

Does the PRC have a Grand Strategy Of Hegemony?

**“In the future we will set up the Earth Control Committee,
and make a uniform plan for the Earth.”**

**CCP Chairman Mao Zedong,
Leader of the PRC, 1949-1976**

**Testimony Presented to the
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The Hon. Dana Rohrabacher, Chairman
International Relations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives.**

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Both Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State have recently raised questions about the PRC's strategic intentions. Secretary Rumsfeld, attending an Asian security conference this past summer, put the issue as follows: "Since no nation threatens China, why this growing investment [in the military]? Why these continuing large weapons purchases?" More recently, on the occasion of President Bush's trip to China, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice remarked that "one has to be concerned" about China's modernization of its multi-million man army. "There's a question of intent," she said.¹

Precisely what are the People's Republic of China's intentions? In one sense, this question answers itself, of course. No country that is not facing a serious military threat maintains a 3.2 million man military,² increases its military budget at a double-digit clip well in excess of growth in GNP, and vigorously upgrades its military technology and hardware—unless it intends to use force, or the threat of force, to accomplish certain domestic and international ends.

But what ends? The PRC's military build-up, in my view, is being undertaken with two overlapping strategic goals in mind. The first is regional, limited, and narrowly conceived. The second--partially obscured by the first--is global, unlimited, and broadly conceived.

The immediate goal of the PRC's military build-up is the conquest of Taiwan, either through the direct application of force or by intimidating the island into preemptive surrender. The ranks of those who deny that the PRC would actually use force against Taiwan have been further thinned in the wake of the March 2005 passage of the Anti-Secession Law by China's rubberstamp parliament, the National People's Congress. This

"law," which is better understood as a formal statement of Chinese Communist Party policy, formally codifies the PRC's determination to exert control over Taiwan and its willingness to use military force to accomplish this end.

It is beyond Taiwan that the waters of the PRC's intentions grow murky. Some deny that Beijing's ambitions extend beyond what it calls that "renegade province" and, perhaps, the South China Sea. Certainly the Chinese strategic literature contains nothing resembling a grand strategy, a lacuna that leads some analysts to deny that China has larger ambitions at all. In their view, all the PRC wants is to be "a player" in a multipolar world.

I strongly disagree with this view. I am of the opinion, formed over 25 years of studying the PRC, that the CCP leadership has *always* had a grand strategy. Moreover, it is clear to me that they continue to have a grand strategy today. It is a strategy of intimidation, of expansion, of assertiveness, and of domination on a global scale. It is a strategy to overtake, surpass, and ultimately eclipse the reigning superpower, the United States of America. It is a strategy, in short, of Hegemony.

The PRC is bent on becoming the Hegemon, the *Ba* in Chinese, defined by longstanding Chinese usage as a single, all-dominant power. A Hegemon, it should be understood, is more dominant than a mere superpower, more dominant even than a "sole superpower," the international role that the U.S. currently occupies.³ The PRC accuses the U.S. of "seeking Hegemony," but this should be understood as secret envy and hidden ambition: It is Hegemony that the PRC itself seeks.

The Grand Strategy of Chairman Mao Zedong

The deliberations of China's senior leaders *in camera* are carefully guarded secrets. Recently, however, some statements made by the late Chairman Mao have come to light that indicate that the PRC had a strategy of global domination from the earliest days of its existence.⁴ The Founder of the People's Republic of China, it turns out, specifically and repeatedly enunciated a strategy of Hegemony.

First, let me provide you with a little background. By October 1, 1949, when Chairman Mao announced the founding of the PRC, Mao controlled the heartland of China. But Tibet, Eastern Turkestan (Xinjiang), Taiwan, and parts of Mongolia and Manchuria remained outside of his grasp. The leader of the Chinese Communist Party believed that China's historical greatness, no less than Communism's universalism, demanded the reconstruction of the Qing empire that had collapsed nearly 40 years before.

