STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA IN THE NEAR TERM: AND THE UNITED STATES MILITARY'S ROLE

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ABSTRACT

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The U.S. needs a constructive working relationship with China because: it is the world's most populous nation; it has nuclear weapons and plays a key role in regional stability; it is one of five permanent members in the United Nations Security Council; and it is undergoing extraordinary economic growth and promises to be an economic power early in the next century.

There are significant points of friction between the U.S. and China on human rights; sovereignty issues, such as, Taiwan; proliferation of WMD; and fair trade.

Both nations' leaders recognize the potential for an isolated military confrontation to escalate to a major war. However, it is in both nations' interest that they remain constructively and peacefully engaged. The U.S. military will play a significant role in ensuring peaceful relations between the two well into the 21st century.

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BACKGROUND

"How China defines itself and its greatness as a nation in the future, and how our relationship with China evolves will have an impact on the lives of our own people and, indeed, on global peace and security, as that of any other relationship we have."

President William Clinton[1]

Prior to the commencement of classes for the Army War college class of 1998, the officers of the naval services were sent to Washington, D.C. The purpose of this visit was to receive a series of high level briefings by senior Navy and Marine Officers. During the course of one of the briefings a senior official stated that it was his firm belief that the future held a very strong possibility of armed conflict between the United States and the People's Republic of China (PRC).[2] This view supports the hardline critics of the Clinton administration's policy of constructive engagement with China. Particularly inflammatory have been many of the claims of those "neo-cold warriors" in their efforts to persuade Americans to abandon engagement and follow a policy of "containing" the "China threat." As an example of the hostile hyperbole that has become quite common, consider this statement from the Washington-based William J. Casey Institute of the Center for Security Policy: "The nature of the threat posed by China is in key respects of a greater magnitude and vastly greater complexity than that mounted by the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War."[3]

Nearly concurrently with the above statement being published, an article appearing in the Armed Forces Journal concluded that "...the prospect of an armed conflict between China and the United States is also considered unlikely, since both nations' leaders obviously recognize the potential for an isolated military confrontation to escalate to a nuclear confrontation."[4]

Regardless of which side one chooses in this debate, it is clear that as both nations stride into the twenty-first century the peace and prosperity of their respective peoples will depend greatly on the nature of their relationships.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the relations between China and the United States for the near term and to explore what role the United States military should play in shaping the nation's strategic goals with respect to China. Toward that end, this work will address the following topics: Background of the nations' relations; Chinese policy and interests in regards to the U.S.; United States policy and interests in regards to China and mutual successes between the two nations; and The role the U.S. military can play in shaping the environment in order to ensure U.S. strategic goals are achieved.

When Richard Nixon met Mao Zedong in the Chairman's book-strewn-office study in early 1972, the thought that dominated the moment was that common American and Chinese interests, not sentimental friendship, had drawn the two countries together. Those interests were perceived, in large measure, to reside in the realm of common opposition to Soviet expansion.[5] Sustained by this strategic assessment, the relationship overcame the ups and downs of the next sixteen years and even broadened as economic and intellectual exchanges increased. [6]

Throughout those years, the two nations sought to find a more enduring and positive basis for a bilateral relationship than opposition to a mutual threat. In the late 1970's and early 1980's, as China committed itself to economic reform, Americans increasingly hoped that China's growing economy would not only produce an expanding market for their products, but also provide the soil in which a pluralistic society would grow. The rationale for the relationship began to broaden slowly from the narrow focus on strategic security objectives to include the

pursuit of economic goals and the hope for social change.[7]

However, in 1989, the relationship between the two nations took a turn toward the worse.[8] In June, many civilian deaths occurred when the military was ordered to stop pro-democracy demonstrations in and around Beijing's Tiananmen Square as well as in other locations in China. Following quickly on the heels of that tragedy, the global strategic tectonic plates shifted. Eastern European Communist regimes collapsed. The Berlin Wall came tumbling down. The Warsaw pact folded. Saddam Hussein rose to the world stage. Communism's motherland imploded. Finally, Yugoslavia broke up and writhed in a bitter ethnic civil war. These events following on the heels of the Tiananmen Square incident greatly distracted the US from pursuing improvements in relations with China.

