

SPECIAL REPORT

AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY IN EAST ASIA: DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL

By

Clinton H. Whitehurst, Jr.

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AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY IN EAST ASIA: DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL

One might legitimately wonder where American foreign policy would have historically been focused had North America been settled by Asians and our manifest destiny driven by a west to east expansion rather than the other way around.

America's ties to Europe, both cultural and economic, are centuries old. With only a few breaks in continuity, our foreign policy has been European driven. The two major conflicts of the 20th century began in Europe and ultimately involved the United States. With the single exception of Japan in World War II, for over 300 years America's major allies and most ardent foes were European. But what was a truism is no longer true. As the United States approaches the 21st century, its greatest opportunities and challenges are no longer in Europe but rather in East and Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, old habits and mind-sets die hard.

The Europeans

Whether the colonization of North America was first undertaken by the Vikings or Spaniards is of little consequence—both were European, as were the English, French, Dutch and Russians that followed. These European countries and cultures gave us our law, language, religion, and ethics. The establishment of the United States as an independent country in the late 18th century did not break, or even weaken trans-Atlantic ties. In fact, independence gave rise to stronger economic links as trade between North America and Europe expanded.

As the 19th century progressed, the United States extended its borders, in some instances doubling the nation's size by stroke of a pen. The nation, however, still lacked sufficient investment capital and people to settle and develop its new acquisitions. Europe supplied both. And while the latter part of the century saw an American territorial presence in the Pacific—the acquisition of Alaska, Hawaii, the Philippines, and Guam, the addition of these new territories had little impact on America's cultural and political orientation toward Europe. European immigration, which began as a trickle at the beginning of the 19th century, reached tidal proportions in the early 20th century. Immigrants from Italy, Ireland, Great Britain, Germany, central Europe, and Scandinavia contributed heavily to this influx. At this point in American history, it was eminently logical that the Statue of Liberty be in New York and not San Francisco.

American Interests in the Pacific, 1820-1941

American interest in the Pacific roughly dates from the end of the War of 1812 when a few adventurous shipmasters saw the possibilities of profit in cargoes such as spices and tea. In the 1820s New England whalers sought their prey as far afield as waters off the Japanese home islands. Trade with China gradually opened up following its defeat by the British in the 1840-42 "Opium War". Over the next half century, major European powers, as well as the United States, were granted trade concessions by the Chinese, but hardly by choice on the part of China. In 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry, primarily by intimidation, opened Japan to trade with the western world. In 1854, a treaty with Japan formalized the concession.

To protect American commercial interests in the Far East, American warships routinely called at Asiatic ports. In fact, a Pacific Squadron had existed on paper since 1825 but its capabilities hardly matched its name. In point of fact, the United States did not become a power in East Asia until the defeat of the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay in 1898 and the acquisition of the Philippine Islands.

However, with the participation of American forces in an expedition to rescue European and American nationals besieged in Peking (as a consequence of the Boxer Rebellion of 1900), the United States did

become a player, if not a major player in the region.(1) But it was a presence with small means to backup any policy initiatives that might be put forth. The Asiatic (Pacific) Squadron which became the Asiatic Fleet in 1902, was still a fleet of some 20 ships, half of which were gunboats or their rough equivalent.

The opening lines of an 1899 poem by Rudyard Kipling (after the United States acquired the Philippines), began:

Take up the White Man's burden—
Send forth the best you breed—
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need; (2)

While Kipling viewed a United States presence in Asia as a thankless obligation to bring western civilization, that is, European culture, to that part of the world, it was more the possibilities of trade and commerce that interested the American business community, not the acquisition of real estate. One of several reasons cited for America's undertaking to build the Panama Canal was to further Pacific Ocean commerce. The opening of the canal in 1914 did, in fact, greatly facilitate trade between the United States East coast and the Far East, though in the beginning most traffic was inter-coastal in origin.

A view different than that of Kipling with regard to the America's role in Asia was put forth by the United States-also in 1899. The American policy toward a disintegrating China as stated by then Secretary of State, John Hay, was that (a) the United States had no territorial interest in China, and (b) that all Chinese trading ports be open to all nations on equal terms. The statement became known as America's "Open Door" policy. However, no major American diplomatic or military initiative was undertaken in support of the policy and for all intent and purpose it was ignored by the major European powers. The exception was Great Britain, which for its own purposes, supported the declaration.

While China's entry into World War I on the allied side, gave it some relief from "extraterritorial" acquisitions by western nations and a better bargaining position at the peace table, it now had a new threat to contend with-an Imperial Japan. In 1895 Japan had acquired Taiwan (Formosa) after a short, but decisive war with the Manchu Dynasty. Ten years later in the 1904-05 Russo-Japanese War, Japan was again victorious. Her reward for entering World War I on the Allied side were German holdings in China and Germany's Pacific islands which were occupied under a League of Nations mandate but ultimately were fortified as naval and military bases. There could be little doubt that Japan, in the space of 50 years, had become a major world power.

While World War I barely touched East Asia and the Pacific region with only a few bits and pieces of empire changing hands as between victor and vanquished, the beginning of the takeover of the Japanese government by extreme militarists in 1926 (the Showa Restoration) deserved far more attention in Washington than it received. Even a cursory analysis of the circumstances behind the takeover should have given fair warning of things to come. And while Japan's unprovoked, barbaric invasion of China in 1937 evoked an outpouring of American sympathy and identified Japan as a possible future enemy, East Asia still received but a fraction of American collective diplomatic and military attention. Only when the American gunboat U.S.S. Panay was bombed and sunk by Japanese warplanes on the Yangtze River in 1937, did events in East Asia get the undivided attention of the American State Department. However, following a profuse Japanese apology and a reparations payment, all returned to normal in Washington, normal being a preoccupation with Europe.

A growing trans-Pacific trade, discussions to move the Philippines toward independence, escalation of Japan's brutal, undeclared war against China, and a continuing Japanese military buildup, could not compete with events in Europe. More important to Americans was the abdication of Edward VIII from the British throne, the rise of Hitler and Mussolini in Germany and Italy, the Spanish civil war, the acquiescence of Great Britain and France in the expansionist policies of Germany in a vain search for peace in our time, the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, the collapse of the League of Nations, and the valiant

resistance of tiny Finland as it fought off invasion by the Soviet Union. These and other events in Europe were the newsmakers in the run-up to World War II.

In summary, America's 120 year presence in the Western Pacific (1820-1941) was one in which the first one hundred years were a time of feeling one's way--no major policy successes, unless one counts Commodore Perry's forcible opening of Japan to world trade and Admiral Dewey's victory over the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay, but then no major failures. It was a time for learning for those willing to learn.

From 1920 onward, there were few, if any, successes and one major failure--the complete misreading of Japan's intentions in the Pacific. Or put another way, misinterpreting or ignoring the warning flags along the way. Only in 1941 when Japan officially put forth its conditions for peace in the Pacific, did the region get the undivided attention of diplomats in Washington. By 1941, however, it was too late.

The Road to War: Japan 1922-1941

- 1922 Japan signs Nine Power Treaty guaranteeing China's sovereignty.
- 1926 The Showa Restoration. Militarists become dominant force in Japan's government. The authority of Emperor Hirohito who succeeded his father Emperor Yashihito, is enhanced by militarists. Civilian influence on government policy is curbed. In 1930s, militarists consolidate influence by attacking/ assassinating business and government leaders deemed hostile to military agenda.
- 1931 Japan begins an undeclared and successful two month war against Manchuria. Vassal state of Manchukuo is created. League of Nations criticizes Manchuria takeover; Japan withdraws from League
- 1937 Japan begins undeclared war against China. Large parts of China conquered. Japanese atrocities in China (Rape of Nanking) get world attention but no action.
- Japanese aircraft attack and sink U.S.S. Panay. United States accepts apology and reparations.
- 1938 United States begins embargo on shipment of strategic materials to Japan. e.g., oil.
- U.S. Navy's "Orange" war plans (conflict with Japan postulated) assumes a surprise attack by Japan preceded by a period of strained relations.
- 1939 World War II begins in Europe. Japan occupies Hainan Island and gains control over access to Tonkin Gulf in South China Sea.
- 1940 U.S. attention focused on defeat of France by Germany, Battle of Britain, and beginning of the Battle of the Atlantic.
- Japan continues its conquest of large areas of China but is unable to unconditionally defeat Chinese forces led by Chiang Kai Shek.
- 1941 Japan and Soviet Union sign neutrality pact. Japan's northern flank "diplomatically" secured.
- Japan forces Vichy France to accept a joint Japanese-French protectorate over French Indo China.

Japan announces its long run goal-creation of a "Greater East Asia CoProsperity Sphere." Concept generally interpreted to mean that Japan would be the dominant power in East Asia and the Western Pacific.