Lost territories must be recaptured, straying vassals must be recovered, and one-time tributary states must once again be forced to follow Beijing's lead. Military action—engaging the Japanese invaders, defeating the Nationalists, and capturing the cities—had delivered China into his hands. Now military action would restore the empire. For these reasons Mao intervened in Korea in the early years of his rule, invaded Tibet, bombarded

Quemoy, continued to bluster over Taiwan, attacked India over Tibetan border questions, confronted the Soviet Union, and gave massive amounts of military assistance to Vietnam, including the introduction of an estimated 300,000 PLA troops.

Maps were drawn up showing China's borders extending far to the north, south and west of the area that the PLA actually controlled. Any territory that had been touched by China, however briefly, seems to have been regarded as rightfully Beijing's. Fr. Seamus O'Reilly, a Columban missionary who was one of the last foreign Catholic priests expelled from China in 1953, recalls seeing, in the office of the local Communist officials who interrogated him, a map of the PRC that included *all* of Southeast Asia—Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Burma, Thailand, and Singapore--*within* China's borders.⁵

But such maps were marked for internal distribution only. For Mao, although willing to go to war to restore China's *imperium* piecemeal, was characteristically coy about his overall imperial aims. Even as his troops were engaged in Korea or Tibet, he continually sought to reassure the world, in the policy equivalent of a Freudian slip, "We will never seek hegemony." Mao may have been open about his dictatorial aims at home, but along his borders he still faced an array of powerful forces. The United States occupied Japan and South Korea, and had bases in the Philippines and Thailand. The British were in Hong Kong and Malaysia. Even his erstwhile ally, the Soviet Union, was occupying large swaths of Chinese territory in Manchuria, Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang.

Once in power, he launched a program to industrialize and (secretly) to militarize China. Spending of the military and its arms industries took up three-fifths of the budget, a ratio that even his chief arms supplier, Joseph Stalin, not one to stint on military expenditures, criticized as "very unbalanced."⁶ Nuclear-tipped ICBMs were a particular priority.

Why this headlong and, as history would reveal, economically bootless rush to build up China's military might? The Chairman was pursuing, it would appear, a grand strategy of Chinese Hegemony. As he bluntly put it to his inner circle in 1956, "**We must control the earth.**"

The disastrous Great Leap Forward—in which the peasants were dragooned into large, state-controlled communes--must be understood as an outgrowth of Mao's lust for Hegemony. The Chairman wanted steel not just "to overtake Great Britain in steel production in three years," as the standard histories relate, but to build a blue water navy for conquest, expansion, and domination.

"Now the Pacific Ocean [in Chinese, *Taiping Yang* or "The Ocean of Peace,"] is not peaceful," Mao told his leading generals and admirals on June 28, 1958. **"It can only be peaceful when we take it over."** Lin Biao, Mao's closest ally in the military, then interjected: **"We must build big ships, and be prepared to land in [i.e., invade] Japan, the Philippines, and *San Francisco.*"** [Italics added]. Mao continued: **"How many years before we can build such ships? In 1962, when we have XX-XX tons of steel [figures concealed in original]..."**⁷

Calling together his provincial chiefs later in 1958, Mao was even more expansive: **“In the future we will set up the Earth Control Committee, and make a uniform plan for the Earth.”**

It is tempting to dismiss such comments as the quixotic ravings of a known megalomaniac. Indeed, the very idea of the isolated and impoverished China of the 1950s, with its miniscule industrial base, setting up an “earth control committee” seems ludicrous. Yet even though Chairman Mao’s prospects of realizing his “grand strategy” were nil, his words are of more than historical interest. They speak directly and unequivocally to Condi Rice’s question of *intent*. “Mao dominated China,” aptly summarize Chang and Halliday, whose access to Chinese Communist Party archives produced the above quotes. “He intended to dominate the world.”

As we know from our own history, the character of a country’s founder deeply influences its future course, even hundreds of years following his death. Mao passed from the scene less than 30 years ago. His portrait still dominates Tiananmen Square, and his body lies embalmed there. More to the point, his political legacy has been mostly affirmed. He was, in the definitive judgment of his successor, Deng Xiaoping, “70 percent good, 30 percent bad.”