Meanwhile, other areas of the world were integrating and progressing in exciting ways. In the West, the European Community (EC) was making an uncertain voyage toward integrated markets and unified political and monetary institutions. The North American vision of a free trade area held out the prospect of new regional cooperation and wealth. And East Asian nations were experiencing economic growth in varying degrees of political liberalization.[9]

Nearly paralleling these events, the globally televised violence in Beijing (Tiananmen) dashed the hopes for relatively quick and painless political development in the People's Republic of China. The violence, and apparent lack of concern for human rights, that Tiananmen Square represented, outraged Americans.[10] Further, the precipitous collapse of communism in much of the rest of the world; and the rise of dynamic new centers of integration, growth, and political realization elsewhere transformed the way Americans looked at China. In the 1980's, China was seen as a possible model for reform in the socialist world. In the latter half of 1989, the PRC was

viewed by many in the same negative light as Vietnam, North Korea, and Cuba.[11]

This transformed image found expression in America's China policy debate; the consensus formed over the previous two decades was shattered. Today, some Americans argue that helping to improve the human rights conditions of the Chinese people should be America's primary objective, and that only if U.S. sanctions and pressures are properly applied can change be achieved.[12] Others contend that America has a broad range of economic, security, political, and human rights interest at stake. Further, they argue a balance among objectives must be struck; that America's capacity to produce social and political change in China and elsewhere is limited; and that while some pressure may work, others may be counter productive.[13] They generally feel that economic change will produce political transformation, albeit perhaps only over a long period of time and in ways which reflect the force and distinctiveness of five thousand years of Chinese cultural development.

While America is embroiled in this debate, East Asian nations bring their own experiences and concerns to bear as they think about their futures in relations to China and the United States. East Asian nations, after decades of developing social infrastructure, including democratic institutions, have been experiencing rapid economic growth and varying—in some cases impressive—degrees of political liberalization. New trade and investment patterns in the region that were inconceivable just a few years ago have developed. One of the most dramatic examples is a growing cultural, trade, and investment relationship among the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.[14]

In this environment of change, China's leaders have attempted throughout the 1980's and early 1990's to reform the economy, achieving a speed of economic growth during the 1980's

exceeded only slightly by South Korea. Change has been conspicuous along several dimensions, even while political repression remains an ongoing reality for dissident Chinese. By late 1992, industrial growth was surging in the double digits.[15] Economic and social freedoms associated with a few coastal enclaves were being extended to interior areas, and there were even a few faint signs of renewed political liberalization. By mid-1992, almost all of the Asian and European countries had resumed pre-Tiananmen patterns of relations with Beijing; and in August of that year Seoul and Beijing normalized relations, completing Beijing's quest to normalize relations with Asian countries. By late 1992, Chinese economic growth was providing buoyancy to the entire regional economy in a time of slowdown in Japan.[16]

These changes bring not only opportunities to East Asia, but concerns as well. How will China use its growing power? Will the United States continue to play an active role in the region? Will the US continue serving as a comparatively benign stabilizing force while the military and economic power of China, Japan, and others grow? Will those areas of friction between the United States and China be resolved amicably or will they be a source for regional instability? In answering these questions, an examination of each nation's key national objectives with regard to the other is in order. I will begin with an examination of the Chinese position and follow that by an examination the U.S. perspective.

CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY: U.S. RELATIONS

As we examine the goals of Chinese foreign policy three key words, modernization, nationalism, and regionalism, can be used to better understand the objectives of that foreign policy.[17] "Modernization" refers to China's concentration on economic growth. Since 1978, 2

years after the death of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping has repeatedly emphasized the need to shift China's priorities from revolution to modernization. In early 1980, Deng outlined three tasks for China in the decade ahead: to oppose hegemonies and preserve world peace; to work on Chinese reunification with Taiwan; and to step up the drive for China's modernization. Deng singled out the third as the most important by stating, "Modernization is the core of all these major tasks, because it is the essential condition for solving both our domestic and external problems; and nothing short of World War could tear us away from this."[18]

Nationalism has emerged as a leading ideological current behind China's drive toward modernization and one of the primary forces behind Chinese foreign policy. In the post-Cold War era, nationalistic feelings appear particularly strong among Chinese intellectuals and government officials, as well as in other circles of Chinese society. As one author put it:

> "Such National identity enactment may be seen as a necessary compensatory-searching behavior, a function of a regime with weak legitimacy trying hard to bring about a national unification and restore what Chinese of every ideological coloration believe to be their natural and inalienable right to great power status."[19]

Regionalism is the emphasis that China has remained a regional power, concentrating its political, economic and military activities primarily in the Asia-Pacific region, despite its global aspirations.[20] This new orientation of Chinese foreign policy was further confirmed by what was called "the 28 characters strategy" put forth by Deng Xiaoping in the wake of the Tiananmen Square incident of 1989 when China was facing economic sanctions from the West, disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the collapse of communism in East Europe. This strategy included the following seven phrases:

Leng jing guan cha—watch and analyze (the developments) calmly;

wenz zhen jiao—secure our own position;

chen zhe ying fu—deal with the changes with confidence;

tao guang yang hui—conceal our capacities;

shan yu shou zhou—be good at keeping a low profile;

jue bu dang tou—never become the leader;

you suo zuo wei—make some contributions.[21]

In essence, this strategy emphasizes building one's own strength while staying involved on the world stage, but not as an overt leader.

Since 1949 and the rise of communism in China, that country's bilateral relations with the U.S. have run a zigzag course.[22] However, the PRC has always believed in the importance of its relationship with the United States. The most recent major downturn in Sino-American relations certainly took place after the Tiananmen incident of 1989, when the two sides regarded each other as the major ideological threat.

Beginning in the early 1990's, there was a gradual warming of the relationship between Beijing and Washington. In late 1991, the Beijing leadership indicated that it attached great importance to its relations with Washington and was pleased to host U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, calling his visit a "a success" despite serious disagreements voiced during his stay on issues such as human rights. China also regarded the United States, with Japan and the European Community, as a major source of advanced technology, capital, and markets. Although having criticized the People's Republic of China on issues such as human rights and unfair trading practices in his presidential campaign, President Clinton made a critical decision in 1994 to remove the human rights issue as a factor in the renewal of China's most-favored nation status.[23] This removed a major obstacle in the path of improving bilateral relations and giving the Chinese

greater opportunity to move closer to the United States to achieve their key national strategic key goal: modernization.

On the other hand, as long as the future of Taiwan remains unsettled, the potential for a Sino-American conflict will continue. Deng Xiaoping once pointed out to a visiting head of an Asian country, "The question of Taiwan is the main obstacle to better relations between China and the United States, and it might even develop into a crisis between the two nations."[24] This was never more apparent than in March of 1996, when the People's Republic of China conducted a series of military exercises and missile tests around Taiwan. In reaction, the United States sent two aircraft carriers—*USS Independence* and *USS Nimitz*—to waters near Taiwan, making them the largest U.S. force in the region in the recent past. Beijing, which was conducting the exercises as a matter of showing anger over Taiwan's "independence tendencies," reacted even more strongly, pushing the war games even closer to the island.[25] The Chinese would not be seen as backing down on what they viewed as clearly a national sovereignty issue. This clashing of wills over Taiwan is clearly a potential military danger.

Economic issues also arise between China and the United States. At the beginning of 1995, a major incident in Sino-U.S. relations was a clash over intellectual property rights. China and the United States reached an agreement in February 1995, just before U.S. sanctions on more than one billion dollars in Chinese imports were to take effect. The understanding was that China would close seven of twenty-nine factories that copied and distributed pirated computer software and audio compact disks, and that Washington would soften its opposition to China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO). In March of that year, U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor indicated that the United States backed China's entry into the WTO and softened its

stance on China's status as a developing country, which resulted in certain trade concessions. But in June 1995, U.S. trade negotiators and manufacturers were alarmed by a report that the Chinese government had allowed all but one of the seven compact disc factories it had closed for piracy to reopen. President Jiang Zemin then made an announcement at the Osaka APEC Summit in November 1995 that starting in the following year China would reduce by 30 percent the import tariff on more than four thousand items. On 1 April 1996, China cut its average import tariffs to 23 percent, down from the previous average of about 39.5 percent.[26] Currently, China is still in the process of negotiating its WTO membership with major economic powers such as the United States, the European Union, and Japan. One may expect that the clashes on political, economic, and cultural dimensions will continue for years to come.