Warnings about Japan's hostile intentions toward the United States, Great Britain and Netherlands East Indies are repeatedly sent to Washington by U.S. ambassador to Japan, Joseph Grew and other diplomatic outposts.

Japan lays out its basis for negotiating a peace in East Asia and the Western Pacific.(3)

1. United States and other powers to discontinue military and economic aid to China, end anti-Japanese propaganda and withdraw military missions from China.
2. Leave China completely free to deal with Japan, thereby ending hostilities and establishing economic collaboration with China.
3. Advise China to make peace.
4. Acknowledge Japan's co-prosperity sphere and Japan's leadership in the Western Pacific, thereby leaving Manchuria, China, Indo China, Thailand, the Netherlands East Indies and other states or protectorates to establish their own political and economic relations with Japan.
5. United States to recognize Manchukuo.
6. Unconditional and immediate unfreezing of Japan's and China's assets in the United States, Britain and Dutch East Indies.
7. Restore trade between Japan and the United States.

October: General Hideki Tojo becomes Japan's Prime Minister replacing Prince Konoye.

November: Discussions with Japanese diplomats continue in Washington. Japanese navy task force sets sail for attack on Pearl Harbour.

American Interest in the Pacific, 1945-72

The Japanese attack on Hawaii and the Philippines in 1941 forever guaranteed a paramount American interest in Asia and the Pacific Ocean territories. With the surrender of Japan in 1945, the United States was not only a world power, but the predominant power in East Asia. But now it had to deal with a part of the world whose culture, ethics, religion, law and politics were understood by relatively few in Washington, a lack of understanding which was to later exact a high price in lives and national treasure. When all is said, United States' foreign policy in East Asia in the post World War II period can be characterized by some successes but mostly failures. Why?

Argued here is that in dealing with Asia, we treated the region as if it were another Europe, that is, if the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) proved a shield to Soviet (communist) encroachments in Europe, a Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) should work as well in Asia. If the Truman Doctrine kept Greece and Turkey in the western camp, why not a line delineating American interests in Asia, one that said in effect-hands off Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines. The Korean War was the price paid for a failed "Truman Doctrine," the Vietnam War for a failed SEATO.

The loss of China to the communists (1945-49) is another matter. It can, in part, be explained by the Truman Administration's insistence that continued American aid to Chiang Kai Shek's government depended upon his accepting and imposing western ethical and political standards on a war-torn, devastated country. The implied demands included an immediate lifting of martial law, that is, implementing the Chinese Constitution of Sun Yat Sen, ending corruption in general, replacing inefficient/ineffectual administrators, removing military commanders with poor won-loss records, and above all demonstrating that American assistance translate into success on the battlefield and instant democracy in the countryside. It proved too much to ask of a government that had fought both the communists and Japanese since 1937 and was now fighting a well disciplined and equipped communist army backed by the Soviet Union-not a peasant army led by agrarian reformers as official Washington was prone to believe.(4)

Major American successes in East Asia in the post World II period included the rebuilding of the Japanese economy and a restructuring of its political system, the granting of independence to the Philippines, and an American aid program which gave the Republic of China on Taiwan a solid base on which to become a world class economic power. On balance, however, defeat, generally rationalized as anything but defeat, was the more often outcome.

The Great Game

In the lonely passes and blazing deserts of Central Asia, a deadly struggle took place in the last century between secret agents of the two superpowers-Victorian Britain and Tsarist Russia. One of the most gripping episodes in imperial history, it is known as the Great Game. Today, following the sudden collapse of Russia's mighty empire, its often violent repercussions are once again rocking the headlines, giving rise to what political analysts are already calling the new Great Game.(5)

Argued here is that the geographic boundaries of the new "Great Game" not only include Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, Trukmenistan, Pakistan, and Tibet, but also the People's Republic of China, Japan, the United States, and Russia. In other words, the area in play is not just Central Asia but the lands and peoples stretching eastward from Central Asia all the way to the Pacific Ocean. The two contending superpowers are the United States and the People's Republic of China.

The present day Great Game could reasonably be dated from almost any time after the end of World War II In this paper it will date from the meeting between President Richard Nixon of the United States and Premier Chou En-Lai of the People's Republic of China on February 27, 1972.

The communique at the end of the meeting, jointly issued by President Nixon and Premier Chou En-Lai made the following points.

- * Progress toward the normalization of relations between China and the United States is in the interest of both countries.
- * Both countries wish to reduce the danger of international conflict.
- * Neither country should seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region and each is opposed to the efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such hegemony.
- * Both countries agree that it would be against the interest of the peoples of the world for any major country to collude with another against other countries, or for the major countries to divide up the world into spheres of influence.

While signing off on the above statements, the People's Republic of China reaffirmed its position with respect to the Republic of China on Taiwan.(6)

The Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government of China; Taiwan is a province of China which has long been returned to the motherland; the liberation of Taiwan is China's internal affair in which no other country has the right to interfere; and all U.S. forces and military installations must be withdrawn from Taiwan.

The United States' response:

The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves.

One old China hand, Edgar Snow, was of the opinion that the United States gave up more than it got. He commented that "Vassal kings of the past brought tributes to Peking, but never before the head of the world's most powerful state."(7)

In 1979, the United States formally recognized the People's Republic of China and gave a one year notice of its intent to end its Mutual Security Treaty with the Republic of China on Taiwan. Formal recognition was replaced by an informal, non-governmental entity referred to as the American Institute on Taiwan. It was a nonprofit corporation incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia. (8)

Fourteen years later, commenting on the pre-conditions put forth by the People's Republic of China as the price for establishing diplomatic relations, former Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger, argued that cutting formal ties with the Republic of China was unnecessary. He said:

No one can quarrel with the idea of our improving what was a non-existent relationship with one of the largest countries on earth. But we paid an unnecessarily heavy price: We did not have to give in to the PRC's demand that we so weaken our ties with Taiwan. Many in Congress agreed, and the Taiwan Relations Act passed later, was an attempt to define how we could keep on speaking to Taiwan even though we had formally recognized the PRC and its claim to be the only China.

Both officials and the people of Taiwan are very kindly disposed to the U.S. and desire a closer and warmer relationship. We have a great deal to lose if we do not abandon our outmoded and artificial restraints on our relations with the ROC. (9)

To understand the moves and counter moves of the opposing sides in the 20th century Great Game, a good beginning would be to chronologically review recent policies and actions of the major players, primarily the United States, the People's Republic of China, and the Democratic People's Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam), but also not ignore the role of the supporting actors—the Soviet Union, Japan, and the Republic of China on Taiwan. Then as now it is a high stakes game with the winner not yet determined.

Policies and Actions of the People's Republic of China

1950-1979

- 1950 People's Republic of China enters Korean War on the side of North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) against United Nations forces supporting South Korea (Republic of Korea) PRC forces in Korea numbered 300,000. General Assembly brands PRC as aggressor. U.S. battle deaths 34,000; wounded 103,000.
- 1959 People's Republic of China launches all out offensive against then autonomous region of Tibet. Dalai Lama flees to India. International Commission of Jurists accuses PRC of practicing genocide in Tibet and the slaughter of 65,000 Tibetans.
- People's Republic of China claims 40,000 square miles of India's territory. Border clashes in Kashmir. In October border clash 7 Indian troops killed, 10 taken prisoner.
- Beginning of Soviet Union-PRC split over doctrine and border boundaries.
- 1962 People's Republic of China launches full scale offensive against India border positions.
- 1964 People's Republic of China becomes nuclear power.
- PRC supports Pakistan against India in Kashmir dispute.
- 1965 People's Republic of China declares full support for North Vietnam in its aggression against South Vietnam. As war continues, PRC allows Soviet supplies to North Vietnam to use mainland China land routes.
- PRC backs coup against Government of Indonesia (September 30-October 1) Coup fails.
- 1967 Armed border clashes with India.
- 1969 Six border clashes (March-August) with Soviet Union. Ussuri River clash was a major engagement.
- 1976 Mao Zedong dies and is succeeded by Deng Xiaoping who launches a program of economic reform.
- 1971 President Richard Nixon of the United States visits People's Republic of China in first step to normalize relations. At conclusion of their meetings PRC reiterates support for North Vietnam.
- 1978 Border clashes with Vietnam.
- 1979 United States diplomatically recognizes People's Republic of China.