The question before us is this: Is Mao's grand strategy of Hegemony part of the "30 percent bad" that that has been discarded by the post-Mao leadership? Or is it included in the “70 percent good”—the part of Mao’s legacy that has been embraced by Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, and now Hu Jintao?

On balance, the evidence suggests that Mao’s grand strategy of Hegemony has been vigorously embraced by his successors. At the same time, they have become enormously more sophisticated in acquiring the industrial, technological, and military means to realize such a strategy. Fifty years later, the thought of an “Earth Control Committee”—based in Beijing and controlled by the CCP—does not amuse.

From Mao Zedong to Hu Jintao: The Patriotic Education Program

Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong had a strong sense of historical grievance against the West in general --and the U.S. in particular. This accentuated his desire to recover what he saw as China’s rightful place in the world--at its center. This is, after all, what the very name of the country means in Chinese: *Zhongguo*, or the Kingdom at the Center of the Earth. China’s current leaders share these sinocentric and xenophobic views which form the conceptual basis for, and justification of, their drive for Hegemony.

When, on October 1, 1949, Mao Zedong announced the founding of the People’s Republic of China, his words suggested not merely wounded national pride but a thirst for revenge:

The Chinese have always been a great, courageous and industrious nation; it is only in modern times that they have fallen behind. And that was due entirely to oppression and exploitation by foreign imperialism and domestic reactionary governments. . . . Ours will no longer be a nation subject to insult and humiliation. We have stood up.

In the view of Chairman Mao, a cabal of Western and Western-oriented countries—Russia, Great Britain, France, Germany, Japan and America—had treacherously combined to attack the old Chinese empire, loosening China’s grip on hundreds of thousands of square miles of territory and a dozen tributary states in the process.

Mao reserved special rancor for the United States, fulminating in a bitterly sarcastic speech called “‘Friendship’ or Aggression” in late 1949:

The history of the aggression against China by U.S. imperialism, from 1840 when it helped the British in the Opium War to the time it was thrown out of China by the Chinese people, should be written into a concise textbook for the education of Chinese youth. The United States was one of the first countries to force China to cede extraterritoriality. . . . All the ‘friendship’ shown to China by U.S. imperialism over the past 109 years, and especially the great act of ‘friendship’ in helping Chiang Kai-shek slaughter several million Chinese the last few years—all this had one purpose [according to the Americans] . . . first, to maintain the Open Door, second, to respect the administrative and territorial integrity of China and, third, to oppose any foreign domination of China. Today, the only doors still open to [U.S. Secretary of State] Acheson and his like are in small strips of land, such as Canton and Taiwan.⁸

Jumping ahead to the post-Mao period, when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Americans reacted with euphoria and expected China (remember the “China card”) to do the same. But the steely-eyed heirs of a two-thousand-year tradition of hegemony had a far less happy view of the new world situation. To the dismay and consternation of many in Washington, Deng Xiaoping not only dissolved his country’s de facto alliance with the United States, he went even further, declaring in September 1991 that “a new cold war” between China and the sole remaining superpower would now ensue.⁹

The pivotal moment in U.S.-China relations had actually occurred two years before, when millions of people took to the streets of China’s cities to demand an end to corruption and bureaucracy. Many of the young people were even bolder, calling openly for democracy. The CCP put down this “counterrevolutionary incident” with deadly force—and belatedly realized that the battle for the hearts and minds of Chinese youth was close to being lost.

The Chinese Communist Party has always portrayed itself as the paramount patriotic force in the nation, but following the Tiananmen debacle it desperately sought to shore up its crumbling mythology by all the institutional means under its control. The educational system was mobilized to teach students about China’s “history of shame”; state-run factories required their workers to sit through patriotic indoctrination sessions; and the state-controlled media as well as the schools promoted Chinese exceptionalism through what is called “state-of-the-nation education” or *guoqing jiaoyu*. The message conveyed was that only the Chinese Communist Party could provide the strong central government required by China’s unique *guoqing* and current national priorities, along

with continued economic growth and the means to recover Chinese preponderance in Asia and accomplish the “rectification of historical accounts” (i.e., revenge on the imperialist powers).¹⁰

These efforts achieved a bureaucratic apogee in September 1994 with the publication of a sweeping Party directive, “Policy Outline for Implementing Patriotic Education.”¹¹ Within the schools, the Party ordered that “Patriotic education shall run through the whole education process from kindergarten to university . . . and must penetrate classroom teaching of all related subjects.” While PRC history textbooks have always stoked nationalist fervor and xenophobia, these same attitudes were now to be inserted into everything from beginning readers to junior high school social science textbooks to high school political education classes. The resulting kindergarten-through-college curriculum has been custom-designed to breed young superpatriots.