However, from the perspective of world politics, the United States and China's national interests are not always fundamentally in conflict. Certainly, the desire for improved relations that brought them together when Richard Nixon was President in 1972 is still largely in place, even though the strategic situation has been altered. As noted earlier, in the sometimes-stormy relations between the two, Beijing has always attached great importance to its relations with the U.S. With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of Soviet power in the early 1990's, Deng Xiaoping issued a 16-character instruction to guide China's policy toward the United States:

zeng xinren—to increase mutual trust

jiangshao mafan—to reduce trouble

zengjia hezou—to enhance cooperation and

bugao duikang—not to seek confrontation.[27]

With these guidelines, Beijing has attempted to keep a low profile and avoid open confrontation

with the United States on most occasions in the 1990's. The recent visit of Chinese Premier Jiang Zemin has highlighted each nation's desire to put its foreign policy relation with the other on a steady course to enhance both nations' national objectives.[28]

In summary, modernization, nationalism, and regionalism—general trends in China's foreign policy in the post-Cold War era—are evident and continue today. The Beijing leadership's interpretation of the internal conditions and external environment will continue to play an important role in its foreign policy development. If the U.S. is perceived as a threat to China, instead of a good partner, China will likely reduce its relations with the United States. This could come about even if the PRC anticipated a modernization setback and economic loss. However, the U.S. offers China a great deal of resources toward its key national objective, modernization. That is, U.S. technological expertise and consumer markets.

UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY: CHINA RELATIONS

"As always America must be prepared to live and flourish in a world in which we are at odds with China. But that is not the world we want. Our objective is not containment and conflict; it is cooperation. We will far better serve our interests and our principle if we work with a China that shares that objective with us."

President William F. Clinton[29]

As stated in A National Security Strategy for a New Century, "An overarching U.S. interest is China's emergence as a stable, open secure, and peaceful state. The prospects for peace and prosperity in Asia depend heavily on China's role as a responsible member of the international community."[30] Toward that end, The U.S. has four key security objectives with regard to China: 1.) Sustaining the strategic dialogue begun by the recent series of high level

exchanges with attention to core interests on both sides; 2.) Resumption of the cross strait-Strait dialogue between Beijing and Taipei, a smooth transition in Hong Kong; 3.) PRC adherence to international nonproliferation norms, establishing of a comprehensive export control system, and the conditions that would permit implementation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy; and 4.) the PRC's constructive role in international security affairs through active participation in APEC, ARF, and the Northeast Asia Security Dialogue.[31]

The need for a strong, constructive, and peaceful relationship with China are more obvious when reviewing certain facts. First, the People's Republic of China plays a major role in the post Cold War world. Second, it is the world's most populous nation (about 1. 2 billion people) and the third largest land-mass. Third, China has nuclear weapons, is a growing military power, and plays a key role in regional stability. Fourth, as one of five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, China has veto power over Security Council resolutions dealing with key multilateral issues, including international peace keeping and the resolution of regional conflicts. Fifth and finally, China is undergoing extraordinary economic growth and promises to be a preeminent economic power early in the next century.[32]

For the last 26 years, the U.S. has tried to construct a positive dialogue with the PRC. In the 1972 Shanghai Communiqué signed during President Nixon's historic trip to China, the United States adopted a " one China policy." This policy acknowledges that Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Strait recognize that there is only one China and that Taiwan is part of China.[33] In 1979, the United States established relations with the PRC and transferred diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing. A 1979 Joint Communiqué reflected this change, and Beijing agreed that the American people can continue to carry on commercial, cultural and other official

contacts with the people of Taiwan. The 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, and a third Joint Communiqué signed in 1982, further defined the United States-China relations as well as unofficial U.S. relations with the people of Taiwan.[34]

