be at, or near, the epicenter of instability or conflict in East Asia? Externally, three possibilities are most worrisome: a declaration of independence by Taiwan, or PRC preemption of

such a possibility; war on the Korean Peninsula arising from either Pyongyang's aggression or internal collapse; and accelerated Japanese defense spending and the acquisition of nuclear forces, giving rise, in turn, to a regional arms race and alliance diplomacy.

The prospects of domestic instability cannot be ignored. There have been no cases to date of communist regimes gracefully handing power over to more democratic successors. Moreover, the CCP leadership's predisposition to see Western subterfuge behind domestic demands for political reform (the latest foreign plot being to inflict upon China the evil of "peaceful evolution") bodes ill for PRC external policies in the midst of severe civil unrest.[105]

At the same time, this study emphasizes that there are important constraints and opportunities that China cannot ignore as it advances through the first decade of the 21st century. They are derived from the structure of the international system and East Asia regional subsystem, the imperatives of economic growth, and the limitations on the pace at which the PRC can accumulate relative military power. Collectively, they pose a set of incentives and disincentives that will strongly influence Chinese calculations about the utility of force.

China is a rising power with enormous growth potential. It has a capable but technologically backward military, some years away from being able to roam far from home. Benefits from participation in the world's liberal trading order are substantial, and Beijing finds the benefits of the status quo outweighing the costs. Hence, whether in terms of capabilities or of likely intentions, the PRC cannot be regarded as a serious threat in the mid-term to Asia-Pacific stability.

If such a conclusion is correct, what are the implications for US foreign policy and military strategy? The question is a timely one since the post-Cold War era marks the first time in the history of Sino-American relations that the United States has dealt with China for its own sake, and not simply in the context of crises with other major powers (such as with Japan from the 1920s through World War II, and thereafter with the Soviet Union).[106] Building upon the preceding analysis, three recommendations seem appropriate.

First, the United States should maintain a strong military presence in Asia. The reassurance that a credible American regional presence provides to the potential mutual antagonists of Northeast Asia, as well as the many actors concerned about the security of the sea lanes of South and Southeast Asia, is crucial to the continued stability of the region. Were a severe crisis to unfold unexpectedly in East Asia and if US military power were found lacking for reasons of capability or will, an arms spiral analogous to that which consumed the European powers in the years leading to World War I could be set in motion. As a PLA security specialist, Senior Colonel Pan Zhenqiang, notes:

During the Cold War years, taking an explicit commitment to a broad engagement in the affairs of the region, [the United States] became an indispensable factor in the security pattern of the Asia-Pacific area. To provide extended deterrence to its allies and to maintain the US military presence is part of this security structure.[107]

The current security structure does provide the modicum of certainty needed to promote continued regional growth and stability. America must not mistakenly apply the "overextended global cop" metaphor to its current commitment of military forces in an Asia-Pacific region so vital to US strategic and economic interests.

Second, the United States should increase the scope of its ties with China and promote PRC interdependence in the international economic system. The evidence seems so overwhelming that modernity begets political liberalization that such a policy is hard to assail on strategic grounds. On the other hand, as Senior Colonel Pan points out:

If Beijing fails in its formidable efforts to reorganize its economic as well as political structures and its modernization programs fall apart, there is a possibility that it will shrink back into a sealed society again; or worse, like what happened in the former Soviet Union, the country falls into a painful process of split, with perhaps millions upon millions of refugees and immigrants flocking to neighboring countries. The impact could really be catastrophic.[108]

Plainly, the United States can ill afford to see Beijing's transition from a command to a market economy fail.

Further, as part of Washington's policy of engagement with Beijing, Sino-American security ties should be both increased and regularized. There are important shared strategic concerns that should not be obscured by the important contradictions between the two nations. For example, Chen Qimao of the Shanghai Institute for International Studies comments: "China would not like to see ultranationalism and religious fundamentalism prevail in regions after the Cold War. In this respect, it shares a common interest with many countries, possibly including the United States." [109] More specifically, within the East Asia region, Washington and Beijing agree on the threat posed by nuclear proliferation, the desirability of ending Cambodia's civil strife, and the importance of upholding the international principles that underpin the liberal trading order.