The Patriotic Education policy is less about accurately depicting past events than about propagating a metanarrative designed to stir up the blood of young Chinese. Complex historical events are twisted to fit a simple morality tale of good Chinese Communist patriots versus evil foreign imperialists. The tale goes like this:

*The Chinese are a great race which for millennia has rightly dominated its known world. The Middle Kingdom’s centuries of national grandeur were ended by foreign imperialists, at whose hands the Chinese people suffered a hundred years of humiliation. They shamed us, tearing off and devouring living parts of the Chinese race and nation, even threatening the whole with disunity. But China has now stood up and is fighting back, determined to recover her lost grandeur no less than her lost territories. We must be wary of things foreign, absorbing only those that make us stronger and rejecting those, like Christianity and Western liberalism, that make us weaker. The first duty of the Chinese state is therefore to nationalize the masses and resist these foreign ideas. Only the Chinese Communist Party has the will and determination to lead the struggle. The new China must gather within its fold all the scattered Chinese elements in Asia. A people that has suffered a century and a half of Western humiliation can be rescued by reviving its self-confidence. To restore the Chinese nation, the PLA must become modernized and invincible. The world is now moving toward a new millennium, and the Chinese state must see to it that the Chinese race is ready to assume its proper place in the world—at its center.*¹²

Note that the Patriotic Education Program, which comes straight out of the collected writings of Chairman Mao Zedong, was approved by the current leadership. This suggests that Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao are, like Mao, are consumed by atavistic fantasies of Great Han Hegemony and see the U.S. as the chief obstacle to the restoration of China’s lost glories.

In unguarded moments, members of the CCP elite have admitted as much. General Chi Haotian, the former vice chairman of the Communist Party’s Central Military Commission, is among those who have spoken openly about the need to overtake and dethrone the United States. “Viewed from the changes in the world situation

and the hegemonic strategy of the United States to create monopolarity,” General Chi said in December 1999, “. . . war [between China and the U.S.] is inevitable.”¹³

“We Will Never Seek Hegemony”

The Great Wall of secrecy that surrounds Chinese security affairs suggests that the CCP sees that its interests and America’s are in deep and fundamentally irreconcilable conflict. If this were not the case, it would presumably be in Beijing’s interest to adopt a policy of transparency with regard to security affairs to reassure its largest trading partner.

From time to time Beijing does issue blanket denials that it is seeking Hegemony. Indeed, the phrase “We will never seek Hegemony” has become a commonplace of Chinese diplomatic discourse. Such denials should, if anything, heighten U.S. concerns as to China’s real intentions. Chairman Mao, whose frenetic preparations to achieve Hegemony we have already discussed, frequently issued similar denials. In my view, such denials were--and are--intended to mask China’s hegemonic ambitions. After all, disinformation has been a part of Chinese statecraft for millennia. “When seeking power,” Chinese strategist Sun-tzu advised, “make it appear that you are not doing so.”

Beyond such blanket denials, secrecy reigns. The Pentagon’s 2005 report to Congress on the military power of the PRC complains that “secrecy envelops most aspects of Chinese security affairs. The outside world has little knowledge of Chinese motivations and decision-making and of key capabilities supporting PLA modernization.”¹⁴

This almost complete lack of transparency in military affairs concerning basic information on the quantity and quality of the Chinese armed forces cannot help but raise questions about China’s ultimate intentions. Even such basic facts as the overall size of China’s military budget remains a mystery. As the Department of Defense admits, we “still do not know the full size and composition of Chinese government expenditures on national defense. Estimates put it at two to three times the officially published figures.”¹⁵

Some might argue that this secrecy is merely an unintentional outcome of the conspiratorial character of the Chinese Communist Party, a character that it shares with all Communist parties. In fact, secrecy in security matters is the *official and stated* policy of the CCP leadership. In his “24-character Admonition,” Deng Xiaoping instructs his successors to “bide their time, and hide their capabilities.”