Nearer to the present, in September 1993, President Clinton launched a policy of comprehensive engagement with China to pursue U.S. interests through intensive, high-level dialogue with the Chinese. This policy seeks: 1.) Constructive Chinese participation in the United Nations Security Council and in the resolution of regional conflicts to enhance global peace and security; 2.) Active participation by China in multilateral non-proliferation regimes, which is necessary to slow the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems; 3.) Economic and trade relations with China that meet United States economic interests; 4.) Respect for internationally recognized standards of human rights and the rule of law in China; and 5.) Cooperation on global issues, such as combating alien smuggling and narcotics trafficking and improving protection of the environment.[35]

As noted above, regional security remains a key issue in U.S.-Chinese relations. The long-term interest in peace and stability in Asia, particularly with China and North Korea, is evident in the approximately one hundred thousand American soldiers stationed in the Asia-Pacific region. Further, China can play a key role in resolving several regional security issues. These issues include: the North Korean nuclear development and Korean unification, reaching a peaceful settlement of the territorial dispute over the South China Sea and Spratly Islands, and building democracy and peace in Cambodia. As noted, the United States supports China's active participation involving regional security institutions, most prominently the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF) and the Northeast Asia Security

Dialogue.

With regard to other nuclear and security issues, the United States and China have agreed to work together to try to achieve an international convention banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. China is a signatory to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, signed a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1996, ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention in April 1997, and banned the exports of MTCR-Class intermediate and long-range missiles. In May 1995, China voted in favor of an indefinite extension of the Non-proliferation Treaty, a top priority in U.S. foreign policy. The United States continues to encourage China to stop all nuclear cooperation with Iran's nuclear power generation program; to join the Zangger Committee and Nuclear Suppliers Group;[36] further restrict transfers of missile components and technology; and strictly control exports of chemical and biological weapon precursors.[37]

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

In large measure, the current administration's policy toward China is also about business. It is a continuation of the colonial-era, 19th century U.S. policy of keeping the door open to the world's most populous nation in order to exploit China's potential as the world's largest consumer (of U.S. products). By doing so, the U.S. ensures the health of it own economy well into the 21st century. When addressing this, the State Department is most candid. It writes in its fact sheet, "China has a quarter of the world's population—A vast pool of potential consumers for U.S. products and services—and market-oriented reforms have recently helped generate rapid economic growth."[38] The World Bank has predicted that China's economy would grow 8-10 percent a year until the year 2000 and has estimated that China's economic output will reach $10

trillion by the middle of the next century.[39]

With this rapid expansion, China's market will be increasingly important for United States commercial interests. The United States currently grants China most-favored-nation trading status. In some sectors, access to the Chinese market has become a critical element of U.S. producers' growth strategies, this is especially true in the aerospace industry and high technology industries.[40] United States-China trade has continued to climb, reaching 57. 3 billion in 1995–up from $48.1 billion the previous year. Recently, however, China's exports to the U.S. have accounted for most of the growth in bilateral trade. The U.S. merchandise trade deficit with China was about 39. 5 billion in 1996, exceeded only by the U.S. bilateral trade deficit with Japan. In order to build a balanced and sustainable bilateral trading relationship, it will be essential to obtain greater market access for United States' products and services in China.[41]

Seeking to participate in China's rapid growth, major multinational corporations from around the world have shown great interest in investing there. The United States is the third-largest source of such investment, after Hong Kong and Taiwan. Globally, China is second only to the United States as a recipient of direct foreign investment.[42]

The increasingly important U.S. economic and trade relations with China are an important element of the administration's " comprehensive engagement" strategy in economics and trade. There are two main elements to the U.S. approach.[43] First the United States seeks to fully integrate China into the global, market-based economic and trading system. China's participation in the global economy will nurture the process of economic reform and increase China's stake in the stability and prosperity of East Asia. Second, the United States wants to increase U.S. exporters and investors access to the Chinese market. As China grows and develops, its needs for

imported goods and services grow even more rapidly. China is now only in its tenth year of negotiations for access to the World Trade Organization (WTO). To gain WTO entry, all prospective world trade organization members are required to comply with certain fundamental trading disciplines and offer substantially expanded market access to other members of the organization. Securing China's accession to the WTO on these terms, a goal President Clinton strongly supports, will contribute to China's economic transformation, spur economic growth in the U.S. and other WTO-member economies, and support the integrity of the international trading system.[44] The U.S. continues to work with China and other WTO-members toward a commercially viable accession protocol.

