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Military Review

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Cover photo: Soldiers of the Chinese People's Liberation Army take part in a military drill 25 December 2018 in Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province, China. (Photo by Imaginechina via Associated Press)

Next page: Soldiers from the 1058th Transportation Company, Massachusetts National Guard, conduct a night base defense live-fire exercise under the illumination of a green flare 1 August 2019 during Patriot Crucible, a combined arms exercise at Camp Edwards, Joint Base Cape Cod, Massachusetts. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Steven C. Eaton, U.S. Army National Guard)



2019 General William E. DePuy

Special Topics Writing Competition

The 2019 theme was "What role do unofficial transnational and criminal organizations play in the global adversarial competition among nations occurring today? How specifically do China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, or other specifically named adversary employ unofficial transnational or criminal organizations in their strategic efforts to undermine the United States or its allies?"

WINNER!

Maj. Thomas D. Arnold, U.S. Army

"The Geoeconomic Dimensions of Russian Private
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For updates and information on the DePuy writing competition, please visit

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Pfc. Trevor Short, infantryman with 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, conceals himself in a wheat field 20 June 2019 during an air assault mission, part of Saber Guardian 19 in Bordusani, Romania. (Photo by Sgt. Thomas Mort, U.S. Army)

General

- What operational and logistical challenges are foreseen due to infrastructure limitations in potential foreign areas of operation, and how can we mitigate them?
- What is needlessly duplicated in the Army (e.g., what should be done away with, how should the Army adjust, and how would it benefit)?
- What is the progress in development of Futures Command?
- Technology advancements and their application
- Case studies: How do we properly integrate emerging technology?
- What nations consider themselves to be at war or in conflict with the United States? How are they conducting war, and what does this mean for the Army?
- China case study: How does Japan's effort to establish the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" compare with current Chinese efforts to develop the "New Silk Road" and assert control over the South China Sea?
- Case study on civil-military operations: How does tactical-level military governance during occupation following World War II and Operation Iraqi Freedom compare?
- Update on status of the regional power rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran
- What are the security threats, concerns, and events resulting from illegal immigration globally?
- What must we do to create a more effective means of developing and maintaining institutional memory in order to deal with emerging challenges?
- What is the role for the Army in homeland security operations? What must the Army be prepared for?
- What is the role of the military in protecting natural resources?

- What are the potential adverse impacts on military standards due to factors associated with poor integration of new cultures, ethnicities, or racial considerations, and how can those impacts be mitigated?
- Case study: How is gender integration changing the Army and how it operates?

Large-Scale Combat Operations

- How do we foster deep institutional focus on large-scale combat operations (LSCO)?
 - Needed restructuring?
 - See/understand/seize fleeting opportunities?
 - Develop the situation in contact and chaos?
 - Offset "one-off" dependencies and contested domains?
 - Rapidly exploit positions of advantage?
 - Survive in hyperlethal engagements (including attacks using weapons of mass destruction)?
 - Continuously present multiple dilemmas to the enemy?
 - Decide and act at speed?
 - Fully realize mission command?
 - What must be done to adjust junior leader development to a modern operational environment?
 - Changes demanded to the professional development models of the officer and noncommissioned officer structure?
 - Increased readiness challenges?
 - Required adjustments that need to be made among the Army's support elements to reset for LSCO (e.g., personnel, logistics, medical, etc.)?
 - What is the correlation between multi-domain operations and LSCO? Impact on the Army's training, readiness, and doctrine?
 - What material solutions are required to fulfill the Army's unified land operations obligations in LSCO?
 - Hypersonic weapons: What are their real capabilities? How do we defend against them?

Reinvigorating the Army's Approach to Command and Control

Training for Mission Command (Part 3)

Gen. Stephen J. Townsend, U.S. Army

Maj. Gen. Douglas C. Crissman, U.S. Army

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Col. Keith Nightingale, U.S. Army, Retired



I want all of you, no matter where you land in France tonight, to march on the town of Sainte-Mère-Église, where together, we're going to liberate the people and fly this flag from the tallest building in town!

—Lt. Col. Edward Krause, commander, 3rd Battalion, 505th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 5 June 1944

Building lethal units and instilling disciplined initiative in every soldier are essential to Army readiness and to leading a winning Army. As we recognize the seventy-fifth anniversary of D-Day this year, the airborne operations behind German lines on 6 June 1944 provide one great example of the need for disciplined initiative. Lt. Col. Edward “Cannonball” Krause, 3rd Battalion, 505th Airborne Infantry Regiment commander, knew that each company had an assigned task that needed to be accomplished, but he also knew the jump into France would be chaotic and any plan, no matter how carefully written or rehearsed, would be the first casualty of enemy contact. So when giving his intent to his paratroopers before their jump, Krause simply told them that if they missed their drop zone or their planned linkup, they were to find their own way to meet him in Sainte-Mère-Église—their primary objective.¹ Krause’s intent was clear, simple, and memorable to every soldier in the battalion. It not only allowed for subordinate decision-making and initiative, but it also demanded it. Of all the tasks his battalion was assigned, Krause identified the single decisive point for his troopers and the one thing they must do to win.

Developing leaders, soldiers, and units capable of operating this way in combat requires living and training for mission command every day. The object of training for mission command is to instill and empower disciplined initiative in every member of the team.

Previous page: U.S. soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, dismount a Bradley Fighting Vehicle and advance on a target as Hungarian soldiers in BTR-80 armored personnel carriers and dismounted Hungarian soldiers lay suppressive fire 13 November 2014 during a NATO demonstration at the closing ceremony of Iron Sword 2014 in Pabradė, Lithuania. The establishment of clear standards and constant training repetitions are essential for achieving a mission command culture within the U.S. Army and its coalition partners. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson, U.S. Army)

Mission command grew from the view there is no certainty once opposing forces join in violent armed combat. Therefore, the Army’s approach to command and control uses commander’s intent to empower and encourage subordinate decision-making and initiative appropriate to the situation. It is the only approach to command and control that provides sufficiently flexible and rapid decision-making to seize, retain, and exploit operational initiative when fighting a near-peer adversary.

As with any warrior task or battle drill, soldiers and units must train and practice months, and even years, in advance of the outbreak of conflict to be ready to fight using mission command. By living mission orders and commander’s intent every day, leaders seize every opportunity to empower subordinate decision-making and encourage initiative and decentralized execution. Under mission command, subordinate leaders’ initiative at every level is not just permitted, it is required. To achieve and maintain a tempo of operations the enemy force cannot match, well-trained soldiers must act decisively in the absence of orders and without continuous leader interaction when the plan no longer applies because of unfolding events, when an unforeseen opportunity presents itself, or when a new threat appears that demands rapid adaptation.

Training for Mission Command

Training for mission command starts with commanders establishing clear and measurable standards. Standards are the basic building blocks for developing soldier competence in key wartime tasks that enable a culture of mission command and disciplined initiative. Soldiers who become competent in their wartime tasks during training can be trusted to do their jobs in combat. However, just because soldiers execute a task once during training, either individually or as a team, does not mean they are competent in that task. Leaders must continuously assess, plan, and ruthlessly impose progressively more demanding training repetitions to achieve the high degree of competence mission command requires. Absent leader guidance and presence, standards and soldiers’ competence provide the basis for trust, discipline, and decision-making in garrison, in training for combat, and during worldwide operations.

Developing subordinates' decision-making proficiency requires frequent and repetitive experiences in a variety of garrison and tactical situations. The best commanders provide these experiences, and they do not fly off the handle when subordinates make mistakes. On the contrary, leaders understand that learning from mistakes in garrison and during training is an effective way to build proficiency. Through multiple repetitions, leaders learn what works and what does not work under varying conditions. Leaders coach and teach during each repetition to promote learning and to build mutual trust among other leaders and their subordinates. The combination of positive and negative experiences allows subordinate leaders to develop judgment and gain the confidence necessary to act decisively and accept risk when they are on their own. The growth of mutual trust between the leader and the led allows commanders to reduce their level of control—a key objective of the mission-command approach.

Tactical decision games are an effective way to build leader competence, decision-making proficiency, and mutual trust up and down the chain of command. For example, a battalion commander might assemble all the platoon leaders around a large terrain board or video display depicting various tactical vignettes. Company commanders, first sergeants, and platoon sergeants attend as well. The battalion commander then deliberately forces the platoon leaders outside of their comfort zone by

training them one level up from their current leadership positions. The methodology is a leader-to-leader dialogue centered on tactical scenarios that are intentionally ambiguous. In this case, the battalion commander's training objective is to develop tactical competence and decision-making proficiency in the absence of orders by providing the platoon leaders with opportunities to practice exercising disciplined initiative. With mission orders in hand and a firm understanding of the commander's intent, each platoon leader gains decision-making experience by making and explaining their decisions through multiple tactical vignettes on varying terrain, against diverse enemy sets, and with different task organizations. Their competence improves as they learn from the outcomes of their decisions and those of their peers. The battalion commander also makes clear to the platoon leaders what to take away from each repetition and in doing so invests in the future success of each of the platoon leaders and the ability of the unit to maximize the application of the mission command philosophy. Such tactical decision games are an easily repeatable and low-cost way to foster a mission command mindset and an understanding of what constitutes disciplined initiative in combat.

Living by Mission Orders

On the battlefield, there are no memorandums of instruction or policy letters that guide leaders' decision-making. Instead, troop leading procedures (TLP) and the military decision-making process (MDMP) inform the

Gen. Stephen J.

Townsend, U.S. Army,

incoming commanding general of U.S. Africa Command, has led soldiers from the company to corps level and deployed in support of six major combat operations. He previously served as commanding general, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Combined Joint Task Force—Operation Inherent Resolve, and XVIII Airborne Corps.

Maj. Gen. Douglas C. Crissman, U.S. Army,

director of the Mission Command Center of Excellence, has led soldiers in multinational, coalition, joint, and Army units and deployed in support of combat and peacekeeping operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Sinai Peninsula.

Col. Jason C. Slider, U.S. Army, incoming executive officer to the commanding general of U.S. Africa Command, has led soldiers from company to brigade level and deployed in support of combat operations and security force assistance missions in Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, and the Philippines.

Col. Keith Nightingale, U.S. Army, retired,

led soldiers from company to brigade level and is a combat veteran with service in Vietnam, Operation Eagle Claw (Iran), and Operation Urgent Fury (Grenada). He managed the Department of Defense's Interagency Counter-Drug Task Force for Latin America and is a founding member of Joint Special Operations Command.



production of five-paragraph field orders. Many times, orders must be delivered verbally over the radio or by a runner in a single written copy. These mission orders are directive but are free from small details that seldom survive the passage of time or contact with the enemy.

As highlighted in the first article of this series, leaders and observer-controller/trainers at the U.S. Army's combat training centers recently noted that brigade and battalion operations orders (OPORDs) were often too long, contained too much extraneous detail, and arrived too late.² Additionally, as noted in the article, the observer-controller/trainers observed that company commanders often do not share the battalion commanders' intent with their subordinates. This failure to employ timely mission orders takes time away from subordinate leader planning and preparation time, jeopardizes shared understanding of the mission down to the lowest level, and risks confusion and inaction by subordinate leaders when conditions on the ground make the plan untenable.

To be clear, a "mission order" is not a type of order. It is rather a disciplined approach to written or verbal orders that requires competent subordinates and a

Maj. Lazaro Oliva Jr. (center) shows the potential effects of a tactical decision to other 1st Cavalry Division planners 8 November 2018 while conducting the Tactical Wargaming Analysis Model at Fort Hood, Texas. Such wargames are an effective way to cultivate decision-making skills and trust within units. (Photo by Maj. Joseph Payton, U.S. Army)

culture of trust in subordinate decision-making and initiative to work. Mission orders are concise and simple directives that tell subordinate leaders *what* to do, not *how* to do it. Mission orders require confirmation briefs as a check on both the clarity of a given order and subordinate leaders' understanding of it. If two of five company commanders are not able to quickly confirm their understanding of the mission, the commander's intent, the concept of the operation, and the required unit tasks—it is probably not a good order.

Living by mission orders starts every day in garrison, not just at the combat training centers or during operations. Operating from short, simple, and effective mission orders takes practice. Another easily repeatable and low-cost way to provide frequent and repetitive mission command training experiences is



to use mission orders for everything, every day. For example, use them for planning and executing an organization day, performing command maintenance, or conducting a combined-arms live-fire exercise—every repetition of TLP, MDMP, and OPORD production counts toward fostering the mission command culture. When requiring more control over an operation, commanders can use back briefs, rehearsals, and in-process reviews without violating the principle of mission orders. When the risk to mission or force is high, mission command leaders can use more than one in-process review or rehearsal to increase leader interaction without compromising trust in subordinate leaders' decision-making and initiative.

Living by Commander's Intent

The objective of commander's intent is to instill and empower disciplined initiative in every member of the team. It is a thoughtful act by the commander, not the staff. Commander's intent is a concise

A German self-propelled gun smolders along the road leading from Neuville-au-Plain to Sainte-Mère-Église June 1944 after being destroyed by Pvt. John E. Atchley, H Company, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment. Atchley's actions (see award citation, page 11) exemplify the type of initiative and bias for action mission command training aims to promote. (Photo from the U.S. Army Signal Corps, gift of Maude Hayman, The National World War II Museum collection. Information verified on 1 July 2019 by Pfc. Leslie P. Cruise—a member of the unit when the action took place—that the vehicle depicted was indeed the one destroyed by Atchley.)

statement of the operation's broad objective or desired outcome that is clear, simple, and easy to remember. Developing commander's intent takes practice and should not resemble a concept of the operation. The commander's intent unites an organization with purpose, provides shared understanding of what must be accomplished, and issues a call to action.

A clear commander's intent provides opportunities for subordinates' initiative in all contexts, even those contexts

that require adherence to specific procedures for the organization to succeed—like maintenance or command supply discipline. Leaders fully invested in mission command reduce or eliminate prescriptive policy letters in favor of inspiring the right actions across the organization, whatever the context. This builds a climate and culture where trust, teamwork, and unit cohesion can flourish.

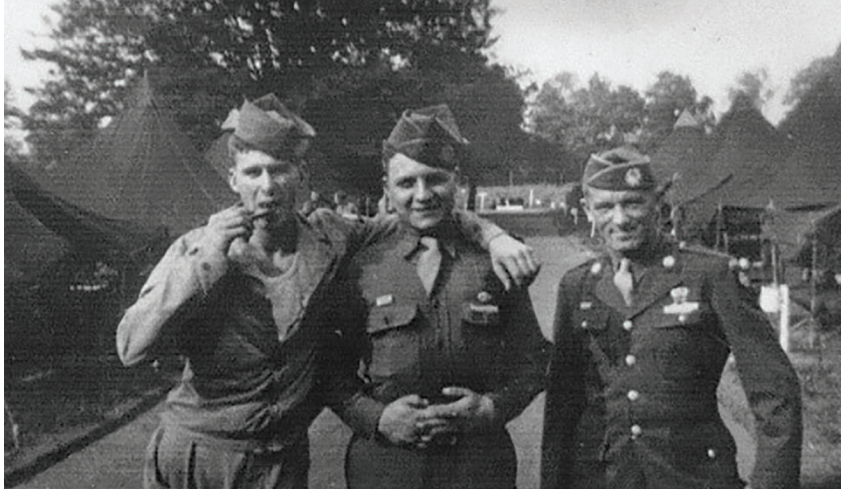
To focus training, commanders provide annual training guidance as well as guidance for specific training events. They describe what needs to be accomplished in terms of training objectives and leave subordinate leaders free to assess their unit's proficiency and prioritize training tasks, resources, and time available to achieve the objectives. *That guidance is the commander's intent issued through mission orders.* Monthly unit status reporting and quarterly training briefs provide confirmation back to the commander that subordinate units are either accomplishing the commander's intent or require increased leader interaction to do so. In either case, commander-to-commander dialogue ensures the readiness of units while protecting the mutual trust between the leader and the led.

Instilling Disciplined Initiative

Every individual from the highest commander to the lowest private must always remember that inaction and neglect of opportunities will warrant more severe censure than an error of judgment in the action taken. The criterion by which a commander judges the soundness of his own decision is whether it will further the intentions of the higher commander.

—Field Manual 100-5, *Field Service Regulations: Operations*, 22 May 1941³

What is “disciplined initiative”? Simply put, it is when subordinates have the discipline to follow their orders and adhere to the plan until they realize their orders and the plan no longer fit the situation they find themselves in. This may occur because the enemy has done something not foreseen in the plan; a new, more serious threat has emerged; or the enemy has presented a golden opportunity that



Pvt. John E. Atchley (left), Pvt. Nicholas J. DePalma, and Pvt. Joseph J. Comer (right), paratroopers of H Company, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, pose on the company street May 1944 several weeks before D-Day at Camp Quorn, Leicestershire, England. Atchley was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions at a roadblock in Sainte-Mère-Église on 7 June 1944. The award citation (below) demonstrates how Atchley exemplified the type of initiative and bias for action mission command training aims to promote. (Photo and caption courtesy of the 505th PIR Association, <http://www.quornmuseum.com/display.php?id=520>. We express our appreciation to Pfc. Leslie P. Cruise, also a member of H Co. and friend of the soldiers depicted, who verified their identities 28 June 2019.)

The American Soldier's 'Bias' toward Action

General orders:

Headquarters, First U.S. Army,
General Orders No. 31
(July 1, 1944)



Citation:

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918, takes pleasure in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross to Private John E. Atchley (ASN: 34505971), United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy while serving with Company H, 3d Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82d Airborne Division, in action against enemy forces on 7 June 1944, in France. When the enemy counterattacked with tanks in the vicinity of Sainte-Mère-Église, one of the very few antitank guns at the disposal of the defending force had been put out of action due to the fact that most of the members of its crew were casualties. As the enemy tanks approached, Private Atchley, despite the fact that he had never previously fired an antitank gun, left his place of cover and fearlessly moved over to man the gun. Although without aid, Private Atchley's second shot destroyed one of the advancing tanks, whereupon the other tanks turned about and retreated. The courage, daring, and complete disregard for his life displayed by Private Atchley reflects great credit upon himself and is in keeping with the highest traditions of the Armed Forces.

outweighs the objectives of the original plan, which must be seized and taken advantage of. The subordinate leader then uses his or her initiative to determine and take an action that fits the new situation in a manner that will achieve the commander's intent.

It is under extraordinary circumstances that a private will make decisions that impact the mission of a battalion, but it is not unusual for a junior soldier or leader to be forward enough to see the need for a new plan of action. For example, during 1983's Operation Urgent Fury in

Grenada, during the execution of a strategic mission, a unit found itself cut off, under heavy fire, and without communications to coordinate required support to accomplish its mission. Then, one leader took the initiative. Finding no other options, he pulled out a credit card and called long distance to Fort Bragg from a still-functioning telephone to route a request for fire support. It worked!⁴

Fog, friction, and chance in war force plans to change. These changes frequently shift the point of decision down to the leaders closest to the problem.

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 151st Infantry Regiment, complete their live-fire training exercise 3 November 2018 at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, Louisiana. This training requires soldiers to be able to move and maneuver as a team using live ammunition. (Photo by Sgt. Aimee Shatto, U.S. Army)







To be effective in combat, the best leaders deliberately build these uncertain conditions into their training. This means focusing training repetitions on our most junior leaders so they develop the good tactical judgment essential in the relationship of mutual trust between leaders and subordinates. It is impossible to instill initiative in leaders during training if the plan is always right, if the size and location of the enemy force are always where the intelligence officer templates, or if the higher headquarters is always easily reached through tactical communications when someone requires a decision. Training that does not incorporate uncertainty inherent in armed conflict falls short of building a culture of trust in subordinate decision-making and initiative. Our junior leaders are the most likely to be in a position to see the need for a new plan of action when operations do not unfold as foreseen. They must be smart enough to realize this, smart enough to come up with a plan that will work, and have the guts and trust to execute—even when out of communications with higher.

A way to inject uncertainty in training is to intentionally create inconsistencies between the OPORD

Capt. Wade Redenius (*right*) discusses the plan for an upcoming mission with 1st Lt. Ross McDonald and 2nd Lt. Tony Eshoo of 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, 19 September 2018 during Engineering Change Proposal Stryker testing at Yakima Training Center, Washington. (Photo by Maj. Sonie Munson, U.S. Army)

and what subordinates encounter during execution. These differences should not just provide an opportunity for disciplined initiative but require it for mission accomplishment. These differences could include repositioning the enemy force some distance off the unit's templated objective. Or, it can be as simple as an ambush during a tactical movement in an area reported cleared of enemy forces. Other scenario injects could be as significant as a change of mission when en route to the objective with a new and more time-sensitive mission such as a downed pilot recovery operation, or by planting an OPFOR headquarters just across their adjacent boundary but where the unit is sure to find it. It could also be as complex as making the primary objective merely a stepping-stone to an unknown and

more important objective—discoverable only after the unit seizes the primary objective and exercises initiative to conduct sensitive site exploitation and questioning of prisoners of war that reveal clues about what the final objective actually needs to be. What will our subordinate leaders do? Will they continue with their assigned tasks, or will they have the initiative to do more?

Conclusion

Throughout the “Reinvigorating the Army’s Approach to Command and Control” series of articles, our intent has been clear—to reinvigorate our conversation about and practice of mission command in our Army. We began by identifying how we arrived at present challenges and described a way ahead with the pending update to Army Doctrine Publication 6-0, *Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces*.⁵ We followed that first article with a second that explained how to lead by mission command.⁶ In this third and final article, we have argued that training for mission command is essential to building ready and lethal combat units. To achieve that goal, Army leaders

at all levels must seize every opportunity to apply the principles of mission command and create a unit climate and culture where it can flourish.

We do not know when or where the Army will fight its next first battle. The nature of that fight will be no more certain than it was at Trenton on Christmas Day in 1776, or no less chaotic than it was in Normandy with airborne drops behind German lines in June 1944. We do know the form of that next first fight will be a rapidly changing and continuous and violent contest of wills between at least two combatants in multiple domains. To win that fight, our Army must establish a tempo of decision and action and intensity of operations the enemy force cannot match. The mission command approach helps us achieve that.