1979-1997

- 1979 People's Republic of China invades Vietnam in response to Vietnam invasion of PRC ally Cambodia. Estimated 20,000 casualties on each side.
- 1982 Great Britain and PRC reach agreement on transfer of Hong Kong and New Territories to PRC in 1997.
- 1987 Portugal agrees to turn over Macao to PRC in 1999.
- PRC troop buildup on India border after India grants state status to Aruchachal Pradesh. Aruchachal Pradesh is part of area claimed by People's Republic of China.
- 1988 PRC becomes major or supplier of arms to Mid East countries.
- PRC naval units fire on three Vietnam freighters supplying Vietnam forces on one of the Spratley Islands. Spratley Islands claimed in part by Mainland China, Vietnam, Republic of China on Taiwan, Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei. All but Brunei have garrisons on one or more islands.
- 1989 PRC army units fire on demonstrators in Peking's Tiananmen Square. Casualties unknown but estimated in the thousands. Thousands of other demonstrators are imprisoned.
- PRC forces fire on demonstrators in Tibet in three days of anti-Chinese riots. Tibetan sources claim 60 killed, hundreds wounded.
- People's Republic of China cracks down on religious groups after Tiananmen Square. Fines and imprisonments imposed for religious activities outside state controlled church.
- 1990 PRC continues to arm Khmer Rouge, one of factions seeking to govern Cambodia.
- 1992 Mao Tse-tung returns to favor in Mainland China.
- National People's Congress in Peking asserts PRC's claim over all of Spratley and Parcel Islands.
- PRC continues arms sales and export of nuclear technology to Mid East countries.
- PRC explodes nuclear device with power equivalent to one million tons of TNT; 50 times more powerful than typical tests of Western nuclear powers.
- PRC claims all three Mogul regions (Russian Republic of Buriyatia, independent Mongolia, and inner Mongolia which is a part of the People's Republic of China).
- A PRC State Security Bureau paper accuses the United States, unspecified western powers, and the Dalai Lama of colluding with separatists whose long-term goal is to unify the three Mongolias into an independent state.
- Arrests, surveillance, and questioning of suspect individuals in inner Mongolia by PRC state security agents began in May 1991 according to Asia Watch.

U.S. Congress accuses PRC of using prison labor for exports to the United States.

1993 PRC police use tear gas to quell the largest protests in Tibet since 1989.

Great Britain and PRC clash over electoral reforms as Hong Kong prepares for legislative elections. Reforms include greater public participation in elections. PRC threatens to cancel any electoral reforms in 1997 and to cancel any contracts signed in Hong Kong prior to 1997.

PRC continues as a major arms supplier to Burma.

PRC conducts nuclear test in October 1993 after PRC is rejected as site for Olympic Games 2000.

1994 In a U.S. Naval War College game programmed for the year 2010, the PRC defeated the U.S. Seventh Fleet by using land and sea based cruise missiles to attack and sink surface combatants, including aircraft carriers.

PRC concludes fleet exercise involving 50+ ships, including submarines. A PRC nuclear submarine shadows U.S. battle group in Yellow Sea. PRC protests U.S. defensive measures taken against such surveillance and warns U.S. that an attack on U.S. ships could not be ruled out. The People's Republic of China has the world's largest navy-1 100+ ships manned and supported by 260,000 uniformed personnel, but no aircraft carriers.

1994-97 PRC presses hard for Most Favored Nation (MFN) treatment with respect to exports to the United States. President Clinton delinks PRC human rights record from economic engagement-supports granting MFN status.

PRC continues buildup of armed forces, including eight to ten billion dollar purchases from Russia. Military budget increased in real terms (1988-95) by 50 percent. Priority is missile upgrading.(10)

PRC continues to insist on its right to use force to bring the Republic of China on Taiwan under PRC control.

PRC continues sale of military equipment (including missiles) to nominal U.S. enemies, e.g., Iran and Libya.

1995 PRC test fires six DF-15 missiles. Target area is north of Taiwan.

PRC begins talks with Philippines on future of Spratley Islands

1996 PRC launches four DF-15/M 9 short range ballistic missiles (350 mile range) in target areas near Taiwan ports of Keelung and Kaohsiung. There is general agreement that the firings were meant to influence (intimidate) Taiwan's presidential elections. China's DF-21 missile has a range of 1100+ miles but lacks accurate guidance systems. With a guidance system in place and deployed, PRC could hit most U.S. forces deployed in East Asia.

Two U.S. carriers, with escorts, are positioned near Taiwan as a warning to PRC that the United States has a commitment to insure Taiwan's security. PRC warns U.S. not to send ships into Taiwan Strait. Carriers are withdrawn.

PRC and Burma sign military agreement that includes arm sales and training of Burma military officers.

Chinese Defense Minister Chi Haotian defends action of cracking down on student demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in 1989. Reiterates that PRC has not ruled out use of force to reunify Taiwan with the mainland.

PRC threatens to enforce its claims on Diaoyu Islands. These uninhabited islands are located in East China Sea and are claimed by PRC, Japan and Taiwan. Threat to Japan tempered by on-going negotiations for Japanese loans to China.

PRC continues to assert its claim to majority of Spratley Islands in South China Sea.

China replaces Hong Kong's elected legislature with an appointed one. The PRC argues the existing legislature came into being (was elected) without its consent.

The "appointed" legislature will take office when the PRC assumes control of Hong Kong in July 1997. The British position is that the present legislature was elected under rules agreed to between Great Britain and China in 1984 when Britain agreed to end its colonial rule.

1997 U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence believes that PRC has given go ahead for construction of two 48,000 ton aircraft carriers (40 aircraft) by the year 2005. Other sources note that PRC is interested in buying an existing carrier from either France or Russia

Unconfirmed but reliable source reports sale of Russian destroyers to PRC. Ships are of the most advanced design and carry state of the art anti-aircraft and anti-ship missiles.

Deng Xiaoping, "paramount leader" of the Peoples' Republic of China dies. PRC president, Jiang Zemin, consolidates his position as Chinese Party Chief. Jiang affirms the importance of economic development, but also considers promoting "spiritual civilization" as defined Marx, Lenin, Chairman Mao, and Deng Xiaoping. Jiang stresses that the party must stand firm with respect to building socialism with Chinese characteristics. Cultural activities must serve the nation. The media must support the Communist Party.

Tung Chee-hwa, the PRC's named Hong Kong Chief Executive when territory reverts to PRC control, said that Hong Kong press will operate under same restraints as mainland press, i.e., no criticism of PRC government or government officials.

For the seventh straight year the 53 member nation Human Rights Commission of the UN failed to rebuke China on its human rights record. For the first time the Western nations were divided on the issue. France, Italy, Germany and Spain (Airbus Consortium Partners) did not co-sponsor the condemning resolution. Australia, Canada, and Japan withheld their support arguing that dialogue rather than criticism was the best means to get China to improve its human rights record.

The Road to War: Korea 1927-1950

- 1927 Chinese communists demand pre-eminence in China's government.
- 1927-37 Struggle between Nationalist government of China (Chiang Kai Shek) and Communists.
- 1937 Japan attacks China in undeclared war.
- 1942 Financial aid to China authorized by United States. (\$500 million credit)
- 1944 General Joseph Stilwell's criticism of Chiang Kai Shek forces his recall by President Roosevelt. General Albert Wedemeyer named to command of the China Theater of War.
- General Patrick Hurley sent to China as U.S. ambassador. Mission is to bring Communists and Nationalists into a common front against Japan.
- 1944-45 Negotiations between Nationalists and Communists continue. However, fighting between the two forces also continues.
- 1945 Soviet Union and China sign treaty of Friendship and Alliance based on Yalta agreements. Soviet Union recognizes authority of Chiang Kai Shek's government.
- Japanese occupied Korea divided into North and South Korea along 38th parallel. Korea lost independence to Japan in 1910.
- November 1945. Ambassador to China, Patrick J. Hurley resigns. John Leighton Stuart appointed Ambassador to China. See Appendix B for excerpts of Hurley letter of resignation.
- 1945-46 General George C. Marshall's Mission to China. Purpose was to bring Communists and Nationalists together in a peaceful settlement wherein Communists would be a part of China's government.
- 1947 General Marshall leaves China-becomes Secretary of State.
- President Truman sends Lt. General Albert C. Wedemeyer on fact finding mission to China and KOREA (emphasis supplied) Communists vehemently oppose Wedemeyer mission.
- Wedemeyer's Report to President Truman. See Appendix C for excerpts.
- 1948 Gallup Poll, April 28, 1948. Question? Do you approve or disapprove of the United States giving the Chiang Kai Shek (Nationalist) Government more military supplies, goods, and money? Approve 55%, Disapprove 32%, No Opinion 13%.
- General elections held in South Korea-constitutional government approved. Syngman Rhee elected president. Rhee generally at odds with South Korea's National Assembly.
- 1948-50 Communist subversion in South Korea intensifies-supported by North Korea and Soviet Union.
- Rhee government orders arrest and confinement of some Assembly members, opposition press curbed, judicial branch of government purged.

1949 Chiang Kai Shek retires as President of Republic of China. Communists occupy Shanghai. Seat of ROC government moved to Canton. Nationalists retreat to Taiwan. Chiang Kai Shek establishes ROC government on the island.

Directive from President Truman to Secretary of State Dean Acheson that a "White Paper" be compiled explaining U.S. policy toward Nationalist China, during the period 1944-49. The directive called for the report to be completely objective.