Such admonitions only make sense if the CCP leadership is engaged in a long-term struggle with the United States for world hegemony. Lieutenant General Mi Zhenyu, formerly vice-commandant of the Academy of Military Sciences, was speaking for the leadership of his country when he recently remarked, “[As for the United States,] for a relatively long time it will be absolutely necessary that we quietly nurse our sense of vengeance. . . . We must conceal our abilities and bide our time.”¹⁶

Like Mao and Deng before him, Jiang remains wary of the “imperialist-dominated” world, and believes that armed conflict—sooner or later—is inevitable. “We must prepare well for a military struggle” against the “neo-imperialists,” Jiang said in 1997.¹⁷ The plots of the “neo-imperialists” to “split up” and “westernize” China, he continued, can only be stopped by a modern and robust PLA.

I suppose that some may say that this secrecy does not mask imperial ambitions, but is merely a reflection of the nature of China’s system of government. There is, as I remarked above, a natural tendency towards secretiveness on the part of one-party dictatorships. But this is hardly reassuring as to China’s intentions given that it is China’s system of government itself—a Leninist one-party dictatorship--that is *the root of the problem*.

The Chinese Communist Party, like all Communist Parties, is a War Party.

Chairman Mao famously remarked that “Political power comes from the barrel of a gun.” This generalization was certainly true in the case of the Chinese Communist Party, which came to power via a bloody civil war, remained in power by continually purging real and potential enemies, and has frequently used force against neighboring countries.

CCP rule has been characterized by high levels of state-sanctioned violence, even domestic terror campaigns, from the beginning. In recent years we have the examples of the violent response to the peaceful Tiananmen demonstrations, the ongoing violence against women in the one-child policy, and the continuing purge of the Falungong, a nonviolent Buddhist sect whose members are still being arrested, tortured, and sometimes killed today on the orders of first Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao.

Internationally, China has bloody borders. Because of the PRC’s peace-loving rhetoric, that country has largely avoided the reputation for bellicosity that its history of aggression against peoples on China’s periphery deserves. During the 25 years that Mao ruled China, his armies intervened in Korea, assaulted and absorbed Tibet, supported guerilla movements throughout Southeast Asia, attacked India, fomented an insurrection in Indonesia, provoked border clashes with the Soviet Union, and instigated repeated crises vis-à-vis Taiwan. When an opportunity arose to send out China’s legions, Mao generally did not hesitate—especially if the crises involved a former tributary state, which is to say almost all of the countries with which China has a common border. Under Mao, the would-be Hegemon, China had bloody borders.¹⁸

In the decades since Mao, China has invaded Vietnam, attacked Philippine and Vietnamese naval units in the South China Sea, splashed down missiles adjacent to Taiwan, and continues its aggressive intrusions into Japanese territorial waters. The CCP today continues to exist in a state of partial mobilization, and has made it clear that it is prepared to use force to resolve both domestic crisis and external challenges.

“Comprehensive National Power” as the Basis for Hegemony

Chinese strategists speak in terms of maximizing their country's "Comprehensive National Power." This is a deliberate, rational effort to build up China's industrial base as the basis for future military production. Military production is not to be an accidental byproduct of other productive capacities, as it was, for example, in the U.S. during World War II, and is still to some extent today. Rather, it is a deliberate aim of the government's continuing Five Year Plans. The sobering implications of this fact need to be thought through.

First, a little history. Mao was in a hurry to industrialize, build a first-class war machine, and become the Hegemon. Yet, virtually the only thing he had to sell to the Soviet Union in exchange for arms was food. Setting up large, centrally controlled people's communes allowed him to more efficiently extract food and work out of the peasantry. Loudspeakers were set up to urge the peasants to work longer and harder, and women were forced into the fields to work alongside the men for the first time. Most of the grain they produced was turned over by the Communist cadres in charge to local "state collection stations." For there it was shipped to the cities—and to the Soviet Union.