Mission command is the only way to lead a winning Army. Without it, we lose the strategic advantage that has been with us since 1776—the ingenuity, can-do attitude, initiative, and bias toward action of the American soldier. It is up to each of us to reinvigorate mission command. How we lead and train it today will shape how we will fight and win tomorrow. ■

Notes

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A military government "spearhead" (I Detachment) of the 3rd U.S. Army answers German civilian questions in April 1945 at an outdoor office in the town square of Schleusingen, Germany. I Detachments moved in the wake of division advances to immediately begin the process of civilian stabilization and normalization. (Photo from book, *The U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany 1944-1946*, by Earl F. Ziemke)

Three Perspectives on Consolidating Gains

Lt. Gen. Mike Lundy, U.S. Army

Col. Richard Creed, U.S. Army

Col. Nate Springer, U.S. Army

Lt. Col. Scott Pence, U.S. Army

Winning battles while losing wars is an expensive waste of blood and treasure. Armies that win battles without following through to consolidate tactical gains tend to lose wars, and the U.S. Army has experience on both sides of the historical ledger in this regard. While consolidation of gains has been a consistent military necessity, it remains one of the most misunderstood features of our warfighting doctrine. Many struggle to understand the relationship between the strategic role, the responsibilities of the various echelons, and the actions required across the range of military operations. As the requirement and term “consolidate gains” is relatively new to our doctrine, this article seeks to clarify what it means and encompasses. To do so, it approaches consolidating gains from three perspectives: the tactician, the operational artist, and the strategist. By considering the perspective of each level of warfare, one may better understand how echelons and their subordinate formations consolidate gains in mutually supporting and interdependent ways.

How the Army Contributes to Winning

The U.S. Army contributes to achieving national objectives through its four unique strategic roles: shaping the security environment, preventing conflict, prevailing in large-scale combat operations (LSCO), and consolidating gains. These strategic roles represent the interrelated and continuous purposes for which the Army conducts operations across the competition continuum as a part of the joint force. Successful consolidation of gains is an inherent part of achieving enduring success in each of the other three roles in competition and conflict.

The operational environment is a competition continuum among nation-states. The publicly released *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy* describes the requirement to defeat one peer adversary while deterring another.¹ The *National Defense Strategy* also addresses other things the joint force and the Army must continue to do. While the Army focuses on readiness to deter and defeat a revanchist Russia, a revisionist China, a rogue North Korea, and an Iran seeking regional hegemony, it also must continue to disrupt terrorism abroad to protect the homeland while continuing to fulfill obligations to security partners in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. A large part of the

Consolidating Operational Gains in the European Theater during World War II

“The workhorses of military government on the move were the I detachments [‘Spear Detachments’] composed of three or four officers apiece, five enlisted men, and two jeeps with trailers. These detachments represented the occupation to the Germans, at once the harbingers of a new order and the only stable influence in a world turned upside down. They arranged for the dead in the streets to be buried, restored rationing, put police back on the streets, and if possible got the electricity and water working. They provided care for the displaced persons and military government courts for the Germans. ... Since, in an opposed advance, predicting when specific localities would be reached was impossible, the armies sent out spearhead detachments in the first wave—I detachments whose pinpoint assignments were east of the Rhine. Their job was to move with the divisions in the front.”

—Earl F. Ziemke, “The Rhineland Campaign,” chap. XII in *The U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany, 1944-1946* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2003), 186.

Extract from *TIME* magazine

"How Disbanding the Iraqi Army Fueled ISIS"

By Mark Thompson

29 May 2015

"General Ray Odierno, [former] Army chief of staff, says the U.S. could have weeded Saddam Hussein's loyalists from the Iraqi army while keeping its structure, and the bulk of its forces, in place. 'We could have done a lot better job of sorting through that and keeping the Iraqi army together,' he told *TIME* on Thursday. 'We struggled for years to try to put it back together again.' The decision to dissolve the Iraqi army robbed Baghdad's post-invasion military of some of its best commanders and troops. ... it also drove many of the suddenly out-of-work Sunni warriors into alliances with a Sunni insurgency that would eventually mutate into ISIS [Islamic State of Iraq and Syria]. Many former Iraqi military officers and troops, trained under Saddam, have spent the last 12 years in Anbar Province battling both U.S. troops and Baghdad's Shi'ite-dominated security forces, Pentagon officials say. 'Not reorganizing the army and police immediately were huge strategic mistakes,' said [General] Jack Keane, a retired Army vice chief of staff and architect of the 'surge' of 30,000 additional U.S. troops into Iraq in 2007. 'We began to slowly put together a security force, but it took far too much time and that gave the insurgency an ability to start to rise.'"

To view the complete article, visit <https://time.com/3900753/isis-iraq-syria-army-united-states-military/>.

Total Army remains engaged in security force assistance, counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and stability-related missions, the focus of which is to consolidate gains in support of host-nation governments. Consolidation of gains in present-day Iraq and Afghanistan is inherently the purpose of the advise-and-assist missions for which security force assistance brigades were designed.

While recognizing that the U.S. Army consolidates gains during competition, during conflict, and after LSCO, this article focuses on consolidation of gains within the context of the Army's third strategic role: prevail in large-scale combat. Armed conflict against a peer adversary is likely to encompass multiple corps in large geographical areas inhabited by significant populations. Any conflict is also likely to require ground forces to defeat enemy forces in order to reestablish the sovereign control of an ally or partner's land and population. This would be an immense undertaking and requires thinking about how to simultaneously consolidate gains from the bottom up and top down. Consolidating gains during LSCO looks different at each stage of the operation and from each level of warfare.²

The consolidation area is an important feature of LSCO at the tactical level. Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations*, explicitly identified the consolidation area to solve an age-old problem during operations.³ Army forces consistently struggle with securing the ground between brigades advancing in the close area and the division and corps rear boundaries, particularly during offensive operations when the size of areas of operation (AOs) expand. Maintaining tempo in the close and deep areas requires that the division and corps support areas be secured as the lines of communication lengthen. However, this leaves the problem of defeating bypassed forces and securing key terrain and population centers to be solved in ad hoc fashion. "The typical solution was to assign combat power from brigades committed to operations in the close and deep areas to the maneuver enhancement brigade (MEB)."⁴ This proved satisfactory during short-duration simulations as long as the division bypassed only small enemy formations. "Actual experience against Iraqi forces during the first few months of Operation Iraqi Freedom [2003] indicated this approach entails significant risk" in

the real world, where not accounting for both the enemy's will and means to continue a conflict resulted in a well-resourced insurgency in a matter of months.⁵

FM 3-0 emphasizes that an "enemy cannot be allowed time to reconstitute new forms of resistance to protract the conflict and undo our initial battlefield gains."⁶ This is based upon experience that indicates consolidating gains requires more combat power than what is required for the initial tactical defeat of enemy forces in the field. This in turn must drive planners at the operational and strategic levels to account for the need for these additional forces. If not, a short-war planning mindset using "minimum force" risks the ability to consolidate gains tactically, operationally, and strategically.

Deliberately written to empower operational planners and commanders to anticipate additional force requirements, FM 3-0 provides an expanded description of the operational framework and the consolidation area in chapter 1. While consolidate gains activities are addressed throughout FM 3-0, chapter 8 is singularly dedicated to the topic. It says consolidation of gains are "activities to make enduring any temporary operational success and set the conditions for a stable environment allowing for a transition of control to legitimate authorities." The chapter concludes with a review of the theater army, corps, division, and brigade combat teams (BCTs) in operations and the distinctive roles they play in consolidating gains.⁷

The following perspectives expand upon the last section of chapter 8 by describing the considerations and responsibilities for consolidating gains at each of three levels of warfare. Instead of explicitly identifying the echelon (brigade, corps, division, field army, or theater army), we start with the tactician, advance to the operational artist, and then conclude with the strategist. The intent is to provide insight on consolidation of gains for the warfighting professionals at the level for which they are responsible, not necessarily the type of headquarters or rank.

The Tactician's View

Those who have won victories are far more numerous than those who have used them to advantage.

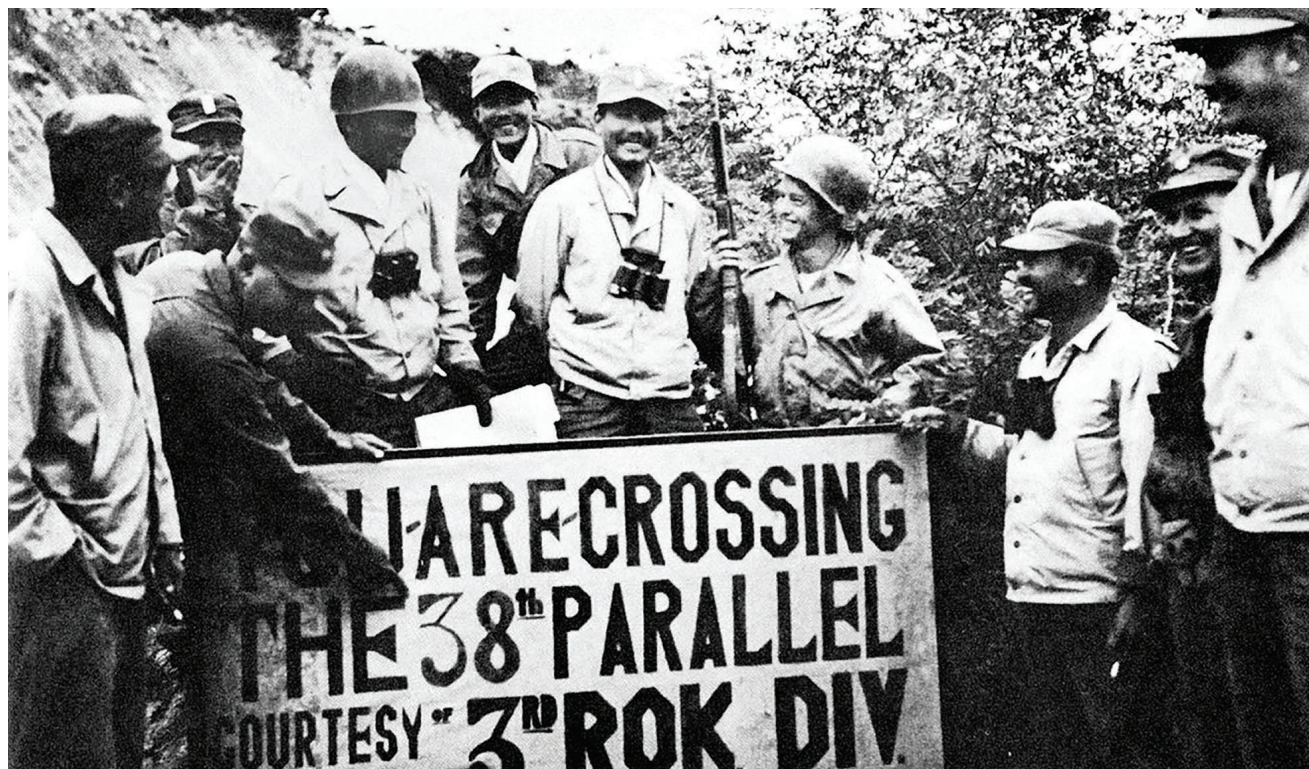
—Polybius⁸

The tactician focuses on battles and engagements, arranging forces and capabilities in time and space to

achieve military objectives. The point of departure for thinking about consolidating gains at the tactical level is clearly understanding that the means for doing so is decisive action: the execution of offensive, defensive, and stability tasks in the ever-changing context of a particular operation and operational environment. The goal is defeating the enemy, accounting for all his capabilities to resist, and ensuring unrelenting pressure that grants him no respite or opportunity to recover the means to resist. Corps and divisions assign AOs, objectives, and specific tactical tasks for their subordinate echelons. While initially they must focus on the defeat of enemy forces, the ultimate objective is to consolidate gains in a way that ensures the enemy no longer has the means or will to continue the conflict while maintaining a friendly position of relative advantage. Divisions and corps have a critical, mutually interdependent role in making this happen.

While limited contingency operations over the last twenty years saw corps headquarters function as joint task forces or land component commands, during large-scale ground combat operations, corps fight as tactical formations. Corps provide command and control (C2) and shape the operational environment for multiple divisions, functional and multifunctional brigades, and BCTs. The corps plans, enables, and manages consolidation of gains with its subordinate formations while anticipating future operations and continuously adjusting to developments in the close and deep areas. As LSCO concludes in a part of the corps AO, the corps headquarters assigns responsibility, usually a division but in some cases one or more BCTs, to consolidate gains in that AO. When LSCO is largely concluded throughout the corps AO, it reorganizes the AOs of its subordinate echelons in a way that enables the most rapid consolidation of gains with the capabilities available.

A corps consolidation area is comprised of the physical terrain that was formerly part of its subordinate division consolidation areas, which the corps assumed responsibility for as it shifted the division rear boundaries forward to maintain tempo during offensive operations. The division assigned the corps consolidation area may be a unit that was specifically dedicated to and deployed for the task or one that was following in support of the close fight, or it may be a division that was already committed that remains focused on



defeating enemy remnants and bypassed forces. As the corps enjoys success and its AO expands, a larger proportion of its combat power may be committed to consolidate gains. The commitment of combat power to consolidate gains should enable tempo and is not intended to draw forces away from the fights in the close and deep areas. This means that tactical and operational level planners need to anticipate the amount of combat power necessary to simultaneously defeat the enemy in the close and deep areas while consolidating gains in their AOs. Accounting for the required additional forces during operational planning and force flow development prior to conflict is essential. Again, a short-war, minimum-force planning mentality at the strategic and operational level will likely result in insufficient forces to maintain offensive tempo and continuously consolidate gains to win decisively.

Because divisions begin to consolidate gains in their own consolidation areas, their decisive-action focus is heavily weighted toward offensive tasks designed to defeat all remaining enemy forces in the field and secure key terrain that is likely to encompass population centers. This means that when corps establish consolidation areas, particularly when they assume responsibility for division consolidation areas as friendly forces advance, their focus in terms of consolidating gains is

Members of a UN public health and welfare detachment, a composite allied force, meet at a crossing point on the 38th parallel circa early October 1950. For more information, see the sidebar on page 21. (Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command History Office)

likely to be broader and emphasize stability tasks, area security, and governance. The divisions should have already consolidated gains to some degree, particularly in terms of defeating enemy remnants and bypassed forces. Successful consolidation of gains at the division level creates security conditions more amenable to a higher level of focus on populations, infrastructure, and governance at the corps level because there are few or no enemies left to contest friendly forces in an AO.

For the tactician, consolidating gains at the division level is initially difficult to distinguish from other LSCO for a couple of reasons. The first is that it represents a transition within a portion of the AO that might not be readily apparent. The second reason is that establishing security within a portion of an AO requires defeating enemy remnants and bypassed forces through decisive action, and that is likely to require offensive operations, which differ only in scale from what a BCT was doing previously. When an AO

is designated a consolidation area, the BCT assigned to it may already be there, so consolidating gains becomes a form of exploitation and pursuit by forces already in contact with the enemy. If an uncommitted BCT is assigned an AO to consolidate gains, the transition is more explicit even if the assigned tasks do not change. In either case, tactical planners must anticipate what additional capabilities the division should provide the BCT to facilitate area security, secure key terrain, and control the local population. Some of those capabilities are likely to be under control of the corps and must be task-organized down into the division for use by the BCT.

In all cases, every effort should be made to account for the requirement to consolidate gains early in the planning process so that adequate additional combat power is available to consolidate gains without diverting forces from other purposes and losing tempo. Similar to how the corps approaches consolidating gains, the division may pass an uncommitted BCT forward into the close area to maintain tempo and momentum and assign an already committed BCT consolidate gains related tasks in its AO. This approach avoids the complexities of a relief in place while in contact and generally saves time but adds the complexity of a forward passage of lines requiring detailed planning and rehearsals.

The BCT entrusted with the division consolidation area enables the division's MEB to focus on the security and C2 of the support area(s) and enabling operations in the close and deep areas. MEBs are task organized with engineer and military police units to facilitate maneuver support while securing routes and sustainment sites from mid-level threats. Their focus is enabling the desired tempo of operations in the close and deep areas, not consolidating gains achieved in those areas.

The easiest way to think of the division consolidation area is as another close fight area with a different purpose. FM 3-0 states that a division consolidation area requires at least one BCT to be responsible for it as an assigned area of operations.⁹ No smaller force can handle the task because the BCT is the first element capable of controlling airspace and employing combined arms across an AO. As an operation progresses, multiple BCTs may be employed to consolidate gains within the division AO, particularly

Consolidating Gains in Korea

Following a successful UN amphibious counteroffensive in September 1950, the invading North Korean military was forced back north out of South Korea and eventually across the Yalu River into China. Accompanying the Allied forces as they crossed the 38th parallel were public health and welfare detachments whose mission was to administer military government in occupied areas. However, the existence of these detachments was short-lived, as Chinese forces crossed the Yalu and drove UN forces back below the 38th parallel. These detachments were subsequently replaced by United Nations Civil Assistance Corps, Korea (UNCACK) teams, which provided civil affairs support in the south with the stated missions of helping to "prevent disease, starvation, and unrest," to "safeguard the security of the rear areas," and "to assure that front line action could go on without interruption by unrest in the rear." Guidance given to these units was often vague. One UNCACK officer later recounted that the only guidance he received in two years of service was, "Your orders are to see what needs to be done and do what you can."

For more on the public health and welfare detachments and UNCACK teams, see "Same Organization, Four Different Names: U.S. Army Civil Affairs in Korea 1950-1953," U.S. Army Special Operations Command History Office, https://www.soc.mil/AR-SOF_History/articles/v7n1_same_org_four_names_page_1.html.



toward the successful conclusion of large-scale ground combat operations. Successful consolidation of gains ultimately denies the enemy the time, space, and psychological breathing space to reorganize for continued resistance. At the tactical level, consolidating gains is the preventative that kills the seeds of insurgency.

History shows that successfully consolidating gains requires a much broader approach than simply assigning additional stability tasks to existing subordinate formations. They lack the specialized capabilities to comprehensively consolidate gains in an enduring manner because it is simply not what they are designed to do; they are built for LSCO. Our Army addressed this problem effectively in the past. During World War II, the United States realized that it would need to set conditions for the governance of the territories it liberated in Europe and the Pacific.

By the D-Day landings in 1944, the U.S. Army had assessed governance aptitude and expertise amongst its ranks and identified 7,500 U.S. military personnel to train in the United States as the cadre for military governance in liberated areas. They were placed into governance detachments assigned directly to corps

Army and Navy Civil Affairs Staging Area (CASA) officers listen to a civilian speaker on stage with a large map of Asia at an assembly in the spring of 1945 in Presidio of Monterey, California. (Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army via the National Archives)

and division commanders during combat operations for the purpose of consolidating gains directly behind the close area. Governance detachments reestablished civil administration, cared for sick and injured locals, registered the local population, assisted refugees and displaced persons, collected weapons and contraband, organized local citizens for the cleanup of their communities, and reestablished basic services to the cities, towns, and villages occupied by Allied forces to the best of their ability.

For the tactician, the goal is to continuously create and then exploit positions of relative advantage that facilitate the achievement of military objectives that support the political end state of a campaign. All efforts to consolidate gains ultimately support that goal; therefore, they must be synchronized and integrated into the campaign plan itself.

The Operational Artist's View

Operational artists design military campaigns to achieve strategic goals. They consider the employment of military forces and the arrangement of tactical efforts in time, space, and purpose to achieve strategic objectives. Following the initially successful invasion of Iraq in 2003, the joint force learned many valuable lessons about the importance of rapidly consolidating gains. The first and perhaps most important lesson was adequately determining the required means (forces) to accomplish not only the tasks required to defeat enemy forces in the field but also those required to establish physical control of the entire country. Identifying and deploying the necessary capabilities to defeat all potential forms of enemy resistance should be a fundamental part of any operational approach seeking to end a war with an enduring and decisive outcome. This requires breaking the enemy's will to resist.

Consolidating gains was and remains critical to attacking the enemy's will. Part of breaking the will to resist is denying the available means to resist, which means killing or capturing its regular and irregular forces and separating them from the population, seizing control of weapons and munitions, and controlling

the population in a way that maintains order and security

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Col. Richard Creed,

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without creating incentives for further resistance. This provides incontrovertible evidence of defeat and removes the hope upon which those who would mount a protracted resistance feed. It generally has a sobering effect on the population, particularly when done quickly, an effect that endures if the means that secure a population and enforce its orderly behavior improve or do not excessively interfere with the economic and personal lives of the people.

Planning to consolidate gains is integral to prevailing in armed conflict. Any campaign that does not account for the requirement to consolidate gains is either a punitive expedition or likely to result in a protracted war. The planning must therefore account for the desired end state of military operations and work backward. It should determine how much damage to infrastructure is acceptable and desirable, what is required to physically secure the relevant terrain and populations, and what resources are available among both Army forces and our coalition allies. It needs to account for all the potential means of enemy

resistance to ensure the defeat of the enemy

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Lt. Col. Scott Pence,

U.S. Army, is the executive officer to the commanding general, Combined Arms Command. He holds a BA in organizational psychology from the University of Michigan, an MBA from Webster University, and an MMAS in operational art from the School for Advanced Military Studies. His previous assignments include commander, 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry, 82nd Airborne Division; battalion and brigade operations officer in the 173rd Airborne Brigade; and assistant S3 and HHC commander of the 75th Ranger Regiment.

in detail. Planning should also determine, based upon the available resources, where and when to accept risk in terms of balancing the need to consolidate gains against maintaining the desired tempo of an operation. Consolidating gains throughout the operation may require a slower tempo but result in a shorter conflict, while a high-tempo operation that quickly achieves tactical success may result in a longer conflict because significant parts of the enemy forces and population not engaged or influenced by the initial battles may retain both the means and will to resist.

