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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES

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## **The United States and East Asia after 9/11**

Kongdan Oh Hassig

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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES

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## **The United States and East Asia after 9/11**

Kongdan Oh Hassig



## PREFACE

This paper was prepared by the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) in partial fulfillment of a task for the Advanced Systems and Concepts Office (ASCO), Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), and is part of a larger task entitled “Threat Reduction Strategies in the New Strategic Environment.” The purpose of this paper is to assess the East Asian contributions and responses to the U.S.-led war on terrorism after September 11, 2001. Among Northeast Asian countries, the paper focuses primarily on China, Japan, and South Korea.

The author wishes to thank numerous friends and colleagues who have been a source of support and insight throughout the research. At IDA, I want to thank Brad Roberts and Caroline Ziemke, my project teammates; Victor Utgoff asked challenging questions; Ginny Monken excellently reviewed the paper; and Chuck Hawkins provided first-hand reports about Chinese perceptions of the war on terrorism. Outside of IDA, my special thanks go to Mr. Yoshi Imazato, senior editor of *Tokyo Shimbun*, whose insights and timely information enriched my understanding. And also to ROK National Defense University faculty, researchers, and visiting senior military fellows who shared their insights during roundtable on the United States and East Asia after 9/11. The author alone is accountable for the final content of this paper.

Finally, I want to thank Shelley Smith for gracefully agreeing to edit this paper under time pressure; Andra Hill, my assistant with an always cheerful smile; and Barbara Varvaglione, our IDA division’s efficient production coordinator.

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## **SUMMARY**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States have the potential to profoundly alter the nature of US relations with its allies and non-allies alike. The opportunity provided by the loose coalition against terrorism is to leverage US leadership to forge better long-term working relationships with a multitude of states. The danger is that strong US leadership will be interpreted as global hegemony, which will be resisted by other states, even including our allies.

This report offers an assessment of views of East Asian governments and peoples on the ongoing anti-terrorism campaign. Because the terrorism and response to terrorism is very recent, the sources for this study are primarily official and unofficial statements of East Asian governments, unsystematic surveys of Asian media reactions and public opinion polls, and discussions with East Asian specialists and policy makers.

### **II. INITIAL RESPONSE TO 9/11 IN NORTHEAST ASIA**

Chinese statements on 9/11 were low key and seemingly genuine. Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi offered a very strong statement of support. South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung sent condolences and offers of assistance. He also proposed that the ROK and DPRK adopt a joint statement opposing terrorism at their fifth joint ministerial meeting on September 15. North Korea's Foreign Ministry said that the "large-scale acts of terrorism" were a "very regretful and tragic incident" and that "as a UN member, our Republic's position of opposing all forms of terrorism and any support to it remains unchanged." The North Korean government, however, refused to issue a joint anti-terrorism statement at the joint ROK-DPRK talks.

In his address to the world community on September 21, 2001, President Bush said, "Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists." The US government requested that other governments provide protection for US citizens and facilities in their

countries, share intelligence on terrorist networks, prevent terrorists from entering their countries, provide logistical support for anti-terrorist military operations, and prevent weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation from being transferred to terrorists.

### **III. WAR ON TERRORISM IN EAST ASIA: THE FIRST SIX MONTHS**

The Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF) dispatched six naval vessels to the Indian Ocean to supply coalition forces. The government passed an “Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law” that provided for SDF assistance in supply of US and UK forces and took numerous other actions, including passing legislation to block financing of terrorists.

Japan donated \$500 million for Afghanistan reconstruction. The South Korean Ministry of National Defense (MND) dispatched a Special Warfare Unit to join the coalition forces. A 150-member MASH unit was sent to Central Asia to provide medical aid to allied fighters. MND also dispatched transportation helicopters to ferry US military supplies. For Afghan Reconstruction, the ROK pledged \$48 million. The Chinese government pledged an unspecified sum for Afghan reconstruction at the Tokyo meeting.

### **IV. ASIAN RESPONSES TO THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THE WAR**

In Southeast Asia, local terrorism by militant Muslims is a serious problem only in the Philippines and Indonesia, and on a smaller scale, in Singapore. The Chinese government is concerned about unrest among the 18 million Muslims living in western China, but violence has been uncommon. More than terrorism, the Chinese leaders are concerned about the continuing Taiwan problem, and about being encircled by potentially unfriendly states. The South Korean government and people are preoccupied with the upcoming presidential election of December 2002, and with ongoing corruption scandals in government and business. Because South Koreans have lived with terrorism for decades, they are not as shocked by it as Americans. The major concern in Japan continues to be the stagnant economy. Like the Koreans, the Japanese, having lived for centuries with natural and man-made disasters, view terrorism as a sort of unavoidable evil that cannot be completely eradicated.

The American pursuit of al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan demonstrated once again the superiority of US air power and military technology. The single-minded determination of the George W. Bush administration to wage war on terrorism concerned many US allies, as well as other states. In January 2002, President Bush delivered his annual State of the Union address in which he warned of action against the three-member “axis of evil”—North Korea, Iraq, and Iran. The starkness of this categorization alarmed many foreigners. Foreigners were concerned as well by an American news media report that the latest revision of the Nuclear Posture Review contemplated the nuclear targeting of a more diverse group of states (including North Korea and several in the Middle East) than had been targeted during the Cold War.

## **V. ASIAN RESPONSES TO THE SECOND SIX MONTHS OF THE WAR**

The war on terrorism poses several challenges for China. First, US aid and cooperation with Pakistan might tilt Pakistan toward the United States and away from its long-time friend, China. Second, US troops sent to the new central Asian republics “encircled” China on the west, in the future possibly preventing China from projecting influence westward. A third potential threat for China is that the global American buildup to fight the war on terror will work against China's own pursuit of global influence and superpower status. China's leaders have not revealed how they plan to address these opportunities and challenges. However, as the war on terrorism moves closer to Iraq, China will be forced to make decisions. A potential benefit of 9/11 is that china might use the excuse of fighting the war on terrorism to crack down on domestic dissidents.

China is simply too big to be concerned about Bush's ultimatum about being with the United States or with the terrorists. China will not be a compliant partner who blindly follows Washington's lead. For the foreseeable future, China will become a nominal partner with the United States in the war on terrorism, with the Communist leaders calculating their best interests every step of the way.

For Korea, the war on terrorism provided the opportunities to demonstrate support for its US ally, to participate in an international cause, and through donations to Afghanistan, to demonstrate support for a Middle Eastern country. The war on terrorism

also presents challenges, the most significant of which is that President Bush's characterization of the DPRK as a member of the axis of evil conflicts with President Kim Dae-Jung's top agenda item, which is improving relations with the DPRK. Even worse, South Koreans fear unilateral US action toward DPRK will bring war to their country. Many South Koreans believe that the roots of terrorism are not only in militant Islamic groups, but also in American arrogance and desire for global political and economic hegemony. They believe that terrorism cannot effectively be addressed only by military action. In the absence of a truly cooperative international coalition, the US war on terrorism is expected to be costly, time-consuming, and ultimately a failure.

Among the three Northeast Asian countries under consideration, the ROK is perhaps the biggest loser, not from 9/11, but from the US response to 9/11. If the ROK joins the United States in the American version of the war on terrorism, ROK support will make North Korea angry and China nervous. If the ROK declines to actively assist the United States, the US-ROK alliance will be strained.