At the same time, it is very much in America's own long-term security interests to maintain access to the PLA. An enduring aspect of Chinese strategic culture is the emphasis placed on the maxim of Sun Tzu that "all warfare is based upon deception." [110] The PLA, by the standards of most armies in the 1990s, remains enshrouded in secrecy. As the PRC becomes more powerful, the United States will require a precise understanding of Chinese military capabilities and intentions. Routine bilateral dialogue and exchanges will increase PLA transparency.

The third policy recommendation is that the United States work with China and the other major actors in East Asia to establish subregional, or issue-specific, forums for consultation and coordination on security issues. For example, China, Japan, Russia, and the United States all hope to reduce tensions on the Korean Peninsula, and an informal mechanism could usefully be established for the exchange of information and opinions. However, at present the interests of the actors composing the broader region are simply too diverse to make profitable an Asia-Pacific-wide dialogue based upon a European model. For that matter, there is no evident reason that what is understood to be the Asia-Pacific region should be embraced by an overarching security condominium. Chinese leaders, however, do remain receptive to more modest or restricted proposals, and the United States should take advantage of the favorable existing environment and exert the leadership necessary to create appropriate institutions. [111]

China's leaders envision that the PLA will become one of the most powerful armies in the world by the mid-21st century. If the PRC continues to grow at its present rate and the country remains unified, this expectation will be realized. Yet in international affairs the future is highly problematic. In the time frame that does matter in security issues relating to potential challengers, perhaps 15 years into the future, the PRC is unlikely to disrupt the equilibrium in East Asia. US policy nevertheless ought to be consistent with the assumptions upon which such an analysis is based: the United States should continue to be actively engaged in regional security issues. To do so is both to promote Asia-Pacific stability and to hedge against the unforeseen.

NOTES

1. The terms "Asia-Pacific" and "East Asian" regions are used interchangeably throughout this paper. Unless otherwise noted, both terms will refer to China, its contiguous areas, the island states of East and Southeast Asia, and the surrounding oceans and seas. As a global and more specifically a Pacific power, the United States is also assumed to be a member of the region.
2. Among the most important US security relationships in Asia during the Cold War were the 1951 tripartite security treaty with Australia and New Zealand (ANZUS) and bilateral treaties with Japan and the Philippines; the 1953 bilateral treaty with the Republic of Korea; the 1954 bilateral treaty with the Republic of China (abrogated in 1979 with the establishment of diplomatic ties between Washington and Beijing); and the creation in 1954 of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) consisting of the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, France, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand. See Amos A. Jordan, William J. Taylor, Jr., and Lawrence J. Korb, *American National Security: Policy and Process* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1993), pp. 33-34, 356-83.
3. China's land area is 9.33 million square km, while that of the United States is 9.17 million square km. From US Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook* (Washington: GPO, 1992), pp. 71, 358.
4. The "economic miracles" of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore, as well as the extraordinary performances of overseas Chinese around the world, are all excellent indicators of the enormous potential of China's population of some 1.2 billion.

