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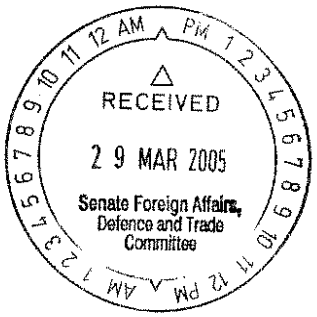


March 23, 2005

The Secretary
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee
Suite SG.57
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Email: fadt.sen@aph.gov.au

Re: Inquiry into Australia's relations with China

Dear Committee Members:

Thank you for your invitation to make submissions. I will focus here principally on China's political and strategic relationships with the United States and the region.

Australia presently has very good relations with both China and the United States, and a top priority for any Australian government would be to maintain and sustain both of those relationships. If there is a confrontation between China and the US, Australia would not want to have to choose between the two. The vast majority of countries in the region find themselves in a similar situation: they value good relations with both, and don't want to have to choose either the US or China. In this regard, one of the most important objectives of Australian foreign policy should be to work with both China and the United States to help to avoid a confrontation between them.

President Bush apparently believes that, despite the continuing insurgency in Iraq and serious remaining problems in Afghanistan, the foreign policies of his first term have been vindicated by the success of the democracy movements in Georgia and the Ukraine, Libya's agreeing to give up its nuclear weapons programs, the resumption of negotiations between Israel and Palestine, and by recent events in Lebanon and Kyrgystan. The appointments by President Bush of John Bolton to be the American ambassador to the United Nations and Paul Wolfowitz as head of the World Bank, both outspoken "neo-conservatives," appear to indicate that the Bush administration may be planning to take an even harder line in its foreign policy during his second term of office than in his first term. The resignation of former Secretary of State Colin Powell, generally seen as a

moderating influence, may be seen by neo-conservative hardliners like Vice President Cheney and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld as an opportunity to push even more forcefully for their policies over the coming four years.

Australia, like Japan, has supported the major Bush administration initiatives of the President's first term, especially the "global war on terror" and the invasion of Iraq. The two countries are seen in effect as the anchors of US policy, North and South, in the East Asian region. The Howard Government has won credit with the Bush administration for its support of US policies, and most recently for the decision to increase the number of Australian troops in Iraq. The Prime Minister has a personal relationship with Bush and has been invited to the President's ranch --- as one Japanese Foreign Ministry official put it to me, John Howard has a "Crawford connection" with the President that might be used to help shape American policy in the region.

Much of the analysis of the geopolitics of the region has focused on the Taiwan issue, most recently the PRC's anti-secession law and the possibility of a US-China military conflict erupting over the future of the island. However, while this long-term problem does indeed deserve the analytical attention it is receiving, especially efforts to avoid the dangers of misperception and miscalculation, two other initiatives in the region, the Six Party Talks on North Korea and the East Asian Summit planned for December of this year in Kuala Lumpur, perhaps provide both more immediate indications of what is to come and opportunities for important Australian initiatives.

The East Asian Summit idea has emerged from a variety of ASEAN relationships with the three major economic powers of Northeast Asia: China, Japan, and South Korea. The historical precedents are the ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN Plus One, and ASEAN Plus Three, and hopes for the future involve a range of proposals for an East Asian Community to be built around economic, political, and even security cooperation. Much of this thinking about East Asian collaboration has its roots in former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad's proposal for an East Asian Economic Caucus and the Japanese proposal in response to the financial crisis of 1997-1998 for an Asian Monetary Fund. The United States opposed and defeated both initiatives. Washington generally opposes any Asian cooperative arrangement from which it is excluded. At this point, it is still unclear how the Bush administration will respond to the East Asian Summit.

The Six Party Talks on the DPRK's nuclear programs is a very different arrangement, and one in which the United States definitely is included. To date, three meetings of the six countries (the US, China, Russia, and Japan plus North and South Korea) have been held, hosted by China, and the objective of the negotiations is to convince the DPRK to agree to a verifiable arrangement in which it gives up its nuclear weapons programs in return for security commitments (probably both multilateral and bilateral) to insure Pyongyang from outside military attack plus substantial economic and technological assistance for the economic modernization of the country. One problem for the United States in these negotiations has been that the Bush administration has failed to make clear

whether its principal objective is a nuclear-free Korea or "regime change" in the DPRK. If it is regime change (which seems to be the neo-conservative preference), then a negotiated conclusion to the crisis would appear to be impossible.

China is obviously deeply involved in both of these initiatives, and so far, Australia is directly involved in neither one. Canberra has stated its support for the Six Party Talks, but at the same time, Australia and Japan have joined the US Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), which looks to the DPRK more like coercion than serious multilateral negotiations to resolve the problem. Australia might in the end be invited to the East Asian Summit, but probably not as a full participant.

Nonetheless, Australia can have a significant influence on both initiatives, especially through the Prime Minister's "Crawford connection."

The Six Party Talks and the East Asian Summit are important efforts by the countries of Northeast and Southeast Asia to build new institutions in the region and to sustain cooperative and mutually beneficial arrangements for the future. Australia will be a beneficiary of these arrangements, whether or not Canberra is a direct participant in the initial stages. The United States will also be a beneficiary, but the benefits are difficult for Washington to perceive through its Realist concerns about "China threat."

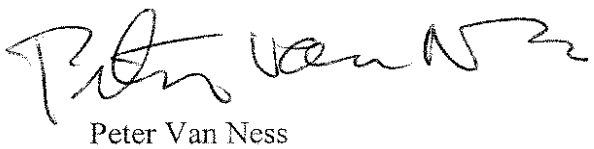
China can in reality be a threat and, not surprisingly, its Asian neighbors are particularly concerned. Because of these concerns, the neighboring countries are especially eager to build these new Asian institutions to incorporate and to constrain a possible Chinese hegemony in the region. For this reason, for example, it is important that an East Asian community be built around the original ASEAN plus Three concept that includes both Japan and South Korea, not just an ASEAN relationship with China (ASEAN plus One). Countries in the region want to balance China's power with an active participation by Japan. Similarly, if the Six Party Talks on Korea should produce as a result a new multilateral security mechanism or strategic consortium for Northeast Asia, it is vital that all four of the major powers in the region be parties to that institution: Japan, Russia, the United States, and China.

If these institutions were successful, everyone would benefit from the strategic stability, new opportunities for trade and investment, and security in the region. If, on the other hand, the Six Party Talks fail and the United States sabotages the East Asian Summit, North Korea may test a nuclear device (rather like India and Pakistan did in 1998) to demonstrate its capacity as a nuclear-weapons power. Politics in the region would become deeply polarized, and Japan, South Korea, and even Taiwan might choose to go nuclear. The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty would be dead, and confrontation and conflict would be our most likely future.

Australia obviously cannot shape these events in one direction or another, but Canberra has earned substantial influence in Washington, Tokyo, and Beijing and with its closer Asian neighbors. The beginning of the second Bush term constitutes in some respects a

new beginning for US policy with a new foreign policy team under Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Australia has an opportunity to commit its influence in favor of cooperative arrangements in the region, and to help avoid a polarization and confrontations in East Asia that would benefit no one.

Sincerely,



Peter Van Ness
Visiting Fellow

Attachments: I am sending by post three recent papers in which I attempt to spell out in more detail the analysis that I have briefly summarized here on: the US role in East Asia; China's response to the Bush Doctrine; and the Six Party Talks.

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Special Issue on the Bush Doctrine and Asia

Guest Editor: Peter Van Ness

The Bush Doctrine in Asia: A Brief Introduction

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THE NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR CRISIS: FOUR-PLUS-TWO—AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME

Peter Van Ness

The confrontation between North Korea and the Bush administration over North Korea's nuclear programs threatens to plunge Northeast Asia, one of the most strategically volatile regions in the world, into chaos and to ignite a nuclear arms race. This article argues that there is a way to achieve a peaceful resolution to this crisis that would be minimally acceptable to all parties, including both North Korea and the United States. It would be a four-plus-two security consortium, comprised of the four major powers in Northeast Asia (China, Japan, Russia, and the United States) plus the two Korean states. They would guarantee the security of the region and assure that the Koreas remained non-nuclear. This is a "cooperative security" design, the idea being to achieve security by working out mutually beneficial arrangements with or among likely adversaries, rather than constructing alliances against them.

Key words: Bush Doctrine, North Korea nuclear crisis, Six-Party Talks, Four-plus-two security consortium

Competing Paradigms in the North Korean Nuclear Negotiations

The six-party negotiations on North Korea's nuclear programs, held in Beijing in August 2003, concluded with nothing more than the expectation that the six participating nations would meet again—no time or place was announced.[1] Meanwhile, North Korea threatened to escalate tensions further by testing a nuclear device, while the United States remained undecided about how to proceed.

Was anything achieved in the August meetings? Is a peaceful solution to the North Korean nuclear crisis possible? If so, what is most needed to produce a mutually acceptable conclusion to the crisis?

For starters, to have any hope for a successful multilateral negotiation, especially on a topic as sensitive as nuclear weapons, it is vitally important to have the right parties at the table: not too many, not too few. All of those states whose core interests are most directly involved must be included, but, at the same time, it is equally important to include as few parties as possible because each additional state creates one more hurdle to achieving a viable consensus among the participants. This important first step was accomplished in Beijing in August. The six-country meetings brought together what has been labeled the "four-plus-two" (the four major powers—the United States, China, Russia, and Japan—plus North and South Korea), a formula that has been widely discussed in the region ever since Nakayama Taro was Japan's foreign minister in the early 1990s.

Among the six countries, however, there are deep disagreements about what a solution to the North Korean nuclear problem might be and how it could best be achieved. Both the United States and the North Korean regime have taken such extreme positions that a peaceful resolution of the standoff is not possible without outside pressure to convince both governments to modify their irreconcilable positions.

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1. Yoshinobu Yamamoto and Robert Bedeski, "Assessing the Six Party Talks: CSCAP North Pacific Working Group," Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network Special Report, December 3, 2003, from The Nautilus Institute (Berkeley, Calif.) website, NAPSWIRsuperlist@nautilus.org.

But the conceptual divisions among the six are not what one might expect. Strangely enough, North Korea and the United States tend to understand security issues in a similarly "realist" way, while the other four, especially South Korea and China, are arguing for a very different "cooperative security" design. Both the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, North Korea) see anarchy throughout the world, self-help as the only reliable strategy, and negotiated outcomes as inevitably zero-sum (i.e., I can only gain at your expense). By contrast, the other four are proposing an "everybody benefits," win-win solution. They emphasize the importance of avoiding military conflict, and stress the need to maintain existing trade, aid, and investment ties—a network of mutual benefit that the DPRK would be invited to join.

Yet, North Korea seems far from considering such an attractive proposal. The DPRK has become convinced that it is now target number one on the George W. Bush administration hit list, after having been marked as a member of the "axis of evil" in the President's 2002 State of the Union address, and identified by name in the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review as a potential target for U.S. nuclear attack. The U.S. declaration of a right to engage in preemptive war,[2] plus its invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, have only confirmed the DPRK in its strategic judgments. As a result, the DPRK leadership has determined that a nuclear capa-

2. Long before the U.S. invasion of Iraq, David Hendrickson argued that what the United States was proposing to do was not preemption but "preventive war." The United Nations Charter does provide for war-making in self-defense, but only in the face of an imminent threat. However, the Bush administration had explicitly shifted U.S. strategic calculations, as articulated by Donald Rumsfeld, from a "threat-based" concept to a "capabilities-based" understanding of threat. Rumsfeld's argument was that the United States should be prepared to make war against any state with the capabilities to do it serious harm. This would be "preventive war," however, not "preemption." David C. Hendrickson, "Toward Universal Empire: The Dangerous Quest for Absolute Security," *World Policy Journal*, vol. 19, No. 3 (Fall, 2002), pp. 1-10. Noam Chomsky later entered the debate, arguing that what the Bush administration was doing should not be understood as either "preemption" or "preventive war," but rather as what he calls "preventative war—the use of force to eliminate a contrived threat." *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 29-30, 2003.

bility is its best and perhaps only defense against a possible U.S. attack.[3] Some analysts believe that the DPRK would not willingly give up its nuclear capability under any conditions.

Within the Bush administration, there is a parallel, realist debate on what to do about the North Korean nuclear programs and the continuing DPRK escalation of the confrontation. Should Bush opt for preemption, coercive diplomacy, or engagement?[4]

At present, U.S. policy is a combination of the latter two, focused on what is called the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), a strategy designed to pressure North Korea by cutting off any exports of missile components or nuclear materials to other countries. Ten other countries have signed up in support of the PSI after two meetings, first in Madrid and then in Australia, hosted by the John Howard government.[5] The problem with PSI is that none of the three countries that border the DPRK (South Korea, China, and Russia) has agreed to join, and the operational difficulties and international legal implications of trying to intercept DPRK flights and stop North Korean ships in international waters are very serious. Nuclear material, which is the greatest concern, could easily be transported in a backpack and walked across North Korea's 800-kilometer border with China, as a Japanese diplomat described to me recently in Tokyo. That kind of material would be virtually impossible to interdict by U.S. and

3. See, for example, Don Kirk, "North Korea Says Publicly It Needs a 'Nuclear Deterrent,'" *International Herald Tribune*, June 10, 2003. Presumably, Iran is making similar calculations. See Anatol Lieven, "Dangers of an Aggressive US Approach to Iran," *Financial Times*, June 8, 2003; Ray Takeyh, "Iran's Nuclear Calculations," *World Policy Journal*, vol. 20, No. 2 (Summer, 2003), pp. 21-28; and David Albright and Corey Hinderstein, "Iran, Player or Rogue?" *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 59, No. 5 (September-October, 2003), pp. 52-58.

4. Robert J. Art and Patrick M. Cronin, eds., *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy* (Washington, D.C.: US Institute of Peace, 2003).