Japan's prompt and comprehensive support for the United States has been quite remarkable, given the fact that Japan's SDF faces severe constitutional restrictions on its war-fighting activities. Japan's non-military support to the Afghanistan region has been impressive as well. Japan saw 9/11 as an opportunity to stand tall and support the United States, which is the most important nation for Japan's economy and national security. It was also a time for Japan to make up for the mistake of contributing only money to the Gulf War coalition. Domestically, the war on terrorism provided the Japanese a unique opportunity to reopen debate over Japan's international military role and peace constitution, although a recent poll suggests that even after 9/11 the majority of the Japanese people do not want to change their peace constitution. One of the clear challenges to Japan will be the financial burden imposed by the war on terrorism, straining an economy that has been stagnant for years. As a US ally, Japan is facing a dilemma similar to that of the ROK. Support for the war on terrorism requires "militarizing," which will anger Japan's neighbors.

## **VI. THE NEXT BATTLE IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM: IRAQ**

US hegemony before 9/11 was accepted as benign by all but those countries most hostile to the United States. US hegemony after 9/11 is much more widely viewed as a threat. Asians fear US hegemony because they believe that the war against terrorism should be fought cooperatively, preferably under the authority of the UN, providing for a wider input of concerns. Instability in the Middle East, even short of war, could slow economic growth throughout East Asia. Also, Northeast Asian states fear that the next target for the United States after a successful Iraq campaign would be North Korea.

## **VII. CONCLUSIONS**

Most Northeast Asian leaders seem to expect that the Bush administration has decided irrevocably to launch an attack on Iraq, even without foreign cooperation.

If the United States extends its war on terrorism to Iraq, it appears that China will not support the war; instead, China is likely to reduce its cooperation with the United States across the board. It seems unlikely that South Korea would send troops to the Iraqi theater or provide non-combat military support. It is difficult to tell which way Japan would go. Both governments are likely to begin a reassessment of the costs of being US allies. Their strong preference is for the United States to take an incremental approach, working through the United Nations, to uncover and dismantle Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. At this point the best the United States can do is to make stronger efforts to consult with (rather than cajole or advise) its Asian allies on the subject of how the war on terrorism (and on Iraq) should be pursued, but the Bush administration has by now probably earned such a reputation for secrecy and unilateralism that efforts to convince the world that the United States is willing to work closely with a coalition are likely to fail.

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States have the potential to profoundly alter the nature of US relations with its allies and non-allies alike. Since the beginning of the Cold War in the 1950s, the United States has provided security and leadership for its two most important allies in East Asia, Japan, and the Republic of Korea (ROK or South Korea). The predominant themes in US foreign security policy have been defense, deterrence, and detente. With the demise of the Soviet Union as an imperial power, the United States became the sole superpower, with an unparalleled ability to project power to further its own interests around the world. Paradoxically, the 9/11 attacks, triggered by a combination of foreign events and US policies in the Middle East, revealed America's weakness as well as its strength. The homeland security that Americans had always enjoyed, even during times of war, was in jeopardy.

A loose anti-terrorist coalition quickly coalesced around the United States in the aftermath of 9/11. The coalition provides the opportunity to leverage US leadership to forge better long-term working relationships with a multitude of states. The threat is that strong US leadership will be interpreted as global hegemony, which will be resisted by other states, even including US allies. One factor that will influence how the world reacts to the US anti-terrorism campaign is how successful the campaign is. If key terrorists and their supporters can be quickly identified and eliminated, and further terrorist attacks prevented, the means of autocratic coalition leadership may well be considered to justify the ends. Another important factor is how culturally and politically sensitive the United States is in conducting its anti-terrorism campaign.

American policy makers tend to overestimate foreign support for the anti-terrorism campaign. One reason for this is that the policy makers focus too much on expressions of support of governments, but tend to neglect the more difficult-to-measure opinions of non-governmental actors, with whom they have limited contact. The problem with focusing too much on the support of foreign governments, especially in Asia, is that Asian political leaders are polite and formal, and often voice agreement even when they do not actually agree. This is a cultural characteristic. Within their culture, the danger of misunderstanding is limited by the fact that Asians understand how to interpret different shades of agreement, under different circumstances. Americans are

often ignorant of these cultural nuances. Another reason for Washington's unrealistic optimism about foreign support is that the leaders of Japan and the ROK tend to voice agreement with US policy because their countries depend on the United States for a strategic security umbrella (although in the post-Cold War era this umbrella is becoming increasingly irrelevant to the South Koreans, who seem to be less concerned about a massive attack from North Korea than the US administration claims to be).

Area studies experts—both inside and outside the US government—are more familiar with foreign public opinion than government policy makers, but these experts are rarely consulted by the top policy makers. State Department public diplomacy officials and journalists who write about such things as foreign displays of anti-Americanism rarely get the attention of policy makers. Yet another failure of US understanding involves an ignorance of or disregard for the "piggyback" agendas of cooperating governments. The best example is China, where numerous domestic groups and minorities oppose the dictatorial governance of the Chinese Communist Party. It is hardly surprising to discover that the Chinese leadership seeks to suppress or eliminate these dissident movements under the name of "anti-terrorism." To the extent that the Chinese Communist leaders can use the US-led war on terrorism as a cover for domestic political repression, the United States is supporting dictatorships and working against one of its own foreign policy goals: to bring freedom to the world's peoples.

This report is devoted to an assessment of views of East Asian governments and peoples on the ongoing anti-terrorism campaign. The war on terrorism is still in its early stages, so it is not possible to offer anything like a definitive analysis. An American attack on Iraq will virtually redefine the war. This early assessment can help American policy makers present their anti-terrorism strategies more persuasively to US allies, friends, and the rest of the international community.

Because the events under consideration are recent, and still evolving, the sources for this study are primarily official and unofficial statements of East Asian governments, unsystematic surveys of Asian media reactions and public opinion polls, and discussions with East Asian specialists and policy makers, rather than systematic surveys or historical analyses. This report covers only Northeast Asia, comprised of China, Taiwan, the



Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea), the Republic of Korea, and Japan. Consideration of the reactions from Russia and Taiwan has been excluded.

## **II. INITIAL RESPONSE TO 9/11 IN NORTHEAST ASIA**

### **A. Media and Government Statements**

Immediately after the attacks, China's President Jiang Zemin sent a message to the White House saying that the Chinese government condemns and opposes all manner of terrorist violence. In a personal call made by Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxun to Secretary of State Colin Powell, Tang said, "In the struggle against terrorist violence, the Chinese people stand with the American people." For China, 9/11 provided a golden opportunity to patch up the bilateral relationship broken by the EP-3 incident of March 2001. Chinese statements on 9/11 were low key and seemingly genuine.

Among Northeast Asian leaders, Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi offered the strongest supporting statement: "We can never forgive such a dastardly and outrageous act. On behalf of the people of Japan, I express my condolence to the American people from the bottom of my heart. This sort of terrorism will never be forgiven and we feel strong anger." Considering that Japan is a land of subtle language and symbolic and indirect expressions, this was indeed a strong statement (although Koizumi is a very atypical Japanese).

South Korea's President Kim Dae-Jung sent condolences and offers of assistance. He also proposed that the ROK and DPRK adopt a joint statement opposing terrorism at their fifth joint ministerial meeting on September 15. South Korean citizens held a candlelight vigil in front the US Embassy in Seoul to display Korean support and sympathy.