5. Asra Q. Nomani and Robert S. Greenberger, "China's Economy World's No. 3, IMF Calculates," *The Wall Street Journal*, 21 May 1993, p. A-6.
6. International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance 1993-1994* (London: Brassey's, 1993), p. 152.
7. Hwang Pong-mu, *Wolgan Chungang* (July 1993), pp. 518-29, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report-East Asia* (hereafter FBIS-EAS), 29 September 1993, p. 33.
8. Vladimir Skosyrev, "China Increases Defense Expenditure," *Izvestiya*, 20 March 1993, p. 33; FBIS, *Daily Report-Central Eurasia*, 30 March 1993, pp. 26-27.
9. M. K. Dhar, *The Hindustan Times*, 10 March 1993, p. 12; FBIS *Daily Report-Near East and South Asia*, 18 March 1993, p. 46; and Tokyo Kyodo, 17 March 1993, FBIS-EAS, p. 3. The term PLA refers to all of the armed forces of China: the ground forces, the navy (PLAN), the air force (PLAAF), and the strategic rocket forces or Second Artillery.
10. Kuala Lumpur Voice of Malaysia, 21 August 1993, FBIS-EAS, 24 August 1994, p. 54; and Li Wei, Beijing Zhongguo Xinwenshe, FBIS, *Daily Report-China* (hereafter FBIS-CHI), 22 October 1993, p. 23.
11. Beijing Waiguoyu Xueyuan Yingyuxi, *Hanying Cidian* (Beijing: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1982), pp. 713, 763.
12. A. F. K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 30.
13. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979), p. 192.
14. Robert Jervis, "Realism, Game Theory, and Cooperation," *World Politics*, 40 (April 1988), 334.
15. David A. Baldwin, "Neoliberalism, Neorealism, and World Politics," in *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*, ed. David A. Baldwin (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1993), pp. 16-17, 25.
16. *Cihai: Junshi Fence* (Shanghai: Shanghai Cishu Chubanshe, 1980), p. 3.
17. Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1976), pp. 585-94. Two excellent studies of the interrelationship between economic development and military potential include Robert S. Gilpin's *War and Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990); and Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (New York: Random House, 1987). For the influence of geography on military power see Harold and Margaret Sprout, *The Rise of American Naval Power* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1939).
18. Sandra Deger, "World Military Expenditure," *SIPRI Yearbook 1993: World Armaments and Disarmament* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993), p. 387; and Lincoln Kaye, "Pre-Emptive Cringe," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (hereafter *FEER*), 24 March 1994, pp. 48, 50. All monetary figures are shown in US dollars, derived from the May 1994 exchange rate of \$1 (US) being equal to 8.6664 renminbi, China's unit of currency.
19. See, for example, Jim Mann and David Holley, "China Builds Military; Neighbors, US Uneasy," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 September 1992, pp. A-1, A-26; Nicholas D. Kristof, "China Builds Its Military Muscle, Making Some Neighbors Nervous," *The New York Times*, 11 January 1993, pp. A-1, A-11; and William Branigin, "As China Builds Arsenal and Bases, Asia Fears a 'Rogue in the Region,'" *The Washington Post*, 31 March 1993, pp. A-21, A-27.
20. Paul Humes Folta, *From Swords to Plowshares?: Defense Industry Reform in the PRC* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1992), pp. 19-20, 216-19.
21. The World Bank, *World Development Report 1993: Investing in Health* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993), p.262.