Many major trading entities--among them the U.S., the European Union, and Japan--have shared concerns with respect to China's accession. These concerns include efforts to obtain satisfactory market access for both goods and services, full trading rights for all potential Chinese consumers and end-users, nondiscrimination between foreign and local commercial operations in China, reduction in the monopolistic state trading practices, and the elimination of arbitrary or non-scientific technical standards.

The United States and China also maintain a very active dialogue on bilateral trade issues. In the past two years the two sides concluded agreements on the protection of intellectual property rights, textiles and satellite launches. U.S. and Chinese negotiators meet regularly to review progress in implementing our commercial agreements. In areas where China has failed to comply with its international commitments, the U.S. has exercised its legislative authority to conduct investigations and, when necessary, propose appropriate trade sanctions. These efforts not only expand the commercial opportunities open to U.S. exporters in China but also contribute

to China's efforts to bring its trade regime into compliance with the World Trade Organization and with other international commercial standards.[45]

The U.S. continues to expand its export promotion efforts and scientific and technical exchange programs in China. The United States and China last year renewed their bilateral science and technology agreement for another five years. In March 1997, the two countries held their first Sustainable Development Forum, which is intended to expand cooperation in the environmental field. The Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade, hosted by the Commerce Department in September 1997, discussed expansion of long-term economic and business ties between China and the U.S.

The United States economic relationship with Hong Kong is closely tied to U.S.-China relations. Under the 1994 Sino-British Joint Declaration, Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China on July 1, 1997. U.S. concerns over this transition include economic and investment issues. The U.S. has substantial economic and social ties with Hong Kong, with an estimated $8-10 billion invested there. There are 900,000 U.S. firms and 30,000 American residents in Hong Kong. The U.S. is Hong Kong's second largest market- importing $10.2 billion in 1995--and Hong Kong is America's fourteenth-largest trading partner--14. 2 billion in U.S. exports in 1995.[46] The U.S. and China are both members of the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum. At the November 1994 APEC summit in Bogor, Indonesia, President Clinton, Chinese President Jiang Zenim, and the other APEC leaders pledged to meet the goal of free and open trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region by the year 2020.[47]

CONCLUSIONS

"Because of the importance of the China's military leaders to the ongoing succession in China, to the PRC's global and regional postures, and to issues of weapons and technology proliferation, the United States should restore high-level official military exchanges. Further, military education and other professional exchanges should be resumed. The first objective of a bilateral military relationship should be to enhance understanding of and influence with this important leadership element and to understand clearly the national security objectives of the PRC..."

The Committee on U.S.-China Policy
"The Policy Paper"[48]

The U.S. needs a constructive working relationship with China numerous reasons. The PRC plays a major role in the post Cold War world. It is the world's most populous nation and the third largest by land area. In addition, it has nuclear weapons, is a growing military power, and plays a key role in regional stability. One of five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, China has veto power over Security Council resolutions dealing with multilateral issues, including international peace keeping and the resolution of regional conflicts. Finally, it is undergoing extraordinary economic growth and promises to be a preeminent economic power early in the next century. Further, China's cooperation will be essential in holding the line on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means.[49]

There are significant areas of concern between the U.S. and China. Specifically, China's record on human rights abuses, specifically the legacy of Tiananmen Square (1989) and the handling of dissidents. Further sovereignty issues concerning Tibet, Taiwan, and the Spratly Islands can still cause confrontations. Also, potentially fractious are issues such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missile technology, alien smuggling, fair trade, and concerns of the environmental impact of the rapid Chinese economic development.

Since both nations' leaders recognize the potential for an isolated military confrontation (such as, recent Chinese military exercises in the Formosa Straits and U.S./Taiwanese response) to escalate to a major war (perhaps even nuclear exchange), the prospect of an armed conflict between China and the U.S. is considered unlikely. It is still essential that these two powers stay constructively and peacefully engaged.

U.S. policy toward China must not be passive. This policy must set the stage for a future relationship that is more positive, stable, and enduring.[50] It must be an active, fully engaged relationship that will enable the U.S. to obtain substantial Chinese cooperation in achieving common interests and resolving differences. To achieve the U.S. national goals, this policy will fully engage the U.S. military.