North Korea's Foreign Ministry released a statement to the (North) Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), the government-run news service (targeted at the international community and not received by the domestic audience), saying that the "large-scale acts of terrorism" were a "very regretful and tragic incident" and that "as a UN member, our Republic's position of opposing all forms of terrorism and any support

to it remains unchanged.”<sup>1</sup> The North Korean government, however, refused to issue a joint anti-terrorism statement at the joint ROK-DPRK talks. For its domestic audience, however, the DPRK government’s reaction was somewhat different, and probably closer to the true attitude of the North Korean leadership. On September 14, the Korean Central Broadcasting Station (KCBN) referred not to terrorism but to “unprecedented surprise attacks.”<sup>2</sup> The broadcast quoted foreign news sources, often out of context, that expressed a negative attitude toward the United States. For example, the *Washington Post* was quoted as saying that “the United States brought international isolation on to itself by practicing arrogant foreign policies.” TF1, the French television network, was quoted as saying that the United States, “heretofore regarded as a strong power, has been found to be weak.” Japan’s NHK television was quoted as saying that the attacks were “a symbolic attack against a unipolar system in which the world’s politics and economy are intensively concentrated in the United States.”

## **B. Further Responses**

The Chinese government increased security around US diplomatic buildings. Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao declared, “The Chinese government endorses the international community strengthening cooperation in cracking down on all terrorist activities, including the prevention and curbing of financing terrorist activities. We are willing to strengthen negotiation and cooperation with the United States in this respect.” Some Chinese policy analysts and scholars were more specific, arguing that China should support retaliation against Osama bin Laden if his guilt could be proven.

The Japanese government ordered its military to tighten security around US bases in Japan. Prime Minister Koizumi promised to assist the United States in the search for those who planned and supported the attacks. The Japanese government announced that Japanese destroyers and minesweepers would escort the US aircraft carrier *Kitty Hawk* from its base at Yokosuka to the Indian Ocean. The secretaries-general of the ruling coalition parties agreed on the basic outlines of a parliamentary bill to allow the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to support the US military campaign against 9/11 terrorists. In

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<sup>1</sup> Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), September 12, 2001; <http://www.kcna.co.jp>

<sup>2</sup> Korean Central Broadcasting Station, September 14, 2001.

contrast to Japan's Gulf War response, the government decided to provide transport, medicine, and supplies in addition to financial support for the anti-terrorist campaign.

South Korea's President Kim Dae-Jung said to the American people, "I assure you that the Republic of Korea will provide all necessary cooperation and assistance as a close ally in the spirit of the ROK-US Mutual Defense Treaty. ROK will take part in the international coalition to support the US action against terrorism." Defense Minister Kim Dong-Shin stated that moral and material support for the US was fully ready.

North Korea's KCNA broadcast some ambiguous remarks following the 9/11 event: "It may be a right option taken in line with the policy of each country opposed to all forms of terrorism to make a due contribution to the efforts of the international community to eliminate the root cause of this terrorism. But the neighboring countries of Japan are becoming extremely watchful against its hectic moves." The underlying meaning of this statement is that each country has a right to its own anti-terrorism policy, that the United States is partially responsible for provoking the terrorist attacks on itself, and that if Japan strengthens its military, Japan's neighbors will suspect a renewal of Japanese militarism. KCNA did not say what the North Korean government would do to combat international terrorism. Two months after 9/11, the DPRK finally signed the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. US State Department Korean desk officials interpreted these actions as an indication of North Korean interest to be eliminated from the US State Department's list of states sponsoring terrorism.

### **C. US Requests of Foreign Governments**

President Bush, speaking to the country and the world community in his address of September 21, 2001, said, "Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists." The clear message was that there could be no third way of responding to the terrorist attacks, no fence-sitting. The US government requested that other governments provide protection for US citizens and facilities in their countries, share intelligence on terrorist networks, prevent terrorists from entering their countries, provide logistical support for anti-terrorist military operations, and prevent weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation from being transferred to terrorists.

The list of requests was not long, but for some governments the requests posed special dilemmas. Governments such as China and Russia, who viewed the United States as a competitor or rival, needed to calculate their own interests. For those countries with a large anti-American Muslim population—Pakistan, for example—the requests were especially difficult. For allies like Japan and the ROK, the list of requests provided the severest test of the strength of the alliance since the Vietnam War (in the case of the ROK) or the Gulf War (in the case of Japan).

### **III. WAR ON TERRORISM IN EAST ASIA: THE FIRST SIX MONTHS**

#### **A. US Military and Security Responses Originating in East Asia**

In Japan, the Kitty Hawk task force left Yokosuka for the Persian Gulf. The Japanese and Koreans did not feel threatened by the absence of the Kitty Hawk, which was assigned to the region primarily to provide a platform for the defense of Taiwan, because the extraordinary circumstances of 9/11 seemed to bring assurance that China would not take advantage, at least in the short term, of any Asian vacuum in US forces. Dennis Blair, the Combatant Commander, Pacific, offered the Philippine government equipment and training to fight the Abu Sayyaf guerillas, and a contingent of US special forces were also sent to assist in the effort.

#### **B. Cooperation by Country**

##### **1. Japan**

The Japanese SDF dispatched six naval vessels to the Indian Ocean to supply coalition forces. The government passed an “Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law” that provided for SDF assistance in supplying US and UK forces in the Afghan theater and took numerous other actions, including passing legislation to block financing of terrorists.<sup>3</sup> An early offer of financial assistance was \$500,000 to help pay for security at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors meeting in March 2002 in Vienna.

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<sup>3</sup> See the Japanese ministry of foreign affairs website at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/apec/2002/terro.html>.

As part of the campaign on international terrorists and the rogue states that might support them, the Japanese police and security authorities resumed their investigation of the financial affairs of *Chosoren* (the Korean-Japanese Association in Japan aligned with the North Korean government) in order to prevent Japanese money from going to North Korea. Since the establishment of *Chosoren* in the 1950s, the organization has become a major supplier of hard currency to the North Korean leadership. Since the 1980s the South Korean and American governments have pressed the Japanese to more closely investigate the nature of *Chosoren* businesses, but the Japanese government has been reluctant to do so because of the complex (that is, non-transparent) nature of the banking and finance systems of Japan. The events of 9/11 seemed to provide either a good excuse or an overwhelming need to initiate such an investigation.

Finally, Japan hosted an international conference to raise funds to rebuild Afghanistan after the defeat of the Taliban government. The honorable Sadako Ogata, former UN High Commissioner for Refugee affairs, served as conference chair and pledged a Japanese donation of \$500 million for Afghanistan reconstruction.

## **2. ROK**

The Ministry of National Defense (MND) dispatched a special warfare unit to join the coalition forces. A 150-member MASH unit was sent to Central Asia to provide medical aid to allied fighters. MND also dispatched transportation helicopters to ferry US military supplies. At the Tokyo Afghanistan Reconstruction conference, the ROK pledged \$48 million in aid.

## **3. China**

The Chinese government pledged an unspecified sum for Afghan reconstruction at the Tokyo meeting. The Foreign Ministry announced that government would try to prevent Osama bin Laden and his followers from entering China. Other verbal assurances were offered, but no military action was taken.