The report was based entirely on State Department documents. When the White Paper was issued in August 1949, Republicans and critics of Truman-Acheson policies toward Nationalist China called it a "whitewash" and "cover-up" full of omissions and distortions. A New York Times editorial said "This inquest on China is not the work of a serene and detached coroner but of a vitally interested party to the catastrophe." See Appendix D for excerpts from the White Paper and the Letter of Transmittal that accompanied the report.

American occupation forces withdrawn from Korea. A 500 man Military Advisory Group remains.

1950 January 1950. President Truman and Secretary of State Acheson publicly state that the United States will not provide military aid and or advice to Chinese forces on Taiwan. They noted that Taiwan had little strategic value to the United States and lies outside of our first line of defense in the Western Pacific. Republican criticism of Truman-Acheson policies reaches new high.

June 1950. North Korea invades South Korea. President Truman instructs Seventh Fleet to protect Taiwan, that is, the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Republic of China offers three divisions to fight in Korea. General MacArthur declines on advice of General Joseph Stilwell. Stilwell argues that ROC army poorly led and not worth the trouble of transporting three divisions to Korea.

The Road to War: Vietnam 1961-65

1961 Communist insurgency increases against South Vietnam government. Great Britain asks Soviet Union as a co-chairman of the 1954 Geneva Conference which partitioned Vietnam into North and South Vietnam to appeal to North Vietnam government to end subversive activities in the south. Lack of effective border control allows communists to operate from Laos and Cambodia.

U.S. training mission in Vietnam numbers 700. The United States considers invoking SEATO's commitment to defend South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. European SEATO partners are lukewarm or oppose SEATO intervention.

Ngo Dinh Diem elected to second term as South Vietnam president. From 1954 to 1961 over \$2 billion spent on military and economic aid to South Vietnam.

1962 U.S. committed to defense of South Vietnam against North Vietnam sponsored Viet Cong insurgency. Military Assistance Command (MAQ established. More than 10,000 U.S. troops in South Vietnam.

1963 President Kennedy suggests that a change in South Vietnam's policies might

stabilize internal situation.

Buddhists demand right to fly their religious flags and insist on property rights similar to those granted Catholic Church and an end to government favoritism toward Catholics. Government responds by arresting key Buddhist leaders. A number of self immolations (self burnings) by Buddhists receive world attention. Students protest attacks on Buddhists.

President Ngo Dinh Diem overthrown by military leaders. Rationale for the overthrow: (1) government suppression of Buddhists, students, and other non communist groups; (2) to forestall a plan by Diem government to make a deal with communist insurgents.

1964 General Nguyen Khanh leads a bloodless coup and replaces military junta that replaced Diem government.

U.S. agrees to consider neutralization of South Vietnam if Viet Cong ends insurgency and the People's Republic of China and North Vietnam end support of Viet Cong.

Alleged (unprovoked) North Vietnam~attacks on U.S. destroyers Maddox and C. Turner Joy prompt U.S. air strikes against North Vietnam naval installations.

1965 National Front For Liberation of South Vietnam (Viet Cong political arm) announces its intent for a peaceful reunification of Vietnam.

Estimates that 20,000 hard core Viet Cong guerrillas plus thousands of local cadre are operating in South Vietnam.

March 1965. U.S. air strikes against North Vietnam. June 1965. U.S. ground forces in offensive action against guerrillas. U.S. attacks bases in Laos, authorizes pursuit into Cambodia.

In 1975 the U.S. policy of containment of communism in East Asia and the Western Pacific, for all intent and purpose, came to an end. On April 20, 1975 President Thieu of South Vietnam resigned and bitterly condemned the United States for failing to honor its commitment to intervene militarily if North Vietnam violated the 1973 peace accords. President Nixon had promised such intervention but was prohibited from acting without prior congressional approval. On April 30, 1975, South Vietnam surrendered unconditionally to the Democratic People's Republic of Vietnam.

South Vietnam casualties in the 15 year war against communist North Vietnam were estimated at 740,000 killed or wounded.

Subic Bay: 1947-1992

1947 The United States and Philippines sign Military Bases Agreement. Primary U.S. installations were a naval base at Subic Bay and Clark Air Force Base on Luzon.

1987 Surveys indicate 60 percent of Filipinos favor retention of the bases. U.S. military spends \$350 million annually in the Philippines. The Rand Corporation estimates a multiplier effect of 2.6 which amounts to \$1 billion a year. The Makati Business Club and the Management Association of the Philippines consider a fair compensation for the bases to be \$1.23 billion annually based on the commercial opportunity cost of the bases.(11)

- 1989 Exploratory talks begin between the United States and Philippines to renew leases on Subic Bay and Clark Air Force Base which are due to expire in September 1991. Any new agreement would have to be ratified by the Philippine Senate with a two thirds vote in favor of a treaty.
- Political arguments against extension are (1) violation of Philippine sovereignty, and (2) that the "nuclear free" provision in the Philippine Constitution is continually violated by U.S. ships and aircraft.
- Nineteen nations, including the United States, agree to pledge \$3.5 billion for Philippine economic assistance. The United States and Philippines reschedule \$362 million of Philippine debt.
- U.S. military assists in putting down a military inspired coup attempt against Philippine president Corazon Aquino.
- 1990 Disagreement surfaces over how much money is owed under present lease agreements. U.S. position was that it would not increase "rental payments" even if it meant a withdrawal of American forces from the Philippines. Negotiations over new leases continue. President Aquino goes on record in favor of an "ordered withdrawal" of American forces.
- 1991 Mt. Pinatubo erupts rendering Clark Air Force Base unusable-the 11,000 acre base is evacuated. The Philippine Senate defeats a proposed treaty to extend the lease on Subic Bay. The Senate, however, did agree to a three year phase-out period.
- 1992 The United States turns over Subic Bay to Philippine government-withdraws 12,000 personnel from the base. In a face saving agreement, the United States and Philippines agree that the U.S. would be able to use Philippine military installations for exercises and training.
- The decision to give up the bases is, in part, rationalized by Congressional cutbacks in the defense budget, that is, the need to prioritize defense commitments given less available monies.

American Foreign Aid in the Immediate Post World War II Period

One measure of America's global interests in the immediate post war period was the financial assistance earmarked for various regions of the world in the form of loans, credits and grants. In the economic sense, these monies would be considered inputs. The results of these investments, that is, what we got for our money, would be considered outputs. In this paper only considered are Western Europe and East Asia. Table 1 summarizes this data.

TABLE I
GRANTS AND CREDITS IN THE IMMEDIATE POST
WORLD WAR II PERIOD
1946-55 (a,b)

Western Europe	
Total: \$33.06 billion	
Selected Countries	
France	\$8.66 billion
United Kingdom	7.45
Germany	3.88
Italy	3.85
Greece	2.02
Belgium/Luxembourg	1.57
Yugoslavia	1.35
Turkey	1.29(c)
East Asia	
Total: \$9.68 billion	
Selected Countries	
Japan	\$3.26 billion
South Korea	1.42(d)
Taiwan (ROC)	1.27(e)
Philippines	1.03
Indonesia	.25
Vietnam	.24
Thailand	.19

- (a) U.S. Bureau of Census, Statistical Abstract of the U.S. 1996 (116th ed.) Washington, D.C., 1996.
- (b) Note that Marshall Plan inaugurated with \$5 billion initial appropriation in 1948. Congress authorized \$15.5 billion for period 1948-52.
- (c) Turkey included in Western Europe since Greece and Turkey together were specifically targeted for assistance by President Truman in 1946 with an initial grant of \$400 million.
- (d) Note that period 1946-55 includes period of Korean War 1950-53.
- (e) Taiwan figure includes period of 1946-49 when ROC government was based in Mainland China.

Table 2 lists grants and credits to the Republic of China.

TABLE 2

**U.S. GRANTS AND CREDITS TO THE
REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

1937-45 (VJ Day)	\$1.51.billion
1945-49	2.00
1951-68	1.48
Total	\$4.99 billion

Source: The China White Paper, p. 1042.
Excludes sales of military and civilian property to Nationalist China after VJ Day and assistance given through the United Nations. Includes military purchases made under the China Aid Act of 1948.

Source for 1951-68 data is Republic of China, Taiwan Statistical Data Book 1993, Table 12-1.

As was the case in prosecuting World War II, the emphasis in the immediate post war period was Europe first, East Asia and the Pacific second. Most observers would probably argue that the emphasis on Western Europe was correct. The period 1946-55 not only marked the beginning of the Cold War but its escalation and the attendant communist threat to Western Europe's security. Containing this threat was the underlying reason for the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

It does not follow, however, that a communist China was not an equally important long run threat to America's interests in East Asia and worldwide. In 1945 China was still the most populous nation on earth with a potential to be what it actually has become. In the words of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew, Not just another big player, but the biggest player in the history of man."