5. Paul O'Sullivan, "Chairman's Statement: From Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) meeting in Brisbane on 9-10 July," July 16, 2003, Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network Special Report, from The Nautilus Institute at napsnet@nautilus.org. For the Bush Administration's assessment of PSI, see Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, "John Bolton on the Proliferation Security Initiative," *Proliferation Brief*, vol. 6, No. 21 (December 3, 2003), at the Carnegie Non-Proliferation Project npp@ceip.org.

allied military forces without close Chinese cooperation.

A further problem on the U.S. side that must be resolved is that, despite occasional assurances given by officials that the United States would not invade North Korea, at least some of the Bush hardliners are as committed to "regime change" in North Korea as they are to dismantling the DPRK nuclear programs. If there is to be a peaceful resolution of this confrontation, the United States cannot have both regime change and a non-nuclear North Korea. As long as North Korea is convinced that Bush is determined to overthrow the DPRK government, its leaders will see their nuclear capability as their best defense and probably their only deterrent.

The task of finding a peaceful solution is further complicated by the fact that some U.S. leaders conceive of the confrontation with North Korea as a struggle between good and evil, and continue to make personal attacks on Kim Jong Il. The U.S. president's personal contempt for Kim Jong Il is well known: "I loathe Kim Jong Il," he told Bob Woodward during interviews for his book on the invasion of Afghanistan.[6] More recently, the U.S. Under Secretary of State for Arms Control, John Bolton, denounced Kim Jong Il by name forty-one times in a 25-minute speech in Seoul in July, just when other diplomats were working overtime to bring the six countries together for the August six-party negotiations.[7] Clearly, strong emotions like these, on both sides, contribute to the danger of misperception and miscalculation.

This is where multilateral diplomacy becomes essential. To achieve a peaceful outcome, both the United States and the DPRK have got to be moved away from their extreme positions. China and Russia must convince North Korea that they are prepared, together with the United States, to provide the DPRK with credible security commitments to guarantee the DPRK regime against foreign military attack and to help in the economic modernization of the country, in return for a verified dismantling of its nuclear programs. At the same time, Japan and

6. Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), p. 340. Bush described his responsibility to Woodward as being to "rid the world of evil," p. 67.

7. James Brooke, "Kim Jong Il Called a Tyrant by US," *International Herald Tribune*, August 1, 2003.

South Korea, as America's closest allies in the region, will have to convince the Bush administration that it must leave regime change to the Korean people.

Nonetheless, there will also be a myriad of bilateral problems to overcome. Somehow these issues in dispute between two countries must be put aside while the six parties seek agreement on how to deal with the Korean crisis. For one example, China and Japan disagree about a whole range of problems: how to interpret their World War II history, territorial claims over islands in the East China Sea, which side will win a pipeline agreement with Moscow to bring much needed Russian energy exports their way, U.S.-Japanese cooperation on missile defense, Japanese sex tourism in South China, compensation for Chinese workers injured when they unearthed Japanese wartime chemical weapons left in China, and more. Meanwhile, however, they enjoy a close and cooperative relationship with respect to trade, investment, and foreign aid.

Each of the six participating countries also has domestic problems that might prove to be obstacles to a successful negotiation. One of the most serious is the situation facing South Korean President Roh Moo Hyun, in office less than a year, who has suffered a slump in his public approval ratings from 70 percent to just 20 percent. He has called for an unprecedented referendum on his presidential leadership to be held in December. How this problem might be resolved will obviously have a big impact on Seoul's role in the six-party negotiations.

Another serious problem that may have a direct impact on the negotiations is the abduction of Japanese citizens in the past by North Korea. With respect to this issue, however, China, which has taken the lead in hosting the multilateral meetings, has perhaps already set an important precedent. During summit meetings of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in October 2003, People's Republic of China President Hu Jintao reportedly told Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi that the kidnap issue was a bilateral matter that should be resolved separately by Japan and North Korea.[8] If China, as convener and host of the six-party negotiations, can insist on keeping bilateral prob-

8. "China Rejects Helping Japan on Kidnappings," *International Herald Tribune*, October 21, 2003.

lems off of the agenda at these meetings, that would increase the chances for their success by a wide margin.

Despite the many difficulties facing the six participants, a four-plus-two security consortium would be the best way both to resolve the current crisis and to provide a long-term institutional structure to support the strategic stability of Northeast Asia. The participants have an opportunity to take advantage of the immediate crisis to create new security institutions capable of providing long-term security for a historically volatile region.

The Four-Plus-Two Concept

Four-plus-two is a cooperative security concept that has been discussed by analysts in Asia and implemented in so-called Track Two dialogues for over a decade. The idea is that *the four* major powers of Northeast Asia (China, Japan, Russia, and the United States) should commit themselves jointly to guarantee the security of the region and to support a peaceful reconciliation between *the two* (North and South Korea states). Four-plus-two is particularly appropriate today both as a basis for peacefully resolving the current crisis over the DPRK's nuclear programs and as a foundation for building mutually beneficial economic and political cooperation in the future.

The idea of "cooperative security" arrangements among major powers is not new. The U.S. arms-control agreements with the former Soviet Union are the best example to date of cooperative security in practice. The Nuclear Age created new imperatives for the major nuclear-weapons adversaries to cooperate in order to enhance their own security and, most importantly, to avoid a suicidal nuclear war. Once the governments of both superpowers realized that their combined nuclear arsenals constituted a ticking time bomb capable of destroying human civilization, a new way of thinking became essential. That realization, sharpened by dangerous confrontations like the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, led both governments to conclude that it was in their fundamental interests to cooperate across their many ideological and material differences to reach agreements to control the nuclear arms race and to minimize the probability of military confrontations between the two nuclear superpowers.

The "cooperative security" design of a consortium like this is unfamiliar to many of the decision makers who presumably would have to be involved to make a four-plus-two institution work. Nevertheless, they should be able to identify the very substantial mutual benefits to be had for all parties from such an arrangement. The history of Northeast Asia shows just how necessary it is to build new security institutions in the region.

The geopolitics of this area (where China, Russia, Korea, and Japan come together) has been one of the most volatile in the world. For more than one hundred years, the countries of the region have been in conflict with each other. Today, more than fifty years after the end of World War II, Russia and Japan still have not concluded a peace agreement, and the Korean peninsula remains divided into two states, North and South, that confront each other across the demilitarized zone (DMZ) that marks the 1953 truce at the end of the Korean War. It is the most militarized frontier in the world.

The current crisis began with North Korea's reported admission in October 2002 to U.S. Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly that it did indeed have a program for enriching uranium that might be used to make nuclear weapons. This, in turn, threw Bush administration plans for dealing with the "axis of evil" into a tailspin. Ever since Pyongyang's revelation became public, Washington has been on the defensive, trying to explain why it insisted on making war with Iraq, where no evidence to date has been brought forward to show that Saddam Hussein had any weapons of mass destruction, while insisting that diplomacy is the right way to deal with North Korea. The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency estimates that North Korea probably already has one or two nuclear weapons, and at the trilateral meeting in Beijing in April (U.S., DPRK, and China), the DPRK representative reportedly told the United States that indeed it did have nuclear weapons.

The United States has demanded that the DPRK give up its nuclear programs and accept international inspection, while Pyongyang has declared that it first wants to negotiate a bilateral security pact with the United States. While the United States refused to negotiate before there was evidence that North Korea had moved toward denuclearization, the DPRK increased the pressure through a series of unilateral escalations, including the

expulsion of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors and withdrawal from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT).

By a year later, however, it appeared that pressure from the other four parties had begun to work on both the DPRK and the United States. Pyongyang, having earlier refused to meet in a multilateral setting, later agreed, first, to participate in the three-party meeting in Beijing in April, and then, more important, to join the six-party negotiation in Beijing in August. For its part, the United States won its point about insisting on a multilateral meeting, but also began to change its position to meet the North Korean demand for a security guarantee in return for giving up its nuclear-weapons programs. At the APEC summit meetings in Bangkok in October 2003, President Bush still rejected the idea of a bilateral security treaty with the DPRK, but proposed instead a five-nation security commitment to the DPRK.[9]

To describe the four-plus-two idea in more detail, I will first discuss *the four*, and then *the two* Koreas.

The Four Major Powers

The first steps toward constructing a four-plus-two consortium might be the most difficult. Each of the four powers is very different: two Asian states, one communist and one capitalist; a former communist superpower; and the U.S. hegemon. Each has its own vital national priorities, and no previous experience in working together in a foursome like this. In the region, their previous relationships have typically been confrontational, not cooperative. Most often, they have fought wars against each other rather than sought opportunities to work together for mutual benefit.

Yet, what is not widely understood is the fact that the four major powers of Northeast Asia (China, Japan, Russia and the United States), despite their many differences, actually agree on a number of key strategic priorities in the region. Moreover, they are now more in agreement on these fundamental issues

9. John Aglionby, "Bush Offers Deal to End N Korea Crisis," *Guardian Weekly*, October 23-29, 2003.

than they have ever been before.

First, all four have a substantial stake in maintaining the strategic stability of the region. None would benefit from a major destabilizing crisis. For example, it would not serve any of their interests if military conflict broke out again in the region as it did during the Korean War, 1950-1953. Moreover, all four major powers especially value their relations with South Korea, based mainly on commercial ties. More important, all four have an even more substantial interest in maintaining and developing mutually beneficial relationships with each other. They therefore do not want a Korean problem to pit them against each other.

With regard to relations between North and South Korea, all four powers would probably prefer that Korea remained divided (the status quo) because of a variety of different concerns about what a reunified Korea might become—for example, for China, a concern that Korea might become a U.S. ally; for Japan, that Korea might become a nuclear-armed, independent state harboring hostile memories of its colonial past under Japanese rule. But a gradually reunifying Korea within a regional strategic consortium dominated by the four powers would potentially alleviate many of those fears. Moreover, the status quo that the four preferred was the one *before* North Korea revealed its nuclear programs to Secretary Kelly. Now, they have a potential nuclear-weapons power to deal with.

Second, all four are strongly opposed to either Korean state (North or South) becoming a nuclear-weapons power. Three of the four powers (the United States, China, and Russia) are of course already established nuclear-weapons powers. None of the three favors nuclear proliferation in Northeast Asia, nor would any of them like to see a nuclear DPRK ignite a nuclear arms race. Most particularly, if Japan were to respond by deciding to arm itself with nuclear weapons, many analysts believe South Korea, Taiwan, and perhaps other Asian countries would follow suit. Such a regional nuclear arms race would be likely to destroy the global nuclear nonproliferation regime.

Finally, apart from those important issues about which they all agree, only three of the four major powers (all except the United States) are opposed to a collapse of the North Korean regime. This is principally because it might undermine the

strategic stability of the region. But another reason is that neighboring countries fear that tens of thousands of refugees might want to seek protection in their countries. Although the United States has spoken of favoring "regime change" in North Korea, once Washington realized what strategic instability a collapse might bring, perhaps the United States would also prefer to maintain regime stability in the North as part of a transitional arrangement for the peninsula.

One of the major obstacles for the four powers in identifying their common interests and acting upon them is the history of the region. Northeast Asia has been the cockpit of battles among the powers and the two Koreas, time and time again. The cold war in particular divided the region into two competing camps. Moreover, there is a long list of earlier conflicts beginning with the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, the Japanese occupation of Korea from 1910 to 1945, the Manchurian Incident of 1931 and the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, war between Japan and China 1937-1945, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and war with the United States (and in the final days of the war with the Soviet Union as well), the Korean War (1950-1953), the Sino-Soviet dispute (1963-1976), and the cold war (1950-1989). The Korean peninsula today remains divided along cold-war lines, one-half century after the end of the Korean War in which more than 3 million Koreans died.

The Two Korean States

The design here proposes that the two existing Korean states would be full participants in the process of establishing a security consortium, and that upon reunification, the united Korea would become a fifth member of a Northeast Asia five-power consortium. Divided since the end of World War II when American and Soviet Union forces occupied separate parts of the peninsula, the two Korean states have developed in markedly different ways. The DPRK, the last truly Stalinist state, has less than half the population of the democratic Republic of Korea in the South; and its per capita GDP is only about 7 percent that of South Korea's. But North Korea maintains the third-largest

standing army in the world.

The truce negotiated to end the Korean War in 1953 still marks the dividing line between the two Korean states. China withdrew its "volunteers" from the North years ago, but 37,000 American troops remain in the South. U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld wants to relocate U.S. troops further south on the peninsula, or possibly entirely out of Korea. The reasons presumably are two: to limit U.S. casualties in the event of North Korean military response to a U.S. attack on North Korean nuclear facilities; and to increase the pressure on President Roh to agree to a hard-line U.S. position on the DPRK.

The United States and North Korea each blames the other for violating commitments made under the so-called Agreed Framework, the bilateral agreement concluded in 1994 with the Bill Clinton administration to halt the DPRK's nuclear program and to keep North Korea within the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The Agreed Framework called for the IAEA to verify the shutting down of the DPRK's plutonium-producing Yongbyon reactor in exchange for 500,000 metric tons of fuel oil a year until two light-water power reactors, to be built by Japan and South Korea, came on line to replace the energy that could be produced by the Yongbyon facility. Economic and political relations were also to be formalized, and the United States pledged itself to "provide formal assurances to the DPRK against the threat or use of nuclear weapons by the United States."[10]

During the last months of the Clinton administration, accommodation with the DPRK had reached new levels. Former President Kim Dae Jung's "sunshine policy" of engaging the North had led to a historic summit meeting with Kim Jong Il in June 2000, and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright had visited Pyongyang, opening the possibility that President Clinton might also visit North Korea. But all of this came to an end in March 2001 when President Kim met the newly-elected President George W. Bush, who indicated his deep distrust of engaging with the DPRK.[11] President Bush's State of the Union speech the

10. Quoted in "North Korea's Nuclear Program, 2003," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 59, No. 2 (March-April, 2003), p. 74-77. See, also, Bruce Cumings, "Wrong Again," *London Review of Books*, vol. 25, No. 23 (December 4, 2003).

following January included the infamous "axis of evil" charge against Iraq, Iran, and North Korea; and the administration's Nuclear Posture Review, leaked to the press two months later, listed North Korea by name as a potential target for U.S. nuclear attack. The administration's declaration of its strategic doctrine in September 2002, and most importantly its commitment to preemptive war against "rogue states," explicitly detailed Washington's hostile intent.[12]

North Korea, however, remained in engagement mode, inviting Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi for an unprecedented meeting in Pyongyang in September 2002 at which both sides made new concessions in what appeared to be a major step toward DPRK-Japanese reconciliation and normalization of relations. From North Korea's perspective, the visit by James Kelly the following month appeared to be planned within a similar frame of mind. However, when Kelly provided evidence to his hosts of a DPRK uranium enrichment program (quite separate from the plutonium facility secured by the IAEA) and the North Koreans reportedly acknowledged its existence, charges and counter-charges began to fly, with each government attacking the other with allegations of violations of their earlier agreements.