## IV. ASIAN RESPONSES TO THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THE WAR

### A. Threat of Terrorism

In Southeast Asia, local terrorism by militant Muslims is a serious problem primarily in the Philippines and Indonesia, and on a smaller scale, in Singapore. Other ASEAN states, such as Borneo, Malaysia, and Vietnam, have Muslim populations but virtually no cases of violence by militant Muslims. In Northeast Asia the only country that has a sizable Muslim population is China. Few Muslims live in either Japan or the ROK. China's Xinjiang Autonomous Region in the northwest is home to the region's largest Muslim population. Islamic groups in Xinjiang have been a continuing source of trouble for the Chinese leadership, beginning with a bombing attack on government offices which killed Chinese civil servants in 1978. Chinese leaders have been concerned with the Islamic population because some of their number see separatism as the only option to life under the Chinese Communist Party, which continues to rule China with a large bureaucracy of corrupt government officials and an anti-religion policy. Such anti-government movements among many different religious and ethnic groups in western China, from Tibet in the south to Xinjiang in the north, threaten the central government's sometimes tenuous control over local jurisdictions.

Despite the presence in western China of 18 million Muslims, a few of whom have engaged in anti-government terrorist attacks, the Chinese leaders are more concerned about the continuing Taiwan problem, and about being encircled by potentially unfriendly states. As US troops began arriving in central Asia to fight the war on terrorism in Afghanistan, and as Japan and South Korea pledged military support for the war effort, the Chinese realized that American troops and their allies were on two sides of China. Chinese leaders have not voiced their concerns about encirclement—at least not publicly—but it is not difficult to imagine the kinds of strategic calculations they are making. However, by the end of 2001, the Chinese fear of an enhanced circle of containment may have subsided as the United States indicated no “aspirations to maintain a permanent military presence in Central Asia.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Denny Roy, “China and the War on Terrorism,” *Orbis*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (summer 2002), pp. 511-521; quote from p. 513.

The South Korean government and people are preoccupied with the upcoming presidential election of December 2002, and with ongoing corruption scandals in government and business. To be sure, South Koreans are no stranger to terrorism; the division of the two Koreas has resulted in numerous North Korean state-sponsored terrorist attacks against South Korea. One of the most successful attacks was the 1983 bombing of the National Mausoleum in Rangoon in an attempt to assassinate visiting South Korean President Chun Du-Hwan. The plastic bomb planted on the roof of the Mausoleum killed almost all of the South Korean cabinet, but President Chun escaped due to his delayed arrival. Another North Korean terrorism success was the 1987 bombing of a Korean Airlines plane flying from Saudi Arabia to Seoul. All 115 passengers and crew were killed by a plastic bomb planted by two North Korean agents (who had departed the flight in Bahrain). The agents were captured, but one immediately committed suicide. The surviving agent said she had been operating on instructions from the “highest authority” in North Korea, implying Kim Jong-Il, President Kim Il-Sung’s son, and the actual ruler in North Korea, then and now. Such events have made most Koreans especially sympathetic to the victims of terrorist attacks. On the other hand, since South Koreans have lived with terrorism for decades, they are not as shocked by terrorism as Americans.

The major concern in Japan continues to be its stagnant economy. Like most Asians, including the South Koreans, the Japanese, having lived for centuries with natural and man-made disasters, view terrorism as a sort of unavoidable evil that cannot be completely eradicated cleanly. The post-9/11 anthrax terrorism reminded many Japanese of the Aum Shinrikyo sarin gas attack on a crowded Tokyo subway station in 1995. To the extent that the Japanese are concerned about their national security, the threats they see are in North Korea's medium- and long-range missiles, and secondarily, in the potential for North Korean terrorist attacks on Japanese soil should Japan become embroiled in a conflict with North Korea.

## **B. The US Response to Terrorism and Consequent Regional Concern**

The American pursuit of al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan demonstrated once again the superiority of US air power and military technology. Although 17 nations supported the campaign either by sending troops or by supporting as rear guard or supply

units, the actual fighting was directed by the United States and mainly conducted by troops from the Northern Alliance, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

Of course the war was expensive to wage and contributed to the growing federal budget deficit. The single-minded determination of the Bush administration to wage war on terrorism concerned many US allies, as well as other states. A series of statements out of Washington described a campaign to be waged at any price. First, there was President Bush's early assertion that "you are with us or you are with the terrorists," revealing his good-versus-evil view of the world. Then in January 2002 President Bush delivered his State of the Union address in which he warned the three axis of evil states—North Korea, Iraq, and Iran—that if they didn't mend their ways the United States would do the mending for them. The starkness of this characterization alarmed many foreigners. Foreigners were alarmed, or at least concerned, as well by an American news media report in March 2002 that the latest revision of the Nuclear Posture Review contemplated the nuclear targeting of a more diverse group of states (including North Korea and several in the Middle East) than had been targeted during the Cold War. As the war on terrorism was launched in Afghanistan, the treatment of prisoners of war on the battlefield and in American prison camps became an issue. Collateral damage and friendly fire stories were reported in the press. Many Americans and foreigners began to question whether the US conduct of the war on terrorism met American and international standards of law and justice. Meanwhile, the war decisions of the Bush administration were being made in relative secrecy, causing many foreign governments to wonder what was coming next.



## **V. ASIAN RESPONSES TO THE SECOND SIX MONTHS OF THE WAR**

### **A. China**

#### **1. Response to the War**

After the first six months China's choices for long-term cooperation with the United States began to take shape. From early on, Chinese leaders were worried about the possibility that a US military presence might become more or less permanent in central Asia, a region where China has had strategic interests since the demise of the Soviet Union. At the same time, Chinese leaders saw a great opportunity to improve their diplomatic stature in the eyes of Washington and the world. At the Shanghai Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in October 2001, President Bush sat next to President Jiang to discuss bilateral cooperation against global terrorism, and Jiang saw a golden opportunity to make the case against al Qaeda in such a way that it would improve US-China bilateral relations. Between the hazard of a US force presence in central Asia and the possibility of improved relations with the United States and more freedom to crack down on domestic dissenters, China seems to have considered three strategic possibilities.

The first option is to fully support the US-led anti-terrorism coalition. The second option is to develop a broader strategic partnership with the US, but not actively support the war on terrorism beyond restricting Chinese money transfers to al Qaeda and preventing terrorists from entering China. In this second option, Chinese support would be mostly verbal and vague. The third option is to treat the United States as a hegemonic competitor. Each of these options presents threats and opportunities for China in regard to its national interests, which included (1) mending fences with the United States after the downing of the EP-3 spy plane; (2) keeping the United States from intervening in the Taiwan-China controversy; and (3) suppressing American criticism of the Chinese government's crackdown on domestic dissidents. The EP-3 incident was already well on the way to being forgotten. The American crew had been safely returned, the plane had been returned (in pieces), and both sides had moderated subsequent flight patterns.

The US war on terrorism appeared to give China more freedom to address the Taiwan problem on its own terms. Just after he took office, President Bush appeared to

signal a significant change in US policy toward Taiwan by saying, in April 2001, that the United States would do “whatever was necessary to help Taiwan defend itself, if it was invaded by the PRC.”<sup>5</sup> This “strategic clarity” replaced the traditional American “strategic ambiguity” of US policy toward Taiwan. At the time, the Bush administration had also indicated its intention to go ahead with sales of critical advanced weapons requested by Taiwan, including ASW patrol aircraft and destroyers. Taiwan's domestic politics continued to present a challenge to China, because in the Taiwanese legislative elections in late 2001, the independence-minded DPP party defeated the KMT and emerged as the largest party in the legislature. The distraction of the war on terrorism and the US desire for Chinese support for anti-terrorism appeared to give China an excuse to argue for a reduction in US military sales to Taiwan. More generally, it seemed to give China freedom to deal with Taiwan by using more sticks and fewer carrots.