The Roman general Scipio Africanus is an example of a successful operational artist in ancient times who understood the importance of consolidating gains. During the Second Punic War, he designed the campaigns against Hannibal's Carthaginian armies and their Spanish allies while the authorities in Rome decided the overall strategy. In 208 BC, although outnumbered, he launched an initial assault to seize the critical port of Cartagena, Spain, and with it the base of supplies and reinforcements for Hannibal's movement from North Africa to the Italian peninsula. Following the seizure of Cartagena, he showed mercy to the vanquished Spanish troops and built a reputation for battlefield diplomacy. Scipio made effective use of the slow reaction of other Carthaginian forces in Spain. While maintaining a defense around the perimeter of Cartagena, he allocated sufficient forces to effectively administer the population. He found work for the captured artisans and set free all of the residents that agreed to support his cause. His enlightened and innovative leadership resulted in a stable and secure environment that protected non-combatants as a means to achieve Rome's strategic aim of denying Spain as an enemy base of operations.¹⁰ Without effective consolidation measures in Cartagena, Scipio would not have been able to control the gains he had won. News of his actions following the seizure of Cartagena won over three of the most powerful tribes in Spain and gave Scipio a numerical advantage against the Carthaginians. Months later, he routed the Carthaginians at the Battle of Baecula. Historian B. H. Liddell Hart noted, "Scipio, more than any other great captain, seems to have grasped the truth that the fruits of victory lie in the after years of peace."¹¹ These timeless historical lessons are ignored

at our peril, and the striking similarities between conflicts over time should inform our efforts today.

Campaign planners designate forces to consolidate gains and advocate for strategic-level leaders to allocate the resources necessary to achieve objectives. Candor and mutual understanding critically impact this dialogue. Strategic leaders must make resource allocation decisions based upon well-informed operational-level planner estimates and informed by the actual operational environment in the context of our doctrine, not the potentially faulty assumptions that underpin a desire for easy victories. Understanding the population in the area of operations is a critical step toward avoiding faulty assumptions. Cheap and easy victories where populations do not play a significant role in the conflict are not the historic norm and are virtually impossible against capable enemy nation-states.

A Strategist's View

In the philosophy of war there is no principle more sound than this: that the permanence of peace depends, in large degree, upon the magnanimity of the victor.

—Col. I. L. Hunt, Civil Affairs Officer, World War I¹²

The military strategist is most concerned with creating multiple options and conditions that place the United States in positions of relative advantage. When considering ends, ways, and means, the strategist needs to consider, and reconsider, consolidating gains before, during, and after a conflict. Military governance is a good example of potential strategic-level consideration to consolidate gains mentioned earlier. Throughout most of American military history, a lack of forethought about military governance at the strategic level has made the consolidation of gains during and after large-scale combat markedly more difficult. The reality is that military governance has been an unavoidable component of American military intervention going back to the Indian Wars of the nineteenth century.

There has been an ongoing debate, rekindled from one campaign to the next, about what the U.S. military's proper role should be in the administration of governance to civilian populations under its control. The prewar debates center on whether the military should



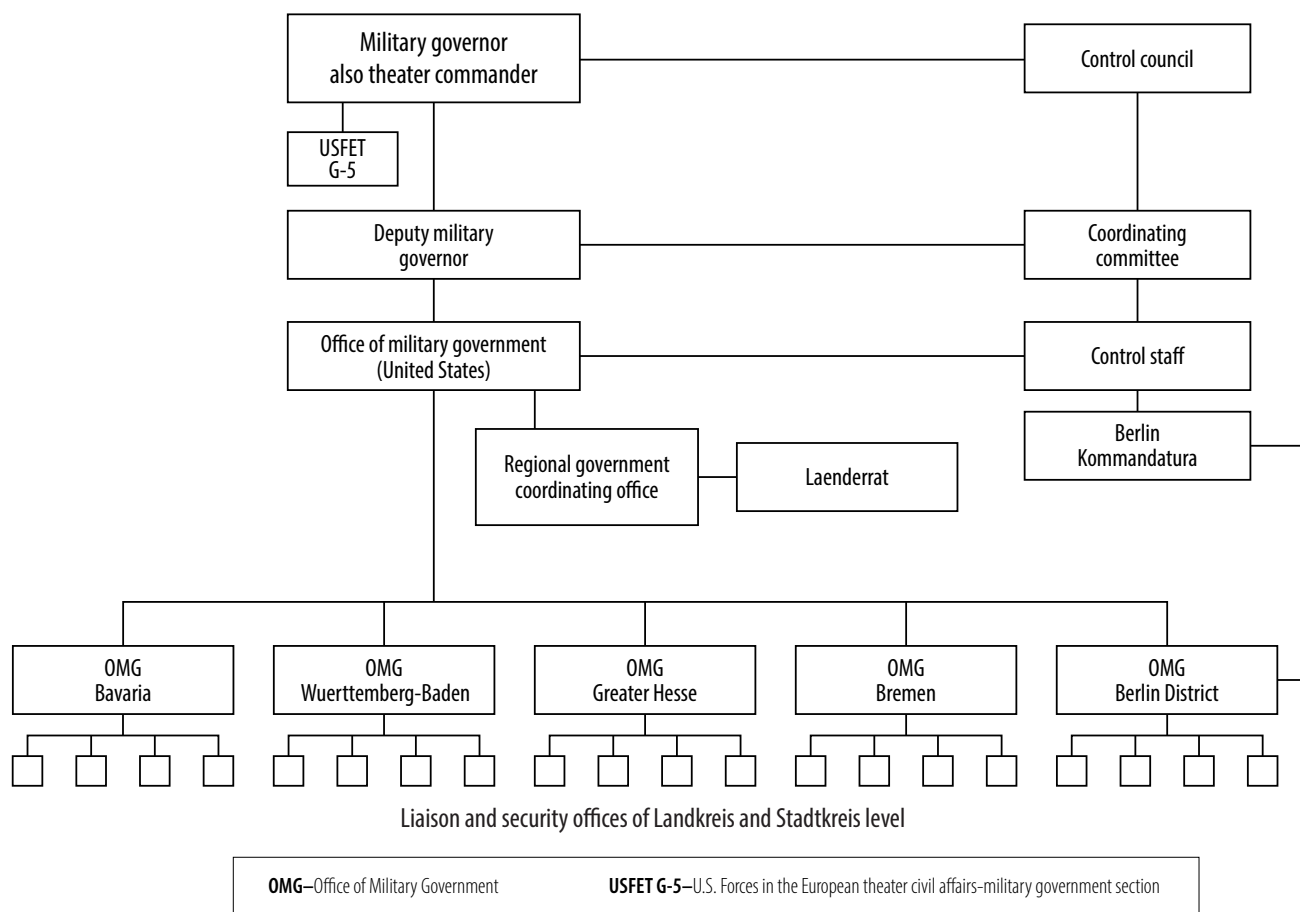
execute such a task or if governance should be left to professional bureaucrats. Regardless of the debate, and whether the military does or does not want to execute governance operations during large-scale combat, the military finds itself governing out of necessity both during and after conflicts even if it is rarely, if ever, labeled as such. In most cases, this happens because there is no other government entity present to do the job in the first place. The Second World War is one of the few examples of strategists linking military governance and consolidating gains to enduring strategic outcomes.

Following the surrender of Germany, the Office of Military Government United States (OMGUS) in the American Zone was established to command and control all governance operations. Control of governance detachments shifted from tactical commanders to OMGUS. Once military governance detachments were under the control of the post-surrender territorial C2 structure of OMGUS, U.S. governance efforts were better streamlined and coordinated with the German governmental system maximizing efficiency with German counterparts at the local, regional, and

Scipio's Noble Deed (1640), painting, by Nicholas Poussin. Roman general Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus conquered the port of Carthage located in what is today southern Spain. One widely retold anecdote that emerged from this conquest was his reputed return of a beautiful young captive woman unravished to her family and fiancé. This gesture reportedly promoted his reputation among the local conquered population for justice and mercy, which facilitated their acquiescence to his rule and their cooperation. The reputed event became emblematic of his shrewd diplomatic approach to stabilizing and consolidating Roman gains in a series of campaigns that eventually cleared the way for his eventual conquest of Carthage itself. (Painting originally from Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow. Digital/mechanical reproduction via Wikimedia Commons)

national levels. The alignment of U.S. governance detachments with the German governmental structure in the post-combat phase was imperative and accelerated restoring Germans to power at every level, crucially removing the U.S. Army from the governance side of the street as soon as possible.

The debate between the efficacy of the land, sea, or air power is really one of consolidating gains. People transit through the air and sea. They live on land. The



(Figure from *The U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany 1944-1946*, Earl F. Ziemke)

U.S. Military Government Relationships after 1 April 1946

initial U.S. strategy in Vietnam (1965–1968) was to use air power to bomb targets in North Vietnam in order to force the North Vietnamese to the negotiating table.¹³ Although the bombing imposed great suffering and material damage, the failure of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam and U.S. ground forces to consolidate tactical gains in ways that earned popular support ceded those gains.

The execution of military government has proven an inescapable, crucial aspect of war that the U.S. military, specifically the Army, must consider. The U.S. military must plan and prepare for the execution of military governance before, during, and after combat operations. This planning deserves the same, or perhaps greater, level of professional forethought than combat operations received. Failure to do so results in the type of ad hoc approach that characterized our experiences in Iraq.

Conclusion

The U.S. Army has consolidated gains, with varying degrees of success, throughout its history. It did so in the Indian Wars, after the Civil War during Reconstruction, during the Spanish-American War, during World War II and Korea, and in Vietnam, Haiti, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The success of consolidation-of-gains operations shaped how those wars and conflicts are viewed today. How we plan for, execute, and follow through with consolidating gains in our generation will determine not just the strategic advantages of the Nation but define the way history judges our actions.

By placing the reader in the shoes of the tactician, the operational artist, and the strategist, this article sought to provide a clearer understanding about consolidation-of-gains operations. The release of FM 3-0 in 2017 and the professional discussion that followed enabled an



appreciation of how the Army strategic roles contribute to the joint defense of the Nation, identified organizational gaps, and began to change the Army. Military professionals must engage in thoughtful reflection and study of how we consolidate gains on the battlefield if we are to prevail in future conflicts. We welcome the insightful professional discussion that ensues. ■

Sgt. Verlan Gunnell (second from right) speaks with Eleanor Roosevelt (third from right) in this photograph from World War II. Also pictured (from left) are Brig. Gen. James Edmunds, administrative officer of the Office of Military Government, United States (OMGUS); Ambassador Robert Murphy, political adviser of OMGUS; Lt. Gen. Lucius Clay, deputy military governor of OMGUS; Richard Jones; and Sgt. Jay Campbell (far right). (Photo submitted by the Gunnell family via *The Preston Citizen/The Herald Journal*, <https://www.hjnews.com/>)

Notes

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The Particular Circumstances of Time and Place

Why the Occupation of Japan Succeeded and the Occupation of Iraq Failed

Col. David Hunter-Chester, PhD, U.S. Army, Retired

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May/June 2016 MILITARY REVIEW

For more on consolidating gains, *Military Review* recommends the previously published article "The Particular Circumstances of Time and Place" by retired U.S. Army Col. David Hunter-Chester. The author, a trained historian, compares the U.S. occupation of Japan with the coalition occupation of Iraq, while also drawing on his personal experience working with the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad, to show why U.S. plans and policies for occupying any country should be tailored to the situation. To view this article from the May-June 2016 edition of *Military Review*, visit https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20160630_art010.pdf.

Military Review also recommends the previously published article "Government versus Governance" by U.S. Army Maj. Jennifer Jantzi-Schlichter. The author asserts that there are two main reasons that the U.S. military has been unable to achieve success in building sustainable governments in Iraq and Afghanistan: the U.S. military has failed to differentiate between government and governance; and it does not effectively train and educate its personnel on how to execute this task. To view this article from the November-December 2018 edition of *Military Review*, visit <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/ND-18/Jantzi-Schlichter-Govt-Governance.pdf>.



Government versus Governance

Why the U.S. Military Must Understand the Difference

Maj. Jennifer Jantzi-Schlichter, U.S. Army

MILITARY REVIEW November/December 2018

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Expeditionary Land Power

Lessons from the Mexican-American War

Maj. Nathan A. Jennings, U.S. Army

Since drawing down its large-scale counterinsurgency and professionally led forces deployed to distant theaters from the Indian Wars that saw some expanding American frontiers in the great reaches of the Spanish American War, the United States Army has been reduced to expeditionary land power. The expeditionary mission is a "hardcore" force of soldiers, sailors, and airmen, and it is the only force that can be deployed to distant theaters. The expeditionary mission is a "hardcore" force of soldiers, sailors, and airmen, and it is the only force that can be deployed to distant theaters. The expeditionary mission is a "hardcore" force of soldiers, sailors, and airmen, and it is the only force that can be deployed to distant theaters.

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January/February 2017 MILITARY REVIEW

For those interested in older examples of successful consolidation of gains in U.S. military history, *Military Review* recommends the previously published article "Expeditionary Land Power: Lessons from the Mexican-American War" by U.S. Army Maj. Nathan A. Jennings. The author details the planning and execution of a campaign by Gen. Winfield Scott that is considered by many historians to be a textbook example of how consolidation of gains were effectively incorporated into an overall invasion and occupation plan. To view this article from the January-February 2017 edition of *Military Review*, visit https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_2017228_art010.pdf.

ARMY UNIVERSITY PRESS

CHINA'S NEW STYLE WARFARE

SPECIAL SECTION

The response to *Military Review's* call for papers on China as a peacetime competitor and adversary, as well as a potential wartime enemy of the United States, was exceptionally positive. In the following special section, we highlight several of those submissions. Look for more on China in subsequent issues of *Military Review* and future *Military Review* online exclusive articles at <https://www.armyupress.army.mil>.



(Photo by Manuel Joseph at Pexels; flag graphic courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

Extract from the Annual Report to Congress “Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China 2019”

Office of the Secretary of Defense

“The report shall address the current and probable future course of military-technological development of the People’s Liberation Army and the tenets and probable development of Chinese security strategy and military strategy, and of the military organizations and operational concepts supporting such development over the next 20 years. The report shall also address United States-China engagement and cooperation on security matters during the period covered by the report, including through United States-China military-to-military contacts, and the United States strategy for such engagement and cooperation in the future.”

What Is China’s Strategy?

China’s leaders have benefited from what they view as a “period of strategic opportunity” during the initial two decades of the 21st century to develop domestically and expand China’s “comprehensive national power.” Over the coming decades, they are focused on realizing a powerful and prosperous China that is equipped with a “world-class” military, securing China’s status as a great power with the aim of emerging as the preeminent power in the Indo-Pacific region.

In 2018, China continued harnessing an array of economic, foreign policy, and security tools to realize this vision. Ongoing state-led efforts, which China implements both at home and abroad and which often feature economic and diplomatic initiatives, also support China’s security and military objectives:

- China continues to implement long-term state-directed planning, such as “Made in China 2025” and other industrial development plans, which stress the need to replace imported technology with domestically produced technology. These plans present an economic challenge to nations that export high-tech products. These plans also directly support military modernization goals by stressing proprietary mastery of advanced dual-use technologies.
- China’s leaders seek to align civil and defense technology development to achieve greater efficiency, innovation, and growth. In recent years, China’s leaders elevated this initiative, known as Civil-Military Integration (CMI), to a national strategy that incentivizes the civilian sector to enter the defense market. The national CMI strategy focuses on hardware

modernization, education, personnel, investment, infrastructure, and logistics.

- China's leaders are leveraging China's growing economic, diplomatic, and military clout to establish regional preeminence and expand the country's international influence. China's advancement of projects such as the "One Belt, One Road" Initiative (OBOR) will probably drive military overseas basing through a perceived need to provide security for OBOR projects.
- China conducts influence operations against media, cultural, business, academic, and policy communities of the United States, other countries, and international institutions to achieve outcomes favorable to its security and military strategy objectives. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) seeks to condition foreign and multilateral political establishments and public opinion to accept China's narrative surrounding its priorities like OBOR and South China Sea territorial and maritime claims.

Recognizing that programs such as "Made in China 2025" and OBOR have sparked concerns about China's intentions, China's leaders have softened their rhetoric when promoting these programs without altering the programs' fundamental strategic goals.

A Comprehensive Approach to Managing Regional Disputes

China seeks to secure its objectives without jeopardizing the regional stability that remains critical to the economic development that has helped the CCP maintain its monopoly on power. However, China's leaders employ tactics short of armed conflict to pursue China's strategic objectives through activities calculated to fall below the threshold of provoking armed conflict with the United States, its allies and partners, or others in the Indo-Pacific region. These tactics are particularly evident in China's

pursuit of its territorial and maritime claims in the South and East China Seas as well as along its borders with India and Bhutan. In 2018, China continued militarization in the South China Sea by placing anti-ship cruise missiles and long-range surface-to-air missiles on outposts in the Spratly Islands, violating a 2015 pledge by Chinese President Xi Jinping that "China does not intend to pursue

militarization" of the Spratly Islands. China is also willing to employ coercive measures—both military and nonmilitary—to advance its interests and mitigate opposition from other countries.

Building a More Capable People's Liberation Army

In support of the goal to establish a powerful and prosperous China, China's leaders are committed to developing military power commensurate with that of a great power. Chinese military strategy documents highlight the requirement for a People's Liberation Army (PLA) able

to fight and win wars, deter potential adversaries, and secure Chinese national interests overseas, including a growing emphasis on the importance of the maritime and information domains, offensive air operations, long-distance mobility operations, and space and cyber operations.

In 2018, the PLA published a new *Outline of Training and Evaluation* that emphasized realistic and joint training across all warfare domains and included missions and tasks aimed at "strong military opponents." Training focused on war preparedness and improving the PLA's capability to win wars through realistic combat training, featuring multi-service exercises, long-distance maneuvers and mobility operations, and the increasing use of professional "blue force" opponents. The CCP also continued vigorous efforts to root out corruption in the armed forces.

The PLA also continues to implement the most comprehensive restructure in its history to become a force capable of conducting complex joint operations. The PLA strives to be capable of fighting and winning "informatized



local wars”—regional conflicts defined by real-time, data-networked command and control (C2) and precision strike. PLA modernization includes command and force structure reforms to improve operational flexibility and readiness for future deployments. As China’s global footprint and international interests have grown, its military modernization program has become more focused on investments and infrastructure to support a range of missions beyond China’s periphery, including power projection, sea lane security, counterpiracy, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance/disaster relief, and noncombatant evacuation operations.

China’s military modernization also targets capabilities with the potential to degrade core U.S. operational and technological advantages. China uses a variety of methods to acquire foreign military and dual-use technologies, including targeted foreign direct investment, cyber theft, and exploitation of private Chinese nationals’ access to these technologies, as well as harnessing its intelligence services, computer intrusions, and other illicit approaches. In 2018, Chinese efforts to acquire

sensitive, dual-use, or military-grade equipment from the United States included dynamic random access memory, aviation technologies, and antisubmarine warfare technologies.

Reorganizing for Operations along China’s Periphery

China continues to implement reforms associated with the establishment of its five theater commands, each of which is responsible for developing command



strategies and joint operational plans and capabilities relevant for specific threats, as well as responding to crises and safeguarding territorial sovereignty and stability. Taiwan persistently remains the PLA's main "strategic direction," one of the geographic areas the leadership identifies as having strategic importance. Other strategic directions include the East China Sea, the South China Sea, and China's borders with India and North Korea. China's overall strategy toward Taiwan continues to incorporate elements of both

persuasion and coercion to hinder the development of political attitudes in Taiwan favoring independence. Taiwan lost three additional diplomatic partners in 2018, and some international fora continued to deny the participation of representatives from Taiwan. Although China advocates for peaceful unification with Taiwan, China has never renounced the use of military force, and continues to develop and deploy advanced military capabilities needed for a potential military campaign.

For those interested in examining the entire report, please visit https://media.defense.gov/2019/May/02/2002127082/-1/-1/1/2019_CHINA_MILITARY_POWER_REPORT.pdf. ■

Soldiers of China's People's Liberation Army march 30 July 2017 during a military parade to commemorate the ninetieth anniversary of the foundation of the army at the Zhurihe military training base in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, China. (Photo courtesy of Voice of America)



Competing with China for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific



Gen. Robert B. Brown, U.S. Army

Lt. Col. R. Blake Lackey, U.S. Army

Maj. Brian G. Forester, U.S. Army





As China continues its economic and military ascendance, asserting power through an all-of-nation long-term strategy, it will continue to pursue a military modernization program that seeks Indo-Pacific regional hegemony in the near-term and displacement of the United States to achieve global preeminence in the future.

—Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy

We are at a strategic inflection point. A hypercompetitive global environment coupled with accelerating technological, economic, and social change has resulted in an incredibly challenging and complex twenty-first-century operating environment. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Indo-Pacific as the People's Republic of China (PRC), under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), seeks to undermine the rules-based international order that has benefitted all nations for over seventy years. The PRC's intentions are clear: to shape a strategic environment favorable to its own national interests at the expense of other nations. Recognizing the growing global challenges emanating from the region, our national leaders have offered a contrasting vision: a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific."¹ Since the end of World War II, the substance of that vision has benefitted all nations and none more than China. As an integral part of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command's joint and combined approach to realize that vision and maintain the advantage against the PRC, Army forces are actively competing for influence in the region. Maintaining an Indo-Pacific that is free and open will require us to continue competing with Beijing by forward posturing combat-credible forces, strengthening our regional alliances and partnerships, and tightly integrating with the combined joint force to succeed in multi-domain operations.