The DPRK then escalated the tension while Washington prepared to make preemptive war against Iraq, another member of the "axis of evil." North Korea expelled the IAEA inspectors and re-started its Yongbyon reactor; it withdrew from the NPT and even threatened to withdraw from the 1953 Korean War truce agreement; and it confronted a U.S. spy plane in international airspace and tested short-range missiles into the Sea of Japan.

Following U.S. military success in overthrowing the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq, North Korea apparently now believes, as mentioned earlier, that it is the next target for U.S. preemptive war, and that having nuclear weapons (unlike Iraq)

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11. Spurgeon M. Keeny, Jr., "Preserving the North Korean Threat," *Arms Control Today*, vol. 31, No. 3 (April 2001), p. 2.
12. Excerpts from the version of the Nuclear Posture Review that was leaked to the press on March 15, 2002 can be found at www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/policy/dod/npr.htm. The full text of "The National Security Strategy of the United States" is available at www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf.

is its best deterrent. At a second meeting with James Kelly under Chinese auspices in April 2003, North Korea told Kelly that it had nuclear weapons; but in the same meeting, the North Koreans surprisingly offered to do all of the things of greatest concern to the United States: abandon its nuclear weapons programs and accept independent verification; stop missile exports; and work within a multilateral framework to reach an accommodation. North Korea put all of the key issues on the negotiating table. In return, Pyongyang wanted a formal nonaggression treaty with the United States and other substantial economic and political concessions.[13]

The Bush administration has said time and again that the DPRK has violated the Agreed Framework, and that it will not reward "bad behavior" with concessions. It insists that it will not give in to "nuclear blackmail" or "appease" North Korea, as it charges Clinton did. The administration says that it seeks a peaceful, diplomatic solution to the nuclear crisis, but at the same time it is keeping the military option open. The administration is conflicted: triumphant in its military victory over Saddam Hussein, but mindful of the potential pitfalls of the upcoming presidential election year—and especially the failure in 1992 of the senior Bush to win reelection after his own success in the first Gulf War.

Negotiating a multilateral solution to the Korean crisis would benefit the administration by showing the world that preemptive war is not its only strategic alternative, and that Washington is capable of negotiating peace with as well as making war against its adversaries. This might be especially important as events in Afghanistan and Iraq play back into the North Korean negotiations. The failure of the United States to consolidate its victories in either country or to capture the top leaders, Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, means that the military option for the United States against North Korea has become increasingly untenable. The aircraft that the United States would need to make air strikes against the DPRK's nuclear facilities have long been in place, but the United States is now unable to move sufficient troops into the region to deal with the kind of

13. Julian Borger and Jonathan Watts, "North Korea Offers to Lift Nuclear Threat," *The Guardian Weekly*, May 1-7, 2003.

counterattack that Pyongyang might launch in response.

Moreover, the failure to find any weapons of mass destruction in Iraq or evidence of a pre-war operational link between Al Qaeda and Hussein; the body bags coming home as a result of some thirty attacks on U.S. forces every day; the sabotage of Iraqi oil pipelines, power systems, and water supplies; and the unwillingness of the other major powers to provide troops or major financial contributions without UN control, taken together, put the Bush administration on the defensive with respect to considering any new military adventures.[14] In addition, escalating costs for both the troops in Iraq and the rebuilding of the country have contributed to unprecedented government budget deficits while the U.S. economy is experiencing a "jobless recovery."[15] And candidates for the Democratic Party nomination for the presidency in the 2004 election, like Howard Dean and Wesley Clark, have begun to challenge the administration's wisdom in their "war on terror."

A Security Consortium for Northeast Asia

What would a security consortium for Northeast Asia actually do, and how would it work?

Four Key Commitments

To begin, the member-states of the consortium would have to commit to four key points. *First,* the four major powers would individually and jointly agree not to commit aggression against the existing states of North and South Korea (and a reunified Korea once that has been achieved).[16] There is no model for such

14. Amin Saikal, "US Policy Has Isolated Only One Extremist Group—Its Own," *Sydney Morning Herald,* October 31, 2003; and Thomas Powers, "The Vanishing Case for War," *New York Review of Books,* vol. 50, No. 19 (December 4, 2003), pp. 12-17. See also Maureen Dowd, "A Front Here, A Front There: Bush Is Scaring Up Votes," *International Herald Tribune,* November 27, 2003.
15. Bob Herbert, "The Harrowing Reality of the Jobless Recovery," *International Herald Tribune,* October 28, 2003.
16. Reuters, October 30, 2003, quoted North Korean defector Hwang Jang

an agreement that I am aware of, but the four-power commitments would provide the security that has been so lacking for both Korean states since the end of World War II. It would also meet the highest priority concern of the DPRK, as reflected in the demands that it has been making on the United States for more than a decade, for a formal nonaggression pact.

Second, in return, the four major powers would insist on international verification to affirm and to sustain the 1992 Joint South-North Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, i.e., the joint pledge by North and South Korea to maintain themselves nuclear-weapons free. Assurances that both Korean states remain non-nuclear is the highest shared priority among the four major powers. This would require an institutionalized inspection regime, to be operated by an international organization like the IAEA. Rose Gottemoeller, an architect of the arrangement with the Ukraine by which it gave up 1,900 nuclear warheads after the collapse of the Soviet Union, has suggested that the Ukrainian experience might serve as a model for how to denuclearize the DPRK.[17]

Third, the member-states of the consortium would commit themselves jointly to maintain the strategic stability of the Northeast Asian region, in a way similar to how the United States has served as guarantor of stability in East Asia since the end of the cold war. In turn, this strategic cooperation could serve as a foundation for joint development projects in the region, such as the exploitation of Russian natural gas and its transmission through the region.

Fourth, the four major powers would agree to assist in the economic development of North Korea and to support a process of gradual reconciliation between North and South as determined by those two states. If the major powers could agree on

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Yop as saying: "I don't understand how we can guarantee the continued existence of a dictator that abuses human rights." It is important to note that the security guarantees proposed here would not guarantee Kim Jong Il's power or any regime's overall security. The commitments to be made by the four major powers would be explicitly restricted to guaranteeing the Korean regimes against foreign military attack, nothing more.

17. Rose Gottemoeller, "North Korean Nuclear Arms: Take Ukraine as a Model," *International Herald Tribune*, April 28, 2003.

these four points, that would suffice to meet the crucial external needs of the two Korean states and the region.

How Would the Consortium Operate?

In order to adequately guarantee the security of the two Korean states, formal institutions would be required: Four-plus-two must be much more than just "a talking shop." For the first time in the history of the region, multilateral security institutions would have to be constructed for Northeast Asia—a security consortium or a formal concert of powers. The new arrangement would have one feature in common with the idea of a post-cold war NATO: the objective of using a security agreement to stabilize a potentially volatile region. But a key difference would be that all the major powers in the region would be included. This would not be a pact against any other state. It would help to stabilize a region that has been traumatized repeatedly by military conflict. A dialogue mechanism alone would not suffice.

Agreement would first be sought among the four major powers, with both South and North Korea invited to participate in the institution building. Presumably, South Korea would support the idea with enthusiasm. Former President Kim Dae Jung officially endorsed such strategic thinking as a part of his "sunshine policy" to the North, and the new President Roh Moo Hyun has himself called for a "structure of peace" in the region. Moon Hayong, Director-General for Policy Planning in the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, also emphasized the importance of a multilateral approach in a paper presented to a Berkeley meeting of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) on March 13, 2003.[18]

North Korea may at first oppose the idea, but its opposition should not stand as an obstacle to continued negotiations among the four major powers. North Korea should at every stage be invited to participate, but its possible boycott should not stop forward progress. The DPRK should not be permitted to sabo-

18. Moon Hayong, "Korean Nuclear Crisis: Benefits of a Multilateral Approach," March 20, 2003, Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network Special Report, from Nautilus, www.napsnet@nautilus.org.

tage the process. Once the consortium is in place, North Korea would not really have an option to oppose the arrangement for two main reasons: first, because the consortium would include as members all of its outside supporters; and, second, the commitments made by the consortium would meet the principal security and developmental objectives declared by Pyongyang.

The United States is currently trying to pressure each of the other powers, especially China, to force North Korea to agree to the U.S. unilateral demands. But a cooperative-security consortium of all of the relevant powers is much more likely to win Pyongyang's compliance. As Hendrik Hertzberg writes in the *New Yorker*, Washington's only viable option is to rely on the help of the other powers.[19] China has emerged as the key player in shaping a multilateral solution.[20]

Even if North Korea were to comply with the present U.S. demands, which I think is most unlikely, what about the next time? Because of the deep distrust on both sides, it would be very difficult to conclude a bilateral U.S.-DPRK agreement to resolve the current crisis. Equally important, even if such a deal were concluded, it is very unlikely that it would be honored because of the continuing mutual distrust. In the end, such a bilateral agreement probably would once again come unstuck, like the 1994 Agreed Framework before it.

What If the Four Powers Disagree?

Of course, they will often disagree, but once the four states decide to join together to build a security institution that can provide substantial benefits for all parties, it is very likely that the bases for agreement listed above (plus others that they may become aware of in the future) will serve as a solid foundation for sustained cooperation. Meanwhile, quite separately from

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19. *New Yorker*, January 13, 2003.

20. It is important to note that, in addition to the PRC initiatives with respect to North Korea, China has taken a number of other "cooperative-security" initiatives in its relations with Russia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and even India. This cooperative-security strategic response to the Bush administration's unilateralism is likely to have a significant influence in shaping the future of both the Sino-American bilateral relationship and even global international relations.

their common interests in Northeast Asia, all of the four major powers are becoming increasingly interdependent in their worldwide economic and political relationships.

Meetings of the four focused directly on identifying areas of mutual agreement also could help to dispel mutual mistrust. For example, Japanese distrust of China's willingness to participate in such a cooperative venture should prove unwarranted, because the Chinese know that a nuclear-armed North Korea would sharply increase the domestic pressure in Japan to go nuclear, and as a result, China is likely to be more helpful in working for a nuclear-free Korea than many analysts in Japan expect.[21]

When attempting to design a successful multilateral arrangement, especially on sensitive security issues, it is vital, as I have argued, to include all of those states whose interests are most directly involved, because if you leave one of them out, that state will almost inevitably view the multilateral agreement as a pact against it. At the same time, however, it is important to include as few states as possible, because each additional state creates one more hurdle to achieving consensus among the member-states of the consortium. Therefore, all six (four-plus-two) should be parties to the consortium, but probably no others.

Some commentators, for example, have suggested that Russia could be left out. But Russian participation is essential to the success of the consortium for several reasons.[22] If Moscow were excluded, not only might the Russians begin to think that the consortium was somehow being designed contrary to their interests and therefore try to sabotage it, but also the DPRK might try to play Russia against the others to obstruct the formation of a working consensus within the consortium. On the other hand, if a four-plus-two solution is reached, the consortium members will probably want to obtain United Nations sanction, and Russia could help facilitate that endorsement by means of

21. Robert Madsen, "China Holds the Key to North Korea," *International Herald Tribune*, November 27, 2003.

22. Cristina Chuen, "Russian Responses to the North Korean Crisis," North Korea Special Collection, Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, online at www.cns.miis.edu/research/korea/rusdprk.htm. See also Alexander Zhebin's article in this issue of *Asian Perspective*.

its role as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Finally, Russian participation is central to achieving multilateral cooperation for the development and transmission of energy resources in the region. This kind of economic cooperation can benefit all parties and could serve as a major foundation stone for political and strategic cooperation in Northeast Asia.

A Role for the United Nations?

The United Nations would not be an ideal site for constructing a four-plus-two consortium. Trying to achieve consensus in the context of the UN Security Council would be likely to make things more, rather than less, difficult because Japan is not a permanent member, and Britain and France, which are, would want to put their particular stamp on the outcome. It would be difficult enough to achieve agreement among the six parties without including the two European UN Security Council permanent members whose interests in Northeast Asia are relatively remote. However, UN Security Council endorsement of the consortium should be sought after it is formed and tested, in order to affirm and strengthen its legitimacy. It will be vital that the six participants remain focused on those key objectives and interests about which they agree, and not be diverted into tangential disputes about their disagreements.

This raises the question whether an independent facilitator might help in the search for consensus among the six parties. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan is probably the only person in the world who might have both the stature and independence needed to perform such a facilitating role. Without some sort of independent convenor, the initial meetings to build consensus among the four, much less the six, might easily deteriorate into arguments about their disagreements rather than their common interests. Also the United States as the only superpower might attempt to intimidate the others into accepting its particular unilateral view, which simply would not work. Maurice Strong, the Secretary-General's personal representative, has already made trips to Pyongyang to assist in the effort to find a peaceful solution.[23]

23. The European Union has also offered to facilitate a multilateral arrange-

While Pyongyang says that it only wants to talk to the United States, Bush insists on a multilateral approach. Yet both a bilateral U.S.-DPRK agreement and a multilateral arrangement might serve together as component parts of a four-plus-two solution. The DPRK-U.S. nonaggression pact that Pyongyang has demanded might turn out to be a necessary (but by no means a sufficient) condition for achieving a successful four-plus-two arrangement for the region. At best, however, a bilateral U.S.-North Korean agreement alone is unlikely to provide a durable resolution to the problems of strategic volatility in Northeast Asia because of the deep distrust between the two governments and the history of conflict in the region.