The disparity in assistance to Nationalist China and Western Europe would have been even greater had not the Republican Party taken control of Congress in the 1946 elections. Of the two major American political parties, the Republican Party was the more supportive of Nationalist China. It was also much further along in recognizing communist influence in the American State Department and seeing such influence as detrimental to American interests not only in Europe but East Asia as well. The political result was that aid to Europe in the 1946-48 period was often tied to aid for China. e.g. The China Aid Act of 1948. With the election of President Truman and the return of Democratic control of Congress, this brief window of opportunity closed.

The above summarizes American economic and military aid to selected countries/regions of the world. Table 3 summarizes the results in East Asia, i.e., what we got for our money.

TABLE 3

RESULTS OF AMERICAN POLICY AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN EAST ASIA, 1945-1997

-
- * The Korean War (Korean Conflict), 1950-53. The human cost to the United States: 34,000 battle deaths, 103,000 wounded. A monetary cost of \$164 billion which includes veteran benefits and estimated interest payments on war loans. Fifty four billion (\$54 billion) was for essentially military expenditures (12)
 - * The Vietnam War, 1965-73. The human cost to the United States was 47,000 battle deaths, 153,000 wounded. The monetary cost was \$352 billion (1965-70) of which \$110 billion was for essentially military expenditures. From 1971-73, the military cost was estimated at \$52 billion. After 15 August 1973 all U.S. combat activities in Vietnam ended. In FY 1973 \$2.27 billion was appropriated for Vietnam assistance; FY 1974, \$ 1. 10 billion; FY 1975, \$700 million.
 - * A Japan that is one of the world's economic superpowers, but a nation unsure of whether it wants to be a major military power. A nation whose security largely depends on a United States presence on its territory but a presence which is increasingly resented.
 - * A Republic of China on Taiwan that is a major economic and military power in East Asia and one of the few democratic (by American standards) countries in the region. A nation with long standing ties to the United States but a country with many reasons to question whether American military power would be used to guarantee its security should the People's Republic of China use military force to reunite Taiwan with the mainland.
 - * A South Korea (Republic of Korea) facing a hostile North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea); a North Korea with a military capability to conquer South Korea absent American military intervention.
 - * A Republic of the Philippines that has effectively cut its military link to the United States with the return of the former American naval base at Subic Bay to Philippine jurisdiction. A nation which hopes it is still under the American military umbrella, i.e., can count on the 1951 and 1983 Mutual Defense Treaties but one that is hedging its bet by developing closer economic and political ties with the People's Republic of China.
 - * A People's Republic of China that can best be understood by reviewing the section above "Policies and Actions of the People's Republic of China: 1950-79 and 1979-97."
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Some Observations

In the 21st century America's challenges and opportunities will be in East Asia, not Europe. Nonetheless, American policy makers continue to focus attention on Europe. e.g. the expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe and the American peacekeeping role in Bosnia, while for all intent and purpose, ignoring the emergence of the People's Republic of China as a regional, if not, world superpower-a superpower of some 1.3 billion people, governed by a communist party of less than 50 million members whose hierarchy exercises dictatorial powers matching, if not exceeding, those of Nazi Germany.

Beginning with President Nixon's 1972 China visit, U.S. policy has been to turn the other cheek when confronted with PRC- directed massacres such as those **at Tiananmen Square** (1989) and Tibet (1989). And hardly considered was the brutality and carnage left by policies and programs of Chinese leaders, in particular Chairman Mao Tse-tung, General Chu-Teh and Premier Chou En-lai, in the 1950s and 60s-The Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution, the Hundred Flowers Campaign, and the atrocities of the

Red Guards. Authoritative estimates of those killed in this period range between one and five million. No less than PRC apologist, President Richard Nixon, estimated the slaughter to be in the millions.

The communique issued at the conclusion of the 1972 meeting between President Nixon and China's Premier, Chou En-Lai explicitly stated that "neither country (the United States or the People's Republic of China) should seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region and that each is opposed to the efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such hegemony."

However, even a cursory review of PRC policies and actions since 1950 can only lead to the conclusion that such a hegemony was begun a long time ago and continues to the present day. The hegemony process was further encouraged, if indeed any was needed, by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the American withdrawal from the Philippines.

One might legitimately wonder where American foreign policy historically would have been focused had North America been settled by Asians and our manifest destiny driven by a west to east expansion rather the other way round.

President Clinton's constructive engagement policy has the support of some very important political and economic "heavy hitters." Included are major U.S. Corporations such as General Motors, Boeing, General Electric and United Technologies. Nominally pro-business organizations such as the CATO Institute, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Heritage Foundation, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce are also supporters of constructive engagement. Both groups seem to have forgotten a long ago observation attributed to Lenin--"We will let the capitalists supply the rope by which we will later hang them." (13)

Present day American political leaders should acknowledge our policy failures in East Asia as failures but also learn from them.

*A good beginning would be to acknowledge our failed attempt to avert a conflict with Japan while at the same time protecting American national interests in the region. By 1941 it was too late. But was it too late in the 1920s and 'thirties? Could we have not better read Japan's intentions-the Showa Restoration, the fortification of League of Nations mandated islands, Japan's 1937 invasion of China and the attack on the American gunboat "Panay" in that same year. If the Roosevelt administration had acted as decisively in the Far East in support of China as it did in support of Britain after the fall of France in 1940, could war have been averted?

*A second failure was our China policy in the immediate post World War II period. Could a military intervention on the side of the Chinese Nationalists in 1947 or even as late as mid 1948, have averted a Communist victory. Many respected observers believed it likely. Weighed against such an undertaking, however, was an **American State Department** honey-combed with communist sympathizers, if not card carrying communists.

Would the Soviet Union have been as adventures and threatening to the West had China been openly in the Western camp? Would North Korea have attacked South Korea? Would North Vietnam attacked the South?

Much criticism has been directed at Chiang Kai Shek and his post World War II government. The unanswered question is still-how could an individual characterized as so thoroughly corrupt and inept in 1945-49 later be so successful in laying the foundation for one of the few American success stories in East Asia-the emergence of the Republic of China on Taiwan as a world economic power and a major regional military power. Chiang Kai Shek died on April 5, 1975.

In 1952 Taiwan's per capita GNP was approximately \$196.00. In 1995 per capita GDP was \$13,235. In the same year the People's Republic of China per capita GDP was \$2,660.

In 1996, the Republic of China installed its first democratically elected president, one of the few elected presidents in Asia.

*A third failure was our policy in Vietnam. While our intervention on the side of South Vietnam was well intended, policy decisions made in the execution of the ten year conflict cannot be defended. Support for this assertion can be found by the number of articles and books written (in their own defense) by the architects of the policy and those whose responsibility it was to implement the policy. Simply stated, it is finger pointing on a grand scale. "Not me but they." The price of this failure fell on those men and women who gave their lives, and those who fought well but were later pilloried and castigated for events beyond their control.

*A fourth failure was the Korean War or "Police Action" as labeled by those responsible for the conflict. The architects of the East Asian policy which led to the conflict were the same as those who argued against further assistance for the Nationalist Chinese in the late 1940s. Some have argued that the outcome of the war was a victory for the United States-that South Korea was saved from communism and that UN intervention discouraged communist aggressive behavior. A fair question in response would be-was there less aggressive behavior on the part of the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and North Korea after 1953? Missiles to Cuba? Afghanistan? Tibet? Vietnam? Angola? And finally, American bribes to encourage North Korea not to develop nuclear weapons.

*There are undoubtedly individuals in American public life that are capable of devising a United States policy for East Asia into the 21st century. The past produced such people-General Douglas MacArthur, General Albert Wedemeyer, General Patrick Hurley, General Claire Chennault, Ambassador Joseph Grew, and Admiral Louis Denfeld, to name but some. Who and where are their successors? It is interesting to note that our military leaders, on balance, have a better understanding of East Asia's culture and politics than diplomats. (14)

*In 1997, the American State Department can be characterized as "hard on easy issues" such as condemning PRC human rights violations, but "easy on hard issues" such as failing to recommend unconditional support for the Republic of China on Taiwan should mainland China take military action against the island.

*Removing an American military presence from the Philippines, that is, giving up the Subic Bay Naval Base, is probably the least cost effective American policy decision of the 1990s. National pride and honor was a major factor in the failure to extend the lease on Subic Bay. The high visibility rationale was that the United States would not be blackmailed into paying an exorbitant price for continued base rights. Exorbitant in what context? Contrast the long run cost for the United States in expanding NATO into Eastern Europe where no threat exists, to the cost of keeping Subic Bay in a part of the world where real threats exist.

In 1992 (when the Subic Bay lease ended) an oft cited argument for abandoning the base was that in a downsized military other defense expenditures had a higher priority. In 1997, the cost of a NATO expansion is considered a necessary expenditure even though knowledgeable observers put the cost at 2 to 3 times greater than the \$200 million annual cost put forth by the Clinton Administration.