More importantly, China could use 9/11 as a pretext to crack down on domestic dissidents as part of its own war on terrorism. In September 2002, the United States and China asked the UN Security Council to add the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), a group of separatists fighting Chinese rule in western China, to its list of recognized terrorist organizations. In Xinjiang, small Muslim separatist groups have fought Chinese rule and control since the 1970s, and one of the best known of the groups is the ETIM. Some foreign analysts of Chinese affairs and many Western European governments doubt that the ETIM is a terrorist organization.<sup>6</sup> The Chinese government may be hoping that by giving support in the UN for military action against Iraq, the United States will, as a quid pro quo, mute its objections to China's domestic version of a war on terrorism that targets dissidents and “separatists.”

The war on terrorism also poses several challenges for China. First, US aid and cooperation with Pakistan in pursuing terrorists might tilt Pakistan toward the United States and away from its long-time friend, China. China has developed a close relationship with Pakistan over the past several decades. China assisted Pakistan in its

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5 Michael E. Marti, “China's Taiwan Policy: Carrot and Stick,” <http://www.dsis.org.tw/peaceforum/papers/2002-09/CSP0209001e.htm>

military development so Pakistan could better stand up against India, which has been a nemesis of China since the territorial conflict between India and China in the late 1960s. Another challenge is the aforementioned threat of US troops in the central Asian republics "encircling" China on the west, and possibly preventing China from projecting influence westward. This region is important to China both because it is the home of Muslims with whom China's Muslim population might fight common cause, and because of the large reserves of natural resources (especially natural gas and oil) that China would like to purchase on favorable terms. China has been diligently trying to improve its relationship with the central Asian republics, and it does not want the United States to interfere with its diplomacy. A third challenge for China is that the global American buildup to fight the war on terrorism will work against China's own pursuit of global influence and superpower status.

China's leaders have not revealed how they plan to address these opportunities and challenges. However, as the war on terrorism moves closer to Iraq, China will be forced to make decisions, at least in the UN, about where it stands in regard to the American version of the war on terrorism. Late 2002, as the storm gathers over Iraq, is a particularly bad time for China's leaders to make important decisions, because they are preparing for a watershed Communist Party meeting at which it is expected that the current generation of leaders will step down.

## **2. China's Broad Definition of Terrorism**

Returning from the Shanghai APEC meeting in October 2001, President Jiang offered the following: "Terrorism should be cracked down on . . . whatever form it takes." The truth is that in China, terrorism is whatever thwarts the state and the party. Those labeled as terrorists include religious groups such as Falun Gong worshippers and discontented ethnic groups such as the Muslim Uighurs in Xinjiang Province.

Even before 9/11, China had been going after these groups. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (the "Shanghai Six": China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan) is a regional institution formed to combat transnational

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<sup>6</sup> See Karen DeYoung, "US and China Ask UN to List Separatists as Terror Group," *Washington Post*, September 11, 2002, p. A13.

crimes and terrorism, as well as share information and facilitate cooperation among its members. Well before the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Shanghai Six had already decided to launch a joint “terrorism center.” Oddly, as an organization the Shanghai Six did not take any collective action to denounce the 9/11 attacks, but the organization did decide to put greater efforts into its cooperative anti-terrorism work. China and Russia have their own domestic opposition/terrorists: the Xinjiang Uighurs in China and the Chechnyans in Russia. Both dissident groups are predominantly Muslim.

The Shanghai Six is thus another coalition dedicated to fighting terrorism, but particularly terrorism committed in the service of ethnic separatism. Distracted by the pursuit of its own terrorists, the Bush administration has paid little attention to China's domestic terrorism agenda. It is a commonplace that in times of war human rights tend to be ignored by combatants, only to emerge as an issue in the postwar period. China's treatment of its religious and ethnic minorities, and how that treatment relates to the underlying principles of US foreign security policy, becomes apparent only if one takes a longer perspective on the war on terrorism.

### **3. China's Viewpoint on the Economic Aspects of the War on Terrorism**

More than anything, China is preoccupied with developing its economy to match the size of its land and population. From this viewpoint, the war on terrorism raises an interesting question: what will be the short and long term impact on China's economy?

Two scenarios come to mind. The first is the scenario in which the war on terrorism slows down the US economy. A weaker economy will erode US power and prestige and hurt the Chinese and world economy in the short term, given the fact that the United States is the largest market for Chinese export goods. However, in relative terms China may gain on the United States in the long run because China's economy will continue to grow despite the fate of the American economy, and China can find other trading partners, although none as profitable (for the Chinese) as the United States. In another scenario, the war on terrorism severely damages the US economy, causing stock prices and foreign trade (e.g., with China) to plunge. Foreign investment will shift out of the United States to other countries, including China. China will gain in the long run as investment pours in and trade gradually recovers. The center of gravity in the world

economy may shift to Asia. In both scenarios, China gains in the long run, and the net economic effect for China is positive.

#### **4. Net for China**

China is simply too big to be concerned about Bush's ultimatum that you are "with us or with the terrorists." China's immense population, enormous land mass, and dynamically developing economy are simply beyond comparison with smaller powers. China has many serious domestic problems that need to be solved, and the younger generations of Chinese are demanding more transparency, accountability, and clean governance from the Chinese Communist Party. However, China's potential is far from being realized, and the Chinese masses and elite have a grand dream and a national strategy to establish a truly remarkable new China in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The events of 9/11 have provided China with an opportunity to work more closely with the United States, the very country that has so often condemned China for domestic and international acts. China, however, will not be a compliant partner who blindly follows Washington's lead. The Chinese will choose their own way to go in the war on terrorism.

For the foreseeable future, it is expected that China will become a nominal partner with the United States in the war on terrorism, with the Communist leaders calculating their best interests every step of the way. If the United States founders in its unilateral war on terrorism, China will not necessarily come to its aid. No people are more aware of how dynasties rise and fall than are the Chinese. China may create its own global role while the United States battles its demons, and by being more clear-eyed than the United States about its long-term goals, may surge ahead.

### **B. Republic of Korea's Response to the War on Terrorism**

#### **1. Contribution to the War**

The South Korean government dispatched a 90-person medical support unit to Kazakhstan, later destined for Kandahar. A 171-person Navy transportation unit with LST went to South Asia, and a 150-person transportation unit with four C-130s flew to Diego Garcia. Five ROK army liaison officers were detailed to CENTCOM and four to PACOM. Various other material and financial contributions were made to a number of organizations involved in the war on terrorism in the Middle East. For the newly established Afghan military, the ROK donated 7,500 units of communication equipment and 8,300 field shovels. Seven medical training officers were dispatched to Afghanistan,

and at the Tokyo meeting the ROK government pledged \$45 million for the Afghanistan Reconstruction Fund.

## **2. Opportunities and Challenges for the ROK**

For Korea, the war on terrorism provided the opportunity to demonstrate support for its US ally; to participate in an international effort; and through donations to Afghanistan, to demonstrate support for a Middle Eastern country. Next year (2003) will be the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of US-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty and the Armistice Agreement ending the Korean War (although the ROK never signed that agreement). In 1953, South Korea was a poor, war-torn country; from that low point, US military and economic support provided the foundation for Korea's phenomenal growth into a prosperous middle power. Today, Korea has the world's twelfth largest economy and is the seventh largest trade partner of the United States. The war on terrorism provided a golden opportunity for Korea to prove that it is a good ally. Unlike the Japanese SDF, the Korean military does not face any domestic legal restrictions on dispatching its fighting forces and troops to foreign lands. Korea was quick to offer such support, just as it had offered support during the Vietnam War and the Gulf War.