Economic agreements among the six countries for the exploitation and delivery of energy resources could provide another foundation stone for a successful Northeast Asian security consortium. Selig Harrison shows how "American encouragement of regional cooperation could make a difference" in helping the countries of the region conclude mutually beneficial deals to exploit natural gas resources in Russia and to deliver it through pipelines to markets in China, Korea, Japan, and beyond. Russia has the world's largest gas reserves, but it needs capital to develop them. Constructing gas pipelines through the DPRK and extending the Trans-Siberian Railroad from Russia through to South Korea would help to bind the countries of Northeast Asia together in ties of mutual benefit and common interests.[24]

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ment, but it is unlikely that the EU could maintain a united position on the North Korean crisis when, for example, it is so divided on Iraq. "3-Country Defense Initiative Further Divides the EU," *International Herald Tribune*, March 22-23, 2003.

24. Selig S. Harrison, "Gas and Geopolitics in Northeast Asia: Pipelines, Regional Stability, and the Korean Nuclear Crisis," *World Policy Journal*, vol. 19, No. 4 (Winter, 2002/03), pp. 23-36. See, also, the Northeast Asia Regional Grid Project at the Nautilus Institute in Berkeley, online at www.napsnet@nautilus.org.

The Importance of a Multilateral Solution

Bilateral approaches to resolving strategic differences with the DPRK to date have failed. The Agreed Framework, which was essentially a U.S.-DPRK arrangement (although other countries were involved), has collapsed, and that precedent is now explicitly rejected by the Bush administration in its own approach to North Korea. Earlier initiatives by both South Korea and Japan have also backfired. Kim Dae Jung's "sunshine policy," and his courageous attempt to resolve North-South differences through personal diplomacy with Kim Jong Il, failed after their first meeting in Pyongyang in June 2000, the victim of charges that Seoul had to pay the North $500 million up front to convince Kim Jong Il to meet. Two years later, in September 2002, Prime Minister Koizumi made another attempt to resolve historical differences with the DPRK through summit diplomacy, but his effort also failed when the problem of Japanese who had been kidnapped years before by North Korea to serve Pyongyang's spying operation became an explosive domestic issue in Japan.

Kim Jong Il may well have made the admission to Koizumi about the kidnapped Japanese citizens as one way to reciprocate the Japanese Prime Minister's good will in making the visit; but subsequent charges and counter-charges about how many Japanese had actually been kidnapped, what had happened to those few that Pyongyang acknowledged having taken, and a tug-of-war over the five Japanese who returned to Japan from North Korea, all poisoned the earlier good will. It is very likely that Pyongyang's acknowledgment about a uranium enrichment program to James Kelly the next month during Kelly's visit to North Korea (and before the kidnapping problem had become a huge issue in Japan) was also made by the North Korean leaders in a similar spirit of good will; but this also failed, as we have seen.

In light of the failure of these bilateral attempts to resolve strategic issues with Pyongyang, there are three main reasons why a multilateral solution is essential. First, as mentioned earlier, both the United States and the North Korean regime have taken such extreme positions that a peaceful resolution of the standoff is not possible without outside pressure to convince both governments to modify their irreconcilable positions—to

bring the two "realist" states into the "cooperative security" solution. If they were left to themselves, their "zero-sum" perspectives would be most likely to lead them to confrontation and possibly to military conflict.

Second, four-plus-two includes all of the countries with the most important relationships with the DPRK. If any one country were left out, North Korea could still try to play that country against the others, but with all of the most interested and influential countries included, the circle of influence on the DPRK is truly closed. However, the United States wants to use the multilateral forum for a different purpose: to close the circle coercively on the DPRK and to force it to accept its terms. These are all "sticks."

By "closing the circle," I mean something quite different. The key point here is to demonstrate unequivocally to North Korea that there is a consensus among the five other states *both* that the DPRK must give up its nuclear-weapons capability and accept verification, and that, in return, the group accepts North Korea's concerns about security and development as legitimate, and is prepared to make appropriate commitments to achieve them. The solution requires the right combination of both "carrots" and "sticks."

Finally, a multilateral approach can provide a much higher probability that once an agreement is concluded, it can be successfully sustained. As already discussed, both the United States and the DPRK accuse the other of failing to fulfill the commitments they made before under the earlier Agreed Framework. Moreover, the Bush administration has earned a reputation during its brief time in office for playing what is called "bait and switch": making a commitment to another party in order to gain something in return, but then failing to do what you had promised to do.[25] In a multilateral arrangement such as the one proposed here, it is assumed that all parties have a substantial interest in assuring that the others honor the commitments that they have made. Multilateral pressure can help to insure that no consortium member plays bait and switch.

25. For example, Paul Krugman describes Bush's post-9-11 economic policies as "the largest bait-and-switch operation in history." Quoted in Russell Baker, "The Awful Truth," *New York Review of Books*, November 6, 2003, p. 8.

Conclusion

All of the United States' bilateral options have serious problems. The use of military force could result in a horrific retaliatory attack by the North on Seoul, on U.S. military forces, and possibly on Japan.[26] Heavy economic sanctions are opposed by Japan, South Korea, and China and could result in the economic collapse of the North, flooding the region with tens of thousands of refugees.[27] And to negotiate bilaterally an offer of aid in return for a promised denuclearization deal with Pyongyang would be criticized by American hardliners as repeating Clinton's earlier "appeasement" of North Korea. Moreover, the Bush administration is seeking some sort of face-saving multilateral format for resolving the crisis to avoid being charged with caving in to North Korean "nuclear blackmail."

Why would four-plus-two be preferable for the United States? It would be the multilateral solution demanded by Washington and would thereby help defend the administration from its domestic critics. More significant for the United States, four-plus-two would not only deal with the immediate DPRK nuclear issue but would also put in place a long-term arrangement that has the potential to bring peace and stability to a volatile region in which the United States has important interests. Four-plus-two would not be simply a strategic Band-Aid like the earlier Agreed Framework. Finally, it could provide a precedent for multilateral security cooperation more broadly in the East Asian region, which could help to alleviate the widespread concerns there about possible unilateral U.S. actions

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26. Phillip C. Saunders, "Military Options for Dealing with North Korea's Nuclear Program," North Korea Special Collection, Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, online at www.cns.miis.edu/research/korea/dprkmil.htm.
27. For an analysis of existing U.S. sanctions on the DPRK, see Dianne E. Rennack, "North Korea: Economic Sanctions," Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, January 24, 2003; and for analysis of the likely impact of economic sanctions, see Kimberly Ann Elliott, "The Role of Economic Leverage in Negotiations with North Korea," April 1, 2003, Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network, Special Report, online at www.nautilus.org/for a/security/0326A_Elliot.html.

either to intervene or to withdraw from the region.

An additional benefit for all parties would be that participation in such a security consortium would allow Japan (the only non-nuclear-weapons power of the four) to become a much more active and influential player—to be a major power in its geographical region of highest priority *without going nuclear*. Such a security consortium might well assist Japan to participate strategically as what Ozawa Ichiro would call a "normal nation."[28] A further benefit for Japan would be that four-plus-two could set a precedent for strategic cooperation in the region, which might facilitate, for example, the completion of Russo-Japanese negotiations for a peace treaty to formally end the hostilities of World War II.

In its negotiations with the DPRK, the United States needs a firm commitment of support by all four of the other countries in order to achieve a peaceful solution. A bilateral U.S.-DPRK agreement is most unlikely to work because of the absolute distrust between the two governments. Just as North Korean commitments to the United States are not credible because of past violations by the DPRK,[29] American promises to the DPRK are not believed for the same reason. They are two "realist" governments playing a "zero-sum" game.

Moreover, unrelenting pressure will be needed to convince the DPRK to do what it fundamentally does not want to do: give up the nuclear programs that Pyongyang believes, in its "self-help" security strategy, to be the best deterrent to a possible military attack by the United States. That pressure can only be imposed by closing the circle of influence on the DPRK through inclusion of all of its major sources of outside support.

At the same time, however, China, Russia, and South Korea will not commit to a unilaterally imposed solution by the United States (as we have seen in their unwillingness to join Washington's Proliferation Security Initiative) that fails to include suffi-

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28. Ichiro Ozawa, *Blueprint for a New Japan: The Rethinking of a Nation* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1994).

29. Nicholas Eberstadt, "Diplomatic Fantasyland: The Illusion of a Negotiated Solution to the North Korean Nuclear Crisis," September 23, 2003, Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network, Special Report, online at www.nautilus.org/for a/security/0342_Eberstadt.html.

cient incentives to meet Pyongyang's minimum security and development requirements. Coercive diplomacy alone will not suffice. The other parties insist that there must be both "carrots" and "sticks" to achieve a peaceful solution to the North Korean nuclear crisis.

Finally, in the proposed Northeast Asian security consortium, the other four parties would in effect serve as guarantors to both the DPRK and the U.S. that the deal, once made, will stick—because it will be in their collective interest to make it work. In that sense, the four in combination have the power to frustrate either side from prevailing. They know that they cannot let either the United States or North Korea have its own way, or there will be no peaceful solution to the crisis. Earlier, the Bush administration might not have been willing to agree to a cooperative-security solution to the crisis, but as the coalition in Iraq continues to fail even to maintain security in that country, and the United States becomes militarily and financially more overextended, the Bush leadership has begun to appear more willing to listen to its five other four-plus-two negotiating partners.

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China's Response to the Bush Doctrine

Peter Van Ness

The American political scientist Mike Lampton has captured just the right image in Chinese for understanding America's relationship with China: *tong chuang yi meng* ("same bed, different dreams"). America and China are like two lovers in bed, with very different understandings about why they are there and what the future may hold.[1]

For more than 30 years, beginning with Richard Nixon's accommodation with Mao Zedong in 1971–72, capitalist America and communist China have cooperated with each other off and on, but always with very different agendas in mind. This is no less true today. After 9/11, the People's Republic of China (PRC) sided with the United States in Bush's "war on terror," but virtually every aspect of the Bush Doctrine (e.g., unilateralism, preemption, and missile defense) raises serious security problems for China. Faced with this series of strategic initiatives from Washington, Beijing is responding in an unexpected way, and has now begun to lay down an alternative strategic design to the Bush Doctrine. How relations between the United States and China evolve will probably be decisive in determining whether there is peace or war in the region.

In this essay, I first examine the strategic implications of the Bush Doctrine to date, then analyze the PRC's response, and, finally, highlight key issues for the next four years.

Understanding the Bush Doctrine

From the presidential election campaign of 2000 through George W. Bush's first months in office before the attacks of 9/11, there were strong indications of what was to come. Bush had staffed his administration with conservative Republicans, who, especially on defense and security issues, had articulated a hard-line, unilateralist position. Their strategic priorities included missile defense, withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the creation of a high-tech, rapid-reaction military of overwhelming scope and power, and the revitalization of the U.S. nuclear weapons industry. Their Manichean worldview led them to view U.S. security in terms of the development of such overwhelming capabilities (military, economic, and technological) that no other state or coalition of states would dare confront the United States.

To some people, it looked as though the Bush leadership did not understand what international relations theorists call the "security dilemma," the idea that when one country builds up its military capability to enhance its defense, an adversary may see that buildup as an offensive threat and increase its own military capabilities, thereby igniting an arms race in which both countries become less secure.

Other commentators thought that President Bush and his advisors understood the security dilemma only too well. The Chinese strategic analyst Yan Xuetong, in an interview in Beijing in April 2001, agreed that when the power capabilities of two states are roughly equal, the security dilemma is likely to have the expected outcome: namely, neither side benefits. But, he said, when one state is much stronger than other states it might deliberately create a security

dilemma between itself and its perceived adversaries in order to intimidate and dominate them. That, Yan argued, is what the Bush administration was trying to do.

Writing in these pages after 9/11 but before the invasion of Iraq, the political scientist David Hendrickson explained the logic of the Bush Doctrine as a "quest for absolute security." Unilateralism and a strategic doctrine of preventive war were the key elements of this futile search. Hendrickson argued that these were "momentous steps," standing in "direct antagonism to fundamental values in our political tradition," which threaten "to wreck an international order that has been patiently built up for 50 years, inviting a fundamental delegitimation of American power."[2] Hendrickson concluded his essay with a quote from Henry Kissinger that sums up the basic flaw in a search for absolute security: "The desire of one power for absolute security means absolute insecurity for all the others."[3]

The invasion of Iraq, for the Bush leadership, became the prototype of this search for absolute security: "regime change" by military force to punish any adversary who dared to stand up to American power. The overthrow of Saddam Hussein in Iraq was intended to show the world that opposition to the Bush grand design was futile. Washington would have its way, through the use of overwhelming military force if necessary, even in the face of opposition by major allies. However, the deteriorating security situation in Iraq and Afghanistan and the continued bloodletting in the Israel-Palestine conflict have demonstrated that there are limits to what even the most powerful state in the world can do in imposing its will on other nations.[4]

President Bush, at his first press conference after his reelection, told the world: "I earned capital in the campaign, political capital, and now I intend to spend it. It is my style. That's what happened in the—after the 2000 election, I earned some capital. I've earned capital in this election—and I'm going to spend it for what I told the people I'd spend it on, which is—you've heard the agenda: Social Security and tax reform, moving this economy forward, education, fighting and winning the war on terror."[5] So, presumably, the Bush Doctrine will remain firmly in place.