The Great Game Continues

In the 19th century the stakes in the Great Game were which nation(s) would be the dominant power(s) in Central Asia. In 1997, the stakes have increased. It is now which power or powers will dominate Asia-from Central Asia to the Western Pacific Ocean. The People's Republic of China has made it abundantly clear that it reserves this role for itself. In 1945, the United States was the unquestioned great power in the region. Some 50+ years later this is no longer true. In 1997, the major players in the game are the People's Republic of China, Japan, Russia, and the United States. Interested spectators include all

of the nations of East Asia, in particular the Republic of China on Taiwan. In terms of regional military power, absent nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, the major power in the region is the People's Republic of China-and its power is growing.

This paper has reviewed America's successes and failures in East Asia. Were the such a review to be made with respect to the People's Republic of China, the record would be one of almost continued success. If this contention be challenged, then it is incumbent on the critic to document PRC failures, diplomatic or military.(15)

While time is short, the game is still in play. Together, the United States, Japan and Russia in 1997 are actually and potentially stronger (economic and militarily) than the People's Republic of China. The question is how to effectively use this strength to convince China's leaders that its interests are best served by cooperation rather than confrontation. Two options are now on the table. The first is President Clinton's constructive engagement policy. It is supported in the hope, and it is only a hope, that free markets will eventually translate into free men and that a free society win favor cooperation rather than confrontation.

The second option relies on taking a page from "what might have been " history. What might have been had Great Britain and France faced up to Hitler in 1937? Or what might have been if the United States had militarily intervened in China's civil war in 1947-48? Or what might have been had the United States in the post World War II era given East Asia as much time and effort as it gave to Europe? Would a firm stand, including military assistance, in support of China in 1937 averted war in the Pacific? What might have been had the United States fought a declared war in Korea and Vietnam instead of a police action and a limited conflict.(16) All of this points to a single conclusion and one generally true throughout history. A demonstrated willingness to use power as often as not makes the use of such power unnecessary.

In East Asia in 1997, the only possible counterweight to an ambitious and expansionist People's Republic of China is a mutual security pact between the United States, Russia and Japan. The pact would stress the goal of co-existence and cooperation rather than confrontation and conflict among the major powers of East Asia. The door would be completely open to the People's Republic of China should it wish to join. Such a mutual security pact, however, presupposes the Kurile Islands dispute between Russia and Japan is resolved and a peace treaty between them signed. The United States would be the logical nation to broker the agreement. (17) In support of such a pact, the United States for its part would seek to negotiate a naval presence in the Philippines. Not at Subic Bay and not the size of the old Subic Bay. But rather a base, that together with Guam and the Mariannas could support an expanded Seventh Fleet. The United States would strengthen the Seventh Fleet-ideally by two carrier groups but no less than one. Absent new builds, this would mean taking existing carriers from other fleets. But if this be the only option, so be it.

Getting the necessary pieces in place for a Russia, United States, Japan East Asia mutual security treaty would be a diplomatic undertaking of Herculean proportions. But the need for some type of NATO arrangement is clearly evident. In 1997, the Western Pacific is in political disarray.

Consider the following:

*A growing nationalism and pride in the PRC's accomplishments by a large cross section of the population, particularly among China's middle class and students. Not that long ago, this group would have been the hope for a peaceful transition to democracy. Now, like Hitler's middle class supporters, they are more and more concerned with China's 44place in the world," and less concerned with China's form of government and its policies.

On the other side of the Taiwan Strait, nationalism, i.e., support for an independent Taiwan is also growing. Less heard is support for bringing about democracy on the mainland. Time and expenditures are now spent on improving the quality of life in the Republic of China. And on the mainland, a growing nationalism can only encourage those political and military leaders who consider reunification of Taiwan and the mainland (by force if necessary) a matter of national pride.

*An uncertain Japan with respect to its role as a Pacific military power. Complicating the issue is a growing hostility toward American forces based in Japan, particularly on Okinawa.

Japan's military budget has increased substantially over the past five years, in part encouraged by the United States. There is no question that Japan has the technical capability of becoming a nuclear power should she so choose. As Japan becomes a military power and the PRC an economic power the question becomes-is there room for two East Asia superpowers given the plain fact that China has reserved for itself the role of being the single superpower in the region?

*The possibility of uniting the two Koreas into a single democratic Korea is as elusive as ever. American policy toward North Korea has been on a month to month basis, if not day by day. The recent bribe of nuclear technology in exchange for a promise by North Korea to forgo the development of nuclear weapons, and most recently the offer of food to bring some stability to a starving country, are cases in point.

Equally important is-How does the People's Republic of China view the situation on the Korean peninsula? One possibility is that an unpredictable North Korea keeps America otherwise occupied and less inclined to challenge the PRC on other issues. e.g., trade and Taiwan. Also a fair question is-would the PRC allow a united, democratic, militarily and economically strong Korea to exist on its northern border?

*The Republic of China on Taiwan is no small player in the Great Game. It is a regional and military economic power and one capable of giving a good account of itself in a conventional conflict with the People's Republic of China. Will the United States honor the intent and spirit of the Taiwan Relations Act and defend Taiwan should an attack occur? And if it opts to defend the island, is the military capability there to fight and win a local war in the Taiwan Strait? In the 1950s, the Seventh Fleet was the shield for Taiwan. In 1997, with its Philippine bases gone and the fleet downsized, does America have a credible capability in the region? Would American forces in Japan be a part of the equation? Not likely. Japan would insist on remaining neutral in such a conflict. Under the Japan-United States Mutual Security Treaty, Japan would have this option.

General of the Army, Douglas MacArthur's words of some 46 years ago are as appropriate in 1997 as they were then. "I have strongly recommended in the past as a matter of military urgency that under no circumstances must Formosa fall under communist rule." (18)

*The issue of who owns the various atolls and islands in the South China Sea as well as island groups north of Taiwan, remains a potentially explosive issue. The islands/atolls (The Parcel and Spratley and groups) are claimed by the People's Republic of China, the Republic of China, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Brunei. Armed clashes between Vietnam and the PRC have already occurred. The Senkaku (Tiaoyutai) group is claimed by Japan, the PRC, and the Republic of China

*The continued possibility of border clashes between PRC forces and those of Russia, India and Vietnam. Like the disputed islands, armed clashes along all three borders have taken place.

*It was proposed above that the United States take the lead in creating a mutual security pact as between Russia, Japan and the United States with an open invitation for the People's Republic of China to join. But what if the PRC acts first and offers a mutual security arrangement to Russia, India or both? One that

for the moment guarantees their present borders but leaves the PRC free to deal with the United States over the Taiwan issue.

*The People's Republic of China reneged on its promise to allow Hong Kong a certain measure of democratic government when it took over the administration of the former British colony on July 1, 1997. The American response was to boycott the takeover ceremonies, that is, the Secretary of State declined to attend. The response was a case of being "hard on easy issues."

*The People's Republic of China present and long run problem on what to do with a population exceeding 1.2 billion and growing. Not only is geographic area important (lebensraum) but also access to resources. At some point in the future, the PRC is going to look North just as Americans looked West in the 19th century. When that time comes it will be a case of two nuclear powers confronting one another. Should conflict come, it may well herald the beginning of World War III-a war not begun in Europe but in East Asia. And not that far down the road is India and Indonesia with the same over population problem. Russian Siberia is not an option-but Australia, an American ally, is (an option).

*The problem of how to give some hope (and freedom) to the people of Tibet is as vexing as ever. The conquest of Tibet was one of the PRC's first successes in the Great Game.

Conclusion

East Asia and to some extent all of Asia is desperately in need of America's undivided attention. It is not getting it. Rather, America's role as the leader of an expanded NATO is the front burner policy issue in 1997. Never mind that there is no threat to American security in Europe. Never mind that a NATO, absent American participation, has the military and economic capacity to stabilize Europe, if indeed, such stabilization is needed. And never mind that one of the most powerful interest groups favoring an expanded NATO, howbeit a mostly invisible group, is the NATO bureaucracy, a bureaucracy as much driven by personal interests as national interests.

There are no easy solutions to the problems of East Asia. What must be done is to recognize the region's crucial importance to America's long term national security and immediately assign the region the priority it deserves. Rudyard Kipling had a way of cutting through complex issues as demonstrated in the last two lines of his poem "East and West." (19)

"But there is neither East nor West, Border,
nor Breed, nor Birth,

When two strong men stand face to face,
though they come from the ends of the
earth!"

There is no question that the People's Republic of China is represented by strong men who know what they want and are prepared to take risks in furtherance of their goals. The problem is-there are no counterparts in the United States, or for that matter, in the West. As history shows, war is never far off when one strong man with wide ranging ambitions stands alone and unchallenged.