22. "Prices and Trends," *FEER*, 19 May 1994, p. 60.
23. Lieutenant General Lu Lin, Deputy Director of the PLA General Logistics Department, quoted in Beijing *Zhongguo Xinwenshe*, 20 March 1993, FBIS-CHI, 23 March 1993, p. 68.
24. IISS, p. 226. Defense expenditure (in 1985 \$US) is listed at \$19.8 billion in 1985, and \$22.4 billion in 1992. These figures are estimates of *actual* defense expenditures and are consequently much larger than those stated in the official PRC budgets. Additionally, IISS figures reflect the old official exchange rate of approximately 5.75 renminbi (Rmb) per US dollar, recently readjusted to 8.7 Rmb per dollar.
25. Deger, pp. 387-88; and CIA, Directorate of Intelligence, *The Chinese Economy in 1991 and 1992: Pressure to Revisit Reforms Mounts* (Washington: CIA, 1992), p. 12.
26. One report indicated the PLA may back or actually control up to 20,000 companies. See Tai Ming Cheung, "Serve the People," *FEER*, 14 October 1993, pp. 64-66.
27. Deger, p. 387; and CIA, Directorate of Intelligence, p. 12.
28. CIA, Directorate of Intelligence, p. 12.
29. Nayan Chanda, "Drifting Apart," *FEER*, 26 August 1993, p. 10.
30. IISS, pp. 224, 226.
31. Paul H. B. Godwin, "Force and Diplomacy: Chinese Security Policy in the Post-Cold War Era," in *China and the World: Chinese Foreign Relations in the Post-Cold War Era*, ed. Samuel S. Kim (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994), p. 178.
32. Economist Dwight Perkins convincingly makes this point. Incurring high production opportunity costs to field obsolete weapon systems is an approach that China abandoned when it launched its modernization drive in the late 1970s. See Dwight Perkins, "The Economic Background and Implications for China," in *The Sino-Soviet Conflict: A Global Perspective*, ed. Herbert J. Ellison (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1982), p. 110.
33. Dunbar Lockwood and Jon Brook Wolfsthal, "Nuclear Weapon Developments and Proliferation," *SIPRI Yearbook 1993: World Armaments and Disarmament* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993), p. 239. IRBMs include the CSS-2 and -6 (ranges 2800 km and 1800 km), while the ICBM force consists of the CSS-3 and -4 (ranges 4750 km and 13,000 km).
34. *Ibid.*, p. 239; and IISS, p. 244. The SLBMs are classified CSS-N-3 and have ranges of between 2200 and 3000 km.
35. Jim Mann, "China Upgrading Nuclear Arms, Experts Say," *Los Angeles Times*, 9 November 1993, p. H-2; and Lockwood and Wolfsthal, p. 239. The SS-25 has a range of 10,500 km, CEP of 200 m, and a throw-weight of 10,000 kg (see IISS, p. 241).
36. Mann, p. H-2; Lockwood and Wolfsthal, p. 239.
37. IISS, pp. 152, 155.
38. Patrick Tyler, "Russia and China Sign a Military Agreement," *The New York Times*, 10 November 1993, p. A-15; and Lincoln Kaye, "Courtship Dance," *FEER*, 26 May 1994, p. 24. For a thorough account of Sino-Russian military ties, see Bin Yu, "Sino-Russian Military Relations: Implications for Asian-Pacific Security," *Asian Survey*, 33 (March 1993), 302-16.
39. Godwin, "Force and Diplomacy: Chinese Security Policy in the Post-Cold War Era," p. 181.
40. See John W. Garver, "China's Push Through the South China Sea: The Interaction of Bureaucratic and National

Interests," *The China Quarterly*, No. 132 (December 1992), 999-1028, for an excellent account of the Chinese navy's progress in developing a power projection capability that can extend to the South China Sea area. The PLA's recent expansion of a landing strip on Woody Island in the Paracels has further boosted the scope of air cover available to PLA naval and marine forces operating in the area. See Tai Ming Cheung and Nayan Chanda, "Exercising Caution," *FEER*, 2 September 1993, p. 20.

41. Yu, p. 302; and Godwin, p. 179.

42. The two Chinese air force bombers with nuclear delivery capabilities, the H-5 and H-6, are adaptations of two Soviet bombers, the Il-28 Beagle and Tu-16 Badger, first flown by the Russians in 1947 and 1954 respectively. See Harlan W. Jencks, *From Muskets to Missiles: Politics and Professionalism in the Chinese Army, 1945-1981* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1982), p. 288.

43. To illustrate, the United States currently has some 6000 strategic nuclear warheads in its arsenal. Under START II, the number will be reduced to 2228. China, on the other hand, has some 280 strategic warheads, 170 of which would have to be launched from highly vulnerable air- and sea-based platforms. See IISS, p. 235; and Lockwood and Wolfsthal, p. 239.

44. Song Jiuguang, *START and China's Policy on Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament in the 1990's* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Center for International Security and Arms Control, 1991), p. 14.

45. IISS, *The Military Balance 1993-1994* (London: Brassey's, 1993), pp. 25-26.

46. The US Army key doctrinal manual, for instance, notes: "Arms and services *complement* each other by posing a dilemma for the enemy. As he [the enemy] evades the effects of one weapon, arm, or service, he exposes himself to attack by another." US Department of the Army, FM 100-5, *Operations* (Washington: GPO, 1987), p. 25.

47. Richard A. Bitzinger, *Chinese Arms Production and Sales to the Third World* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1991), pp. 20-29.

48. Zhong Yongqian, "Brief Look at China's Fighter Aircraft Development Level," *Xiandai Bingqi*, October 1993, pp. 2-4, *Joint Publications Research Service, China Report*, 31 January 1994, pp. 20-21; and Richard J. Latham and Kenneth W. Allen, "Defense Reform in China: The PLA Air Force," *Problems in Communism*, 40 (May-June 1991), 46.