Korea has participated in UN peacekeeping missions, including in the Balkans and in East Timor. Currently a lieutenant general of the ROK Army is the commander of the UN peacekeeping mission on Cyprus. As a medium-size country whose national development has only been a recent achievement, Korean willingness to participate in an international effort is an important expression of Korean national pride and global consciousness.

In the last two decades Korean companies won contracts for construction projects in the Middle East, building roads, bridges, apartment complexes, and dams. Some Korean contract laborers even converted to Islam. Korea's relations with the Middle East have been largely economic, but the war on terrorism provides an opportunity for Korea to demonstrate something beyond pure economic interest. By providing financial assistance to Afghanistan and by being a part of the international coalition, Korea gains a small place for itself in Middle Eastern affairs.

In addition to opportunities, the war on terrorism has presented Korea with difficult challenges. The most significant challenge is that President Bush's characterization of the DPRK as a member of the "axis of evil" conflicts with President Kim Dae-Jung's top agenda item, which is improving relations with the DPRK. Under President Kim's "Sunshine Policy," South Korea has relentlessly pursued multifaceted engagement with North Korea and encouraged Japan and the United States to do the same. President Bush's view of North Korea starkly challenges President Kim's: they cannot both be correct. If the North Korean regime is evil, it is not a deserving engagement partner. In the battle of viewpoints it seems that the United States has taken the lead. The South Korean people are tiring of their government's overly generous treatment of an ungrateful North Korean regime, and President Kim, who must relinquish the presidency at the end of 2002, has been tainted by corruption scandals and buffeted by very low approval ratings. Whoever the next South Korean president may be, he is unlikely to cast as much sunshine on North Korea as has President Kim.

In the year 2003 there is danger of a crisis on the Korean peninsula. The US-negotiated Agreed Framework of 1994, which calls for a freeze of North Korea's indigenous nuclear industry in return for the construction of two foreign-built light water reactors, has reached the stage at which North Korea should be opening its old nuclear installations to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). North Korea is stalling, and in fact at various times has insisted there is no need for any further inspections. The United States is the principal of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), with the ROK, Japan, and EU, among lesser others, as members of the executive board and the major financiers. North Korea's failure to accept international nuclear inspections closely parallel's Iraq's refusal of inspections. North Korea's clandestine uranium enrichment program also provides a close parallel to the Iraqi case. Nor should anyone dismiss the possibility that the Pyongyang regime has other hidden so North Korea is also suspected of having ties to international terrorism. North Korea could be suspected of supplying such groups with nuclear weapons or materials for the development of mass destruction. After the Bush administration's actions in Afghanistan, there is ample justification to turn its attention to North Korea.



A first step in pressuring North Korea to accept inspections might be for the United States to abrogate the nuclear agreement by ending annual oil shipments to North Korea and ordering a stop to KEDO construction of the nuclear reactors (the reactors are under US patent). North Korea would find it necessary to respond to this action, probably by restarting its old nuclear program. And the stage would be set for a confrontation, with time pressure on the Bush administration to stop North Korea before it could manufacture any more plutonium.

Since its surprising intercontinental missile test in August 1998, North Korea's missile program has received enormous international attention, especially from nervous Japan, over which the missile flew. During the visit of US Secretary of State Albright to Pyongyang in October 2000, North Korea's Chairman Kim hinted that his country would stop such missile tests. During the visit of a top EU delegation to Pyongyang, Kim volunteered that North Korea would honor a self-imposed missile testing moratorium until 2003. During a later visit by Japan's Prime Minister Koizumi, Kim suggested that the moratorium would be extended beyond 2003. One cannot be sure. If North Korea prepares to test another long-range missile, the Bush administration will have further reason to act.

South Koreans fear unilateral US pressure on DPRK will bring war to their country. Even such relatively minor American actions as dubbing North Korea a member of the axis of evil severely strains inter-Korean relations (North Korea stopped all contact with South Korea for several months after President Bush made the statement). Not surprisingly, the Bush statement was overwhelmingly unpopular in South Korea, where public opinion toward the United States took a decided turn for the worse. Somehow in the deep bed of nationalistic sentiment and psychology, most South Koreans felt as if they were being slighted and even insulted by President Bush. Thus the question of whether the ROK is with the United States in the war on terrorism is still an open question, ROK government support notwithstanding.

### **3. The ROK's View of Terrorism**

In the short span of time since 9/11, many countries, including friends and allies of the United States, have devoted a good deal of thought, both publicly and privately, to



the nature of terrorism and the strategies to cope with terrorism. Such a debate continues to take place in the ROK. Although it is difficult to get an accurate sense of the range of sentiments, which are volatile and constantly evolving, a tentative summary is worth offering. First, many South Koreans believe that the roots of terrorism are not only in militant Islamic groups, but also in what South Koreans view as American arrogance and desire for global political and economic hegemony. Second, many South Koreans believe that terrorism is ubiquitous (as already noted, South Koreans have often been the victims of terrorism). They believe that terrorism is triggered by a multitude of unresolved problems and conflicts and cannot effectively be addressed only by military action. Third, many South Koreans predict that in the absence of a truly cooperative international coalition, the US war on terrorism will be costly, time-consuming, and ultimately a failure. The trend in much South Korean thinking is that the Bush administration, while it is entirely justified in responding energetically to terrorism, is taking the wrong direction in its response.

#### **4. Net for ROK: A Real Dilemma**

Among the three Northeast Asian countries under consideration, the ROK has turned out to be the biggest loser, not from 9/11, but from the US response to 9/11. If the ROK joins the United States in its version of the war on terrorism, ROK support will make North Korea angry and China nervous. Perhaps even Japan will worry about ROK military participation in a counterterrorist action, because ROK participation will highlight Japan's failure to take comparable military action. If the ROK declines to actively assist the United States, the US-ROK alliance will be strained.

To date, the war on terrorism has not pushed Koreans to the point where they must make the tough decisions. Nonetheless, such a dilemma is being actively discussed in Korea, and the discussions will likely grow more intense as the United States draws closer to a war against Iraq. Koreans do not have any particular feeling toward Iraq, although Korea buys much of its oil from the Middle East. However, the “axis of evil” phrase constantly reminds them of the fact that the United States has linked Iraq and North Korea. For the ROK leadership and people, the 9/11 terrorist attacks ultimately produced a dilemma that they had not anticipated.

## **C. Japan's Response to War on Terrorism**

### **1. The Japanese Contribution to the War**

The prompt and comprehensive support from Japan to assist the United States has been quite remarkable given the fact that Japan's SDF faces severe constitutional restrictions on its war-fighting activities. Not counting the support initially provided after 9/11, as of mid-summer 2002 Japan had provided a total of 170,000 kiloliters of fuel to American and British forces, at an estimated cost of \$53 million. The Japan Defense Agency (JDA) Air Force helped fly US forces to Afghanistan and central Asia, making at least 58 flights by mid-summer 2002. In addition, mail shipment to the troops was handled by Japan. Japan provided no direct support troops in Afghanistan because the Japanese Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Laws, approved by the Diet in 2001, do not authorize the Japanese government to give such support, and the Japanese constitution (largely written and imposed by General MacArthur's staff after the Japanese surrender in World War II) forbids Japan from engaging in military activities except in self-defense.