The contrast between the preferences of the U.S. electorate and world opinion is sharp and potentially calamitous. While George Bush won reelection in 2004 with markedly improved margins of support over 2000, including clear control of both houses of Congress, world opinion has shifted sharply against his policies. The terrorist attacks of September 2001 on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon prompted almost universal sympathy for the victims and support for the United States, but President Bush has squandered that "capital" over the past three years by his contempt for international law and institutions, and his disdain for any who might dare to disagree with him. His administration has shown little concern for either legitimacy or the moral dimensions of the exercise of power.[6]

During the past two years, I have worked on a collaborative project with colleagues from around the Asia-Pacific on responses to the Bush Doctrine.[7] From our discussions, and informed by the insights of other colleagues like Yan Xuetong and David Hendrickson, we can infer four general propositions that are amply illustrated by the efforts of the Bush administration to date.

First, there is no such thing as absolute security, which is simply unattainable for any country, including the United States, the most powerful state the world has ever seen.

Second, the world is confounded by a unique and complex range of military, political, economic, environmental, and public health insecurities that we are only beginning to comprehend. For example, some scientists cogently argue that climate change, by itself, is the greatest threat to our exis-

tence. At the same time, specialists on Islam are convinced that if we do not treat the global problems of human security seriously, terrorism will be with us forever.

Third, no individual state, no matter how powerful, can adequately manage this range of insecurities alone. An effective response to the broad range of threats to national security presented by these problems requires a multilateral response. Obviously, the leaders of every independent state will attempt to advance their own interests as best they can, but the realist assumption that strategies based on narrow self-interest might be adequate to protect the security of a country are utopian in today's world.[8]

Fourth, the more the most powerful states seek to achieve absolute security by building up their economic and military power and operating with impunity to advance their perceived national interests, the more insecure the world—and they themselves—become.[9]

The Bush Doctrine is simply not sustainable in its current form.

It is often remarked that, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, there is no longer any state or group of states with the political will and material capabilities to balance U.S. power, and that following the delegitimation of socialism as a developmental alternative to capitalism, there is no longer any ideological alternative to market economics and representative democracy. Where does one stand intellectually in response to the Bush Doctrine, one is asked, other than to argue that the neoconservatives are not practicing what they preach when they say that what they are trying to do is to bring freedom and democracy to the world? On what basis can a systematic alternative to the Bush Doctrine be built?

The most substantive and promising international reaction to date has been Beijing's response. Rather than initiate an arms race to challenge U.S. hegemonic power directly, as one might expect, China reacted cautiously at first and then began to promote a fully elaborated response to the Bush Doctrine.

The Chinese Response

The Chinese leadership was aware of the hard-line political views of many of the people chosen for top positions in the new administration when George W. Bush was inaugurated in January 2001. Right-wing opinion in the United States had it that China was the most likely challenger to U.S. hegemony and that the "China threat" should be a priority for the new administration. When President Bush chose to identify certain "rogue states" as the main danger in his early speeches on national security, many analysts inferred that the main, unnamed rogue that the administration had in mind was China. When the classified Nuclear Posture Review of 2002 was leaked to the press, it identified China as one of seven possible targets for nuclear attack by the United States, and a PRC-Taiwan confrontation as one of three likely scenarios in which nuclear weapons might be used.[10] The administration's commitment to both missile defense and preemptive or preventive war further raised Chinese concerns.[11]

Official Chinese reaction to the Bush Doctrine has gone through three distinct stages: *avoidance*, *collaboration*, and *strategic response*. At first, Chinese policy seemed designed to avoid confrontation with the new president. As the administration set about putting its foreign and security policies in place, Beijing could see that many of the Bush initiatives clashed with China's interests. But rather than confront the new president directly, the Chinese leadership appeared determined to stand aside from the hard-line bulldozer, apparently hoping that Washington's enthusiasm for missile defense and preventive action against "rogue states" would wane over time.

However, September 11 changed all that. The terrorist attacks on the United States provided China with an opportunity to find common ground with the new ad-

ministration—to collaborate with Washington in the new "war on terror." This second stage began almost immediately after the attacks, when Chinese president Jiang Zemin telephoned Bush to offer his sympathy and support. In effect, Beijing's message was: We have terrorists too (among China's 10 million Muslims), and we want to work with you in the struggle against terrorism.[12] When it came to invading Iraq, however, China joined France and Russia in opposition. If the United Nations Security Council had put a second resolution on Iraq to a vote, one that proposed to endorse a U.S.-led invasion, it was unclear whether China would have joined France and Russia in vetoing that resolution. But China clearly opposed the invasion. Nor did China join in other U.S. undertakings, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative, a multilateral effort to interdict shipments of weapons of mass destruction and missile delivery systems.

Meanwhile, Beijing began to implement a strategic response to the Bush Doctrine. In this third stage, the focus has been on Asia. The core of the Chinese alternative has been a cooperative security response to Bush's unilateralist, preventive war strategy. In response to America's determination to reshape the world by force, China now proposed to build cooperation among different groupings of states in creating new international institutions for achieving solutions to common problems.

For Beijing, these initiatives were unprecedented. From dynastic times to the present, China had adopted a largely realist view of the world, and, like the United States, it had preferred a bilateral approach to foreign relations. Moreover, neither in its dynastic past nor in its communist present had China been any more benevolent toward its neighbors, or more hesitant to use military force than most major powers.[13] For China now to adopt a multilateral, cooperative-security design was something new and important.

By the mid-1990s, some analysts had begun to identify China as a "responsible" power, pointing to Beijing's increasing participation in international institutions like APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum, and the World Trade Organization. By seeking and winning the opportunity to host the Olympics in 2008, and in other ways, Beijing began to signal that it was aware of its growing stake in the status quo and was prepared to help in maintaining the strategic stability that is a prerequisite for the continued economic prosperity of East Asia.

From this beginning emerged the strategic response to the Bush Doctrine. Some called this "China's new diplomacy,"[14] but it was much more than that. Beijing followed the establishment of "ASEAN+3" (yearly meetings between the ten member countries of ASEAN with China, Japan, and South Korea) with the establishment of "ASEAN+1" (the ASEAN countries and China alone). China took the lead in creating the first multilateral institution in Central Asia, the six-member Shanghai Cooperation Organization (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan),[15] and worked to demonstrate to its neighbors that both economic and strategic security could be based on a new design: cooperation for mutual benefit among potential adversaries rather than the building of military alliances against a perceived common threat.

In the name of "nontraditional" security cooperation to deal with terrorism and other transnational crime, Beijing even normalized its relations with its former adversary India,[16] and conducted unprecedented, joint naval exercises with both India and Pakistan in the East China Sea near Shanghai in late 2003. Chinese commentators emphasized the cooperative-security theoretical basis for these initiatives: "China has been a proponent of mutual understanding and trust through international security cooperation and opposed any military alliance directed

at any other countries," and "China won't accept any military cooperation that is directed at other countries."[17]

In October 2003, China signed the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (the first non-ASEAN country to do so), and negotiated a "strategic partnership for peace and prosperity" with the ten ASEAN member countries. The objective is to build an East Asian Community founded on economic, social, and security cooperation.[18] Beijing also demonstrated its new approach by offering to host the six-party negotiations to find a peaceful solution to the North Korean nuclear crisis.

The key distinguishing features of the Bush administration's and Beijing's very different approaches to dealing with the post–Cold War world, stated schematically, are the following:

Bush	PRC
Absolute security for the United States	Cooperative security (seeking to work *with* potential adversaries, rather than to make war against them)
Unilateral	Multilateral
Preventive war and regime change	Rules-based collective action, and conflict-resolution diplomacy
Zero-sum strategic games	Positive-sum strategic games, designed to achieve win-win outcomes
Disdain for international law, treaties, and institutions	International institution building

Beijing's approach is by no means a pacifist design. China is clearly seeking to modernize its military capability and giving very serious thought to exactly what kind of military would be most effective in dealing with the dangers of today's world, including a potential U.S. threat.[19] The military specialist Paul Godwin notes that "a primary objective of the PLA [People's Liberation Army] is to exploit perceived U.S. vulnerabilities."[20] For example, the PRC has made a careful study of so-called asymmetrical warfare and how weaker powers might successfully confront stronger powers. But it would be a mistake to understand the Chinese modernization project as predicated on launching an arms race with the United States—at least not yet.

To date, Chinese nuclear doctrine has focused on maintaining a "minimum nuclear deterrent" capable of launching a retaliatory strike after surviving an initial nuclear attack, rather than on building huge arsenals of more and more powerful nuclear weapons.[21] Beijing is well aware of the great disparity in military capabilities between China and the United States, as well as the disparity in financial and technological capacity. It is also aware of the argument that one of the key factors that finally broke the back of the former Soviet Union was its inability to sustain the arms race with the United States. It does not want to fall into that trap.

Chinese analysts have described their strategy as a design for *heping jueqi*, or "peaceful rise." Zheng Bijian, former vice president of the Central Chinese Communist Party School, says that this approach is prompted by the conviction that "China must seek a peaceful global environment to develop its economy even as it tries to safeguard world peace through development."[22] Building relations based on mutual benefit with all of its neighbors is a central objective of this strategy. Beijing wants to demonstrate that closer trade, investment, and even security relations with China can be beneficial to its neighbors.

Singapore commentator Eric Teo Chu Cheow has suggested that this new strategy resembles an old one: "China's Ming/Qing tributary system was based on three cardinal points: First, China considered itself the 'central heart' of the region; this tributary system assured China of its overall security

environment. Second, to ensure its internal stability and prosperity, China needed a stable environment immediately surrounding the Middle Kingdom. Third, the Chinese emperor would in principle give more favors to tributary states or kingdoms than he received from them; for this generosity, the emperor obtained their respect and goodwill."[23]

Obviously, the international relations of the twenty-first century are very different from China's imperial relations during the Ming and Qing dynasties, but the idea of establishing mutually beneficial economic and security ties with neighboring states makes sense for everyone in Asia. Meanwhile, if successful, such a concert of power (in this case, among states that are formally equals rather than dependents of China) would help to maintain the strategic stability that China needs for its economic modernization. Critics, like activist Cao Siyuan, argue that to be successful, the "peaceful rise" strategy must be accompanied by substantial domestic political liberalization and greater transparency with respect to China's military posture: "Diplomacy is often the extension of domestic policy. A leadership's commitment to global fraternity and solidarity will be called into doubt if it is so reluctant to give its own people adequate human rights."[24] Can China practice at home what it has begun to preach abroad?

Beijing's new strategy has yet to be tested. How will Beijing's commitment to cooperative security hold up when disputes with neighbors over territory or political differences reemerge? Will it also apply to cross-strait relations with Taiwan? Yet when compared with Bush's record of making war to achieve peace in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Chinese response has substantial appeal, especially among the ASEAN countries, where cooperative security ideas have long been popular.

Clearly, China wants to avoid a conflict with the United States. The Japanese journalist Funabashi Yoichi quotes one Chinese think tank researcher as saying: "We are studying the origin of the U.S.-Soviet Cold War. Why did it happen? Was there no way to prevent it? Some see that a U.S.-China cold war is inevitable, but what can we do to prevent it?"[25] China's strategic response to the Bush Doctrine is not confrontational toward the United States and does not require China's Asian neighbors to choose between Beijing and Washington, something none of them wants to have to do.[26] Though it is not a design for what realists would call "balancing" against the United States, it challenges Washington to think and act in ways quite different from the policies prescribed by the Bush Doctrine when trying to resolve problems in international relations.

What Is to Come?

Leaders in both the United States and the PRC have recently consolidated their power: George W. Bush has been reelected, and Hu Jintao has finally moved former president Jiang Zemin into retirement from his Central Military Commission chairmanship and assumed the preeminent leadership of China's party, army, and state institutions. But there the similarities end.

While Beijing has been preoccupied with trying to cool down its burgeoning economy, which has been growing at the astonishing rate of some 9 percent a year, the United States appears stretched to the breaking point to meet its global commitments as the world's sole superpower. And despite the customary statements made by Secretary of State Colin Powell and his PRC counterpart about Sino-America cooperation and harmony, Qian Qichen, China's former vice premier and foreign minister, published an attack on the Bush Doctrine just before the U.S. presidential election that perhaps presented a more accurate picture of Chinese leadership thinking than the official Foreign Ministry statements.

Although it was immediately disowned by Beijing as in any sense reflecting official PRC views, Qian's article charged that the

Bush Doctrine had opened a Pandora's box in advancing the notion that the United States "should rule over the whole world with overwhelming force, military force in particular." The Iraq war, Qian wrote, "has made the United States even more unpopular in the international community than its war in Vietnam." Washington, he said, was practicing "the same catastrophic strategy applied by former empires in history." But, he concluded, "it is incapable of realizing [its] goal." In his view, "the troubles and disasters the United States has met do not stem from threats by others, but from its own cocksureness and arrogance."[27]

China is not without its own problems, of course. A society of 1.3 billion people ruled by a Communist Party that insists on a monopoly of political power while trying to manage an increasingly open market economy is never going to be short of problems. Corruption, growing income inequality, and devastating environmental problems lead the list. Meanwhile, in terms of purchasing power parity, China is already the second-largest economy in the world. It is also second to the United States in energy consumption, having shifted over the past decade from being an oil exporter to an oil importer: China is now dependent on foreign sources for some 40 percent of its crude oil requirements, a number that is expected to rise to as much as 75 percent by 2025.[28]

But while China may be suffering from too much exuberance, the United States appears to be increasingly overextended. Nearly two decades ago, the historian Paul Kennedy sounded a warning about what he called "imperial overstretch," when a state's geopolitical ambitions exceed its material capabilities to sustain such ambitions.[29] In early 2001, when George W. Bush first took office, the Congressional Budget Office projected a federal budget surplus of $5 trillion over the next ten years; but following what the *Economist* has characterized as Bush's "binge of tax-cutting and spending," economists are now projecting instead a $5 trillion budget deficit.[30] Since Bush took office, the federal debt has increased by 40 percent, or $2.1 trillion, and Congress has been required to raise the federal debt ceiling several times already.[31] Meanwhile, the burden of U.S. military commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq, where tours of duty have been extended to keep sufficient troops on the ground, appears to preclude any new "preemptive" assaults on additional countries.