49. Zhong, p. 21.

50. Ibid.

51. For a discussion of the impact of information technology on military affairs, see General Gordon R. Sullivan and Colonel James M. Dubik, "War in the Information Age," *Military Review*, 74 (April 1994), 46-62.

52. Jiang Zemin, Communist Chinese Party Secretary and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, summing up the US-led coalition's impressive application of high technology in the 1991 campaign against Iraq, reportedly said, "To fall behind [technologically] means to get thrashed." See Mann and Holley, p. A-26.

53. Zhou Tao and Ren Yanjun, "Rally Under the Banner of Modernization," *Jiefangjun Bao*, 22 August 1993, p. 1, FBIS-CHI, 1 September 1993, p. 25.

54. Ibid., p. 25.

55. Yang Wei, et al., "Military Forum Column-Sponsored Pen Meeting on Tactical Studies," *Jiefangjun Bao*, 28 May 1993, pp. 22-26, FBIS-CHI, 2 July 1993, p. 24.

56. See CIA, Directorate of Intelligence, *The Chinese Economy in 1990 and 1991: Uncertain Recovery* (Washington:

CIA, 1991) for a discussion of PRC GNP calculation problems. Three methods commonly used are exchange rate conversion, physical indicators, and purchasing power parity. All have significant disadvantages.

57. In 1991, China's official GDP was estimated to be \$370 billion (US) and per capita GNP about \$370 (US). See The World Bank, p. 238, 242. Given the continued rapid PRC economic growth since that time, per capita GNP by mid-1994 is around \$450 (US).

58. The World Bank, pp. 240, 254; "Prices and Trends," *FEER*, 19 May 1994, p. 60; and Samuel S. Kim, "China and the Third World in the Changing World Order," in *China and the World: Chinese Relations in the Post-Cold War Era*, pp. 156-57.

59. For a series of essays on the prospects for Mainland-Taiwan-Hong Kong (the so-called "Greater China") cooperative development, see "The Emergence of Greater China," *Chinese Economic Studies* (Winter 1993-1994).

60. The World Bank, p. 288.

61. Barber B. Conable, Jr., et al., *United States and China Relations at a Crossroads* (Washington: The Atlantic Council of the United States, 1993), pp. 20-27.

62. Carl Goldstein, "Not So Slick," *FEER*, 7 April 1994, pp. 66-67; and William Branigin, "Oil-Hungry Asia Relying More on Middle East," *The Washington Post*, 18 April 1993, pp. A-33, A-36.

63. Jin Ling, "China's Comprehensive National Strength," *Beijing Review*, 16-22 August 1993, p. 24.

64. Tai Ming Cheung, "Elusive Plowshares," *FEER*, 14 October 1993, pp. 70-71.

65. James B. Crowley, "A New Deal For Japan and Asia: One Road to Pearl Harbor," in *Modern East Asia*, ed. James B. Crowley (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1970), pp. 235-63; and Kennedy, pp. 275-343.

66. Daniel K. Okimoto, "The Asian Perimeter, Moving Front and Center," The Aspen Strategy Group, *Facing the Future: American Strategy in the 1990s* (Lanham, Md.: Univ. Press of America, 1990), p. 146.

67. The Russian military has suffered not only by demobilization and severe budget cuts, but by tremendous personnel turbulence as well, threatening to make it a "hollow force." See Konstantin E. Sorokin, *Russia's Security in a Rapidly Changing World* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Center for International Security and Arms Control, 1994), 39-46.

68. Guo Zhenyuan, "Changes in the Security Situation of the Asia-Pacific Region and Establishment of a Region Security Mechanism," *Foreign Affairs Journal* (Beijing), September 1993, p. 40.

69. Author's conversation with Major General Wang Pufeng, Director of the Department of Strategy, PLA Academy of Military Sciences, in Beijing, 3 July 1993.