As the Great Leap Forward picked up speed, senior officials kept increasing the quotas of grain to be delivered to the state collection stations. In response, commune-level cadres worked the peasants longer and longer hours on shorter and shorter rations. Mao, who saw people only as means to *his* ends, was unmoved by reports that millions of peasants were starving to death. Instead, this ruthless megalomaniac calmly declared that, to further his global ambitions, "half of China may well have to die."

The people's communes were arguably the greatest instrument of state exploitation ever devised. They proved so efficient at squeezing the peasantry that tens of millions of villagers starved to death from 1960-62 as a result. Mao's efforts to build up his arsenal cost an estimated 42.5 million lives.

This costly mistake has been rectified by Deng Xiaoping and subsequent leaders, who have ordered that civilian production keep pace with, and support, military production. This is not an abandonment of Hegemony, but merely a more rational approach to achieving it, and one that is in line with time-honored Chinese geopolitical goal of a "rich country and a strong military." In short, China's current leaders have disavowed Mao's *means* as obviously faulty, but not his ends.

One may accurately regard China's National High Technology Research and Development Program, or 863 Policy for short, as a more sophisticated outgrowth of Mao's crude efforts to build military strength. Deng Xiaoping's "Sixteen character declaration" makes the same point—that the primary purpose of economic development is to build a strong military:

"Combine the Military and the Civil"
"Combine Peace and War"

“Give Priority to the Military”
“Let the Civil Support the Military.”

American analysts, understanding these four sets of four characters each as epigrams—encapsulated bits of wisdom—usually take them together to mean something on the order of “technological developments in the civilian economy directly support the strength of the military.”¹⁹ The above statement is true—indeed, it is a truism—but it is a projection of our own beliefs and attitudes onto a different cultural and political landscape. For this reason, it badly mistakes Deng Xiaoping’s meaning.

For Deng was not minting epigrams, he was issuing orders. Read them again as they are read in China—as orders:

Key sectors of the civilian economy must have a military purpose
Use the peace to prepare for war.
Military technology and weapons production has economic priority
Civilian production must support, technologically and financially, military production.

The ruthless mercantilism practiced by the CCP is thus a form of economic warfare. China's rulers seek to move as much of the world’s manufacturing base to their country as possible, thus increasing the PRC's "comprehensive national strength" at the same time that it undermines U.S. national security by hollowing out America’s industrial base in general and key defense-related sectors of the economy in particular. China will not lightly abandon this policy, which strengthens China as it weakens the U.S., and is an integral part of China's drive for Hegemony.

China is Acquiring the Means to Project Force Far Beyond Taiwan.

Many of China’s military modernization efforts—supersonic anti-ship cruise missiles, stealthy submarines, theater based missiles with terminal guidance systems—are aimed specifically at U.S. forces and bases. By acquiring weapons designed to exploit U.S. vulnerabilities, the PRC is clearly preparing for a contest with the United States.

Beijing is interested in deterring, delaying, or complicating U.S. assistance to Taiwan in the event of an invasion, so as to force a quick capitulation by the democratically elected Taiwan government. But while the near-term focus is Taiwan, many of China’s new lethal capabilities are applicable to a wide range of potential operations beyond the Taiwan Strait. As the *2005 Report to Congress* of the USCC report notes, "China is in the midst of an extensive force modernization program aimed at increasing its force projection capabilities and confronting U.S. and allied forces in the region."²⁰

The rapid growth in China’s military power not only threatens Taiwan—and by implication the U.S.—but U.S. allies throughout the Asian Pacific region. China possesses regional, even global ambitions, and is building a first-rate military to realize

those ambitions. It is naïve to view the PRC's military build-up as “merely” part of the preparations for an invasion of Taiwan in which American military assets in the Asian-Pacific will have to be neutralized.

China's construction of naval bases in the Indian Ocean, and its aggressive pursuit of territorial claims in the East and South China Seas point to its wider ambitions.