FOOTNOTES

- (1) One American-and European--export to East Asia which occasionally had some high transactions costs was the protection of Christian missionaries in China. The Boxer Rebellion of 1900 is probably the best example of how high these costs could become. Of the 18,000 man multi-national force sent to relieve the siege at Peking, 2,500 were Americans.

- (2) Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden (The United States and the Philippine Islands)" The Definitive Edition of Rudyard Kipling Verse (London: Hodder Stoughton, 1940), p. 323.
- (3) Cecil Brown, Suez to Singapore (New York: Random House, 1942), p. 243.
- (4) Among Chiang Kai Shek's detractors was American General Joseph Stilwell. In a 1944 report to the Army Chief of Staff, Stilwell said "Chiang Kai Shek has no intention of making further efforts to prosecute the war Chiang Kai Shek believes he can go on milking the United States for money and munitions by using the old gag about quitting if he is not supported. He has no intention of instituting any real democratic regime or of forming a united front with the communists" (Quoted in: The China White Paper, August 1949) p. 68.
- (5) Peter Hopkirk, The Great Game (New York: Kodansha International, 1992) p. 123. Lieutenant Arthur Conolly of the 6th Bengal Native Light Cavalry is credited with coining the phrase "The Great Game."
- (6) U.S.-People's Republic of China communiqué issued at conclusion of meeting between President Richard Nixon and Premier Chou En-Lai, February 27, 1972.
- (7) Quoted in: Ta Jen Lui, A History of Sino-American Diplomatic Relations 1840-1974 (Taipei, R.O.C.: China Academy, 1978), p. 515.
- (8) An abstract of the Taiwan Relations Act (Public Law 96-8-April 10, 1979) is found in Appendix A.
- (9) Casper Weinberger, "Taiwan's Rosy Future," Forbes (October 28, 1991), p. 33.
- (10) In 1994, Singapore's leader, Lee Kuan Yew, said that China will soon force a restructuring of the world's balance of power. It is not possible to pretend that this is just another big player. This is the biggest player in the history of man. Quoted in: U.S. News and World Report, March 3, 1997, p. 76.
- (11) Enrique Esteban, "The Philippine Economy Toward the Year 2000" Pacific Security Toward the Year 2000, ed. Dora Alves (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press) 1988, pp. 204-05.
- (12) Department of Commerce, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the U.S.: Colonial Times to 1970, Part 2, p. 1140.
- (13) Add Former Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, as a strong supporter of President Clinton's constructive engagement policy. He is also a strong supporter of a NATO expansion. Kissinger's support for a constructive engagement policy toward the PRC is understandable given his role in setting up President Nixon's visit to China in 1972.
- (14) It is worth remembering that wars usually occur when diplomacy fails. When conflicts are avoided, and at the same time America's national interests and values not compromised, diplomats can rightly claim credit. This, however, is a difficult task at best.

Irving Kistol gives an insightful commentary on what drives American foreign policy in a short paper titled "A Post-Wilsonian Foreign Policy." (American Enterprise Institute, August 1996). While the entire paper is well worth reading, a particular part, not entirely in context, is cited here.

"What can fairly be called the Wilsonian impulse dominates our State Department and such influential post-World War I organizations as the Council on Foreign Relations. Indeed, practically

a privately financed membership organizations devoted exclusively to foreign policy are Wilsonian. There are not many of them and their memberships may not be large, but they do attract former foreign-affairs officers, often high and distinguished officials, who are presumed to speak with some authority and who get a disproportionate amount of respectful media coverage A casual reference to the Wilsonian vision as "utopian" rarely provokes vigorous dissent. But the past weighs heavily on American diplomacy, and the State Department does not find it easy to disengage itself from those old commitments to this vision."

- (15) It might be argued that the outcome of the Korean War was a Chinese failure. But before reaching that conclusion one must ask what was China's goal in entering the war later rather than sooner. The answer is quite simple-China did not want a hostile western power on her northern border. In this she succeeded. It should be noted that having weak or subservient nations on her borders is historic, very historic, Chinese policy.
- (16) Many observers point out that many of the nations supplying troops to the UN Command, primarily European countries led by Great Britain, were vehemently opposed to expanding the war in any way.
- (17) In 1905 (Treaty of Portsmouth, September 5, 1905) the United States brokered a peace agreement between Russia and Japan ending the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. The treaty extended Japan's influence in Korea. In 1910 Japan annexed Korea.
- (18) General Douglas MacArthur's address to a joint session of the U.S. Congress, April 19, 195 1.
- (19) Rudyard Kipling, "The Ballad of East and West" The Definitive Edition of Rudyard Kipling Verse, p. 234.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT (EXCERPTS)

April 10, 1979

[Abstract]

Public Law 96-8
96th Congress

To help maintain peace, security, and stability in the Western Pacific and to promote the foreign policy of the United States by authorizing the continuation of commercial, cultural, and other relations between the people of the United States and the people on Taiwan, and for other purposes.

Section 2

- (a) The president having terminated governmental relations between the United States and the governing authorities on Taiwan recognized by the United States as the Republic of China to January 1, 1979, the Congress finds that the enactment of this Act is necessary--
 - (1) to help maintain peace, security, and stability in the Western Pacific; and
 - (2) to promote the foreign policy of the United States by authorizing the continuation of commercial, cultural, and other relations between the people of the United States and the people on Taiwan.
- (b) It is the policy of the United States
 - (1) to preserve and promote extensive, close, and friendly commercial, cultural, and other relations between the people of the United States and the people on Taiwan, as well as the people on the China mainland and all other people of the Western Pacific area;
 - (2) to declare that peace and stability in the area are in the political, security and economic interests of the United States, and are matters of international concern;
 - (3) to make clear that the United States' decision to establish diplomatic relation with the People's Republic of China rests upon the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means;
 - (4) to consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including boycotts or embargoes, a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States;
 - (5) to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character; and
 - (6) to maintain the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan.

Section 3

- (a) In furtherance of the policy set forth in section 2 of this Act, the United States will make available to Taiwan such defense articles and defense services in such quantity as many be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self defense capability.

- (b) The President and the Congress shall determine the nature and quantity of such defense articles and services based solely upon their judgment of the needs of Taiwan, in accordance with procedures established by law. Such determination of Taiwan's defense needs shall include review by United States military authorities in connection with recommendations to the President and the Congress.
- (c) The President is directed to inform the Congress promptly of any threat to the security or the social or economic system of the people on Taiwan and any danger to the interests of the United States arising therefrom. The President and the Congress shall determine, in accordance with constitutional processes, appropriate action by the United States in response to any such danger.

Section 4

- (a) For all purposes, including actions in any court in the United States, the Congress approves the continuation in force of all treaties and other international agreements, including multilateral conventions, entered into by the United States and the governing authorities on Taiwan recognized by the United States as the Republic of China prior to January 1, 1979, and in force between them on December 31, 1978, unless and until terminated in accordance with law.
- (b) Nothing in this Act may be construed as a basis for supporting the exclusion or expulsion of Taiwan from continued membership in any international financial institution or any other international organization.

Section 6

- (a) Programs, transactions, and any other relations conducted or carried out by the President or any agency of the United States Government with respect to Taiwan shall, in the manner and to extent directed by the President, be conducted and carried out by or through
 - (1) The American Institute of Taiwan, a nonprofit corporation incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia, or
 - (2) such comparable successor nongovernmental entity as the President may designate.

Section 14

- (a) The Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, and other appropriate committees of the Congress shall monitor
 - (1) the implementation of the provisions of this Act;
 - (2) the operation and procedures of the Institute;
 - (3) the legal and technical aspects of the continuing relationship between the United States and Taiwan; and
 - (4) the implementation of the policies of the United States concerning security and cooperation in East Asia.
- (b) Such committees shall report, as appropriate, to their respective Houses on the results of their monitoring.

Section 15

- (1) the term "laws of the United States" includes any statute, rule, regulation, ordinance, order, or judicial rule of decision of the United States or any political subdivision thereof, and
- (2) the term "Taiwan" includes, as the context may require, the islands of Taiwan and the Pescadores, the people on those islands, corporations and other entities and associations created or organized under the laws applied on those islands, and the governing authorities on Taiwan recognized by the United States as the Republic of China prior to January 1, 1979, and any successor governing authorities (including political subdivisions, agencies, and instrumentalities thereof).