70. Tian Xinjian, "Dongya Anquande Fenxi Yu Zhanwang," *Zhanlue Yu Guanli* (Beijing), November 1993, p. 22.

71. John W. Garver, *Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1993), pp. 315-16.

72. IISS, p. 159.

73. Barbara Opall, "Europeans Court Asia With Tech Transfers," *Defense News*, 13-19 December 1993, p. 36; Michael Vatikiotis, "Wings of Change," *FEER*, 16 June 1994, p. 20; and IISS, p. 148.

74. Major Paul H. Herbert, *Deciding What Has to be Done: General William E. DePuy and the 1976 Edition of FM 100-5, Operations* (Ft. Leavenworth, Kans.: US Army Combat Studies Institute, 1988), p. 3.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

76. Peter Paret, "Introduction," in *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1986); and Stephen P. Rosen, *Winning the Next War: Innovation and the Modern Military* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1991), pp. 185-220.
77. See, for example, Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1984), pp. 220-36.
78. Paul H. B. Godwin, "Changing Concepts of Doctrine, Strategy and Operations in the Chinese People's Liberation Army, 1978-1987," *The China Quarterly*, No. 112 (December 1987), 572-90, and "Mao Zedong Revisited: Deterrence and Defense in the 1980's," in *The Chinese Defense Establishment: Continuity and Change in the 1980s*, ed. Paul H. B. Godwin (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1983), pp. 21-40; and Jonathan D. Pollack, "China's Agonizing Reappraisal," in *The Sino-Soviet Conflict: A Global Perspective*, ed. Herbert J. Ellison (Seattle, Washington: Univ. of Washington Press, 1982), pp. 50-73.
79. See Jencks, pp. 103-07.
80. PLA General Political Department Mass Work Section, "Do Good Jobs of Supporting the Government and Cherishing the People in the New Situation of Reform, Opening Up," *Qiushi*, 1 August 1992, pp. 2-5, FBIS-CHI, 4 September 1992, p. 36.
81. Liu Huaqing, "Unswervingly Advance Along the Road Building a Modern Army With Chinese Characteristics," *Jiefangjun Bao*, 6 August 1993, pp. 1-2, FBIS-CHI, 18 August 1993, p. 17.
82. IISS, p. 155. Peoples Armed Police missions include, among others, border and internal security, anti-terrorism, and fire-fighting. Author's discussion with General Wang Guozhong, Director of the Logistics Department, People's Armed Police, in Beijing, 18 September 1987.
83. CIA, *The World Factbook 1992*, pp. 71, 358.
84. "Turn to Science, Technology for Troop Quality," *Jiefangjun Bao*, 27 September 1991, p. 3, FBIS-CHI, 11 October 1991, p. 27.
85. Shi Genxing, "Unswervingly Deepen Reform of the Army," *Jiefangjun Bao*, 31 July 1992, p. 3, FBIS-CHI, 27 August 1992, p. 33.
86. See, for example, Chen Hui and Zhang Zhongshun, Beijing Xinhua Domestic Service, 27 August 1993, FBIS-CHI, 30 August 1993, p. 40; Sun Maoqing, Beijing Xinhua Domestic Service, 6 January 1993, FBIS-CHI, 11 January 1993, p. 23; and Tai Ming Cheung and Nayan Chanda, p. 20.
87. Liu Huaqing, p. 19.
88. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
89. IISS, pp. 249-51; and Ragnild Fern, "Annex A. Major Multilateral Arms Control Agreements," *SIPRI Yearbook 1993: World Armaments and Disarmament* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993), p. 768. PRC adherence to MTCR had been brought into question by alleged Chinese sales of M11 missiles and missile technology to Pakistan. See Nayan Chanda, "Red Rockets' Glare," *FEER*, 9 September 1993, pp. 10-11.
90. "China Airs Stand on Nuclear Testing," *Beijing Review*, 18-24 October 1993, p. 4; Shen Dingli, "Toward a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: A Chinese Perspective," *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 50 (March/April 1994), 51-54; "Bomb Test in China Upsets US," *San Jose Mercury News*, 11 June 1994, P. A-10; and "Regional Briefing," *FEER*, 23 June 1994, p. 13. PRC officials emphasize that while the United States has conducted some 1050 nuclear tests, Russia (the former Soviet Union) 700, and France 200, China has tested only 39 times since it exploded its first nuclear device in 1964. As such, they say that the PRC must continue limited testing for reasons of safety and

reliability (see Shen, pp. 51-2).