Finally, even a cursory reading of China's 2004 Defense White Paper suggests that it views U.S. power and military presence throughout the world with a jaundiced eye, and that it seeks to become, over the mid-term, the dominant power in Asia. This goal necessarily brings it into potential conflict with the U.S. and its allies, chiefly Japan.

China is Pursuing Territorial Claims Other Than Taiwan.

Additional evidence that China's territorial ambitions go well beyond Taiwan comes from its aggressive pursuit of territorial claims in the East China and South China seas.²¹

Since the early 1970s, Beijing has claimed the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands (or Tiaoyutai in Chinese) and the continental shelf that extends into Japanese territorial waters. China's increasingly aggressive intrusions into Japanese airspace and Japanese territorial waters has raised eyebrows in Tokyo and Washington. In November 2004, for example, the Japanese navy chased a Han-class nuclear submarine away from the waters off Okinawa.

China also orchestrated the removal of U.S. logistics forces from the Central Asian republics, demonstrating that its commitment to fighting terrorism was less important than its desire to reduce U.S. influence and presence in the region.

China's Activities Weaken the International System Dominated by the U.S.

The PRC's approach to international relations is sometimes described as “value-neutral,” “not influenced by ideology,” and driven principally by a need for resources, especially oil. This seems to me to be a rather too narrow a reading of the situation.

The PRC has close relationships with virtually every “country of concern,” whether or not they possess oil or mineral reserves. Many countries, “orphaned” internationally because of their human rights violations, terrorism support, WMD proliferation, and other objectionable activities have been “adopted” by China. Cuba, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, Iran, Myanmar, and Sudan, among other countries, receive support from China in international forums, generous aid packages, and arms.

While these relationships are driven by China's need for resources and are construed to advance its own interests, it is naïve to ignore the deeper commonalities that bind one dictatorial system to another. The CCP elite has much in common with the

leadership of such countries, since it, too, engages in human rights violations, WMD proliferation, and other objectionable activities.

The PRC, by elevating and legitimating the governments of “countries of concern,” undermines the international system dominated by the U.S. As the loss of the U.S. seat on the U.N. Human Rights Commission demonstrates, China is effectively forming a system of competing alliances that will enable it to co-opt, undermine, or ignore the existing world order. What we see here is not a “value-neutral” foreign policy, as some aver, but the outlines of an alternative world order, one Made in China, not in the U.S.

Hegemony and Mao's Heirs

Unlike the Third Reich of Adolf Hitler or the Soviet Union of Joseph Stalin, the People’s Republic of China of Mao Zedong survives to the present day, its ruling party intact, its system of government largely unchanged. The myths and lies that continue to prop up Mao’s image also serve to bolster the political legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party itself. The current Communist leadership proudly declares itself to be Mao’s heirs, maintains his Leninist dictatorship, continues his military build-up and, the evidence would seem to indicate, cherishes his grand ambitions.

All this suggests a PRC that has, in combination, the historical grievances of a Weimar Republic, the paranoid nationalism of a revolutionary Islamic state, and the Hegemonic ambitions of a Soviet Union at the height of its power. As China grows more powerful and attempts to rectify those grievances and act out those Hegemonic ambitions, it will cast an ever-lengthening shadow over Asia and the world.

Recommendations

1. There is an urgent need to increase U.S. military capabilities in the Western Pacific to counter the Chinese military buildup there.
2. Congress should reaffirm that Taiwan's future should be decided by the people on Taiwan.
3. Congress should commission a study of how the projected 12 percent per year growth in China's military budget will enable it to increase its military capabilities in the years to come.
4. Congress should encourage the creation of a program of military-to-military exchanges with Taiwan's military to facilitate contingency planning.

¹ Sunday, 20 November 2005

² I include here the roughly 900,000 men in the so-called People's Armed Police (PAP). The PAP is not, properly speaking, a police force at all. It was created following the Tiananmen Square demonstrations of 1989 out of heavily armed PLA military units which are charged with the mission of putting down future domestic insurrections.