A Revanchist China

The CCP's unabashed vision for the future is the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation."² Beyond just words,

Chinese troops on parade 13 September 2018 during the Vostok 2018 military exercise on Tsugol training ground in Eastern Siberia, Russia. The exercise involved Russian, Chinese, and Mongolian service members. Chinese participation included three thousand troops, nine hundred tanks and military vehicles, and thirty aircraft. (Photo by Sergei Grits, Associated Press)



this blueprint has manifested itself in actions such as China's One Belt, One Road initiative, wherein the CCP promises loans for infrastructure development across the Asia-Pacific region and, increasingly, the globe. In 2018, China expanded One Belt, One Road to include arctic regions as the "Polar Silk Road" and emphasized its growing status as a "Near-Arctic State."³ Exploiting the resources of other nations for China's benefit, One Belt, One Road development agreements often come with harmful, mercantilist terms that result in host-nation corruption, crippling debt, and Chinese takeover of critical infrastructure. For example, Chinese loans to Sri Lanka for a port project in Hambantota ultimately resulted in political turmoil and debt default. In 2015, Sri Lanka was forced to hand the port over to China along with fifteen thousand acres of coastline.⁴ This and other examples represent the type of "debt-trap diplomacy" that typifies the predatory economic practices under China's

One Belt, One Road.⁵

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Beyond simple regional influence, the CCP has a long-term vision for global pre-eminence.⁶ President Xi Jinping has offered a plan to guide China through domestic transformation and realize the "Chinese dream."⁷ This plan includes "two 100s," a symbolic representation of the CCP's and the PRC's one hundred-year anniversaries

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(2021 and 2049, respectively). By 2021, the CCP aims to achieve status as a "moderately prosperous society," doubling its 2010 per capita gross domestic product and raising the standard of living for all Chinese citizens.⁸ By the PRC's one hundredth anniversary in 2049, the CCP envisions the nation as "fully developed, rich and powerful," with an economy three times the size of the United States backed up by the world's premier military power.⁹ Collectively, the "two 100s"—with 2035 as an interim benchmark year—outline China's self-described path to revitalization as a superpower. This future vision is evident in the rhetoric and views of People's Liberation Army (PLA) leaders. Command level engagements with PLA officers indicate that they no longer fear the United States. Twenty, or even ten, years ago, it was evident that the PLA viewed the United States with a healthy dose of both respect and fear. That view has noticeably changed in recent years. While the PLA still respects our military capability, it no longer fears us, which is reflective of its confidence in its growing relative military power.

China has been utilizing the current peaceful interlude in international relations to aggressively modernize its military force. From 2000 to 2016, the CCP increased the PLA's budget by 10 percent annually.¹⁰ And while the CCP has voiced its intentions to achieve a fully modernized force by 2035, its actions indicate a far earlier target.¹¹ Capitalizing on the research-and-development efforts of other nations, frequently through underhanded means, the PLA is rapidly expanding its arsenal, focusing less on conventional forces and more on nuclear, space, cyberspace, and long-range fires capabilities that enable layered standoff and global reach. The PLA's updated doctrinal approach to warfighting envisages war as a confrontation between opposing systems waged under high-technology conditions—what the PLA refers to as *informatized warfare*.¹²

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In short, this is using information to PLA advantage in joint military operations across the domains of land, sea, air, space, cyberspace, and the electromagnetic spectrum. Additionally, recognizing the need to carry out joint operations

in a high-tech operating environment, the PLA is in the process of reforming its command-and-control structure to resemble our own theater and joint construct.¹³ In sum, the CCP characterizes the PLA's military modernization and recent reforms as essential to achieving great power status and, ultimately, realizing the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation."¹⁴

China where we have an alignment of interests."¹⁹ We have strands of commonality—especially in the military realm—notably related to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. U.S. Army Pacific annually participates in the largest exercise with the PLA that focuses on disaster response. We can and should find common ground to build trust and stability between our two nations. But,



By 'open,' we mean that 'all nations should enjoy unfettered access to the seas and airways upon which our nations and economies depend.'



Our Competing Vision

It is against this backdrop that U.S. Indo-Pacific Command is implementing a strategy toward our national vision of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific."¹⁵ As stated by Adm. Phil Davidson, commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command,

We mean 'free' both in terms of security—being free from coercion by other nations—and in terms of values and political systems ... Free societies adhere to the shared values of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, respecting individual liberties.¹⁶

By "open," we mean that "all nations should enjoy unfettered access to the seas and airways upon which our nations and economies depend." This includes "open investment environments, transparent agreements between nations, protection of intellectual property rights, fair and reciprocal trade—all of which are essential for people, goods, and capital to move across borders for the shared benefit of all."¹⁷ The substance of this vision is not new; "free and open" have buttressed our regional approach for over seventy years. As an enduring Pacific power, we aim to preserve and protect the rules-based international order that benefits all nations, and it is this objective that underpins our long-term strategy for Indo-Pacific competition.¹⁸

Despite our conflicting visions, we must not overlook areas of common interest with China. As noted by then Acting Secretary of Defense Patrick Shanahan at the recent IISS (International Institute for Strategic Studies) Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, "We cooperate with

as Shanahan went on to say, "We compete with China where we must," and though "competition does not mean conflict," our overarching goal is to deter revisionist behavior that erodes a free and open Indo-Pacific and, ultimately, win before fighting."²⁰ Land forces play a key role in competing to deter the PRC. Deterrence is the product of capability, resolve, and signaling, and there is no greater signal of resolve than boots on the ground. Forward-postured Army forces, alongside a constellation of like-minded allies and partners, provide a competitive advantage and a strong signal of strength to potential adversaries. Should deterrence fail, forward-postured land forces support a rapid transition to conflict, providing the Indo-Pacific commander additional options in support of the combined joint fight. In an environment where anti-access aerial denial systems provide layered standoff, forward-postured land forces can enable operations in the maritime and air domains if competition escalates to crisis or conflict, which we have demonstrated in tabletop exercises, simulations, and operational deployments.

Army Forces in Combined and Joint Indo-Pacific Competition

Competition with the PRC is happening now, and the twenty-five thousand islands in the Indo-Pacific will be a key factor in any crisis scenario we may encounter. U.S. Army Pacific delivers several advantages to the combined joint force as America's Theater Army in the Indo-Pacific. This summer, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command completed the first ever certification of U.S. Army Pacific as a four-star combined joint task force (CJTF). This historic certification not only signifies the integral



role of land forces in the Indo-Pacific, but it also provides the combatant commander the option of a land-based CJTF. Additionally, Army forces contribute to an agile and responsive force posture that ultimately strengthens the joint force's capacity for deterrence.

Now in its seventh year, the Pacific Pathways Program is evolving to meet the demands of increased competition. Under Pathways 2.0, U.S. Army Pacific forces are now west of the international dateline ten months of the year, and the Pathways Task Force, which is growing from under 1,000 to approximately 2,500 troops, will remain static in key partner nations—especially in the first island chain—for longer periods.²¹ Doing so benefits the partner forces by increasing the depth of training and relationships, enhances the combat readiness of the deployed task force, and allows the dynamic force employment of smaller units to outlying countries. For example, in May of this year, we operationally deployed a rifle company from the Pathways Task Force based in the Philippines to Palau for combined training with the local security forces—the first time in thirty-seven years Army forces have been in Palau. Pathways 2.0 and other Army force-posture initiatives are expanding the competitive space, providing opportunities to compete with the PRC for influence in previously uncontested regions of the Indo-Pacific.

Operating among the people, our land forces are especially suited to strengthening the alliances and partnerships in a complex region containing over half of the world's population. Everything we do in the region militarily is combined; we will never be without our

allies, partners, and friends. Relationships must be built before—not during—a crisis. We strive every day to form our team in the Indo-Pacific so that when a crisis occurs, we are ready. During U.S. Army Pacific's recent certification as a CJTF, key allies and partners provided critical capabilities that made the entire team better. The exercise exemplified the importance of forming the team prior to crisis, strengthening our capacity for deterrence to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific. Because fear and coercion are central to the PRC's regional approach, mutually beneficial and purposeful engagements build trust among our partners and enable us to cooperatively counter China's intimidation. During this fiscal year alone, U.S. Army Pacific conducted over two hundred senior leader engagements, seventy subject-matter expert exchanges, and over thirty bilateral and multilateral training exercises involving thousands of soldiers. These partner engagements reinforce the message that nothing we do in the theater will be by ourselves; it is only by working together that we can achieve a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Army forces also strengthen regional partnerships by enhancing interoperability among militaries. We often focus interoperability discussions on technical systems (communications, fires, logistics, etc.). The hard reality is that our systems will always have challenges with communication, and though we should not stop pursuing perfection, we must not forget the other dimensions of interoperability: procedures and relationships. Procedural interoperability involves agreed upon terminology, tactics, techniques, and procedures that



minimize doctrinal differences. While we will always remain frustrated by—and often focused on—systems interoperability, procedural interoperability should not be overlooked as a way to enhance our cooperative effectiveness. The most important dimension of interoperability is personal relationships. Strong relationships among partners can overcome the friction inherent in today's complex operating environment, especially at the outset of crisis, and they are a critical component of long-term strategic competition with China.

Finally, our strategic approach to the Indo-Pacific embraces the reality that current and future operations will be multi-domain. In competition and conflict, all domains—land, air, maritime, space, and cyberspace—will be contested. The combined joint force will have to seize temporary windows of opportunity to gain positions of relative advantage. Considering the geographic complexity of the Indo-Pacific across twenty-five thousand islands, land forces will play a pivotal role in supporting operations in other domains whether during competition, crisis, or conflict. Exercises and simulations have demonstrated the value of land-based systems—integrated with cyber and space capabilities—in enabling air and

maritime maneuver. For over two years, U.S. Army Pacific has been leading the Army's Multi-Domain Task Force (MDTF) Pilot Program; through exercises and experimentation in the Indo-Pacific, we are driving the development of multi-domain operations (MDO) doctrine and force structure. Earlier this year, we activated the first Intelligence, Information, Cyber, Electronic Warfare, and Space (I2CEWS) Detachment, which serves as the core of the MDTF's forward-deployed capability to strengthen our capacity for deterrence.

The MDTF is proving its worth in key exercises, to include last year's Navy-led Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise and in our recent CJTF certification. Key capabilities such as land-based antiship

A Naval Strike Missile fires from an Army Palletized Load System truck 12 July 2018 before hitting a decommissioned ship at sea during the world's largest international maritime exercise, Rim of the Pacific, at the Pacific Missile Range near Kekaha, Hawaii. This was the first land-based launch of the missile. (Photo by David Hogan, U. S. Army Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center Weapons Development and Integration Directorate)





Soldiers from Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Southern Theater Command and the U.S. Army Pacific carry an injured man 18 November 2016 as they conduct a search-and-rescue operation at a simulated earthquake-collapsed building during the U.S.-China Disaster Management Exchange drill at a PLA training base in Kunming in southwestern China's Yunnan Province. (Photo by Andy Wong, Associated Press)

missiles enable operations in other domains and pose multiple dilemmas to the enemy. Final preparations are also underway for the MDTF's dynamic force employment during this year's Exercise Orient Shield, a combined exercise with the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force that, for the first time ever, will include the integration of multi-domain capabilities in concert with our Japanese partners. While the MDTF is not a panacea, the multi-domain capabilities that it is integrating into doctrine are invaluable as the joint force grapples with the changing character of warfare in the face of competition with China.

Succeeding in multi-domain competition with China will require an unprecedented level of U.S. joint force integration. In the past, we have waited for conflict to begin for jointness to take hold, but we cannot afford to do so now. And while we are well practiced at joint *interdependence* in conflict—notable examples include Operations Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom—MDO will require the “rapid and continuous *integration* of all domains of warfare to deter and prevail as we compete short of armed conflict.”²² Accomplishing this level of joint integration will require us to break down existing service stovepipes,

overcome our tendency to seek service-centric solutions, and integrate doctrine, training, and modernization efforts to mature MDO into a joint warfighting approach. The Indo-Pacific is truly a combined and joint theater, and we must seek combined and joint solutions to the problem of competition with China.

Our Advantage

We should be clear-eyed about the PRC's demonstrated intentions to undermine the rules-based international order and shape a strategic environment favorable to its interests at the expense of other nations. No one seeks conflict, but as George Washington once said, “To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace.”²³ U.S. Army Pacific, as part of a lethal

combined joint team, contributes to deterrence through the forward posture of combat-credible forces, the strengthening of our regional alliances and partnerships, and a joint approach to MDO. We will cooperate with China where we can but will also compete where we must to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific and preserve the rules-based order that has been at the heart of the region's stability and prosperity for over seventy years.

Strategic competition with China is a long-term challenge, exacerbated by the accelerating complexity of the global security environment. Within this challenge, though, is the opportunity to leverage our greatest long-term advantages: our partnerships and our people. Everything we do in the Indo-Pacific is in partnership with other nations. We must maintain strong alliances

and partnerships, leveraging our combined forces to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific. And as Gen. George Patton said, "The soldier is the Army. No army is better than its soldiers."²⁴ Though our combined joint force is the envy of the world, we have "no preordained right to victory on the battlefield."²⁵ We must actively invest in the development of our people now in order to retain the advantage in MDO. Leaders who can thrive—as opposed to just survive—in ambiguity and chaos are essential if we are to maintain a combat-credible force that can succeed in a complex, multi-domain operating environment. We are confident in our greatest assets—our people, in cooperation with our great allies and partners. Investing in our advantage today will ensure we can compete, deter, and, if necessary, win as part of a lethal combined joint team. ■

Notes

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Chinese armored vehicles pass in review September 2018 at the end of the Vostok 2018 military exercise at the Tsugol training ground in Eastern Siberia, Russia. The exercise involved Russian, Chinese, and Mongolian forces. Chinese participation included three thousand troops, nine hundred tanks and military vehicles, and thirty aircraft. (Photo courtesy of the Office of the President of Russia)

Contemporary China

In Conflict, Not Competition



Timothy L. Faulkner

Any assessment that the United States and China are in competition and not conflict is flawed and reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of core Chinese operational and strategic end states. Within the U.S. Department of Defense, this misunderstanding stems in part from two misguided

approaches to China. First, our current joint doctrine lacks joint operating concepts that integrate all services and domains, and it does not posture the United States to be in a positional advantage for conflict. Second, and more importantly, we misunderstand the Chinese approach to warfare. As stated in Qiao Liang and Wang

Xiangsui's *Unrestricted Warfare*, the new principles of war are no longer “using armed force to compel the enemy to submit to one’s will, but instead using all means, including armed forces or non-armed forces ... lethal and non-lethal means to compel the enemy to accept one’s interest.”¹ We would do well to understand this mindset.

Most Department of Defense officials tend to classify the current stance with China as a competition. However, instead of a competition, which implies a steady state, I would argue that we are in a mature state of *conflict*. Although this controversial stance may cause a stir inside various departments of the U.S. government, it is plausible when we apply China’s thought process to the current U.S. situation and accept that China’s view of the world causes us to miscalculate Chinese intent.

To rectify the “competition versus conflict” misunderstanding, one needs to consider China’s extensive expansion of its military capabilities through the lens of the nation’s historical references and contemporary political objectives. China’s published political objectives clearly define its strategic goals of becoming the premier world power. These goals are in line with the upcoming one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the communist state in 2021 and 2049, respectively.

Military objectives include plans for advanced weapons that will enable China to have the positional advantage in the first island chain, an area that extends from Japan along the South China Sea, by 2021 (see figure 1). Moreover, by 2035, China plans to have a fully modernized military possessing a positional advantage in the Pacific; and, by 2049, the regime intends to be a rich and powerful country that will challenge, and potentially impose its will on, all democracies in the Indo-Pacific.²

Additionally, the Chinese political system has created a purpose-built military to defeat the United States. The ruling regime in China, led by President Xi Jinping, desires to supplant the United States in the Pacific and change the existing world order. Coupled with China’s economic growth, the regime’s modern and capable military will ensure the U.S.-China conflict will endure for the next two decades. China’s focus is on displacement, not replacement, in this current conflict. Displacement

is one component of removing the United States from its post-World War II guardianship of the Indo-Pacific and the global commons.

China’s ambitions are not confined to the Indo-Pacific. The nation also seeks to displace the United States globally in order to exert total social, cultural, ideological, and economic influence as a global power. China’s strategic end state is to be both a regional hegemon and a global superpower, giving the country the socioeconomic leverage, power, and influence its desires. Until recently, China has been able to move this plan forward by creating man-made features



(Figure from Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2006* [Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2006]; boundary representations are not necessarily authoritative)

Figure 1. Geographic Boundaries of the First and Second Island Chains

in the South China Sea that contribute to success in the current and future conflicts with the United States. China pursues conflict with the United States through extensive military expansion, improvements in joint integration, political coercion of regional neighbors, and a twisted “whole-of-government” approach in its long worldview of Pacific supremacy and eventual totalitarian world order.

This world order uses military intimidation in economic coercion, transactional political payoffs, and lethal and nonlethal levers to support its current campaign. To create further challenges for U.S. forces, the Chinese use economic espionage, intellectual theft, cyber operations, and academic espionage to mitigate

U.S. technological advantages and ensure the United States has no traditional rear area.

Failure to understand or take this conflict seriously will have grave consequences for the United States, just as it did when China entered the Korean War. History can illuminate other cases where the United States approached a growing threat with a competition mentality instead of a conflict mindset. Imagine if the United States had taken a conflict approach to handle Adolf Hitler's free land grab or the Imperial Japanese invasions of Korea, China, and other Pacific nations before World War II. If Japanese Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto had not attacked Pearl Harbor, would the United States have come to "competition" terms with Imperial Japan? Moreover, if so, what would that have meant to the future world order and, more importantly, America's national security?

World War II and the Korean War were conflicts as horrible as one can imagine, but they do not compare to the warfare potential of the all-domain military and

civilian capabilities the Chinese are building. These include weapons, such as the DF21 and DF26 missiles, that can kill a carrier strike group, an air wing, or an Army brigade within seconds. Alternatively, these capabilities can set the conditions for controlling sea lines and air lines of communication (SLOCs and ALOCs) with man-made islands in the South China Sea, where more than one-third of the global shipping passes.³ These capabilities and improvements will allow China to slowly take possession of the Indo-Pacific without firing a shot via a methodical information campaign and emplacement of a sophisticated network

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of state-owned enterprises that control other countries' energy, telecommunications, medical, informational systems, and intellectual property.

The current conflict with China takes place across all domains and is unlike anything the United States has ever faced, and, unfortunately, few people seem to be considering the consequences. As former Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead stated, "We have not thought about the significant capital losses that will occur—and the American people not being prepared for that."⁴

The way we address the China threat now will determine the United States' standing in the twenty-first century and beyond. Accordingly, the United States must recognize that it is, as Simon Sinek stated in his leadership discussion at the U.S. Special Operations Command headquarters, playing an "infinite game."⁵ Infinite games are played by those who want to keep playing versus a finite game, which is played by those who seek a short-term win. In competitions, a finite player believes there can be a distinct near-term win. This mindset will not be the case with China. Infinite games are zero-sum: the country is either ahead or behind in military terms, and there can be no win-win scenario. Applying this to the current conflict and in the context of multi-domain operations, the United States either has a positional advantage or disadvantage; currently, it is at a disadvantage.

In this infinite conflict, we must embrace the fact that there will be positional advantages, and the United States' ability to limit China's maneuverability or obtain a permanent positional advantage is critical. It is crucial to challenge China in all traditional domains: land, air, and sea; however, it is equally important to challenge China in the nontraditional domains of intelligence, information, influence, cyber, and space (I3CS). The conflict China is waging has put it in a positional advantage in traditional and nontraditional areas that, if left unchecked, will allow it to dominate in terms of diplomatic, intelligence, military, and economic power by 2050. However, that is not to say that these results are inevitable. Understanding Chinese history, all-domain objectives, the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) transformation, a whole-of-government approach, and military force employment will provide critical insights into U.S. forces gaining the positional advantage in this conflict.

History is Religion

“For Chinese people, history is our religion,” wrote Chinese writer Hu Ping.⁶ This statement is key to studying China’s history, understanding the future China envisions for itself, and enhancing the United States’ ability to know the enemy. Two important historical reference points tie China’s history to the Song (960–1279) and Qing dynasties (1636–1912). During both these periods,

objective is for the PLA Navy to evolve into a global navy by 2050.¹² Liu’s vision is an excellent example of the standard Chinese belief that their rightful place is to control and dominate their region and the world. Chinese policy statements state that the path to success is waging a long war, much of which will be indirect and nonkinetic, to supplant U.S. leadership in the Pacific and dictate the Chinese totalitarian new world order.

“World War II and the Korean War were conflicts as horrible as one can imagine, but they do not compare to the warfare potential of the all-domain military and civilian capabilities the Chinese are building.”

China was reunified, and during the Song Dynasty, it originated many significant technological innovations such as mass printing, the magnetic compass, gunpowder, and paper money.⁷ Today’s China is once again seeking to lead the world innovatively, including in the areas of artificial intelligence and quantum communication. As in the past, many of these technologies have dual civilian and military uses. More importantly, all these capabilities are essential for the PLA to become a world-class military.

With the intent to intimidate, awe, and charm other countries and regions including Mongolia, Tibet, Central Asia, and Taiwan into submission (or at least acquiescence), Xi uses references to the Qing dynasty to remind his people and his neighbors of China’s past economic and cultural glory.⁸ His ability to leverage historical underpinnings provides his road map for rejuvenated Chinese dominance. Recent historical references paint the picture of Chinese determination to dominate the Asia-Pacific and beyond. Policies of insulation, all-domain objectives, the PLA transformation, and the all-of-government approach best explain China’s efforts.