China, for its part, is concerned about Japanese participation in the U.S. missile defense system, new legislation to permit Japanese forces to play a larger supporting role in Bush initiatives, and the possible revision of Japan's constitution to facilitate a more substantial military modernization;[32] but except for possible miscalculation over the issue of Taiwan, there appears to be little likelihood of direct confrontation between the United States and China. Beijing and Washington understand each other much better today than they did in 1995–96 when China launched its "missile exercises" in a failed effort to influence the presidential elections in Taiwan, and since then, they have established a variety of communication links in order to avoid misperception and miscommunication if tensions in the Taiwan Strait should reemerge.

Taiwan will continue to be an issue in Sino-American relations, but it is Iraq, Iran, and North Korea that should provide the best indicators of their strategic competition. China and the United States take very different positions with respect to each of the three states demonized by President Bush as an "axis of evil" in his 2002 State of the Union Address, and each one raises a separate kind of problem for the Bush Doctrine.

The most serious and immediate case is, of course, Iraq. China opposed the U.S. invasion and totally rejects the doctrine of preventive war. The PRC, like the other major powers, fears a disruption in petroleum imports from the Middle East if the U.S. intervention fails and Iraq descends into

chaos, but Beijing clearly does not want the U.S. policy of unilateral military intervention to become the norm.

Iran's nuclear program raises a different issue, since it is unlikely that the United States will have the military capability in the near future to threaten an invasion of the country. It is possible that Bush might endorse at some point an Israeli air assault on the Iranian nuclear facilities, like the Israeli "surgical strike" on Iraq's plutonium-producing Osirak research reactor in 1981, but rather than a site for a new preventive war, Iran is currently a test case for Under Secretary of State John Bolton's policy of "counterproliferation," a coercive-diplomacy strategy designed to use international pressure to force Iran to give up its potential nuclear weapons capability.[33] China, like many of the European allies, rejects this approach in favor of a more conventional "arms control" or "nonproliferation" approach.[34]

Finally, by hosting the six-party talks on North Korea, China directly confronts the Bush Doctrine with its own cooperative security approach to conflict resolution.[35] China is no less concerned to stop nuclear weapons proliferation in Northeast Asia than the United States, fearing that a nuclear North Korea could prompt Japan, South Korea, and possibly even Taiwan to follow suit. But having rejected the coercive U.S. Proliferation Security Initiative, China is proposing instead a multilateral security mechanism for the region to engage and to incorporate the existing North Korean regime.

When Beijing and Washington come face to face, there are always a great many issues to discuss: Taiwan, the U.S, trade deficit with the PRC, and Beijing's concern about the falling U.S. dollar (China is heavily invested in U.S. Treasury bonds), as well as North Korea, Iraq, Iran, and other security problems. Beijing will wait to see who will hold the key foreign policy and security posts in the second Bush administration, and it will have to learn to work more closely with Condoleezza Rice as secretary of state after Colin Powell is gone.

China and the United States are still "in the same bed but dreaming different dreams," as Beijing and Washington each appeal to the world to support their distinctive approaches to resolving the problems of the twenty-first century. President Chen Sui-bian's failure to win a majority for his pro-independence position in Taiwan's legislature in the December 11 elections should help ease tensions over the Taiwan issue, but policies toward the "axis of evil" countries remain in dispute. For the next chapter in the Sino-American saga, it would be a good idea to keep a close watch on North Korea, Iran, and Iraq. ●

Notes

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3. Ibid., p. 7.

4. See, for example, Ahmed Rashid, "The Mess in Afghanistan," *New York Review of Books*, February 12, 2004, pp. 24–27; Jamie Wilson, "Attacks Halt Rebuilding Work in Iraq," *Guardian Weekly*, April 29-May 5, 2004, p. 1; Scott Wilson, "US Abuse Worse Than Saddam's, Say Inmates," *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 4, 2004; and Sarah Boseley, "100,000 Iraq Civilians Have Died Since Invasion, Survey Finds," *Guardian Weekly*, November 5–11, 2004, p. 4.

5. "President Holds Press Conference," November 4, 2004, www.whitehouse.gov.

6. See Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, "The Sources of American Legitimacy," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 83 (November/December 2004), pp. 18–32. Regarding the issue of torture, which has so undermined the legitimacy of the U.S. role, see also Seymour M. Hersh, *Chain of Command: The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004); and Mark Danner, *Torture and Truth: America,*

Abu Ghraib, and the War on Terror (New York: New York Review Books, 2004).

7. Melvin Gurtov and Peter Van Ness, eds., *Confronting the Bush Doctrine: Critical Views from the Asia-Pacific* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004).

8. See Peter Van Ness, "Hegemony, Not Anarchy: Why China and Japan Are Not Balancing US Unipolar Power," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2002), pp. 131–50.

9. For example, Richard Clarke, former head of counterterrorism in the White House during both the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations, found that for Bush and his neoconservative advisers "Iraq was portrayed as the most dangerous thing in national security. It was an idée fixe, a rigid belief, received wisdom, a decision already made and one that no fact or event could derail." Invading Iraq constituted "a rejection of analysis in favor of received wisdom. It has left us less secure. We will pay the price for a long time" (Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror* [New York: Free Press, 2004], pp. 265, 287).

10. See Timothy Savage, "Letting the Genie Out of the Bottle: The Bush Nuclear Doctrine in Asia," in Gurtov and Van Ness, eds., *Confronting the Bush Doctrine*; and David S. McDonough, *The 2002 Nuclear Posture Review: The "New Triad," Counterproliferation, and U.S. Grand Strategy* (Vancouver, B.C.: Centre of International Relations, University of British Columbia, Working Paper No. 38, August 2003).

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12. You Ji, "China's Post 9/11 Terrorism Strategy," Jamestown Foundation, *China Brief*, vol. 4, no. 8, April 15, 2004.

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15. For the Shanghai Cooperation Organization statement on terrorism, see *Beijing Review*, January 17, 2002, p. 5.

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23. Eric Teo Chu Cheow, "An Ancient Model for China's New Power: Paying Tribute to Beijing," *International Herald Tribune*, January 21, 2004.

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30. *Economist*, October 9–15, 2004.

31. *International Herald Tribune*, October 16–17, 2004, p. 2.

32. Richard Tanter, "With Eyes Wide Shut: Japan, Heisei Militarization, and the Bush Doctrine," in Gurtov and Van Ness, eds., *Confronting the Bush Doctrine*.

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Hegemony, not anarchy: why China and Japan are not balancing US unipolar power

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Abstract

The United States today dominates the globe and many regional geographical subsystems in an unprecedented way, maintaining a hegemonic order that is in no way similar to the 'anarchy' assumed in realist analyses. The global system today is not simply unipolar; it is a hegemonic system that is increasingly globalized, in which the basic concepts of realism (anarchy, self-help and power balancing) provide little guidance or understanding in explaining state behavior. This paper describes the US hegemonic system, analyzes the roles of China and Japan within this system, and examines how the Bush administration's plans for missile defense might transform the system. The conclusion points to some critical implications from this analysis for realist interpretations of international politics.

1 Introduction

Ten years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the debate about how best to understand our post-Cold War world continues with no resolution in sight. The major competing images (e.g. 'end of history', 'clash of civilizations', 'borderless world' or 'new medievalism') capture at best only one or two dimensions of the complexities of the world today (Fry and O'Hagan, 2000). Amidst the contending images and paradigms, however, there does seem to be a consensus about the predominance of US power. While there is much debate about how sustainable America's pre-eminent global role may be, few scholars today would contest the proposition that the United States is militarily,

economically, and in most fields scientifically and technologically predominant. Thus, terms like 'unipolar power' and, in Europe, the less admiring 'hyperpower' have become common parlance.[1] Policy analysis has focused on the use, and abuse, of US global power.

Despite this consensus about the predominance of US power, much contemporary international relations scholarship fails to take into account the pervasive influence of US structural power. Realists and neorealists, for example, continue to assume that the character of the global system is best understood as anarchic, and that the security policies of major powers, as a result, will inevitably be designed on the basis of self-help strategies. New contenders, they insist, will inevitably emerge to challenge US unipolar power.

Kenneth Waltz, for one, argues that realism 'remains the basic theory of international politics', but contrary to realist expectations, none of his major candidates to be the next great power (the European Union, China, Japan and Russia) have thus far sought to balance US power. His conclusion nonetheless is that, given the existence of anarchy, they must do so in the future as a part of 'the all-but-inevitable movement from unipolarity to multipolarity' that is taking place in Asia (Waltz, 2000, pp. 32, 41). The failure of major powers to balance US power ten years after the collapse of the Soviet Union constitutes a major anomaly in the realist interpretation.

Critiquing Waltz's argument, this essay will make the case that the United States today plays a hegemonic role in different ways in different parts of the world. Contrasting my understanding with Waltz's interpretation, but focusing on East Asia as he has suggested, I will specifically address the question of why neither China nor Japan has chosen to balance the power of the United States. I want to show that Chinese and Japanese reluctance to balance American power can be better explained by alternative understandings of the structure of the global system, based on concepts of hegemony and globalization.[2]

I will argue that China and Japan, both in different ways strategic dependents of the United States, devise their national security policies to deal with a world that is not, for them, characterized by anarchy. Instead, they perceive a hierarchical world environment, structured in terms of a combination of US military-strategic hegemony and a globalized economic interdependence.

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1 For example, the United States is characterized as 'the sole and unique hyperpower' by French Foreign Minister, Hubert Vedrine, quoted in Levine (2000, p. 12).

2 The Gramscian concept of 'hegemony' used here is primarily drawn from Cox (in Cox with Sinclair, 1996). By 'globalization,' I mean the multifaceted processes of transformation described in Held *et al.* (1999) to include the imperatives labelled the 'golden straitjacket' by Friedman (1999, chap. 5). Critical perspectives such as Klein's (1999) also help to illuminate the dynamics of globalization.

They devise strategies based on the perceived benefits/costs of participation in that system, as compared with opting out of it.

Each of the two countries has the capability to reject dependency on the United States, but neither is even close to doing so. Japan's leaders can no more conceive of a world without the US security commitment (Soeya, 1998) than China can consider opting out of the global capitalist market and returning to the Maoist economic strategy of self-reliance. Moreover, both have recent, unhappy experiences of attempting to balance against the United States (Japan in alliance with Germany during the Second World War, and China during the first two decades of the Maoist period); each paid a heavy price for doing so.

For China and Japan, what realists would see as 'bandwagoning' is their only option – *unless they are forced out of the system by basic rule-changes insisted upon by the hegemon*. Participation in the hegemonic system provides such substantial benefits that each has become dependent upon continuing to receive them. Japan has enjoyed these benefits for over half a century, and even communist China has chosen dependence on the leading capitalist country, and already stayed the course for over twenty years.

With respect to US hegemony, the international positions of China and Japan are embedded in and supported by domestic development strategies, social identities and ruling-party legitimacy claims (e.g. Japan's self-image as a 'pacifist nation', and the extent to which the Chinese Communist party's [CCP] legitimacy has become dependent on assuring high and continuing rates of economic growth). However, dependency always has a price. Clearly, Japan is more comfortable in its dependent relationship with the United States than is the CCP regime.[3]

Nonetheless, there are substantial benefits for China (see Vogel, 1997; Lardy, 1998; Economy and Oksenberg, 1999). In the twenty years since the CCP leadership began its domestic market reforms and 'open policy' with respect to foreign aid and investment, China has averaged annual economic growth rates of 9%. The training of People's Republic of China (PRC) students and scholars in the West, most importantly in the United States, by itself constitutes the most significant transfer of technology to one country in a short period of time ever. Without doubt, over the past twenty years, China has obtained what it needed for its economic modernization from abroad (capital, technology and access to markets) in greater amounts and at less cost than any country has previously, including Japan during the Meiji period. Yet China's CCP leadership continues to actively resist the inroads

3 By participating in the US hegemonic system, China faces new kinds of security threats that self-help strategies cannot help to resolve (Van Ness, 2000).

of US culture, especially the pressure to democratize, while sustaining its dependent role. To different degrees, Japan and even its European allies also reject US cultural influences while acquiescing, much more happily than China to be sure, to US dominance.

States existing under the US hegemonic order in East Asia have to adjust to the changing role of the hegemon. Most importantly, these states are concerned about the sustainability of the benefits provided by the hegemon, on the one hand, or new costs to be exacted, on the other. A hegemon by definition has the power unilaterally to change the rules of the system in fundamental ways that may seriously affect the security of dependent states.

The Bush administration's commitment to build and to deploy missile defenses, both a national missile defense system (NMD) to protect the United States and a theater missile defense (TMD) system in East Asia, are forcing such a reconsideration in China and Japan. A US decision to deploy NMD would threaten the viability of China's nuclear deterrent and its fundamental sense of national security. Early Japanese enthusiasm for TMD led to a decision to engage in joint research with the United States. This has now been tempered by concerns that missile defense participation might isolate Japan in the North-east Asian region. Japanese participation creates the potential for confrontation with both China and Russia, the region's two other major powers. This potential would substantially increase should missile defense in the United States ultimately became part of a 'fortress America' strategic design, which would depend on the projection of power from US territories in the Pacific, and the withdrawal of US troops from the region. In what might be understood as a *mismanaged hegemony*, President Bush's new strategic 'vision' has the potential to disrupt the stability from which virtually all countries in the Asia-Pacific have benefited so substantially over the past twenty-five years.[4]

In this essay I will describe the US hegemonic system, analyze the roles of Japan and China within this system, and then examine how US plans for missile defense might transform the system. Finally, in the conclusion, I will draw out some of the critical implications from my analysis for realist interpretations of the international politics of East Asia.