91. "China Airs Stand on Nuclear Testing," p. 4.

92. Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, p. 50.

93. "China Never Seeks Hegemony" (address by Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting, 23 July 1993), *Beijing Review*, 2-8 August 1993, p. 11.

94. Samuel S. Kim, "China as a Regional Power," *Current History*, 91 (September 1992), 248.

95. CIA, *The World Factbook 1992*, p. 71.

96. Robert G. Sutter, *East Asia: Disputed Islands and Offshore Claims. Issues for US Policy* (Washington: Congressional Research Service, 1992), pp. CRS-6, CRS-7.

97. John W. Garver, *Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*, p. 251.

98. Taiwan Affairs Office and Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Beijing, August 1993, *Beijing Review*, 6-12 September 1993, pp. VI-VII.

99. Stephen D. Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investment Policy and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978), pp. 329-52. Krasner cites the US war in Vietnam as an example of a very great power applying its vast resources in pursuit of ideological goals. States with fewer capabilities are constrained to focus on the preservation of their positions within the international system.

100. Thomas W. Robinson, "Interdependence in China's Foreign Relations," in *China and the World: Chinese Foreign Relations in the Post-Cold War Era*, p. 193.

101. The World Bank, p. 282.

102. Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1987), p. 47.

103. The concept of a world society that promotes norms, principles, and ideas that are important determinants of state behavior has been articulated by Hedley Bull in *The Anarchial Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1977). The importance of ideas in ensuring compliance to rules in the absence of enforcement mechanisms is also argued effectively by Douglass C. North in *Structure and Change in Economic History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1981), pp. 33-68.

104. See Susan Strange, "Cave! Hic Dragones: A Critique of Regime Analysis," in *International Regimes*, ed. Stephen D. Krasner (Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell Univ. Press: 1983), pp. 337-54; and Stephen D. Krasner, "Global Communications and National Power: Life on the Pareto Frontier," *World Politics*, 43 (April 1991), 337-66.

105. See Kenneth Lieberthal, "Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy," in *China's Foreign Relations in the 1980s*, ed. Harry Harding (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1984), pp. 43-70; and James D. Seymour, "Human Rights in Chinese Foreign Relations," in *China and the World: Chinese Foreign Relations in the Post-Cold War*, pp. 202-25.

106. Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, "China and America: 1941-1991," *Foreign Affairs*, 70 (Winter 1991-1992), 75-92.

107. Pan Zhenqiang, "Future Security Needs of the Asian-Pacific Area and Their Implication for the U.S. Defense Policy," paper presented at the 1993 United States National Defense University and United States Pacific Command Pacific Symposium, Honolulu, Hawaii, 4 March 1993, p. 16.

108. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

109. Chen Qimao, "New Approaches in China's Foreign Policy," *Asian Survey*, 33 (March 1993), 248.

110. Sun Zi (Sun Tzu), *Sun Zi Bingfa Qianshuo*, ed. and trans. (into modern Chinese) Wu Rusong (Beijing: Jiefangjun Chubanshe, 1985), pp. 29-40.

111. Qian Qichen, pp. 10-11.

Colonel Karl W. Eikenberry is assigned to the staff of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Office of the Secretary of Defense. He commanded a light infantry battalion in the 10th Mountain Division and served as an assistant attaché in the American Embassy in the People's Republic of China and as a division chief with the Strategy, Plans, and Policy Directorate of the Army Staff. Colonel Eikenberry is a graduate of the US Military Academy, holds a master's degree from Harvard University in East Asian studies, has studied at the British Ministry of Defence Chinese Language School in Hong Kong and at Nanjing University in the PRC. He also was a national security fellow at the JFK School of Government, Harvard University, and he is a Ph.D. candidate at Stanford University.

Reviewed 25 November 1996. Please send comments or corrections to carl_Parameters@conus.army.mil.