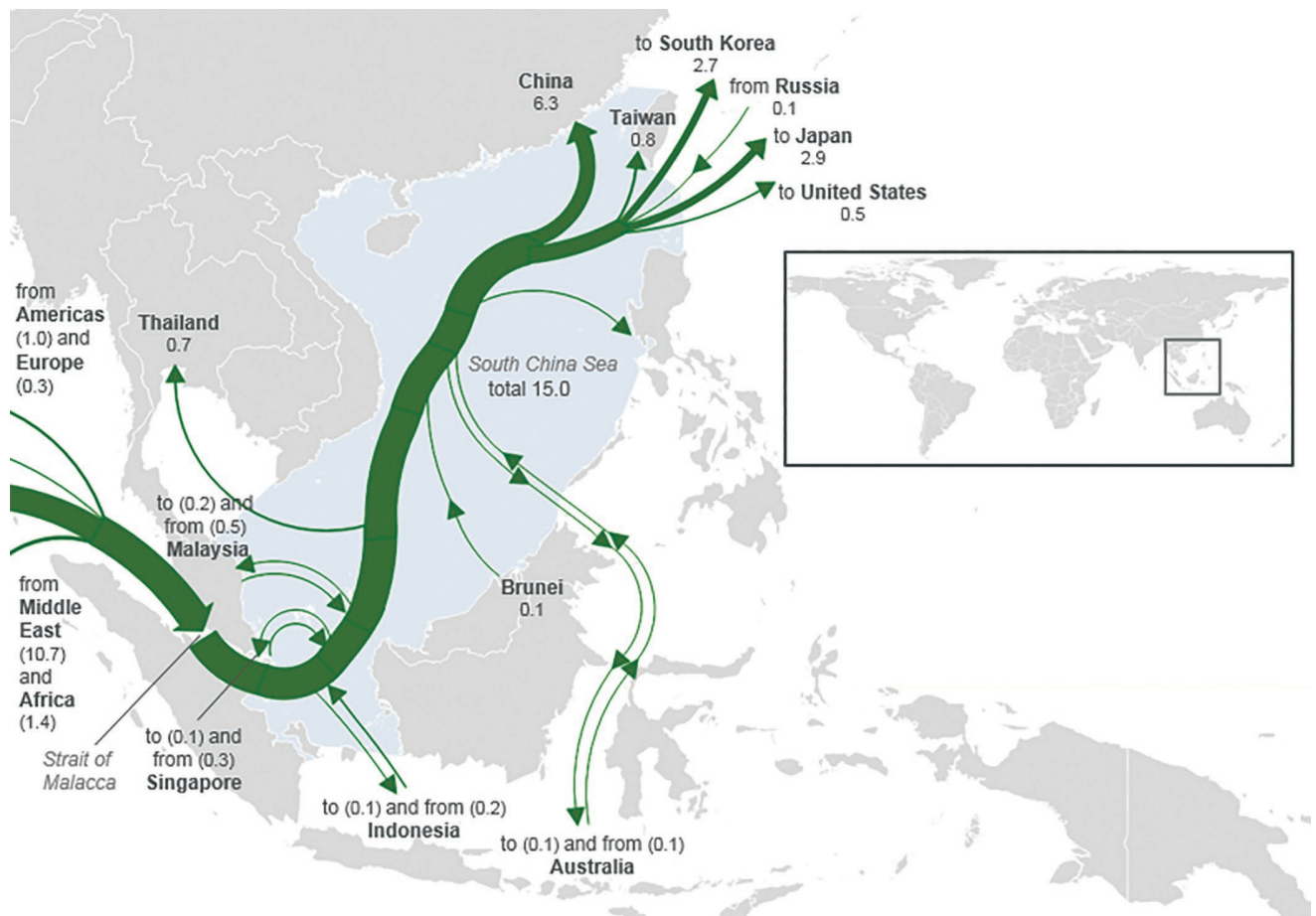
Insulation. Insulation plays a key role in Chinese strategic thinking. In 1989, Chinese Adm. Liu Huaqing, father of the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLA Navy), shifted the PLA Navy’s focus to an offshore defense strategy by outlining a series of phases.⁹ In phase 1, the PLA Navy would dominate the first island chain to include the South China Sea, the East China Sea, and the Yellow Sea by the year 2000.¹⁰ In phase 2, the PLA Navy will extend its control to the second island chain beyond Guam by 2020 (see figure 1, page 43).¹¹ In phase 3, the

China’s race to build islands in the pathway of key SLOCs and ALOCs is by no means a coincidence. The Chinese have purposely built them to provide the PLA the ability to control the first island chain, providing a buffer from U.S. air and maritime dominance. The combination of geography and its recent militarization of these man-made features allows China to enjoy a positional advantage, enabling the country to challenge the United States on the sea and in the air. Furthermore, China has taken an aggressive stance against U.S. allies and partners by challenging any nation that comes within twelve nautical miles of its man-made features in the first island chain.¹³ Through these moves, China has extended its ability to control an area where \$3.37 trillion, or 21 percent, of global trade and 30 percent of the world’s maritime crude oil and numerous fishing, transportation, naval vessels, and communication cables must pass through (see figure 2, page 46).¹⁴

Further complicating the situation, China’s obsessive nature and concern of events on the Korean peninsula and Taiwan and border disputes with other neighbors such as India prompted Xi to declare at the 19th CCP Congress in 2017 that the PLA must “prepare for military struggle in all strategic directions and the military was integral in achieving China’s national rejuvenation.”¹⁵

All-domain objectives. China continues its influence with fabricated facts while it is simultaneously building a similar capability in the I3CS domains. As with traditional domains, the goal is to surpass and defeat the United States in I3CS.





(Figure from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, based on Clipper Crude Data Service and IHS EDIN; total includes small flows, less than 0.1 million barrels per day, not shown on map)

Figure 2. Major Crude Oil Trade Flows in the South China Sea during 2016 (numbers in millions of barrels per day)

China has built an intelligence layer that starts with its own population, thus controlling the domestic information domain. Implementing the intelligence layer is especially evident in China's social casting, which provides insights into the intricate intelligence apparatus China has built for its citizens. In China, the Ministry of State Security controls every aspect of the internet, and citizens who do not conform to the state's restrictions are placed on a no-fly list or, worse yet, are reeducated in various communist concentration camps.¹⁶

In the next intelligence layer, China conducts outward surveillance that focuses on key countries in the Asia Pacific and then branches out toward areas with strategic value such as the Panama Canal and the Middle East. The intelligence apparatus then starts intelligence preparation of the environment in order to facilitate the information collection and needed influence to achieve China's desired

strategic end state. Part of this intelligence preparation is leveraging the cyber and space domains.

A web of state-owned enterprises, private companies, and Confucian centers are platforms to collect and influence local governments and populations. The Chinese also control media platforms that promote the Chinese narrative. Additionally, the Chinese have sought to spread influence by selling military technology with no questions of efficacy or moral obligation. (So, if we do not fight the Chinese tomorrow, we will surely fight their weapon systems.)

China is also trying to replace the United States in international military education and training. The Chinese are willing and able to train officers from all the countries where China seeks to challenge the United States. Add in language training, and the Chinese are slowly building a pathway for foreign



countries' leaders to align with China. If all officers received their training from China instead of the United States, where will we be when one of these officers is the minister of defense or the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the United States or another country?

Finally, the U.S. global advantage depends in large part on sovereign countries allowing the United States to base or overfly their countries. Chinese influence may preclude this in the future. China's all-domain approach is a key foundation of its holistic joint transformation.

PLA transformation. Underpinning the PLA transformation was China's inability to confront U.S. forces during the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis and observing U.S. military operations in Middle East conflicts. Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu opined, "Know your enemy and know yourself; in one hundred battles you will never be in peril."¹⁷ Modern China has taken this to heart. Not only did the Chinese study, steal, and observe any writings of U.S. performance in conflicts, but it also made critical decisions not to have PLA forces strictly army based.

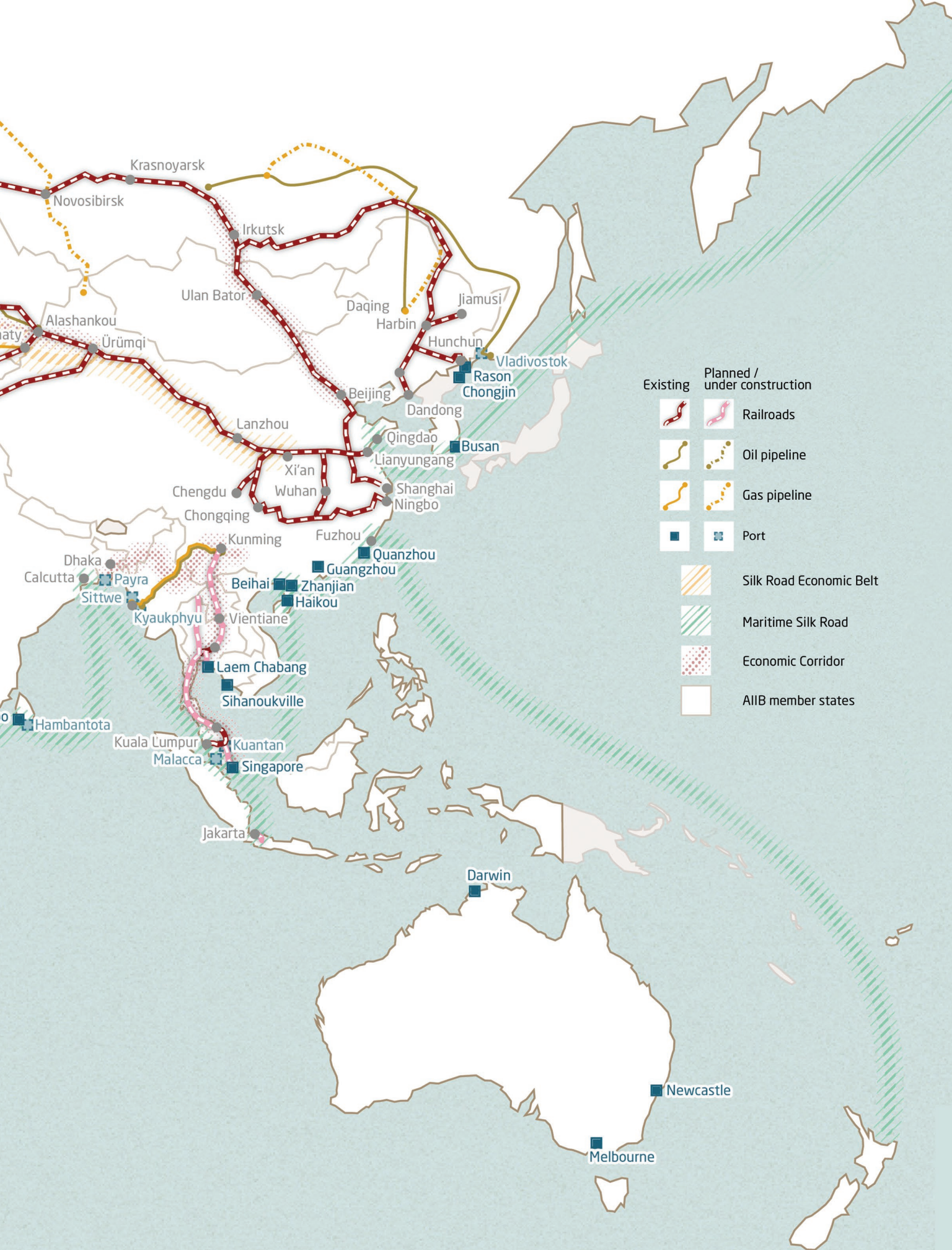
The Chinese have reformed traditional PLA units to work jointly and integrate all joint capabilities and nontraditional capabilities, including intelligence; information operations; and electronic, space, and cyber warfare. Not only has the PLA aligned joint theater-level headquarters to fight in complex joint environments, but

During a Chinese military parade marking the seventieth anniversary of the end of World War II, a military vehicle carrying a Pterodactyl I unmanned aerial vehicle drives past the Tiananmen Gate 3 September 2015 in Beijing. China is the world's leading exporter of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS). Low pricing and lack of export restrictions make Chinese-made UAS especially appealing to markets in Asia, Central Asia, and Africa. (Photo by Jason Lee, Reuters)

it has also vastly improved its weapons capabilities.¹⁸ The ability to employ sophisticated weapons is reinforced with an intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance network that provides commanders real-time intelligence to facilitate decision-making.¹⁹ China also furthered its battlefield capabilities by creating a robust network that moves data across all domains.

China knows that equipment alone will not make the PLA a robust force; it takes training and integration. Since 2012, China has conducted combined-arms unit rotations with an opposing "blue force" at its training centers. These training events are not scripted and emphasize empowering junior leaders, much like U.S. combat training centers. In 2015, PLA leaders directed changes to ground forces training based in part on lessons learned from these rotations.²⁰

These training adjustments have given China a competent joint warfighting capability that resembles





A naval soldier of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy looks through a pair of binoculars from onboard China's first aircraft carrier, *Liaoning*, as it visits a military harbor circa 2013 on the South China Sea in Sanya, Hainan Province, China. (Photo by Hu Kaibing, Xinhua)

that of the United States. Overcoming the integration of forces, breaking cultural barriers, and including highly critical after action reviews are telling signs of military maturity. Strategic opportunity has given the PLA the ability to reinvent its fighting capability while not being in a hyperwar. With a trained and capable joint force, the PLA is prepared for employment.

Whole-of-government approach. China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative enables debt-trap diplomacy, leveraging countries' inattentive acceptance of loans that can never be paid off (see figure 3, pages 48–49). And, China's use of state-owned enterprises is a key and essential way to use Chinese businesses as a façade for permanent military and intelligence capability. Again, this global expansion has been put to practice in Djibouti and recently in Sri Lanka.²¹ China conducts meticulous studies of where it requires military positioning, securing of invaluable

SLOCs, global military responsiveness, and upper-hand dictation of terms in land agreements.

China now has reached into the Middle East and Africa and has coercive control of Sri Lanka's strategic position in the Indian Ocean. This initiative is only the beginning, as China can now focus on militarizing the first island chain and influencing countries in the second island chain, which will radically cut off the U.S. Pacific forces' attempts to engage in any future Pacific conflict. China's use of government agencies to advance military power is unequalled. U.S. military leaders must acknowledge the Chinese model that has shifted assets from tactical to strategic with one purpose in mind: to advance the nation's global-power end state. China's military has a direct chain of command to China's center of gravity, the CCP. Not only does the PLA have obedience to serve the CCP, but the PLA



Seaman Alex Case uses high-powered binoculars to observe a Chinese navy vessel from the bridge of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *Sterett* (DDG 104) 21 September 2014 on deployment in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations in the Pacific Ocean. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Eric Coffey, U.S. Navy)

also handles domestic security as well, as evidenced during the 1989 Tiananmen Square unrest.

With the current whole-of-government approach, the Chinese have not only used all instruments of power to slowly diminish the U.S. influence in the Indo-Pacific, but they also have been able to accelerate weapons development, training, land reclamation on key ALOCS and SLOCS to create strategic leverage with U.S. partner countries to counter the free and open Indo-Pacific.²²

China's unchallenged "buying friends" debt-trap strategy seeks to strategically influence countries where they have no choice in future diplomatic and military partnerships. Controlling the Pacific is the key terrain in this conflict, where not only 70 percent of the world's population lives but where many of the world's largest economies also operate.

"Feeding the beast" is an excellent analogy in terms of how a nation builds a fighting force. China's economic ascendance has allowed the rapid rise of its military force. The PLA's military modernization is focused on gaining capability that would challenge any U.S. force. The Chinese government increased annual spending by 10 percent from 2000 to 2016.²³ The Chinese economy drives the military makeover by intellectual thievery, much of which is enabled by its intelligence apparatus. China's intelligence activities on the U.S. mainland should be alarming. The use of Chinese students at major research labs for intellectual property theft and for infiltration of companies that provide a fighting edge to U.S. forces means that the days of distinct U.S. technological advantage are gone. The United States will have to contend with a force



that is trying to penetrate all walks of U.S. life to the benefit of the Chinese government. The U.S. global responsiveness must reassess its forward posture to be in a position to challenge the PLA in any conflict.

China has learned never to allow the United States the opportunity to deploy to strategic countries and forces countries to acquiesce to China's demand. This fact was very evident with South Korea, one of the most ardent U.S. allies, when China organized a massive protest against South Korean companies in response to the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense deployment. If South Korea can be pressured, what would a partner nation that cannot withstand the Chinese economic blackmail do? The answer to that question is probably whatever China wants. China committed long ago to creating a military that would challenge the United States through global conflict and in the Pacific. When it comes to conflict in the Pacific, we are there now.

Deploying the Force

China's military influence is not limited to the Pacific region. China has deployed forces in support of noncombatant evacuations in Yemen and Libya and provided counterpiracy naval patrols off the coast of Somalia.²⁴ These were the first tests along its path toward global power. China intends to build military capability across the globe, and deploying the force serves many vital lines of effort. First, it demonstrates to other nations it has the capability. Second, it provides placement and access to sell made-in-China military hardware. And lastly, it displaces the U.S. military as the partner of choice. Americans must understand the depth of the new battlefield that is not tied to lockstep military phases or traditional lethal means of attack, and realize China's strategic deployments guide its global actions.

Sun Tzu provides a framework for understanding the Chinese view of warfare. China's comprehensive study of U.S. tactics, capabilities, and weakness are three of Sun Tzu's themes: (1) "know your enemy and know yourself, and in one hundred battles you will never be in peril"; (2) "to win one hundred wars is not the height of skill, to subdue the enemy without fighting is"; and (3) "avoid what is strong, attack what is weak."²⁵ These themes drive strategic thinking into a broad campaign to win in conflict, and China has been in conflict. Those who have opposed have been met with confrontation, such as the Philippines, as seen from 2012 South China Sea Navy

incident and recently in 2019 with multiple incidents of fishing in disputed territory and the use of maritime militia and the coast guard.²⁶

We should not misinterpret China's past military campaigns in Korea or Vietnam as failures. These tactical defeats were strategic wins. Yes, China suffered losses; however, both conflicts restored an insular border in North Korea and ensured Vietnam withdrew from southeast countries and restored borders between Laos, Cambodia, China, and Vietnam. We should avoid the pitfall of thinking tactically about past conflicts, as it inhibits our ability to think strategically about future conflicts.

The PLA is a purpose-built force intended to defeat the U.S. military that answers directly to the CCP. Its rapid pace of military development and testing of capabilities is distressing. China's development in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, rocket technology, force projection of land and maritime forces, and fifth-generation fighters are all meant to defeat the United States. Winning quickly and decisively drives the Chinese military strategy. Regardless of the foe, it wants armed conflicts to end quickly and as bloodlessly as possible. Moreover, now it thinks it can do so. In this current state of conflict, the Chinese have set conditions early with hypervertical escalation to achieve strategic objectives and bring a quick victory.

The United States now finds itself in a conflict where the enemy has matched or will overmatch its capabilities by 2025. The Chinese are setting the conditions in diplomatic, economic, and informational areas where most countries will be reluctant to support U.S. force deployments to counter the PLA. China understands that defeating the conditions of U.S. support is vital in defeating the United States. Breaking apart alliances by using all elements of power sets the conditions for total U.S. defeat. In the conflict with China, understanding Chinese military intentions and force employment is critical in order to integrate a comprehensive campaign against China. We know what Chinese leadership is going to do because they have told us repeatedly. Therefore, the question before us now is a simple one: what are we going to do about it?

Gaining U.S. Positional Advantage in this Conflict

The United States and its military leaders must realize we are in an infinite conflict and, if actions are not taken

immediately, China will set conditions to obtain a permanent positional advantage in the Indo-Pacific. The Chinese are not without weaknesses. They have proven that their intentions in all domains are for the betterment of the CCP's rejuvenation. The CCP possesses several blind spots in the PLA transformation, all-domain objectives, and global partnerships, which the United States could exploit in order to counter China's dangerous ambitions.

First, in a country where the public lives in fear of the Chinese government, social casting and constant surveillance are true testaments of CCP control. However, they are also strategic weaknesses. The military is reflective of the values of the society and public it serves, and the PLA's most recent military victory is defeating its people in a public protest in Tiananmen Square. Moreover, current operations against the Muslim Uighurs only highlight the CCP's willingness to force its will to control the national narrative. Despite the Chinese government trying to erase this abhorrent abuse of human rights, the public finds the truth. The Chinese public recorded 131 million travelers in 2017. Most of this travel is to democratically elected countries with freedom of speech such as South Korea, Japan, the United States, Australia, and European countries.²⁷ As a result, though the CCP has total control, a population exposed to the truth will silently know the CCP narrative is false. This population fills the military ranks and, over time, with U.S. influence, this could be used to our advantage.

Second, the CCP has continually criticized the Chinese military for lacking strict adherence to communist doctrine. The CCP will never attain full adherence by the military, and that makes it vulnerable. The CCP does not fully comprehend the military agility required to accomplish operational and strategic tasks and often calls upon the PLA to do unreasonable or unattainable things.

Third, despite PLA transformation and military reforms, the PLA still requires a great amount of training and joint integration to become proficient as a fighting force. The PLA has recognized it is incapable of judging the battlefield situation, understanding senior leader intent, making operational decisions, deploying troops, and reacting to unexpected situations. Xi noted "two insufficient abilities" as being the inability to fight and command at all levels of modern warfare.²⁸ In contrast, the United States mastered joint synchronization in Operation Desert Storm and now conducts joint integration. True joint integration is the indicator of a professional military force.

The Way Forward

In order to prevail in the current and future conflict with China, the United States needs to move beyond our current joint integration and truly embrace joint multi-domain operations concepts that include all domains of warfare synchronized within the DIME. Conducting joint multi-domain operations war games against a peer competitor needs to be the standard for all exercises. To further capitalize on this disparity, the Army's training must include a more shared and technical understanding of peer capabilities. In multi-domain operations, the Army will have to conduct non-lethal and lethal effects against peer land, air, and sea targets as well as information, cyber, and space effects.

Furthermore, the military needs to include all non-lethal effects and the diplomatic, economic, and information winning in conflict and ensuring the United States maintains the positional advantage in this infinite conflict. The Army needs to have its forces deployed west of the International Dateline in East and South China Sea Areas to conduct preparation of the environment, indications and warning, and conduct intelligence support to non-lethal cyber, space and information effects before lethal considerations.

Additionally, our coalitions and alliances have never been more critical. Five of the seven mutual defense treaties are in the Indo-Pacific. The United States' ability to conduct multi-coalition exercises provides it with a distinct advantage. All Indo-Pacific nations need our support. The PLA's regional dominance land, air, sea, space, information and cyber space make the United States the only balancing force against China. The United States and our allies' ability to train, equip, and synchronize efforts is critical for all of our alliances and partners in Indo-Pacific and all other geographic and functional commands.

This conflict can and must be won. Having a positional advantage is required to set the conditions for defeat in this infinite conflict. Economic, information, and diplomatic coercion undergird Chinese transactional relationships with other nations, versus the U.S. message of a free and open Indo-Pacific. We must reassure our allies and partners that the United States is committed to countering the Chinese domestic and international narrative for the next one hundred years.