2 US Hegemony in East Asia

The United States maintains a very particular type of hegemonic system in East Asia that is analogous to but different from Western Europe and the Americas, where US power is also predominant. There are implied rules. States may not make war against each other (unless both are communist-party

4 For advice to the Bush administration on how best to manage US hegemony, see Ikenberry (2001).

states, as in the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1978 and the China–Vietnam war of 1979). Non-nuclear states may not formally go nuclear (but a 'virtual' nuclear power like Japan[5] is tolerated). All states are encouraged to become ever more deeply integrated into the capitalist world market and to open their economies to foreign investment. Finally, they are pressured by the United States to become formal democracies – to the point that some authoritarian regimes, especially China, have identified these pressures as serious threats to their national security (Roy, 1996).

The US strategic role in East Asia is best understood as one of 'hegemony' in the Gramscian sense of 'consensus protected by the "armor of coercion"' (Robinson, 1996, p. 22). Robert Cox spells out the implications of the Gramscian concept:

> Hegemony at the international level is thus not merely an order among states. It is an order within a world economy with a dominant mode of production which penetrates into all countries and links into other subordinate modes of production. It is also a complex of international social relationships which connect the social classes of the different countries. World hegemony can be described as a social structure, an economic structure, and a political structure; and it cannot be simply one of these things but must be all three. World hegemony, furthermore, is expressed in universal norms, institutions, and mechanisms which lay down general rules of behavior for states and for those forces of civil society that act across national boundaries, rules which support the dominant mode of production. (Cox, 1996, p. 137)

For Gramsci, 'ideas and material conditions are always bound together, mutually influencing one another, and not reducible one to the other'. The hegemonic state 'maintains cohesion and identity within the bloc through the propagation of a common culture' (Cox, 1996, p. 132).

Fundamental to the Gramscian concept of hegemony, as adapted by Cox to international relations, is the understanding that it combines both hard and soft power (Nye, 1990). Hegemony in this sense is maintained not only by military and economic preponderance but also by the propagation of particular norms and values.[6] Cultural power is a key component of this concept of hegemony. In sustaining the US role as hegemon in East Asia, the propagation of human rights, democracy and other liberal values by the

5 The meaning of 'virtual' here is that Japan has the capability to become a nuclear-weapons power, if it should choose to, in a very short period of time. For a concept of 'virtual deterrence', see Mack (1996, p. 17).

6 For different interpretations of how America implements its soft power abroad, see Cox *et al.* (2000).

United States is therefore as important as the maintenance of its military bases. Moreover, US strategic hegemony is linked inextricably to the expansion of the world market economy and the globalization of capitalist modes of production. Thomas Friedman concludes that 'In the globalization system, the United States is now the sole and dominant superpower and all other nations are subordinate to it to one degree or another' (Friedman, 1999, p. 11).

This is not an anarchic system. It is obviously true that the global system lacks an authoritative world government. But it is mistaken to infer from this the belief that state actors inevitably perceive the world as an anarchical system; this is to misunderstand the nature of contemporary interstate relations. Moreover, neither the global system nor the East Asian subsystem is multipolar in the sense that any of the other major powers, since the collapse of the Soviet Union ten years ago, has acted to provide an alternative to US power. To serve as an effective 'pole' in international politics, a state must be able to attract other states to join in concert to achieve common objectives.

Which other states, large or small, would perceive it to be in their 'national interest' to ally with China, Japan or Russia against the United States (Garnett, 2000)? Only the European Union among the four candidates for 'pole' has the combination of hard and soft power necessary to acquire allies. But the European Union, as a community of independent states, has the unique problem of being unable to make timely decisions on important strategic issues because of the need to gain consensus among its members. Even when it can achieve consensus, it usually finds itself more in agreement with than in opposition to the United States.

With the exception of North Korea and Burma on the periphery, all of the states in East Asia are in varying degrees strategic dependents of the United States. This is because of the role that the US plays as guarantor of strategic and economic stability in the region, and because of the access that it provides to the immense US market (Acharya, 1999). Recent examples of the US military-strategic role as guarantor are the interventions in North Korea in 1994 to stop the development of nuclear weapons (Sigal, 1998; Snyder, 1999), in the Taiwan Straits in 1996 to oppose the PRC 'missile exercise' threat of force against Taiwan (Garver, 1997), and in East Timor to broker the Indonesian acceptance of an Australian-led military intervention in 1999 (Tanter *et al.*, 2000).

US strategic doctrine describes three key US responsibilities in the region: 'to shape the international environment; respond to the full spectrum of crises; and prepare now for an uncertain future'. By committing 100 000 military personnel to the Asia-Pacific region for the foreseeable future, the US has prepared for any eventuality (US Department of Defense, 1998,

p. 8). In East Asia, American strategic hegemony builds on the foundation of economic interdependence in the region (a structure of foreign trade, aid, investment and technology transfer) which was initiated by Japan as a means of rebuilding its devastated country after the end of the Second World War.

3 Japan: 'pacifist nation'

For years, realists have been predicting that Japan, especially on the basis of its immense economic power, would emerge to challenge the United States. This has not proved to be the case. In 1993, Waltz wrote:

> For a country to choose not to become a great power is a structural anomaly. For that reason, the choice is a difficult one to sustain. Sooner or later, usually sooner, the international status of countries has risen in step with their material resources. Countries with great-power economies have become great powers, whether or not reluctantly. . . . How long can Japan and Germany live alongside other nuclear states while denying themselves similar capabilities? (Waltz, 1993, p. 66)

Instead, fifty-six years after the end of the Second World War, the conservative Liberal Democratic Party regime in Japan continues to opt for dependence on the United States (Inoguchi and Jain, 2000). Why? Why would Japan, a country that enjoys the second largest economy in the world, and has built the most modern conventional military forces in East Asia after the United States, continue to shelter under US hegemony?

Part of the answer is historical.[7] Japan attempted in the past to balance US power by, first, allying with fascist Germany and Italy in the early years of the Second World War (in the Tripartite Pact of September 1940) and, later, confronting the United States directly by attacking Pearl Harbor in December 1941. But Japan suffered terribly as a result: more than three million Japanese died, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were subject to nuclear attack, and an empire that had once stretched from the Russian border with China in the north to include most of China's major cities, all of South-east Asia, and much of the western Pacific, was lost. Japan's contemporary self-image as an exceptionalist pacific nation, its status as the only country ever to be attacked with nuclear weapons, and continuing citizen resistance to the amendment of Article 9 of the constitution obviously derive from that history.

From a different perspective, the history of the Second World War also plays a role in constraining the evolution of any expanded strategic influence

7 Our understanding of contemporary Japan has been immensely enriched by the recent publication of two classic historical studies: Dower (1999) and Bix (2000).

in the region for Japan. Especially in China and Korea, memories of Japan's wartime atrocities (e.g. Unit 731, which carried out experiments on human subjects, the 'comfort women', and the rape of Nanjing) are kept fresh by those Asian leaders who are anxious to avoid having to deal with a remilitarized Japan. Moreover, Japan has no natural allies in the region, countries that might be willing to follow Tokyo's lead in providing a strategic alternative to the United States. On the contrary, Japan's immediate neighbors are among those most opposed to a greater military role for Japan.

The strategy that Japanese leaders adopted to rebuild their country economically after the devastation of the Second World War was made possible by security guarantees from the United States. Over time, a symbiotic relationship has evolved between the regional patterns of economic interdependence initiated by Japan and US regional strategic hegemony. For example, in 1991, when I interviewed former Japanese foreign minister Okita Saburo in Tokyo, I asked him about the feasibility of multilateral security institutions, like the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (now Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) for the region. 'Would something like the CSCE be a good idea for East Asia?' I asked. 'No', he replied, 'but it already exists. It is economic.'

What Okita was referring to was the structure of foreign trade, aid, investment and technology transfer between Japan and the rest of East Asia that has been carefully constructed in the postwar period by the Japanese. Some wag once labelled it 'Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere II', suggesting a comparison with Japan's Second World War policies. Many of the objectives are indeed the same: gaining access to vital natural resources and markets for Japan's industrialization. But obviously the means are quite different. This time Japan's relations with Asia would be built on voluntary co-operation rather than enforced compliance, and the result would have substantial benefits for all parties, not just Japan.

Building relationships of economic interdependence based on mutual benefit has been a foundation stone of Japan's Asian policy now for decades. Unlike the zero-sum logic of realist thinking, which focuses on relative gains for different countries, the absolute gains all parties derive from economic interdependence help to provide a solid foundation for strategic stability and long-term co-operation among states in the region. Paradoxically, although the United States and Japan are obviously economic competitors in markets throughout the world, Japanese economic policy in East Asia, when understood in Okita Saburo's sense as security policy, serves to sustain and support the US hegemonic role.

Finally, Japan's decisions about its strategic relationship with the United States should be understood in the context of similar deliberations by the

other five members of the original G-7 group of rich, capitalist countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom). Among them, certainly France, Germany and the United Kingdom all have the material capabilities to stand apart from US hegemony, but none has chosen to do so. In addition to enjoying two of the largest economies in the world, France and the United Kingdom are also nuclear-weapons powers and permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. Yet, since the collapse of the Soviet Union ten years ago, none has acted to provide an alternative to US power.[8] In this regard, then, Japan is not an exception.

More than fifty-five years after the end of the Second World War, Japan's occupation-imposed constitution remains intact, including the famous Article 9 in which 'the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes'. Japan remains enmeshed in the US hegemonic system. Despite growing domestic sentiment to amend the constitution (Hook and McCormack, 2001), the nuclear option for Japan would be extremely unlikely unless the security commitments made under the US–Japan treaty were somehow to lose credibility. Both Japan's exceptionalist self-image as pacifist nation and pressure from the United States combine to keep Japan within the non-proliferation regime. The stakes are extremely high. All are aware that if Japan were to choose to build and to deploy nuclear weapons, this would be very likely to signal an end to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime.

4 China: the rising power

Following Mao Zedong's death in 1976, Deng Xiaoping struck what some might see as a Faustian bargain with the West. Deng proposed to save the socialist revolution in China by using capitalist methods. Faced with a citizenry traumatized by almost two decades of ideological extremism, Deng began in 1978 to revitalize the country by implementing market reforms, to force greater efficiency on China's command economy, and to provide improved living standards for the Chinese people.[9]

Reversing Mao's economic strategy of self-reliance, Deng launched the 'open policy' with respect to the global capitalist system. Overturning Mao's

8 This is particularly apparent in crisis situations (e.g. Kosovo, the 1998 North Korean missile launch over Japan, and East Timor). In each situation, the other powers have deferred to the United States to manage the crisis, either by leading a direct intervention itself or by brokering a response, as in the case of East Timor.

9 The attempted justification in Marxist theory for this strategy of using capitalism to build the material foundations for socialist development is the so-called theory of 'the preliminary stage of socialism' (Zhao, 1987, pp. i–xxvii.)

socialist principles, the People's Republic of China would now welcome foreign investment, seek bilateral foreign aid from capitalist countries, and for the first time join major international financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Deng's risky strategy was designed to achieve wealth and power for China and to sustain Communist Party rule after the Maoist disasters of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. The obvious risk for the CCP leadership was that Deng's modernization strategy might lead to a gradual erosion of the domestic foundations of communist rule in China.

Building on the strategic accommodation negotiated between Mao and Richard Nixon in the early 1970s, Deng sought to establish a much deeper relationship with the United States. Formal diplomatic relations were established, access to US markets was facilitated through granting most-favored-nation trading status to China, and the United States agreed to accept what became tens of thousands of scientists and students for training in the United States. During the 1980s, the United States in effect became China's patron in encouraging more and more substantial participation by the PRC in the global capitalist system.

Yet the two governments have co-operated with each other as a means to achieving quite different ends, like two lovers in bed dreaming different dreams (Lampton, 2001). Beijing co-operates with the United States as a way of obtaining what it most needs for its economic modernization, assuming that Chinese power is rising and US hegemony is in decline. Washington seeks greater access to the potentially immense Chinese market, calculating that co-operation with China provides both a way to meliorate Beijing's radicalism and an opportunity to democratize China.

Nonetheless, China's dependent role rankles. This is especially true of the Communist Party government, still claiming legitimacy on the basis of a discredited Marxist-Leninist ideology; however, any Chinese government would resist playing the role of a dependent power. Identification with the glories of China's Middle Kingdom past, especially as these contrast with the history of China's humiliation at the hands of Japan and the West during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, influences contemporary images of national identity.

Unlike much Western strategic thinking, Chinese analysts focus on assessing longer-term strategic futures. They understand the current US predominance as 'hegemony', but argue that a multipolar structure will inevitably evolve out of the present global system, in which US relative power will decline and Chinese power will increase. Deng Xiaoping's earlier injunctions still dominate China's strategic thinking about how to deal with US hegemony.

In his survey of Chinese strategic analysts, Michael Pillsbury describes their thinking this way:

> The existence of a dangerous and predatory hegemon is the context of Deng Xiaoping's advice, which employs expressions from the Warring States and other ancient texts to guide future Chinese leaders on strategy. China must 'tao guang yang hui', which, literally translated, means 'Hide brightness, nourish obscurity', or, as the official Beijing interpretation translates the four-character idiom, 'Bide our time and build up our capabilities'. China at present is too poor and weak and must avoid being dragged into local wars, conflicts about spheres of influence, or struggles over natural resources. Deng's much-quoted advice also is to 'yield on small issues with the long term in mind'. (Pillsbury, 2000)

Yet Chinese analysts differ with respect to their predictions about precisely when in the future China's 'comprehensive national power' is likely to overtake America's, and what the best tactics should be in the meantime. The hardliner He Xin, for example, favors trying to build an anti-US united front among those powers most opposed to US hegemony. The more moderate Yan Xuetong argues instead for patience and caution, building China's relative capabilities within the existing regime and avoiding confrontations that might prompt the United States to attempt to contain China's rising power (Pillsbury, 2000).