APPENDIX B

RESIGNATION LETTER OF AMBASSADOR TO CHINA, PATRICK J. HURLEY, TO PRESIDENT TRUMAN, NOVEMBER 26, 1945 (EXCERPTS)

(The China White Paper (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1949)

"The astonishing feature of our foreign policy is the wide discrepancy between our announced policies and our conduct of international relations. For instance, we began the war with the principles of the Atlantic Charter and democracy as our goal. Our associates in the war at that time gave eloquent lip service to the principles of democracy. We finished the war in the Far East furnishing lend-lease supplies and using all our reputation to undermine democracy and bolster imperialism and communism."(p. 58 1)

"I was assigned to China at a time when statesmen were openly predicting the collapse of the National Government of the Republic of China and the disintegration of the Chinese Army. I was directed by President Roosevelt to prevent the collapse of the Government and to keep the Chinese Army in the war.... The next in importance was the directive to harmonize the relations between the Chinese and American military establishments and between the American Embassy in Chungking and the Chinese Government.... While these objectives had the support of the President and Secretary of State it is no secret that the American policy in China did not have the support of all the career men in the State Department. The professional foreign service man sides with the Chinese Communist armed party and the imperialist bloc of nations whose policy it was to keep China divided against herself. Our professional diplomats continuously advised the Communists that my efforts in preventing the collapse of the National Government did not represent the policy of the United States. These same professionals openly advised the Communist armed party to decline unification of the Chinese Communist Army with the National Army unless the Chinese Communists were given control I requested the relief of the career men who were opposing the American policy in the Chinese Theater of War. These professional diplomats were returned to Washington and placed in the Chinese and Far Eastern Divisions of the State Department as my supervisors. Some of these same career men who I relieved have been assigned as advisors to the Supreme Commander in Asia."

(p.582)

"Our true position in China is misunderstood abroad because of this confusion of policy within our own Government. This situation suggests the need for a complete reorganization of our policy-making machinery beginning at the lower official levels."

(p.583.)

APPENDIX C

WEDEMEYER REPORT (EXCERPTS)

(Albert C. Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports* (New York: Holt & Co., 1958))

"Many of our military men who were in China during the war did not recognize the evolutionary processes of history and were not cognizant of the implications of the struggles between old order and the new in the Middle East and Far East and their direct effect upon the situation in China during World War II. General Stilwell was regarded as the leading expert on China in the War Department. Yet I found much evidence indicating that he, too, had failed to understand the complex political and psychological problems which were the result of China's past experiences at the hands of Westerners." (p. 305)

"Thus Hurley, in 1944-45, like Marshall after him, in 1945-46, approached the problem of unifying China on the false supposition that the Chinese Communists were not real Communists under Moscow's command but simply a Chinese faction that could be induced by diplomatic negotiations to come to terms with the Nationalist Government. Unlike Marshall, however, Hurley never wanted or tried to compel Chiang to share power with the Communists." (p. 307)

"On arrival in China in September 1944, Hurley found Chiang increasingly alarmed at the efforts being made by the State Department and by Stilwell to force him into an agreement with the Communists. Stilwell had gone so far as to tell his cronies that "the cure for China's troubles is the elimination of Chiang Kai Shek." (p.308)

And on September 16, ten days after Hurley's arrival in China, Stilwell had sent a note to T.V. Soong, who was then Foreign Minister saying that "if the Generalissimo did not meet the demands concerning his appointment to command all of the Chinese forces, he (Stilwell) would recommend that the United States withdraw from China and set up its Asiatic base in the territory of the Soviet Union." (pp. 308-09)

Confronted with the demand that the Civil Government as well as all Chinese armed forces and resources should be placed under Stilwell's orders, and the threat that if he refused the United States would withdraw its forces and cease all aid to China, the Generalissimo courteously and firmly stated, in substance as follows: Inform President Roosevelt that I cannot surrender my responsibilities as President of China. If he withdraws American forces and lend-lease, we will do the best we can with what we have. We will continue to fight even though we receive no aid from outside sources. Tell the President that I desire General Stilwell to be relieved from all duties and responsibilities in China." (p.309)

"Looking backward and *examining the* evidence, I realize today that I was too preoccupied with my military duties in attempting to stem Japan's last offensive in China to have time to evaluate fully the reports of my political officers-Davies, Service, Ludden, and Emerson. Their sympathy for the Chinese Communists is obvious in their reports and in their recommendations that we back the Communists instead of the Nationalist Government." (p. 312).

Wedemeyer's Report to President Truman on China and Korea, September 19, 1947

*Although the Chinese people are unanimous in their desire for peace at almost any cost, there seems to be no possibility of its realization under existing circumstances. On one side is the Kuomintang, whose reactionary leadership, repression and corruption have caused a loss of popular faith in the Government. On the other side, bound ideologically to the Soviet Union, are the Chinese Communists, whose eventual aim is admittedly a Communist state in China. (p.467)

*The Korean problem has been complicated by the Soviet establishment of a Communist regime in North Korea and by the machinations in South Korea of Communist groups, openly hostile to the United States. The terrorists activities of extreme rightists, who have strongly opposed trusteeship, have continually obstructed the efforts of the United States authorities. (A Moscow agreement of December 1945 called for the formation of a Provisional Korean Government to be followed by a Four Power Trusteeship over Korea) (p.473)

*Whereas American and Soviet forces engaged in occupation duties in South Korea and North Korea respectively are approximately equal, each comprising less than 50,000 troops, the Soviet equipped and trained North Korean People's Army of approximately 125,000 is vastly superior to the United States organized Constabulary of 16,000 Koreans equipped with Japanese small arms. The North Korean People's Army constitutes a potential military threat to South Korea, since there is strong possibility that the Soviets will withdraw their occupation forces, and thus induce our own withdrawal. (p.475)

*It is recommended that China be advised that the United States is favorably disposed to continue aid designed to protect China's territorial integrity and to facilitate her recovery, under agreements to be negotiated by representatives of the two governments with the following stipulations:

- (a) That China inform the United Nations promptly of her request to the United States for increased material and advisory assistance.
- (b) That China request the United Nations to take immediate action to bring about a cessation of hostilities in Manchuria and request that Manchuria be placed under a Five Power Guardianship or, failing that, under a Trusteeship in accordance with the United Nations Charter.
- (c) That China make effective use of her own resources in a program for economic reconstruction and initiate sound fiscal policies leading to reduction of budgetary deficits.
- (d) That China give continuing evidence that the urgently required political and military reforms are being implemented.
- (e) That China accept American advisors as responsible representatives of the United States Government in specified military and economic fields to assist China in utilizing United States aid in the manner for which it is intended. (p.478)

*It is recommended (a) That United States withdrawal from Korea be based upon agreements with the Soviet Union to effect proportional withdrawals, with as many guarantees as possible to safeguard Korean freedom and independence.(b) That military aid be furnished to South Korea which would support the achievement of such safeguards and which would envisage: Continuing to furnish arms and equipment to Korean National Police and Korean Coast Guard. The creation of an American-officered Korean Scout Force to replace the present Constabulary of sufficient strength to cope with the threat from the North. Continued interim occupation by United States Army forces in Korea. Advice in training of technical specialists and tactical units. (p.479)

APPENDIX D

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL TO PRESIDENT TRUMAN FROM SECRETARY OF STATE DEAN ACHESON WITH REFERENCE TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE CHINA WHITE PAPER, 1944-49 (EXCERPTS)

**(The China White Paper, 1944-49 (Stanford, CA:
Stanford University Press, 1949)**

"Representatives of our Government, military and civilian, who were sent to assist the Chinese in prosecuting the war soon discovered that, as indicated above, the long struggle had seriously weakened the Chinese Government not only militarily and economically, but also politically and in morale. The reports of United States military and diplomatic officers reveal a growing conviction through 1943 and 1944 that the Government and the Kuomintang had apparently lost the crusading spirit that won them the people's loyalty during the early years of the war. In the opinion of many observers they had sunk into corruption, into a scramble for place and power, and into reliance on the United States to win the war for them and to preserve their own domestic supremacy. The Government of China, of course, had always been a one-party rather than a democratic government in the Western sense. The stresses and strains of war were now rapidly weakening such liberal elements as it did possess and strengthening the grip of the reactionaries who were indistinguishable from the war lords of the past." (p. vii)

"The reasons for the failures of the Chinese National Government appear in some detail in the attached record. They do not stem from any inadequacy of American aid. Our military observers on the spot have reported that the Nationalist armies did not lose a single battle during the crucial year of 1948 through lack of arms or ammunition. The fact was that the decay which our observers had detected in Chungking early in the war had fatally sapped the powers of resistance of the Kuomintang. Its leaders had proved incapable of meeting the crisis confronting them, its troops had lost the will to fight, and its Government had lost popular support." (p.xiv)

"It has been urged that relatively small amounts of additional aid-military and economic-to the National Government would have enabled it to destroy communism in China. The most trustworthy military, economic, and political information available to our Government does not bear out this view."(p.xv)

"The unfortunate but inescapable fact is that the ominous result of the civil war in China was beyond the control of the government of the United States. Nothing that this country did or could have done within the reasonable limits of its capabilities could have changed that result; nothing that was left undone by this country has contributed to it." (p.xvi)

Author's note: The China White Paper was a report of over 1200 pages. The Letter of Transmittal by Dean Acheson was 6,000 words. Criticism of the Letter of Transmittal was, if anything, more vocal and acrimonious than the report itself.

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