Despite the CCP's rewriting of history (in support of taking territory and building man-made features), it ignores important aspects of its own past. Chinese dynastic



periods were corrupt and morally deficient and conquered kingdoms with no regard for countries' borders or human rights. China has no international support for these claims and few allies willing to provide support. The United States must counter Chinese positional advantage by implementing a comprehensive counter-Chinese strategy that synchronizes a whole-of-government approach,

deploys forces to conduct preparation of the environment in the Indo-Pacific and other geographic commands, doubles our joint exercises that involved all domains, supports our allies and partners' militaries, and conducts informational targeting to counter Chinese narrative. Time is of the essence, and the United States can be the true leader in this conflict. ■

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Extract from “China’s Impact on the U.S. Education System”

Staff Report

United States Senate, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations,
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Executive Summary

When China sought to market itself to students around the world, it looked to its past. Confucius, the ancient Chinese philosopher, is synonymous with morality, justice, and honesty. The Chinese government capitalized on this rich legacy and began establishing Confucius Institutes on college campuses around the world in 2004, including the first in the United States at the University of Maryland. Today, there are more than 100 Confucius Institutes in the United States, the most of any country.

The Chinese government funds Confucius Institutes and provides Chinese teachers to teach language classes to students and non-student community members. In addition to Chinese language classes, Confucius Institutes host cultural events, including Chinese New Year celebrations, cooking classes, speakers, and dance and music performances. These selective events depict China as approachable and compassionate; rarely are events critical or controversial. The Chinese government also funds and provides language instructors for Confucius Classrooms, which offer classes for kindergarten through 12th grade students. Confucius Classrooms are currently in 519 elementary, middle, and high schools in the United States. Continued expansion of the program is a priority for China.

Confucius Institute funding comes with strings that can compromise academic freedom. The Chinese government approves all teachers, events, and speakers. Some U.S. schools contractually agree that both Chinese and U.S. laws will apply. The Chinese teachers sign contracts with the Chinese government pledging they will not damage the

national interests of China. Such limitations attempt to export China’s censorship of political debate and prevent discussion of potentially politically sensitive topics. Indeed, U.S. school officials told the Subcommittee that Confucius Institutes were not the place to discuss controversial topics like the independence of Taiwan or the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989. As one U.S. school administrator explained to the Subcommittee, when something is “funded by the Chinese government, you know what you’re getting.”

Confucius Institutes exist as one part of China’s broader, long-term strategy. Through Confucius Institutes, the Chinese government is attempting to change the impression in the United States and around the world that China is an economic and security threat. Confucius Institutes’ soft power encourages complacency toward China’s pervasive, long-term initiatives against both government critics at home and businesses and academic institutions abroad. Those long-term initiatives include its Made in China 2025 plan, a push to lead the world in certain advanced technology manufacturing. The Thousand Talents program is another state-run initiative designed to recruit Chinese researchers in the United States to return to China for significant financial gain—bringing with them the knowledge gained at U.S. universities and companies.

Contracting with the Chinese Government. The Chinese government runs the Confucius Institute program out of the Ministry of Education’s Office of Chinese Language Council International, known as “Hanban.” Each U.S. school signs a contract with Hanban establishing the terms of hosting a Confucius Institute. Contracts

reviewed by the Subcommittee generally contain provisions that state both Chinese and U.S. laws apply; limit public disclosure of the contract; and terminate the contract if the U.S. school takes actions that “severely harm the image or reputation” of the Confucius Institute.

The Chinese director and teachers at each Confucius Institute also sign contracts with Hanban. The contract with Hanban makes clear a Chinese director or teacher will be terminated if they “violate Chinese laws;” “engage in activities detrimental to national interests;” or “participate in illegal organizations.” In fact, the contract states the Chinese director and teachers must “conscientiously safeguard national interests” and report to the Chinese Embassy within one month of arrival in the United States.

Resources Provided by Hanban. U.S. schools that contract with Hanban receive substantial funding and resources to establish the Confucius Institute on campus. At the outset, Hanban typically provides a U.S. school between \$100,000 and \$200,000 in start-up costs, around 3,000 books, and other materials. Hanban also selects and provides a Chinese director and teachers at no cost to the U.S. school. While school officials have the opportunity to interview candidates for these positions, there is little-to-no transparency into how the Chinese government selects the individuals that schools must choose from. Nor did U.S. school officials interviewed by the Subcommittee know if candidates would meet the school’s hiring standards. Hanban requires director and teacher candidates to pass English proficiency tests and undergo a psychological exam to determine adaptability to living and teaching in the United States. Beyond that, U.S. schools’ understanding of the selection process was limited,

at best. *Expansion to Kindergarten through 12th Grade.* China did not stop at expanding at university and college campuses. The next phase of Confucius Institutes involved funding teachers for Confucius Classrooms in K–12 grade school. There are currently 519 Confucius Classrooms operating in the United States with expansion of this program a top

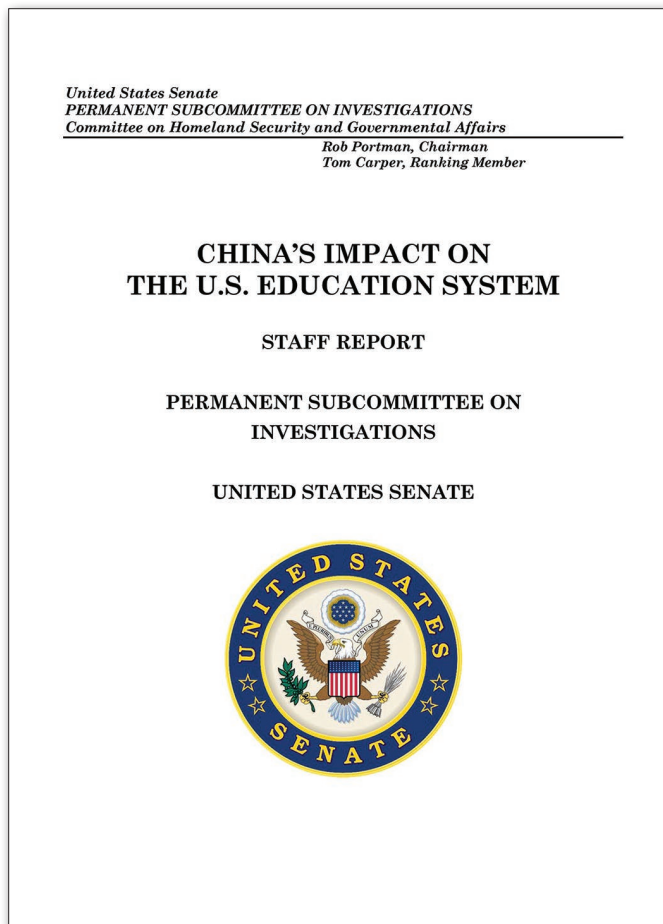
priority for China. In the United States, a Confucius Institute receives funding and instructors directly from Hanban and passes it to the K–12 grade school to support affiliated Confucius Classrooms.

The Cost of Confucius Institutes. The investment by China in U.S. Confucius Institutes is substantial. Since 2006, the Subcommittee determined China directly provided over \$158 million in funding to U.S. schools for Confucius Institutes. A number of U.S. schools, however, failed to properly report this funding as required by law. The Department of Education requires all postsecondary schools to report foreign gifts of \$250,000 or more from a single source with-

in a calendar year of receiving them. Despite that legal requirement, nearly 70 percent of U.S. schools that received more than \$250,000 from Hanban failed to properly report that amount to the Department of Education.

The Department of Education last issued guidance to U.S. schools on foreign gift reporting requirements in 2004, the same year the first Confucius Institute opened in the United States. As China opened over 100 additional Confucius Institutes in the United States over the last 15 years, the Department of Education remained silent.

Visa Failures. The State Department is responsible for issuing visas to any Chinese director or teacher entering the United States to work at a Confucius Institute. Some U.S. schools have struggled to comply with the requirements



of the Exchange Visitor Visa (or “J-1”). In 2018, the State Department revoked 32 J-1 Professor and Research Scholar visas for Confucius Institute teachers who were not conducting research, but instead were teaching at K–12 schools. The State Department also found evidence that one Confucius Institute Chinese director improperly coached the teachers to discuss their research during interviews with State Department investigators.

In 2019, the State Department plans to double the number of Confucius Institutes field reviews it completed in 2018 – from two to four.

China's Lack of Reciprocity. In response to the growing popularity of Confucius Institutes in the United States, the State Department initiated a public diplomacy program in China. Since 2010, the State Department has provided \$5.1 million in grant funding for 29 “American Cultural Centers” or ACCs in China. Through the ACC program, a U.S. school partners with a Chinese school, much like a Confucius Institute. The U.S. school then uses the grant funds to create a space on the campus of the Chinese partner school to “enable Chinese audiences to better understand the United States, its culture, society, government, language, law, economic center, and values.” ACCs are notably different from Confucius Institutes, however, as the State Department does not pay or vet instructors or directors; provide books or materials; or veto proposed events. Even so, the Chinese government stifled the establishment of the ACC program from the start.

In all, the State Department provided 29 U.S. schools with grant funds to establish ACCs with a partner Chinese schools. For some U.S. schools, roadblocks to opening their ACCs appeared immediately. For example, after extensive negotiations, one Chinese school refused to open a proposed ACC, stating it didn’t see a need to move forward. An official from the U.S. school seeking to open the ACC, however, believed China’s Ministry of Education told the partner school not to proceed with the contract. This official wrote in an email to his colleagues, “This is a typical Chinese political euphemism. Obviously, [the Chinese University] was instructed by [the Ministry of Education] not to proceed with our proposal.” The U.S. school returned the grant funds to the State Department.

The ACCs that did open found they needed permission from their Chinese host schools to hold most cultural events. One Chinese host school refused to allow its ACC to host a play about the life of Muhammad Ali. Another denied approval for a lecture series on policy issues facing

Americans. One U.S. school official who staffed an ACC told the Subcommittee that members of the local Communist Party often participated in the approval process. Another U.S. school official left the ACC after two sessions of extensive questioning by Chinese police officers regarding her involvement with the ACC and the State Department. When the U.S. school official returned to the United States, a colleague told her that Chinese police interrogation of school officials was common and that she was now just “part of the club.”

In all, the State Department documented over 80 instances in the past four years where the Chinese government directly interfered with U.S. diplomacy efforts in China. Interference with State Department officials or events took a number of forms. One example involved a Chinese official telling a U.S. official an ACC no longer existed; the U.S. official easily confirmed the continued existence of the ACC through its U.S. partner school. One U.S. official was told she applied too late to attend the opening of an ACC after submitting the request a month before. In other instances, the Chinese school canceled approved events, sometimes as late as the night before.

In December 2017, the State Department Inspector General found the ACC mission was largely ineffective. In October 2018, the State Department ended all ACC program grant funding in order to conduct an internal assessment of the program. There are currently no plans for future ACC grants.

The Need for Transparency and Reciprocity. Schools in the United States—from kindergarten to college—have provided a level of access to the Chinese government that the Chinese government has refused to provide to the United States. That level of access can stifle academic freedom and provide students and others exposed to Confucius Institute programming with an incomplete picture of Chinese government actions and policies that run counter to U.S. interests at home and abroad. Absent full transparency regarding how Confucius Institutes operate and full reciprocity for U.S. cultural outreach efforts on college campuses in China, Confucius Institutes should not continue in the United States.

For those interested in the entire report, please visit <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/PSI%20Report%20China's%20Impact%20on%20the%20US%20Education%20System.pdf> or <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/> and follow links to Library > February 2019 > Majority and Minority Staff Report—China’s Impact on the U.S. Education System. ■

A Chinese Fox against an American Hedgehog in Cyberspace?

Kimberly Orinx

Tanguy Struye de Swielande, PhD

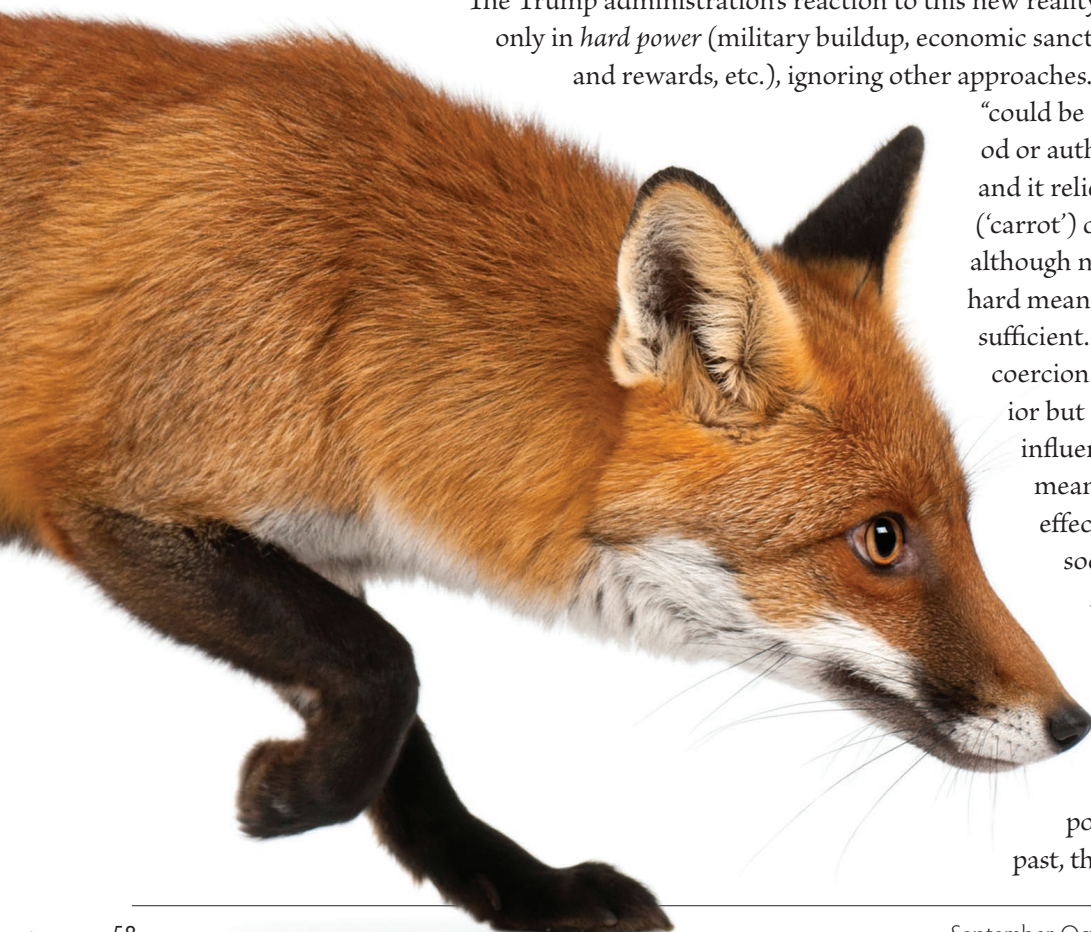


While the end of the Cold War was described as a “unipolar moment”—as defined by Charles Krauthammer in 1991—this period is now over.¹ For several years, we have experienced the return of a power competition in which America’s influence is fading and challenged by other countries. The *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* identifies China and Russia as “revisionist powers” competing against the United States.² This state competition naturally takes place on the classical chessboard (economic and military) but also on the discursive and ideational one.

The Trump administration’s reaction to this new reality has been to invest almost only in *hard power* (military buildup, economic sanctions, coercion, punishments, and rewards, etc.), ignoring other approaches. This hard-power logic

“could be called [a] directive method or authority of exercising power,” and it relies “on the use of incentives (‘carrot’) or threats (‘stick’).”³ However, although necessary for great powers, hard means by themselves are far from sufficient. Indeed, influence through coercion can impact states’ behavior but only in the short term. To influence on the long term, other means of power are needed; effective influence also rests on socialization and persuasion.

As Eric Delbecq stresses, Throughout history, we have witnessed a shift in the representation and implementation of power strategies. In the past, the canons established



the ranking of nations. Influence strategies only accompanied peripherally the essential movements traversing the military chessboard. In our times, the situation has totally reversed: strategies of influence express and structure the clashes of actors in all spheres of competition between human communities, cultural models and private organizations. It is not about aggressively defeating your rival; rather, it is about slowly depriving him of freedom of movement (through concealed or hypocritical action), constraining his choices, limiting his possibilities and prospects. In shaping your rival's global environment, you guarantee his slow decline and your own supremacy.⁴

China has well understood this dynamic and is attempting to master it with the development of cyber power. Unlike the United States, China grasps the importance of “soft” means. Although, as pointed out by Washington, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has the capacity to disrupt, at least temporarily, American critical infrastructure such as gas pipelines or power networks through cyberattacks, this is only a piece of how China uses cyber warfare. In 2017, China defended the idea of becoming a cyber superpower, presenting the Chinese model as the one to follow, calling it “a new option for other countries and nations that want to speed up their development while preserving their independence.”⁵ Thus, as the 2017 Munich Security Conference stressed, cyberconflicts today do not only target infrastructure but also the Western political system and its core values.⁶ This article explains how China is developing as a cyber superpower and is forming a threat to American and Western values and interests.

A Chinese Integrative Cyber Policy

The first events that come to mind when considering cyberattacks are the Estonian cyberattacks (2007), the Stuxnet virus (2010), and the WannaCry software (2017), which were all attacks on infrastructure. Furthermore, cyberwar is often understood as “the use of network-based capabilities of one state to disrupt,

deny, degrade, manipulate, or destroy information resident in computers and computer networks, or the computers and networks themselves, of another state.”⁷ Nonetheless, cyber power is also “the ability to obtain preferred outcomes through use of the electronically interconnected information resources of the cyber domain.”⁸ Daniel Coats, former U.S. director of national intelligence, declared in January 2019 that cyber operations not only threaten infrastructure but also exercise mental pressure on American citizens.⁹ As stressed by the Russians, the main battlefield is human consciousness, perceptions, and strategic calculations.¹⁰

Chinese scholars Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui maintained that “the expansion of the domain of warfare is a necessary consequence of the ever-expanding scope of human activity, and that the two are intertwined,” and we are witnessing this in what is called *cyberization* of international relations.¹¹ Cyberization is defined as “the ongoing penetration of all different fields of activity of international relations by different mediums of the cyberspace on the one hand, and the growing dependence of actors in international relations on infrastructure, instruments, and means offered by the cyberspace on the other hand.”¹² In addition, with the growing number of people connected to the internet (more than 4.3 billion people or 56 percent of world's population), cyberspace is today considered as the fifth domain of warfare.¹³ Despite this observation, no consensus has been reached on a definition for cyberspace. For the purpose of this article, the authors chose Daniel T. Kuehl's definition of cyberspace, which is “a global domain within the information environment whose distinctive and unique character is framed by the use of electronics and the electromagnetic spectrum to create, store, modify,



(Photo [left] by Life on white, Alamy Stock Photo. Photo [right] by Robert Eastman, Alamy Stock Photo)

exchange, and exploit information via interdependent and interconnected networks using information-communication technologies”; and the cyberspace description based on Martin Libicki’s model of three layers: the physical layer (the hardware—tangible objects like computers, servers, routers, etc.), the syntactic or logical layer (software, protocols, etc.), and the semantic or cognitive layer (information and ideas).¹⁴

Defence of the People’s Republic of China’s paper “China’s Military Strategy” stresses the importance of national security and social stability and adopts a similar tone to its 2013 *Science of Military Strategy*, the first document in which the Chinese military publicly addressed cyber warfare from a holistic point of view.¹⁸ These two documents emphasized that cyberspace has become a new and essential domain of mili-

“A nation should be judged not simply by its military, economic, or diplomatic power but by a combination of all of three, as well as its scientific and technological base and its cultural influence.”

The definition conundrum also exists for the term “cyberattacks.” For instance, the *Tallinn Manual* (a study on international law’s application in cyber conflict and cyber warfare) defines cyberattacks as attacks that are reasonably expected “to cause injury or death to persons or damage or destruction to objects,” and the United States defines it as “actions taken in cyberspace that create noticeable denial effects (i.e., degradation, disruption, or destruction) in cyberspace or manipulation that leads to denial that appears in a physical domain, and is considered a form of fires.”¹⁵ However, as the authors mentioned, cyber operations do not only threaten infrastructure but also perceptions. Therefore, in this article the authors adopt the following definition, which includes low-end attacks that do not reach the threshold of the use of force or armed attacks, considering a cyberattack as “[a]n act or action initiated in cyberspace to cause harm by compromising communications, information or other electronic systems, or the information that is stored, processed, or transmitted in these systems.”¹⁶

As the authors mentioned earlier, the PRC has a global approach when it comes to cyber power, but it is also true when it comes to security. Indeed, when the Chinese write about their conception of security, it is often couched in terms of *zongheguojialiliang* (comprehensive national power). As explained by Cheng, “this concept argues that a nation should be judged not simply by its military, economic, or diplomatic power but by a combination of all of three, as well as its scientific and technological base and its cultural influence.”¹⁷ The 2015 Ministry of National

tary struggle in today’s world. The People’s Liberation Army (PLA) acknowledges that *informationization* (becoming information based) means more than just adding a layer of information technology but rather reevaluating the nature of the conflict. Since informationization has affected the global economy and society, it has also influenced the nature of war. Hence, from the Chinese perspective, war is a function of not just military forces and politics but also larger social, economic, and technological trends.¹⁹

In 2011, the PLA’s glossary of military terms outlined “informationized warfare” as warfare where there are “networked information systems and widespread use of informationized weapons and equipment, all employed together in joint operations in the land, sea, air, outer space, and electromagnetic domains, as well as the cognitive arena.”²⁰ This, once again, stresses the awareness that China has had for many years regarding the importance of linguistic, human, and psychological factors, whereas the United States has been mainly focused on infrastructure in modern time.²¹

Accordingly, the importance that China places on the cognitive domain is reflected in its concept of *san zhongzhanzheng* (three warfares), introduced in 2003: *xinlizhanzheng* (psychological warfare), *yulunzhanzheng* (public opinion warfare), and *faluzhanzheng* (legal warfare).²² The aim of this concept, used in times of peace and war, is to “try to influence the public’s understanding of conflict by retaining support from one’s own population, degrading it in the opponent’s population, and influencing third parties.”²³

Public opinion warfare is applied in various channels such as the media to disseminate information to a targeted audience, that is, enemy forces. It complements psychological and legal warfare by including the goal to dominate the venues jointly used in the three types of warfare.²⁴

Legal warfare, at its most basic level, involves “arguing that one’s own side is obeying the law, criticizing the other side for violating the law, and making arguments for one’s own side in cases where there are also violations of the law.”²⁵

Finally, psychological warfare aims at influencing the opponent’s way of thinking or behavior and consolidating friendly psychology. Like opinion warfare, it uses information and media to achieve political and military objectives.²⁶ Moreover, despite using non-military means, it is considered as part of the broader concept of information warfare and has always been under the responsibility of the PLA.²⁷ Consequently for Chinese leaders, on the one hand, psychological warfare is about protecting the country from external influence to avoid a collapse of the Chinese Communist Party, while on the other hand, it is used to weaken open societies by disrupting their messages and proposing alternative narratives.