Japan's non-military support to the Afghanistan region has been impressive. Japan sent \$102 million worth of relief supplies to Afghan refugees via UNHCR, including 1,840 tents and 18,000 blankets. Another \$40 million was given to Pakistan in assistance and another \$260 million in grant aid. In short, whereas the United States has made political and military arrangements to work closely with Pakistan, Japan has addressed the financial burden that the war on terrorism has imposed on that country. For the central Asian republics who are providing base rights and access to Afghanistan, Japan sent \$8 million to Uzbekistan and \$10 million to Tajikistan. Japan donated \$1 million to the UN Afghanistan Interim Authority Fund. Last but not least, Japan hosted the aforementioned international conference for the Afghanistan Reconstruction Fund and pledged \$500 million to the fund.

### **2. Opportunities and Challenges for Japan**

Japan saw 9/11 as an opportunity to stand up and support the United States, which is the most important nation for Japan's economy and national security. It was a time to show Japan's unflinching support for its only ally. It was also a time for Japan to make

up for the mistake of contributing only money to the Gulf War coalition. Japan put up an incredible war fund by donating \$13 billion for the allied campaign in the Gulf War, yet the government of Kuwait did not list Japan as a benefactor in its full-page thank you ad in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* after Iraq was defeated by the US-led coalition. In Japan, the national humiliation was not quickly forgotten. After 9/11, Japan promptly passed its Anti-Terrorism Special Measure Laws to make it legal to dispatch JDA ships and airplanes (but not troops) to assist the United States in its fight against the terrorists and their supporters.

The war on terrorism also provided Japan with a unique opportunity to reopen its domestic debate over Japan's international military role and peace constitution, although this debate can just as easily be viewed as a challenge. Japan's refusal to engage in any military action other than direct self-defense is unlikely to change in the absence of strong foreign pressure or threatening events. Since the passage of the new Defense Guidelines in 1997 (implemented in 1999), Japan has discussed the proper national role to play in an international crisis or regional conflict. Many Japanese security professionals and scholars have argued that Japan should promote an open debate on this question. But such a debate did not materialize in 1997. The US response to 9/11 served as a wake-up call for Japan. What should Japan do if the United States requests Japanese military support?

One of the clear challenges to Japan will be the financial burden imposed by the war on terrorism, straining an economy that has been stagnant for years. Another challenge will be to figure out the best way to increase Japan's military readiness and participation in foreign campaigns without alarming Japan's neighbors. Both China and Korea are strongly opposed to Japanese military modernization or overseas activities, with many arguing that a substantial segment of the Japanese people have never renounced Japanese national superiority, even 50 years after Japan's defeat in World War II. These people still believe that in the war Japan was fighting a defensive battle rather than aggressing against its neighbors. On the other hand, faced with a war on terrorism, most Japanese feel they cannot disappoint the United States, which has underwritten their strategic defense for the last half century. The new Defense Guidelines clearly outline

that Japan's self-defense role is no longer simply limited to protecting the Japanese islands.

### **3. A Closer Look at Japan's Participation in the War on Terrorism**

Japan is the most important US ally in Asia and one of the most important allies globally. However, Japan's contributions to the war on terrorism have not so far been viewed entirely favorably by Japan scholars in the United States. As a matter of fact, two very different schools of thought have emerged. One viewpoint is that Japan is engaging in a "double-hedging" strategy. The originators of this idea are Richard Samuels and Eric Heginbotham of MIT.<sup>7</sup>

The idea goes something like this: (1) Japan is supporting the war on terrorism to preserve the alliance, which is one hedge; (2) But Japan is moderating its support in order not to jeopardize its trade and investment in China, the Middle East, Central Asia, and South Asia, thus constituting another hedge. According to this view, Japanese pacifism and the Japanese "peace constitution" do not in fact act as serious constraints on Japan's fuller participation in the war.

Another viewpoint is that with its tentative participation in the war, Japan is beginning to transform itself into a "normal" country in terms of defense and security affairs. The best articulation of this position can be found in a recent report by a team of researchers at the Asia-Pacific Security Studies center in Honolulu. The report makes several interpretations: (1) The war on terrorism was a wake-up call for Japan; (2) Japan has finally shaken off its post-war pacifism; (3) Japan's participation in the war on terrorism is a first step toward becoming a "normal" (military) power; and (4) Japan may choose new directions with a "strategic vision" toward the future, although it is unlikely that these new directions will be pursued hastily.<sup>8</sup>

Among Japan specialists, Mike Mochizuki and Steve Vogel tend to support this position, although with some differences. Mochizuki has argued that Japan's thinking is

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7 Eric Heginbotham and Richard J. Samuels, "Japan's Dual Hedge," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 5 (September/October 2002), pp. 110-121.

8 John Miller et al., "Japan Crosses the Rubicon?" *Asia-Pacific Security Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (January 2002), entire issue.

evolving in the direction of a clearer understanding of the tasks that need to be undertaken to become a normal country, and that one such task is to revise the constitution. Vogel suggests in a recent book that the Japan-US security relationship will enter a more fluid and uncertain era because Japanese defense policies will be formulated more independently of American defense policies.<sup>9</sup>

The double-hedging theory may well be correct in emphasizing the importance of the economy for Japan's national interest. As an island trading nation, Japan is forced to rely on foreign trade and foreign resources for its survival. The Japanese value their business relationships out of necessity. It may be, however, that the double-hedging theory too lightly regards Japan's pacifism and almost religious adherence to its peace constitution. Japan's pacifism will not easily be discarded. Japan's experience as the world's only victim of nuclear weapons is still strongly present in the minds of many Japanese. Most Japanese are firm in their desire to avoid war, both as aggressors and as victims. Having pondered the nature of war and defeat very deeply, many Japanese realize that wars are easily started but that the consequences of wars, for both aggressors and the victims, are difficult to control.

The "normal country" view may be closer to the truth. Like most Americans, the Japanese have believed that the United States is a safe haven securely separated from the violence that touches many parts world. The events of 9/11 were a wake-up call for the Japanese, as they were for Americans, because the events demonstrated that terrorism can reach even the world's greatest superpower, who happens to be the strategic guardian of Japan's security. Japan and the United States have a mutual defense treaty providing for mutual assistance in response to aggression. The Japanese did not feel that they could be bystanders to the terrorist threat after 9/11. But Japanese society and institutions are slow to change. A recent poll suggests that even after 9/11 the majority of the Japanese people do not want to change their peace constitution.<sup>10</sup>

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9 Steven K. Vogel, "Introduction," pages 1-8 in the author's edited book, *US-Japan Relations in a Changing World*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2002.

10 Japanese ministry of foreign affairs Poll on National Security, Defense Emergency, and PKO, Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 12, 2002.

#### **4. Net for Japan: Much Like the ROK's Dilemma**

If Vogel and Mochizuki are correct, Japan is facing a dilemma similar to that of the ROK. Support for the war on terrorism requires “militarizing,” which will anger Japan’s neighbors. Declining to support the United States will strain US-Japan relations. If the war continues for a long time and includes a large-scale invasion of Iraq or other “rogue states,” the dilemma will become even sharper for Japan. Not surprisingly, Japan, like most other countries, has called for a UN-sanctioned approach to Iraq. In the most recent UN General Assembly, September 2002, Japan’s Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi called for Iraq to accept inspections in order to avoid a war situation.