The National Military Strategy of the U.S. states:

> "US armed forces help shape the international environment through deterrence, peacetime engagement activities, and active participation and leadership in alliances... Engagement activities, including information sharing and contacts between our military and the armed forces of other nations, promote trust and confidence and encourage measures that increase our security and that of our allies, partners and friends. By increasing understanding and reducing uncertainty, engagement builds constructive security relationships, helps to promote the development of democratic institutions, and helps keep some countries from becoming adversaries tomorrow."[51]

I believe the U.S. military can do much toward building such a relationship with the PRC. I recommend the U.S. defense establishment do the following to support the national policies that aim to normalize relations with China and make the PRC a partner in the international community:

- As part of the political process (interagency working group), our military leaders should support programs that promote the economic development of China. The vision is the economic success of China will greatly promote the development of democratic free market ideals and

therefore reduce a considerable source of tension between the two nations.

- Continue to increase the pace of normal cooperative relations between the PRC and U.S. defense communities.

-Maintain a strong presence in the Western Pacific sufficient to inspire confidence in the future stability and peace of the region.

-Work toward engaging the PRC in multilateral nuclear arms discussions to reduce the nuclear weapons stockpile worldwide.

- Encourage China through every possible bilateral defense meeting to join the U.S. in encouraging Northeast Asia and East Asia to develop multilateral forums for discussing security issues of common concern.

- Promote high level official military exchanges. (A process to have begun in earnest in 1997.)

- Develop institutional relationships between comparable military education, research, and gaming centers to exchange ideas about strategy and tactics, basic doctrine, and training experiences that will help each side to better understand the other.

-Educate U.S. military officers as to the vital interest that the PRC has in the Asia-Pacific region and in achieving U.S. national objectives.

-Educate U.S. military officers as to the vital interest that the U.S. has in East Asia.

In conclusion, change in China will be one of the greatest challenges facing American policymakers for the remainder of this century and beyond. A China that progresses economically not only will contribute to global prosperity and growth, but will further develop its ability to project power and influence. If politically unstable and disunited, China will create severe

problems for its own people, the region, and an increasingly interdependent world. On balance, problems of Chinese success are to be greatly preferred to those of failure, but in neither case will Sino-American relations be easily managed.[52]

The United States and its military establishment have a profound interest in peace and stability in China. Three times this century, Americans have fought and died in Asian wars. Once with China as an ally and twice with her as an enemy, either directly or indirectly. Today, 100,000 U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen, Coast Guardsmen, and Marines serve in Asia—37,000 of them still patrol the Cold War's last frontier, the Korean DMZ. Against this historical background, its ongoing presence in the Far East, and the potential flash points between the PRC and the U.S., the military should be required to increase the pace of its contacts with China. A proactive role in shaping a peaceful future between the two nations, thus benefiting the nation in achieving a key national objective.

Word count = 5707

ENDNOTES

[1]United States Pacific Command, Asia-Pacific Economic Update, (Pearl Harbor, HI: U.S. Pacific Command, Summer 1996), "Foreword".

[2]The ideas in this sentence are based on remarks made by a speaker who spoke on conditions of non-attribution.

[3] Robert S. Ross, "Why Our Hardliners Are Wrong," The National Interest, Fall 1997, 42.

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[29]William F. Clinton, "Remarks by the President in Address on China and the National Security Interest," 24 October 1997; available from http://www.state.gov/China6.htm; Internet; accessed 3 January 1998.

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[32]Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "U.S.-China Relations," 20 June 1997; available from http://www.state.gov/china3.htm; Internet; accessed 3 January 1998.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Jeffrey A. Bader, "Sino-American Relations and U.S. Policy Options.

[35]Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, "U.S.-China Relations."

[36]The Zangger Committee had its origins in 1971 when major nuclear suppliers involved in nuclear trade came together to reach common understandings on how to implement Article III.2 of the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Nuclear Suppliers Group is a group of nuclear supplier countries which seeks to contribute to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through the implementation of two sets of guidelines fo nuclear exports and nuclear related exports.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Central Intelligence Agency, "China."

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[44]Clinton.

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[48]David M. Lampton and Alfred M. Wilhelm, United States and China Relations at a Crossroads (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1995, 11.

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