Protection of the Chinese Regime

Beijing well understands the importance of preventing states from trying to influence its population. The perfect example of how China is attempting to achieve this goal is its espousal of the concept of cyber sovereignty. The 2010 Information Office of the State Council’s “White Paper on the Internet in China” states, “Within Chinese territory, the internet is under the sovereignty of China.”²⁸ The concept of cyber sovereignty is based on two main principles: (1) banning unwanted influence in a country’s “information space,” and (2) shifting the internet governance from current bodies that include academics and the private sector to an international forum such as the United Nations that would imply a transfer of power to states alone. According to President of the People’s Republic of China Xi Jinping, “respecting cyber sovereignty” implies

respecting each country’s right to choose its own internet development path, its own internet management model, its own public policies on the internet, and to participate on an equal basis in the governance of international

cyberspace—avoiding cyber-hegemony, and avoiding interference in the internal affairs of other countries. ... [We must] build a multilateral, democratic, and transparent governance system for the global internet.²⁹

In Xi’s statement, the key term is “multilateral.” Contrary to the current multistakeholder approach to cyberspace, which is the “involvement on an equal footing of all actors with a vested interest in the internet including businesses and civil society,” China vigorously defends the opposite idea, promoting the multilateral or intergovernmental internet governance that considers states as the principal decision-makers.³⁰ Moreover, cyber sovereignty was described in 2015 by Xu Lin, the head of the Cyberspace Administration of China at the time, as the difference between the multistakeholder approach and the multilateral approach.³¹

According to the principle of sovereignty defined in the 1928 Island of Palmas international law: “Sovereignty in the relations between States signifies independence. Independence in regard to a portion of the globe is the right to exercise therein, to the exclusion of any other State, the functions of a State.”³² On this basis, the sovereignty related to cyberspace is expressed as referent to the information infrastructure in a state’s territory, airspace, and territorial waters and sea (including the seabed and subsoil); the direct consequence is that information infrastructure, regardless of their specific owners or users, are under the sovereignty of a country’s judicial and administrative jurisdiction, which is protected by sovereignty.³³ Being one

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Conspiring to Commit Computer Fraud; Accessing a Computer Without Authorization for the Purpose of Commercial Advantage and Private Financial Gain; Damaging Computers Through the Transmission of Code and Commands; Aggravated Identity Theft; Economic Espionage; Theft of Trade Secrets



Huang Zhenyu



Wen Xinyu



Sun Kailiang



Gu Chunhui



Wang Dong

of the “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence” developed in the 1950s, the sovereignty principle is at the bedrock of Chinese foreign policy.³⁴

This cyber sovereignty concept is part of the larger term “information security,” which in turn is critical for China to maintain its core values. Contrary to Western countries, which use the term “cybersecurity,” China and Russia favor “information security,” thus, highlighting fears concerning both the technical and cognitive dimensions of cyberattacks.³⁵ The concept developed by Beijing is, therefore, pertaining to its need to control the narrative. According to Mikk Raud, author of *China and Cyber: Attitudes, Strategies, Organisation*, “Ever since the internet became a publicly available communication platform in China, the question was not whether to control it, but rather how to control it.”³⁶ Moreover, in a 2013 report commonly called “Document No. 9” (officially titled “Communique on the Current State of the Ideological Sphere”), the PRC claimed that “Western constitutional democracy is an attempt to undermine the current leadership and the socialism with Chinese characteristics system of governance” and asserted that Western universal values are “an attempt to weaken the theoretical foundation of the Party’s leadership.”³⁷ The last paragraph

In May 2014, five Chinese military hackers were indicted by the United States on charges of computer hacking, economic espionage, and other offenses directed at six American victims in the U.S. nuclear power, metals, and solar products industries. This marked the first time criminal charges had been filed against known state actors for hacking.

of the document also states, “We must reinforce our management of all types and levels of propaganda on the cultural front, perfect and carry out related administrative systems, and allow absolutely no opportunity or outlets for incorrect thinking or viewpoints to spread.”³⁸

In the 2015 *National Security Law of the People’s Republic of China*, the Chinese government clearly shows its desire to control the political landscape and protect the Chinese Communist Party. In defining security in broad terms, the notion of security goes beyond the physical threats to the territory and encompasses the ideological sphere:

National security refers to the relative absence of international or domestic threats to the state’s power to govern, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, the welfare of the people, sustainable economic and social development,

and other major national interests, and the ability to ensure a continued state of security. National security efforts shall adhere to comprehensive understanding of national security, make the security of the People their goal, political security their basis and economic security their foundation; make military, cultural, and social security their safeguard.³⁹

Consequently, China protects itself from foreign influence by putting in place different regulatory mechanisms such as the so-called “Great Firewall,” which was coined for the first time in a 1997 *Recorded Future* article in which a Communist Party official stated that the firewall was “designed to keep Chinese cyberspace free of pollutants of all sorts, by the simple means of requiring internet service providers to block access to ‘problem’ sites abroad.”⁴⁰ This echoes the first principle of cyber sovereignty about the importance of banning “unwanted” influence in a country’s information space.

From Disruption of the Western Narrative to an Alternative One

Since the Chinese know they are not yet competitive in the traditional domains, they advance their pawns on other chessboards. As Kenneth Geers wrote in his paper “Sun Tzu and Cyberwar”: “Because cyber warfare is unconventional and asymmetric warfare, nations weak in conventional military power are also likely to invest in it as a way to off-set conventional disadvantages.”⁴¹ Therefore, in particular, Beijing invests in the “discursive chessboard” by developing alternative narratives and discourses to manipulate the interests and identities of Western societies.

With the growing importance of social media, the PRC government seized a strategic opportunity. According to studies, Americans “spend more than eleven hours per day on average ‘listening to, watching, reading, or generally interacting with media,’ and express varying levels of trust in the reliability of the information on social media.”⁴² With that in mind, Beijing is rumored to have hired people called *wumao dang* (50 Cent Party members) in order to conduct what might be called “reverse censorship.”⁴³ They are supposed to post large numbers of fabricated social media comments as if they were the genuine opinions of ordinary Chinese people.⁴⁴

This is an example of what is usually called “influence operations,” which the RAND Corporation defines

as “the collection of tactical information about an adversary as well as the dissemination of propaganda in pursuit of a competitive advantage over an opponent.”⁴⁵ More precisely, “influence cyber operations” encompass activities undertaken in cyberspace affecting the cognitive layer of cyberspace with the intention of influencing attitudes, behaviors, or decisions of target audiences.⁴⁶ These types of operations are about trust, not the truth.⁴⁷ However, the Chinese government has no scruples using this strategy. As Col. Qiao Liang of the PLA declared, “The first rule of unrestricted warfare is that there are no rules, with nothing forbidden.”⁴⁸ In this context, the application of “overwhelming force” on the “decisive point” as determined by Antoine-Henri de Jomini is disruption of society: the civil population and the elites.⁴⁹ This concurs with Sun Tzu’s thinking that “you can be sure of succeeding in your attacks if you only attack places which are undefended.”⁵⁰

Yet, democracies are little armed when facing “weaponized narrative,” namely the “use of disinformation, fake news, social media, and other information and communication technologies to create stories intended to subvert and undermine an adversary’s institutions, identity, civilization and will by creating and exacerbating complexity, confusion, and political and social schisms.”⁵¹ Furthermore, decreasing American and Western leadership, loss of trust in politicians, and increasing challenges to Western democracies have worsened the situation. Indeed, the Western narrative, with the return of populism in Western societies, is in a profound crisis; many citizens are consequently abandoning the narrative, finding refuge in alternative narratives, and being easily manipulated by foreign actors to change their schemata or mental maps, pushing people to extremes and making compromise almost impossible.

But for Beijing, it is not only about disrupting the Western narrative but also promoting a narrative of its authoritarian model. According to American political scientist Joseph S. Nye Jr., “The countries that are likely to be more attractive and gain soft power in the information age are those with multiple channels of communications that help to frame issues, whose dominant culture and ideas are closer to prevailing global norms, and whose credibility is enhanced by their domestic and international values and policies.”⁵² Thus, China strives to be more influential by developing new narratives. Since 2014, Beijing has hosted the World Internet Conference,



also known as the Wuzhen Summit, in Wuzhen, China. This conference gathers officials and CEOs from all around the world and aims at legitimizing the Chinese vision of cyberspace and promoting international norms in China's view.⁵³ As noted by Adrian Shahbaz's article "The Rise of Digital Authoritarianism," China has "hosted media officials from dozens of countries for two- and three-week seminars on its sprawling system of censorship and surveillance."⁵⁴ "Digital authoritarianism" is being encouraged "as a way for governments to control their citizens through technology, inverting the concept of the internet as an engine of human liberation."⁵⁵ Thus, China is increasingly defending and promoting its authoritarian model and is willing to export "socialism with Chinese characteristics," therefore, proposing an alternative to the liberal model. To this end, it strengthens its discursive power by proposing new ideas, concepts, and institutions in order to strengthen the control of the regional and the international agenda-setting at the political, economic, and security levels. This is how Beijing persuades other states to adopt its vision of the world order (with some success already in regions of Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East).

Building on what has been developed, China has become an "entrepreneur of identity" who recruits followers "by encouraging some identities and marginalizing others" and consequently fashioning identities to manage and manipulate the consent: power successfully employed without the sanction of the reason or the conscience of the obedient.⁵⁶ It is what Pierre Bourdieu called the power of suggestion.⁵⁷ This is characterized by subjectification:

If structuration practices are internalized through constant repetition, social actors are constituted who feel compelled to respond in a particular way to certain stimulus ... A highly disciplined socialization has the potential to deliver highly predictable social subjects who respond like automatons based upon socialization through repetition and rote learning.⁵⁸

By encouraging reproduction and routine, standards, and predictability, states are socialized into compliance.⁵⁹ The more China is able to have followers sharing a common social identity, the more the balance of power in Chinese favor will become a reality. Of course, these are long-term policies and require strategic patience because people's minds change only over time, and they are complementary to the other determinants of power.

Nonetheless, through (but not only through) cyber technology, the Chinese have been able to enforce "coordinated actions, messages, images, and other forms of signaling or engagement intended to inform, influence, or persuade selected audiences in support of national objectives," whereas the American narrative under the Trump administration has been characterized by "information fratricide."⁶⁰ The United States could lose the battle for hearts and minds if it does not change its course. As American environmental scientist Braden Allenby notes:

No great power stays great without its exceptionalism narrative, and the U.S. narrative needs rebooting. Persistent problems such as lack of economic mobility, smoldering racial tensions, and intolerance of immigrants cannot be ignored. A new U.S. exceptionalism, one that fits a far more complex world and prepares citizens for living and working in periods of unprecedented technological and concomitant social and economic change, is required. In short, if the Shining City on the Hill is to remain a beacon, its unifying narrative must be revived.⁶¹

Applying ancient strategists' principles such as Sun Tzu's idea of "mastering the enemy without fighting," China has well understood the potential of influencing the cognitive processes through cyber power. This art of influence, the interconnected nature of information, and the characteristics of cyberspace blurred the lines between war and peace with actions beyond normal peacetime competition but short of all-out war and made the clear distinctions between military and civilian almost impossible.⁶² This gray zone, where the tools employed will remain short of high intensity, creates an interval in which strategic narratives and other influence tactics play a key role.⁶³

These Chinese policies undermine the values, norms, and standards defended by the West and, consequently, the status and reputation of the United States.⁶⁴ If the United States and its allies do not develop a counternarrative, they could lose their dominant position because strategic narratives shape how order is conceived and play a role in the production of order and how it is maintained.⁶⁵ Being powerful without a convincing narrative will not be very helpful in the long term, and social networks are thus powerful instruments of influence. To build its counternarrative, the United States needs to formulate clear objectives, to know the ecosystem or environment (be it local, regional, or systemic),

“The United States, with its allies, will have to guarantee an open internet and fight the tendency of cyber sovereignty in China, Russia, and developing countries: ‘The internet is the place where the great ideological battles will be won and lost.’”

to identify and target key actors, to determine communication relays to diffuse the message/arguments. Furthermore, the United States, with its allies, will have to guarantee an open internet and fight the tendency of cyber sovereignty in China, Russia, and developing countries: “The internet is the place where the great ideological battles will be won and lost.”⁶⁶

Conclusion

To influence through propaganda, or in other words fake news, is not new, but the digitalization has accelerated and facilitated the process. Furthermore, China has raised barriers to external political and cultural influence in its country, while foreign open democratic systems have represented an opportunity for Beijing to take advantage of. By weakening democracies, China has made the Western model more fragile and less attractive, presenting its authoritarian model as a possible, if not more attractive, alternative.

The United States has seemed to realize, with delay, the influence strategy that China has been putting into place for many years. For example, in March 2018, the Asia and Pacific Subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee dedicated a hearing titled “Responses to China’s Foreign Influence Operations,” in which they addressed several points including cyber sovereignty and the fact that Chinese operations are covert and coercive as “they seek to distract, manipulate, suppress, and interfere.”⁶⁷ Accordingly, it is time for the United States to adopt a more holistic

approach toward cyber power. In a 1953 essay, philosopher Isaiah Berlin differentiated hedgehogs from foxes.⁶⁸ The hedgehogs see the world through only one lens, exactly how the U.S. military until recently perceived “information operations as wartime activities which are led at the operational level.”⁶⁹ By contrast, foxes have a more complex view of matters, like China. In that respect, the Chinese developed a more inclusive or integrative strategy toward cyber power and “consider information counter-struggle as something conducted during peacetime and a strategic-level activity executed by the whole society.”⁷⁰

In conclusion, while the expression of power includes coercion and threats, it is not limited to them. Empowering followers is necessary to gain and maintain power and influence. In that sense, the lasting power is also reliant on storytelling. And here lies the problem: the United States has lost its narrative leadership and its discursive power, even in the cyber and social network domains. Countering the Chinese threat to American hegemony requires a massive mobilization of societal resources and their connectivity to support and defend an inclusive grand strategy. Such effort, lacking today, is essential to influence others’ behavior. As explained above, the United States’ traditional view of military and economic capacities as the Nation’s main strengths has been expanded to other components. The lack of discursive and narrative power impacts status recognition and, ultimately, American leadership, and influence on the world stage. ■

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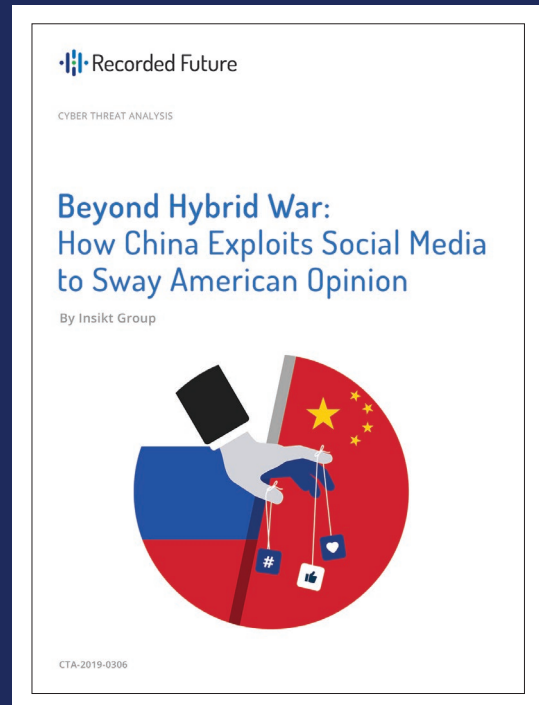
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Military Review

WE RECOMMEND



Beyond Hybrid War: How China Exploits Social Media to Sway American Opinion details research conducted by the Insikt Group on methods employed by diverse agents of the People's Republic of China to manipulate U.S. popular opinion through the use of sophisticated influence campaigns. This study compares the efforts of Chinese state-run social media influence operations with those of Russia. Differences in techniques are reputedly derived from China's distinctly different foreign policy goals and strategic global ambitions. The research details how the Chinese state employs a plethora of state-run media to exploit the openness of American democratic society to sow social and political discord while simultaneously promoting a utopian perception of the Chinese government and communist party by intentionally misrepresenting their character. To view the complete analysis, visit <https://www.recordedfuture.com/china-social-media-operations/>.



Chinese President Xi Jinping (left), who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, reviews the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy 12 April 2018 in the South China Sea. (Photo by Li Gang, Xinhua via Agence France-Presse)

Identifying Windows of Opportunity within China's Rise



Problematizing China's Hundred-Year Strategy toward Great-Power Status

Axel Dessein

The Ming Dynasty appears to be their model, albeit in a more muscular manner, demanding other nations become tribute states; kowtowing to Beijing.

—Former U.S. Defense Secretary James N. Mattis

One of the most alarming assessments of China's rise can be found in the book *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower* by Michael Pillsbury. The work envisions a Chinese masterplan shrouded in mystery and deceit that is aimed at replacing the United States as the world's hegemon. That strategy is believed to take place over a period of one hundred years starting in 1949, referring to the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) under Mao Zedong.¹

Pillsbury, who formerly served as an advisor on Donald Trump's transition team, has been called a "leading authority on China" by the American president.² Even more so, Pillsbury's book has been described by former Chief Strategist Stephen K. Bannon as providing the "intellectual architecture [for the shift toward] the confrontational mode with China."³ This shift became visible during a speech made by former U.S. Defense Secretary James N. Mattis at a Naval War College graduation ceremony. Mattis compared today's China to the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), arguing that the country is "harboring long-term designs to rewrite the existing global order."⁴

Aim of this Article

Such a warning for China's imperial ambitions indeed follows the release of the *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, a document that branded the PRC as a great-power competitor.⁵ Here, *The Hundred-Year Marathon* leaves much to be desired when it comes to an actual outline of the Chinese strategy. (It is but a little surprise that a heavy rebuke was delivered by Canadian political scientist Alastair Iain Johnston; see endnote 3.) In the following article, I will argue that the one hundred-year strategy as described by Pillsbury ought not to be dispelled, as it clearly resonates with the Chinese leadership. However, the angle ought to be adjusted with special regard to Chinese-language sources.

If China indeed has a masterplan to replace the United States as the world's hegemon over a duration of one hundred years, it is important to understand

how it aims to do so. Chinese leaders indeed want to restore the country's great-power status that it once enjoyed during its imperial past, yet this strategy itself is conducive to change. Therefore, it is important to pay close attention to the declarations and signals given by the Chinese leadership. This approach allows us to follow China's rise and the accompanying changes in its assertive posture more closely over time.

The focus of this article is the goals expressed over the 2002–2050 period during the administrations of Jiang Zemin (1989–2002), Hu Jintao (2002–2012), and Xi Jinping (2012–present). The intent is to offer an introduction into the rise of China and how Chinese leaders think strategically about time and their country's future. To do so, two forms of sources will be consulted: speeches by China's top leadership (both in English and Chinese), which hold important policy declarations, and Chinese academic writings. Translations are the author's unless stated otherwise.

This article finds that rather than a long-term strategy, the Chinese leadership are acutely aware of the here and now. While the goals that it defines are a product of its belief in delivering a brighter future, China's leaders at the same time recognize that the road toward these objectives is littered with opportunities and challenges along the way, and it devises its policies accordingly and openly in speeches and other important policy documents. Today, China's period of historic transition (2017–2022) offers a useful device for the Western approach toward the country.

Temporal Perspectives on Rising Powers

As Johnston argues in his review of *The Hundred-Year Marathon*, the disquieting nature of the book delegitimizes close U.S.–China coordination including on issues such as trade, development, and climate change while contributing to an unbalanced understanding of the "complex motivations

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behind Chinese foreign policy.”⁶ Even more so, the deterministic understanding of China’s rise that is evident in this presumed one hundred-year strategy risks obscuring the long-term vision of the top Chinese leadership, leaving almost no space for changes in the nature and behavior of China’s foreign policy.

Linus Hagström and Bjorn Jerdén, for example, lament the dismissal of, or lack of, theorizing on change in world order, leading to power shifts being perceived as given developments.⁷ Other works on the rise of China demonstrate that it is difficult to identify epochal changes in the present era. However, Brantly Womack argues that the global financial crisis (2007–2008) and the political upheavals in the West (2016–2017) could mark a watershed for China to “take a giant leap in political prestige.”⁸

A similar argument is made by Manjari Chatterjee Miller, who in her study of rising powers observes that while the end goal of reaching great-power status is implied within the concept of rising powers, it is often left undefined.⁹ For this reason, confusion abounds about the rising power’s trajectory and how its leadership goes about managing that very rise. Miller sees a rising power as engaging in essentially three types of behavior: increasing its relative military and economic power, globalizing its interests, and exhibiting internal recognition of its changing status.¹⁰ Indeed, the sole focus on the relative material capabilities of these powers would assume direct convertibility of resources into power and influence, a fallacy that has been identified by various authors.¹¹

Based on the assumption that no strategy survives the first contact with a given opponent, it is imperative to explore how China’s long-term thinking concerning its rise

to power evolves and how these changes are reflected in the evolution of the country’s assertive stance as a result of that rise. Special attention is paid to “socialism with Chinese characteristics,” the country’s guiding ideology, based on its own interpretation of Marxism-Leninism.