### **VI. THE NEXT BATTLE IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM: IRAQ**

#### **A. Why Asians Fear US Hegemony**

US hegemony before 9/11 was accepted as benign by all but those countries most hostile to the United States. US hegemony after 9/11 is much more widely seen as a threat. Asians fear US hegemony, because they do not want to become tools of US foreign policy, especially a wartime policy. The Bush team’s lack of transparency is especially worrisome. And probably all of the Asian states, including China, fear the regional consequences if the war is taken to Iraq, because that would seem to introduce the strong possibility of a war against North Korea, which would, in turn, possibly destabilize Northeast Asia.

A post-9/11 survey (in which the author participated) of foreign diplomats, scholars, and policy makers in a wide variety of countries confirmed that most of them and their countries stood behind the United States in its war on terrorism in terms of pursuing al Qaeda. However, many argued that the coalition should not be a temporary or situational tool to be used at the discretion of the United States, but instead should become a broad-based cooperative effort that would not only defeat terrorism, but promote international cooperation on other issues.

## **B. The Iraq Scenario and Its Potential Impact on East Asia**

### **1. Economic Impact**

The Middle East is a major energy supplier and important market for East Asia. Japan relies heavily on Middle Eastern oil, and its economy will be badly damaged by a protracted war in the Middle East. Instability in the Middle East, even short of war, could slow economic growth in China, the ROK, and Taiwan. The Middle East is the largest customer for ROK and Japanese construction companies, and thousands of Chinese workers and technicians live in the region. Most of the East Asian economies have only recently recovered (in some cases are still recovering) from the financial crisis of 1997, and war or serious instability in the Middle East could tip their economies back into crisis.

### **2. Political Impact**

Toward the Middle East, most East Asian countries have followed the policies of separation of business from politics (which often means business *before* politics) and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states. These policies reflect the critical importance that foreign trade and investment have for the survival and growth of the Asian economies. One of China's most important foreign policy principles is non-interference in other state's domestic politics. Japan has consistently practiced *seikei bunri* [separation of economics from politics] in its contemporary diplomacy, cultivating good commercial relationships as an integral part of its bilateral relationships. The Republic of Korea, whose foreign ministry has taken the title of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT), also places a high value on cultivating good commercial relationships. In all these countries, economic considerations provide a serious constraint against going to war with Iraq.

Most people see Saddam Hussein as only one of many despicable rulers. This is an ironical but critical point. East Asian peoples have themselves often suffered from despicable dictators, and even today China and North Korea are dictatorships, whereas South Korea has only in the last 15 years emerged from virtual dictatorship. Saddam Hussein can be eliminated, but what about other leaders? Why not them as well, or instead? Will they be next on the Bush administration's list, especially if they are

suspected of developing or acquiring or selling weapons of mass destruction? Or could it be, wonder many Asians, that oil is a very important but unstated factor in the American calculus to eliminate Saddam Hussein?

Most specifically, East Asia fears the next target after a successful Iraq campaign would be North Korea. Most people probably agree that on most dimensions of badness, North Korea's Kim Jong-Il is the equal of Saddam Hussein, if not worse. But to ward off danger, the Kim regime has been actively cultivating relationships with all of its neighbors. North Korea's relations with China and Russia appear to be quite firm. Relations with South Korea have their ups and downs, but most South Koreans are convinced that North Korea is slowly moving in the direction of reconciliation. Most recently, North Korea has been seeking to restart normalization talks with Japan, and as long as the talks continue, the two countries have a tenuous working relationship. All of these neighboring countries, much as they dislike or even fear North Korea, would oppose a US attack on North Korea.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS

If the United States extends its war on terrorism to Iraq, it appears that China will not support the war; instead, it might even reduce its cooperation with the United States across the board. It seems unlikely that South Korea would send troops to the Iraqi theater or provide non-combat military support. It is difficult to tell which way Japan would go. But for all these countries, the strong preference is to take an incremental approach, working through the United Nations to uncover and dismantle Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. This cautious attitude does not mean that these countries consider the Iraqi regime to be a proper or even legitimate government. Nonetheless, centuries-old pragmatism promotes caution in all three Northeast Asian states.

In a recent meeting, Japan's Foreign Minister emphasized again Japan's three basic foreign policy principles of dialogue, engagement, and international cooperation.<sup>11</sup> During the discussion session that followed her speech, Minister Kawaguchi replied to a question regarding Japan's position on a US war against Iraq by saying that (1) Iraq must

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11 "Common Challenges: US and Japan, Current Japanese View." Speech by Minister of Foreign Affairs Yoriko Kawaguchi, September 16, 2002, CSIS, Washington, DC.



comply with all UN resolutions; (2) Iraq must accept immediate and unconditional UN inspections; (3) Japan is talking to Iraqi leaders to persuade Iraq to accept these inspections; and (5) Japan's Middle East policy is to actively engage Middle Eastern governments through dialogue. Minister Kawaguchi added that Japan has already donated \$1.7 billion to Jordan to stabilize its economy.

The ROK is particularly averse to near-term conflict in the Middle East because the ROK presidential election will be held in December 2002, and in the run-up to the election domestic politics is all anyone wants to think about. Although the outcomes of ROK elections are hard to predict, the current front runner is the main opposition party's candidate, Lee Hoi-Chang, who favors continuing the security alliance with the United States but wants a more independent ROK defense. By no means is he a pro-US politician, at least compared with most past Korean presidents. Lee will likely take a somewhat tougher line toward North Korea than did President Kim, but like almost all South Koreans, Lee favors some form of engagement rather than the confrontation that seems to be the choice (or at least the style) of the Bush administration.

As for the immediate future, Northeast Asian leaders seem to expect that the Bush administration has decided irrevocably to launch an attack on Iraq, even without foreign cooperation. They expect that the United States will request that Japan and the ROK provide logistical and non-combat support as a way of honoring their mutual defense treaty obligations with the United States. But as suggested above, it is quite possible that Japan and the ROK will offer only modest support for a US campaign against Iraq: words rather than guns or war funds. Both governments are likely to begin a reassessment of the costs of being US allies. At this point the best the United States can do is to make stronger efforts to consult with (rather than cajole or advise) its Asian allies on the subject of how the war on terrorism (and on Iraq) should be pursued. But the Bush administration has by now probably earned such a reputation for secrecy and unilateralism that efforts to convince its allies that the United States is willing to work closely with a coalition are likely to fail.

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14. ABSTRACT The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States have the potential to profoundly alter the nature of US relations with its allies and non-allies alike. This report offers an initial assessment of views of East Asian governments and peoples on the ongoing anti-terrorism campaign. China will likely become only a nominal partner with the United States in the war on terrorism, calculating its best interests every step of the way. The ROK and Japan are caught in a dilemma. If the ROK joins the United States in the American version of the war on terrorism, ROK support will make North Korea angry and China nervous. If the ROK declines to actively assist the United States, the US-ROK alliance will be strained. Japanese support for the war on terrorism requires "militarizing," which will anger Japan's neighbors. If the United States extends the war on terrorism to Iraq, it appears that China will not actively support the war, and probably neither Japan nor South Korea will send troops to the Iraqi theater. The strong preference of all Northeast Asian states is for the United States to work through the United Nations.					
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