³ The concept of hegemony was, fittingly enough, introduced into modern diplomatic discourse by the Chinese themselves. During Henry Kissinger's secret visit to Beijing in 1971, the Chinese translator's use of this unfamiliar English word sent the Americans scrambling for their dictionaries. They found definitions of "hegemony" as "a single pole or axis of power," or as "leadership or predominant influence exercised by one state over others." None of these definitions fully captures the rich and sometimes sinister nuances of this concept, the *Ba*, in Chinese. The *Ba* is a political order invented by ancient Chinese strategists 2,800 years ago that is based exclusively on naked power. Under the *Ba*, as it evolved over the next six centuries, total control of a state's population and resources was to be concentrated in the hands of the state's Hegemon, or *Bawang* (literally "Hegemon-king"), who in turn would employ it to establish his hegemony, or *Baquan* (literally "Hegemon-power"), over all the states in the known world. To put it in modern parlance, Chinese strategists of old may be said to have invented totalitarianism more than two millennia before Lenin introduced it to the West, in order to achieve a kind of super-superpower status. See my *Hegemon*, chapter one.

⁴ Rong Chang and Jon Halliday's claim to have access to Chinese Communist Party archives of Mao's private talks with groups of the Communist Party elite seems credible to me on the strength of their other richly documented revelations of Mao's misdeeds dating back to the 1920s.

⁵ Personal conversation, 28 August 1998.

⁶ Chang and Halliday, p. 381.

⁷ Chang and Halliday, p. 426.

⁸ Mao Zedong, "'Friendship' or Aggression," *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, vol. 4 (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1969), 447–49. This speech was a response to the U.S. State Department's white paper on China, formally called *United States Relations with China*, and Secretary of State Dean Acheson's "Letter of Transmittal" of same to President Truman, both of which were published on August 5, 1949.

⁹ Steven W. Mosher, *Hegemon: China's Plan to Dominate Asia and the World* (Encounter Books, 2000), Introduction.

¹⁰ For this definition, see Liu Hong *et al.*, eds., *Zhongguo guoqing*, restricted circulation (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1990), 3–8; cited in Geremie Barme, *In the Red: On Contemporary Chinese Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 446 n. 15. Emphasizing Chinese exceptionalism also helps to insulate the Middle Kingdom from subversive foreign ideas, like the notion of universal human rights. It enables the Party to rebuff Western criticism of its human rights record by saying, in effect, that "here we have different standards." This was the tack taken by the official white paper on human rights published in 1991. See Guowuyuan Xinwen Bangongshi, *Zhongguode renquan Zhuangkuang* (The human rights situation in China) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1991).

¹¹ See "Aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shishi gangyao" (Policy outline for implementing patriotic education), *Renmin ribao*, 6 September 1994.

¹² Based on Churchill's paraphrase of *Mein Kampf*, as contained in his *The Second World War*, vol. 1 (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1948).

¹³ *Hegemon*, "Introduction."

¹⁴ “The Military Power of the People’s Republic of China, 2005,” Annual Report to Congress, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Executive Summary, p. 1

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 1.

¹⁶ *Megatrends China* (Beijing: Hualing Publishing House, 1996); cited in Bruce Gilley, “Potboiler Nationalism,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3 October 1996. According to several selections in *China Debates the Future Security Environment*, the late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping was the author of the military strategy of “biding our time and building up our capabilities.”

¹⁷ New China News Agency, 31 July 1997. Quoted in Lam, p. 161.

¹⁸ Jonathan Wilkenfield, Michael Brecher, and Sheila Moser, eds., *Crises in the Twentieth Century*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1988–89), 15, 161. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1996), 258.

¹⁹ See, *inter alia*, The USCC 2005 Report, p. 88.

²⁰ *2005 Report to Congress*, U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, p. 9.

²¹ The USCC 2005 Report also notes that, “While Taiwan remains a key potential flashpoint, China’s aggressive pursuit of territorial claims in the East and South China Seas points to ambitions that go beyond a Taiwan scenario, and poses a growing threat to nation’s, including U.S. alliance partners, on China’s periphery.” p. 8