China is rapidly modernizing its modest military capability (Stokes, 1999; Scobell, 2000), and its greatest strategic concern is a fear that the United States may in the future decide to stand in the way of China's rise to power. Given the United States' overwhelming capabilities, it is not surprising that the United States is perceived to be the most likely source of threat in Beijing. China's transition might take a variety of different directions. Demonizing China, however, might indeed help to turn the PRC into the 'China threat' that conservative Republicans in the United States insist already exists.[10]

The most obvious shortcoming in many Western assessments of the rise of Chinese power and its implications for the United States is a failure to analyze the domestic vulnerabilities of the CCP regime. Chinese Communist Party rule in the world's most populous country is today an anachronism. Communism as a political philosophy is dead elsewhere, and the actions, if not the rhetoric of the CCP acknowledge that it is also dead in China. In the

10 Among the more alarmist assessments are Gertz (2000) and Timperlake and Triplett (1999). A more measured analysis is Bernstein and Munro (1997). Gerald Segal (1999, pp. 24-36) provides some appropriate balance. For the PRC's declaratory policy with respect to security issues, see 'China's National Defense in 2000' (PRC, 2000).

post-Mao period the party has built its claim to a monopoly of political power in China on championing China's nationalist credentials, maintaining domestic political and social stability, and continuously increasing the material standard of living of the Chinese people. If the CCP fails in achieving any of these three objectives, its power is at risk. Presumably, the traumatic events of 1989–91 in the Soviet Union, and the more recent dethroning of President Suharto in Indonesia, cast long shadows into the nightmares of the residents of Zhongnanhai.

China is engaged in a traumatic process of transition. The hectic pace of change over the past twenty years has produced a range of serious challenges to CCP rule. Among the most difficult to resolve are: growing income inequality, which is likely to increase as a result of China's membership in the World Trade Organization (Wang, 2000); the need to establish the rule of law in order to sustain continued economic modernization, a legal system that would inevitably constrain CCP arbitrary power (Lubman, 1999); a growing AIDS epidemic; devastating environmental pollution; and political opposition (from the spiritual group Falun Gong, to activists attempting to establish democratic political parties, to workers determined to have their own, independent trade unions). At the top of this long list of domestic crises should be placed corruption, which is endemic throughout the system.[11]

Corruption has been the Achilles heel of Chinese regimes throughout history, both Confucian and republican. It was probably the single most important factor in the collapse of Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang government in 1949. Comparing corruption in the PRC today with the vulnerability of the Kuomintang, Pauline Keating notes that the Kuomintang never achieved the degree of political and social control over China that the CCP did. As a result, corruption during the Nanjing Decade 1927–37, the period of greatest Kuomintang power on the mainland, was due in part to central government having to strike deals with regional power holders.[12] By comparison, CCP corruption today is more damning and more potentially destructive of the party's political legitimacy because of the contrast with the unprecedented power that the CCP had once achieved during the Maoist period.

A key strategic implication of this analysis is that the Chinese regime today has no soft power in its relations with other countries, except for the rather thin claim to a continuing role as champion of the Third World (Van

11 He Qinglian has been one of the most outspoken PRC critics of official corruption in China (He, 1998). See also Shambaugh (2000).

12 Personal conversation with Pauline Keating, Canberra, December 2000. Regarding the role of corruption in the defeat of Kuomintang rule on the Chinese mainland, see Eastman (1974) and Sheridan (1975).

Ness, 1993). On the contrary, a more accurate characterization would be to say that the CCP regime has 'negative soft power' – i.e. no other countries in the region are attracted by their kind of political and social system. In democratic Taiwan, for example, it is what they most want to avoid.

When President George W. Bush presented his global strategic 'vision' in a speech to the National Defense University on 1 May 2001, he characterized America's enemies as tyrants 'gripped by an implacable hatred of the United States of America'. 'They hate our friends', argued the President. 'They hate our values. They hate democracy and freedom, and individual liberty. Many care little for the lives of their own people' (www.nautilus.org, 1 May 2001). The President mentioned Saddam Hussein by name, but he left it unclear as to which other countries he had in mind. One could easily infer that he also meant China.[13]

The Bush administration has obviously taken a much harder line on China. Examples of this include: decisions regarding the US Navy EP-3 spyplane collision with a PRC fighter aircraft; new arms sales to Taiwan; Bush's commitment of 'whatever it takes' to defend Taiwan against a use of force by the PRC; visits by Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian to the United States; and a general tilt away from China and towards Japan in the US defense posture. Despite these developments, the official Chinese response has been to maintain the status quo. Chinese President Jiang Zemin responded in a major speech in Hong Kong to the 'Fortune Global Forum 2001' just a few days after Bush's hatred speech, emphasizing instead international co-operation and reiterating the PRC's 'open policy' (Jiang, 2001).

But there are limits to how far President Jiang can go to sustain co-operation with the United States in the face of Bush administration animosity. Will Bush try to push the Chinese to the wall? Does the administration want to make China into America's 'new enemy' to help justify its plans for a military buildup? US decisions about missile defense will fundamentally reshape the PRC's cost/benefit calculus and its understanding of China's role in the American hegemonic system.[14]

5 Changing the rules: missile defense

The National Missile Defense Act of 1999, passed by the US Congress and signed into law by President Clinton, calls for the deployment of a missile

13 Within the Bush administration there seem to be differences of opinion on the issue of 'the China threat'. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld appears to be building his revised US defense posture around an assumption of Chinese threat, while Secretary of State Powell and his subordinates have explicitly rejected such an assumption (Kelly, 2001).

14 For a thoughtful assessment of how China is likely to respond militarily to an actual deployment of an effective missile defense, see Li (2001).

defense system to protect US territory 'as soon as is technologically possible'. A range of different systems are under development: land-based, sea-based and space-based. There are lower-tier (within the atmosphere) systems and upper-tier (above the atmosphere) systems.[15] Most problematic with respect to their strategic implications are the upper-tier systems, which, for example, would make regional TMD systems dependent upon US global, satellite-based monitoring capabilities. The stated reason for building and deploying these systems is to protect the United States, its allies and US bases abroad from missile attack by so-called 'rogue states' or 'states of concern' (usually identified as North Korea, Iran and Iraq) and either accidental or unauthorized launches of Russian or Chinese missiles.[16]

The US-proposed ballistic missile defenses, both the TMD system for East Asia and the NMD for the United States, provide good examples of how China and Japan react differently to what are, in effect, proposed rule-changes by the hegemon. Japan has agreed to joint research with the US on the TMD system planned for East Asia, while China has adamantly opposed both the TMD and the NMD systems, arguing that both systems would in different ways destabilize strategic relations in the region (Yan, 1999; Ding, 1999; Wang, Q., 2000). A major reason why Japan so far favors TMD is that, if such a system were to be put in place, participation would link Japan strategically even more tightly with the United States. This reassures the Japanese that the present US role in East Asia will continue, especially at a time when North/South Korean steps toward reconciliation are raising questions about the need for 100 000 US military personnel in the region.[17] Yet even in Japan there is evidence of an emerging debate about missile defense. *Asahi Shimbun* has recommended that Japan 'just say no' to US plans (*Asahi Shimbun*, editorial, 10 May 2001), and Foreign Minister Tanaka Makiko of the Koizumi government is reported to have serious reservations about missile defense (*International Herald Tribune*, 2–3 June 2001, p. 4).

China, for its part, sees NMD as a threat to its modest nuclear deterrent. It sees TMD, especially the sea-based Navy theater-wide option being researched jointly by the United States and Japan, as a potentially direct intervention in what Beijing regards as the internal matter of regaining control over Taiwan (Christensen, 2000).[18] The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) has noted that 'China's strategic capability is com-

15 For an assessment of how the current US missile defense proposals relate to the earlier Reagan administration 'strategic defense initiative' or SDI, see Fitzgerald (2000).

16 For the CIA's official assessment of the general threat to the US, see United States CIA (1999).

17 Interviews at the National Institute for Defense Studies in Tokyo, April 2000.

18 For an excellent summary of PRC concerns, see 'China's Opposition to US Missile Defense Programs', EANP Factsheets, Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterrey Institute of International Studies (http://cns.miis.edu/cns/projects/eanp/fact/chinamd.htm).

posed of less than 200 nuclear warheads, of which only perhaps 20–30 would be operational at any given time'. Russia still has the capacity to overwhelm any conceivable ballistic missile defense system, but for China, the deployment of an NMD would threaten its basic nuclear deterrent. The IISS concludes that if the US decides on deployment, a 'head-on collison with China will be difficult to avoid' (IISS, 1999a, p. 171; 1999b, p. 50).

After a North Korean Taepodong-1 missile passed through Japanese airspace in August 1998, Tokyo agreed to joint research with the United States on a TMD system that may, at some future time, also include South Korea and Taiwan. Chinese analysts have characterized the stated Japanese fears of North Korean missile attack as 'an excuse' for participating in a TMD project that is obviously aimed at China. Viewed from Beijing, an East Asian TMD looks like a new multilateral security alliance against China.[19]

Beijing is concerned that a TMD in North-east Asia would encourage Japanese remilitarization and that a sea-based Navy theater-wide system for Japan might be used in the event of a conflict to help defend Taiwan. If Taiwan itself were to become a participant in an upper-tier TMD system, Taiwan would once again become linked strategically with the United States – perhaps even more closely than it was under the former 1954 US–Republic of China military pact.[20]

For China, the US missile defense initiative constitutes a rule-change by the hegemon of the most serious sort. Without these rule-changes, however, it is unlikely that China under its present leadership would choose to opt out of the system.[21] The benefits for the PRC are simply too substantial. Moreover, it would be virtually impossible for China to sustain the high rates of economic growth that are so vital to maintaining CCP political legitimacy without access to the foreign markets, aid, private investment and technology transfer that its participation in the global capitalist system has provided.

The administration of George W. Bush is committed to building missile defenses, and favors a much more substantial system than the limited NMD earlier planned by the Clinton administration. Bush's appointment of Donald Rumsfeld as secretary of defense appears to ensure that NMD will have a high priority for his administration. Rumsfeld, a strong supporter of missile defense, will face opposition not just from China, but also from Russia and many of America's European allies (Drozdiak, 1999; Ivanov, 2000).

The scepticism of the European allies, especially Germany and France,

19 Interviews in Beijing: May 1999 and April 2001. For a broader perspective, see Christensen (1999).

20 For more extended commentary on the official Japanese position, see Japan (2000, pp. 82-92).

21 Note the commitments to further domestic market reforms and participation in the capitalist world economy in the report from a recent Chinese Communist Party Central Committee plenum: 'Proposal' (2000).

about missile defense is quite straightforward: they do not perceive the same threat as the United States; they do not want NATO to become an alliance in which some states are protected by missile defense and others are not; they do not want to make an enemy of Russia; they do not want to spend more of their scarce resources on the military; they are not prepared to discard arms control or the nuclear non-proliferation regime; and they do not want to see a new polarization of the world or new arms races.

Confronting opposition to missile defense, both abroad and at home, the Bush administration has attempted to intimidate opponents, and to insist that it would press ahead unilaterally no matter what. However, the defection of Senator James Jeffords from the President's Republican Party in May resulted in the loss of control of the US Senate to the Democratic opposition. As a result, conservative Republican intimidation has been blunted, and opportunities for serious debate on missile defense in the United States have been substantially enhanced (Keeny, 2001).[22]

6 Conclusion

Big powers have always created a certain kind of order for the small powers within their reach; but following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States today dominates the globe and many regional geographical subsystems in an unprecedented way, maintaining a hegemonic order that is in no way similar to the 'anarchy' assumed in realist analyses. Moreover, in today's world, there is as yet no viable alternative to participating in this US-dominated, globalized system.

Each state plays a different role in the system, determined principally by its capabilities (possession of nuclear weapons and relative economic power), the character of its domestic social system (democratic or not), and its bilateral relationship with the hegemon. Thus, communist-ruled China, a nuclear-weapons state with a rapidly growing economy, enjoys substantially more autonomy within the US hegemonic system than does democratic Japan, dependent upon the United States for its national defense under the US–Japan security treaty, despite its having the world's second largest economy.

The global system today is not simply unipolar; it is a hegemonic system that is increasingly globalized, in which the basic concepts of realism (anarchy, self-help and power balancing) provide little guidance or understanding in explaining state behavior. In his classic *Man, the State, and War*, published almost

22 As a result of the loss of control of the Senate to the Democrats, Carl Levin has become chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee and Joseph Biden has replaced Jesse Helms as chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Both of these Democratic senators are firm sceptics on issues relating to missile defense.

fifty years ago, Waltz made a convincing case that structural or third-image analysis must be at least an essential component in any comprehensive explanation of international relations. The question remains, however, as to what kind of structural analysis provides the best explanation.

The Gramscian concept of hegemony, in contrast with realism, links different levels of analysis (second image and third image), and helps us to understand the relationship between hard and soft power. It provides us with a means to relate domestic issues of political legitimacy and identity to international concerns about relative power and security. The concept of hegemony illuminates the dilemmas of dependency (the benefits as well as costs) and the immense difficulties for any major power of attempting to challenge the United States as an alternative 'pole'.

In the sense of Thomas Kuhn's paradigm challenger, hegemony as a way of understanding international relations explains the anomalies that realism cannot explain: most particularly, the failure of other major powers, such as China and Japan, to balance the United States. So if the leaders of the major powers no longer perceive a realist world of anarchy, choose not to balance the dominant world power, and instead opt increasingly for co-operative rather than self-help security strategies, then we must look elsewhere for explanations.

In Waltz's words, these are changes *of* the system rather than *in* the system.

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