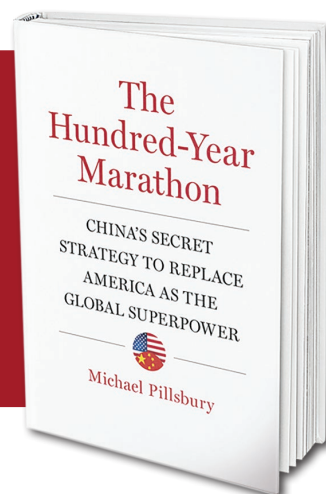
China: Rising or Rejuvenating?

To signal in the new year of 2019, Chinese President Xi Jinping, in his address to China’s Taiwanese compatriots, argued, “You cannot choose history, [but] you can seize the present, [and] forge the future.”¹² This statement is interesting for a rising power like China, especially as an introduction to its temporal perspectives. In his speech, Xi explicitly denotes Taiwan as an integral part of the country’s territorial integrity and, as such, the great rejuvenation of the Chinese people.¹³ However, Xi ultimately touches upon much more than the island state. His statement shows that temporal considerations are part and parcel for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

On the one hand, authors such as Christopher Layne are right to point out that within China, the country’s rise is known as the national rejuvenation. On the other hand, the country’s—and by extension, the CCP’s—future trajectory is either left undefined or simply described as its imminent return to former glory as the world’s Middle Kingdom.¹⁴ Clearly, a more concrete understanding of this rise and its goal is necessary. Is today’s China indeed returning to its imperial past as mentioned in the opening epigraph, or should we study the contemporary rise of China as a relatively new phenomenon?

In other words, is China’s rising trajectory following a cyclical history or moving along a linear future? These are

In Michael Pillsbury’s *The Hundred-Year Marathon*, the author asserts that the government of China is executing a strategy that aims to supplant the United States as the world’s dominant power by 2049 and use such dominance to change the nature of the global economy and culture. Pillsbury contends that the United States and most Western nations have made the mistake of naively pursuing a strategy that assumed integrating China into the worldwide economic system would foster democratizing forces inside China. However, economic development has instead greatly strengthened China’s ability to oppress its own population and to intimidate and dominate its geographic neighbors. The book describes the rise of China as the greatest national and international security threat of the twenty-first century and calls for a dramatic change in the way the United States and other Western states view and deal with China across the spectrum of international engagements. To view more about this book, visit <https://thehundredyearmarathon.com/>.



important questions that can improve our understanding of China's rise to power. Figure 1 illustrates the first point, in which China is reverting to the status it enjoyed before the so-called "century of humiliation," the 109 years between China's defeat in the First Opium War and the founding of the PRC (during which China's technology was surpassed by the West and civil wars, occupations, and revolutions ravaged the country).¹⁵

Similarly, Pillsbury argues that China's marathon strategy is based on "lessons learned from the Warring States period," an era of disunity that ended with the Qin's unification of China and the start of the first imperial dynasty (475–221 BC).¹⁶ However, as Johnston is quick to point out, the claim that is made in *The Hundred-Year Marathon* regarding China's modern statecraft of "[consciously applying] ancient Chinese strategic maxims" is not sustained by the evidence that Pillsbury supplies.¹⁷

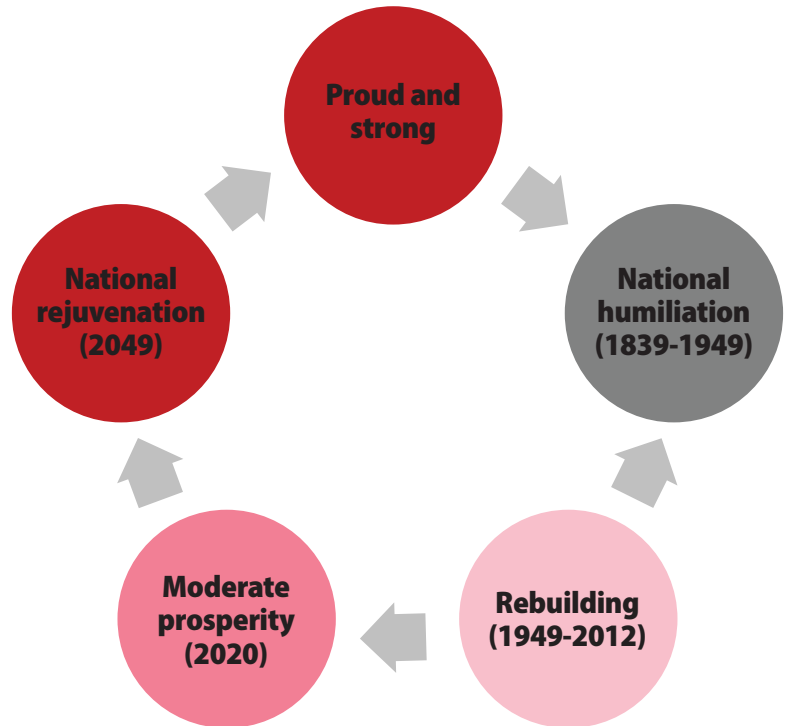
A Socialist Break in History

As external observers, we are keen to observe how ancient strategic thought such as that of Sun Tzu is reflected in contemporary decision-making of the Chinese state.¹⁸ However, this focus on traditional stratagems risks obscuring more recent developments. The socialist break in history is important here. It is most revealing that during the 15th National People's Congress in 1997, former Secretary General of the CCP Jiang Zemin observed "three major changes of historical significance" from 1911 to 1978: (1) the Xinhai Revolution under former President Sun Yat-sen that "overthrew the autocratic monarchy that ruled China for thousands of years," (2) the "founding of the PRC and the establishment of the socialist system with Mao Zedong at its core," and (3) the "reform and opening-up [period]" under the late Chinese statesman Deng Xiaoping.¹⁹

This statement suggests that during the twentieth century, China gradually detached itself from the cyclical nature of its imperial past. This outlook was subsequently replaced with a socialist one, following the Chinese revolution of 1949 led by Mao. In other words, the

pathway of historical progress changed from a circular movement toward one that moves upward and onward in almost evolutionary stages.²⁰

While Marxism-Leninism does indeed also hold a historical sequence, its nature is entirely different. Historical materialism, one of the basic features of the Marxist-Leninist political theory, holds that history moves forward through the material (productive forces



(Figure used with permission of Tom Miller)

Figure 1. The Great Rejuvenation of China

that move along stages of development).²¹ Furthermore, while Marxism-Leninism is presented as a universal truth, this theory is subsequently applied to the national circumstances in which the teaching finds itself.²²

This relationship between the universal and the particular is important. When socialism entered China, it grew upon the rich soil of an already present ideological system, one of China's imperial past. What then is the relationship between this traditional China and the country's system under Marxism-Leninism? In other words, how do these two forms of China relate to one another in contemporary China? In the following passages, I will continue to explore how today's China is different from its past.



Windows of Opportunity in China's Rise

Economist George Magnus argues that China today has reached the end of extrapolation, a phase for which there is no longer any point of reference available.²³ Ideologically, as well, the Chinese system is described by Sun Daizhen and Li Jing as having transcended Western development models and theories (including Marxism itself).²⁴ As a result of unbuckling the straitjacket most commonly associated with the Soviet Union, China can be said to be increasingly putting forward some form of ideological independence, namely its own interpretation and promotion of socialism. Rather than a path-dependent future (as evident in a cyclical outlook), these positive developments suggest that today's China is moving forward along a path-creative trajectory.²⁵ I emphasize this logic to understand the concept of China's rise and argue that the concept of a (great) rejuvenation designates the country's eventual end goal and not the trajectory itself.

Since it is important to understand whether or not China is following a one hundred-year strategic plan, special attention is paid to the time perceptions of the

Delegates leave the Great Hall of the People 24 October 2017 after the closing session of the 19th Communist Party Congress in Beijing. President Xi Jinping's name was added to the Communist Party of China's constitution at a defining congress, elevating him alongside Chairman Mao Zedong to the pantheon of the country's founders. (Photo by Nicolas Asfour, Agence France-Presse)

Chinese leadership.²⁶ Such a temporal approach is especially visible in the concept of the "windows of opportunity." This concept figures prominently within studies of armed conflict and domestic institutional change but, as Fredrik Doerer and Joakim Eidenfalk demonstrate, it does not often appear in explorations of foreign policy change.²⁷ Doerer and Eidenfalk define a window of opportunity as "a moment in time in which some kind of structural change occurs, which either creates a situation in which a state possesses a significant military advantage ... or creates a moment of opportunity which can be used by leaders for introducing new policy proposals."²⁸ More importantly, their argument points to the importance of the individual leadership rather than the state to recognize the window of opportunity. However,

while the literature focuses on a window of opportunity that is based on external circumstances (changes on the international front), we ought to understand how and when this period is perceived domestically.

This article explores how China is moving toward a meaningful future by emphasizing the shift from a “period of strategic opportunity” toward a “period of historic opportunity.” It is a slight yet crucial difference that can inform us about the Chinese rise to power and its assertiveness along the way. However, it is also evident that within those differing periods themselves, there are also important changes in style.

Dreaming of a Brighter Future

Shortly after becoming the CCP's secretary general in 2012, President Xi Jinping declared his “China Dream,” his signature policy of finalizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese people.²⁹ The positive future that is envisioned within this dream is an important shift away from the Chinese imperial past, which saw cycles of “gain and loss [as its] central motif.”³⁰ Furthermore, in a report to the 19th National Party Congress in 2017, Xi proclaimed a “new era for socialism with Chinese characteristics, during which China would be moving toward its goal of becoming a great-power under modernised socialism.”³¹ This shift toward modernization in a distant future is important as it denotes a new historical change similar to the ones described by former Secretary General of the CCP Jiang Zemin.

It is a new stage of development within Chinese socialist modernization, since Xi, during the same report to the 19th National Party Congress, defined a new “major contradiction [within] society” between the “people's growing desires for better livelihood and the country's unbalanced and inadequate development.”³² For this reason, today's period is often described as simultaneously being a “third revolution” and the “end of an era.”³³ In the build-up to this new kind of China, discussions about the concept of China's “growing assertiveness” have become increasingly common.

Indeed, this evolution is often said to be an important shift away from China's low-profile and “status-quo oriented behavior of the previous thirty years.”³⁴ Does this presumed shift in assertiveness reveal a foreign policy change on the part of China? Left unexplained, the increase in assertiveness brings little concrete evidence to the fore that can interpret China's changing behavior.

However, it is said that this presumed shift is connected to a change in the country's strategic guidelines.

Deng Xiaoping's strategic guideline of *taoguang yanghui*, commonly understood as “keep a low profile and bide your time,” according to Pillsbury, defines China's deceptive ploy to overturn and take revenge on the existing hegemon, the United States.³⁵ His strategy was of course coined during the 1980s and 1990s, after the domestic disturbances of the Tiananmen Square incident and the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union. Similar to the one hundred-year strategy, Deng's promulgation of a “three-step strategy,” from 1981 until 2050, indeed points to the existence of some sort of a temporal framework along which China is rising.³⁶

A Period of Strategic Opportunity

The apparent shift in the strategic guidelines becomes even more interesting when coupled with the twenty-year “period of strategic opportunity” as defined by Jiang Zemin during his report to the 16th National Party Congress.³⁷ Professor Xu Jian defines this period as a “duration of time during which the comprehensive national strength, international competitiveness, and influence of a country are expected to rise consistently as a result of favorable subjective and objective factors.”³⁸ This concept of a “period of opportunity” provides a useful heuristic device to start tracing the shifts in China's foreign policy, based on changes within its strategic guidelines.

The so-called period of strategic opportunity took off under the leadership of former President Hu Jintao. During his leadership, the Central Party School's Zheng Bijian defined the slogan “China's peaceful rise,” which was later rephrased to “China's peaceful development.”³⁹ As such, it is interesting that it is only since the Xi period that a shift is perceived in China's assertiveness.⁴⁰

Such studies of China's growing assertiveness discuss a simple change from “doing some things” under Deng to “striving for achievements” under Xi.⁴¹ Nevertheless, Chinese-language materials suggest that the actual shift is in fact much more complex. In this article, it is argued that the evolution of China's foreign policy behavior can be tracked by the strategic guidelines (or provisions) that accompany the country's self-defined periods of opportunity.

These guidelines seem to give information about the nature and intensity of Chinese assertiveness within these periods. In this approach, changes in the initial period



of strategic opportunity can be traced from “doing some things” under Deng’s low-profile approach to “accomplishing great things” and increasingly “striving for achievements” under Xi.⁴² This ambition becomes clear through the declaration of two centennial “goals of struggle” that ought to be accomplished between 2021 and 2050.

However, these “goals of struggle” with which Xi is identified, already appeared in the 16th National Party Congress by 2002, setting the tone for China’s shift toward striving forward under Hu.⁴³ As such, should we approach today’s changes as a shift in style, rather than content? It is necessary to understand today’s China within the country’s larger history. Here, a study by Hu Angang and Zhang Wei on China’s contemporary place in the world usefully traces back the evolution of China since the socialist revolution. They divide the period between 1949 and 2049 in the table.⁴⁴

This historical framework shows that the idea behind a hundred-year marathon clearly resonates with-in China’s rise. However, instead of showcasing a strategy aimed at supplanting the United States as the world’s hegemon, the focus lays firmly with domestic considerations. Indeed, growing to attain the status of a great power seems to be the driving force here. An interesting analogy can be made with the so-called century of humiliation wrought by the hands of Western powers.⁴⁵

Back to the Future?

To tell the story of China’s rise is to recount a story of degradation during the Qing dynasty (1644–1912), followed by salvation under the auspices of the CCP.⁴⁶ The goal of restoring this lost status demonstrates the importance of the socialist break in China’s history. Indeed, as Xi repeated during the 19th National Party Congress:

As socialism with Chinese characteristics enters a new era, a bright prospect is ushered in for the realisation of the great rejuvenation of

First Half of One Hundred-Year Strategy

Level of absolute poverty	1949-1978
Level of adequate food and clothing	1978-1990
Level of a well-off society	1991-2000

Second Half of One Hundred-Year Strategy

Level of a generally well-off society	2001-2020
Level of common prosperity	2021-2050

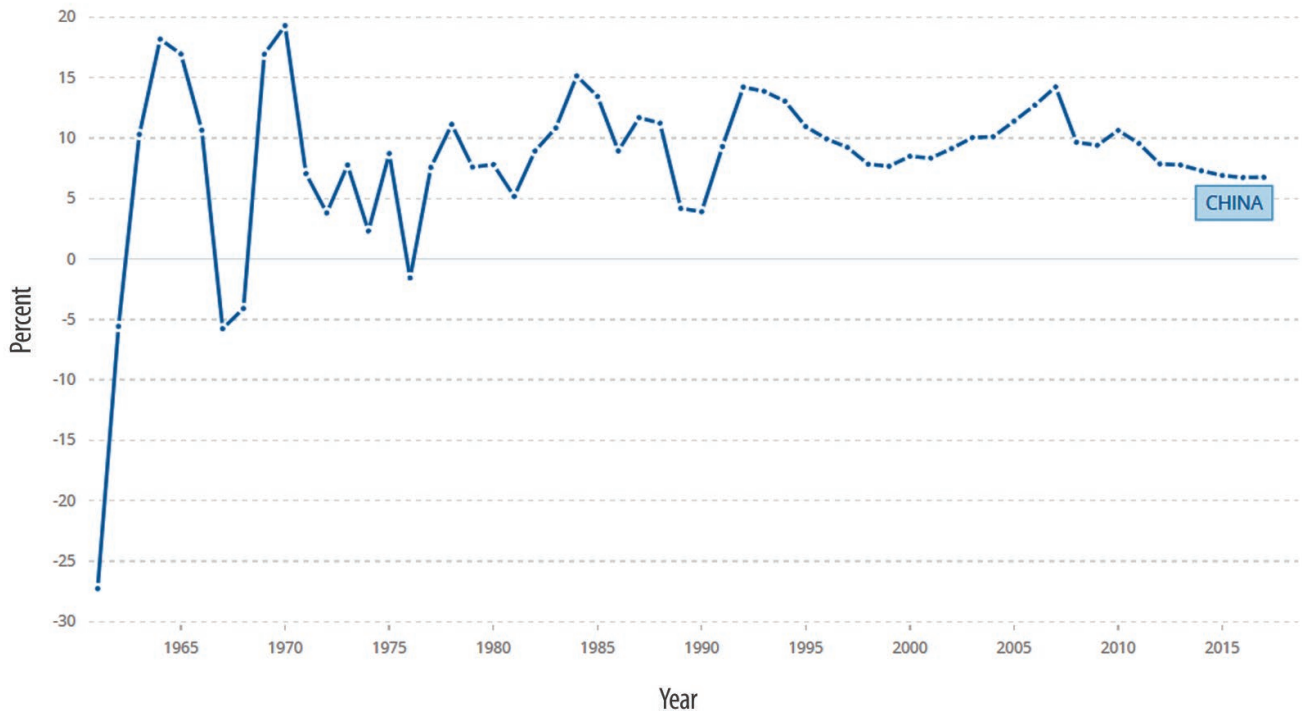
(Figure by Hu Angang and Zhang Wei; author’s English translation)

Table. One Hundred-Year Strategy

the Chinese peoples, whose trials and tribulations have carried through in modern times since standing up [under Mao Zedong] and getting rich [under Deng Xiaoping] to a [new] great leap of getting strong.⁴⁷

While Xi here posits himself next to the illustrious statesmen that went before him, it is important for us to understand the shift toward “striving for achievements” under his leadership. Can we assume that as a result of slower economic growth, there is a rising urgency toward realizing the country’s great-power status? Below, an approximate answer is provided through an overview of some recent events and declarations that touch upon China’s evolution toward great-power status.

While a direct link to economic growth cannot be made to explain the full story behind the rise of China, the evolution in the country’s definition of windows of opportunity can be juxtaposed with the



(Figure and data from The World Bank Group, <https://data.worldbank.org/>)

Figure 2. China's Gross Domestic Product Growth (Annual %), 1961-2017

patterns and dynamics that are evident within the growth pattern of China's gross domestic product (see figure 2).⁴⁸ Of particular interest is the second half of the framework of the aforementioned 2017 study by Hu Angang and Zhang Wei, with special reference to the period under Xi (2012–present).

A downward trend in the period 2008–2010 led Xi in 2014 to declare a “new normal” in which the Chinese economy would shift from high-speed to high-quality development.⁴⁹ Furthermore, as Xi declared in a study session following the 19th National Party Congress, the country will enter a “period of historic opportunity” during which “great things can be done” between 2021 and 2050.⁵⁰ Again, note the strategic provisions that guide the tone and intensity of the Chinese actions during this period.

A Period of Historic Opportunity

Following Professor Xu Jian's aforementioned definition of the period of strategic opportunity, this new period of historic opportunity can be understood as the time in which the previous periods' strategic

opportunity advances are to be consolidated and built upon toward the goal of achieving historic rejuvenation. As exemplified in the modernization strategy outlined by Xi's “Chinese Dream,” this goal will be realized through the “goals of struggle.”

These goals respectively refer to the establishment of a relatively well-off society by 2021, the one hundredth anniversary of the CCP and the subsequent transformation of China into a modernized socialist great power, one hundred years after the founding of the PRC.⁵¹ The growing urgency that is seemingly embodied within this spirit of “striving forward” is interesting, especially when combined with declarations of a “period of historic opportunity.” This shift, away from a “period of strategic opportunity” seems to suggest a more proactive—or assertive—Chinese foreign policy behavior.

However, if Chinese assertiveness in its foreign policy behavior is indeed connected to changes in these windows of opportunity, it is equally important to understand how these intervals of time are defined by the Chinese leadership.

Understanding a Changing China

At the 2017 World Economic Forum, Xi presented China as a staunch defender of globalization (the contrast with Trump could not have been bigger).⁵² This form of optimism was carried over to the 19th National Party Congress later that same year and the 13th National People's Congress in 2018. Indeed, the

considerations together as a whole. While the country still finds itself in the last few years of its period of strategic opportunity, Xi put forward a “period of historic transition” between 2017 and 2022.⁵⁸

This transitory period is important as it presents a sort of “window of vulnerability,” during which China is confronted with the prospect of dramatic

“One interesting consequence of China nearing its ‘period of strategic opportunity’ is the increased belief in the superiority of its own socialist ideology, its own theory, its own system, and its own culture as encapsulated in the doctrine of the four self-confidences: ideology, theory, system, and culture.”

message is clear through statements such as “Only socialism can save China” and “East, west, south, north, and center: The party leads all.”⁵³

As opposed to the political disarray in the West, Xi described China's strongly centralized governance model as a “new type of political party system.”⁵⁴ Indeed, one interesting consequence of China nearing its “period of strategic opportunity” is the increased belief in the superiority of its own socialist ideology, its own theory, its own system, and its own culture as encapsulated in the doctrine of the four self-confidences: ideology, theory, system, and culture.⁵⁵

However, a reckoning came rather quickly for the country. Instead of taking a “giant leap in political prestige,” 2018 was a year in which both China's domestic and external challenges grew to be intertwined.⁵⁶ While it is difficult to determine whether the Trump administration's policies aimed at great-power competition (as defined within the *National Security Strategy*) mark an early end to the period of strategic opportunity, a new understanding of China's position in the world is certainly afoot within China.

During the Central Foreign Policy Work Conference, held 22–23 June 2018, Xi stressed that since the 18th National Party Congress, China has increasingly been confronted with challenges.⁵⁷ As such, a new and holistic strategic outlook needed to be devised to bring both domestic and international

decline relative to its rival (the United States). Here, as Costantino Pischedda argues, the country in its “gamble for resurrection” will “be tempted to resort to force against a rival in a desperate attempt to overcome its predicament.”⁵⁹ More specifically, the period of historic transition is described as the period of time during which the two centennial “goals of struggle” will converge.

Indeed, while the first goal focuses on the establishment of a well-off (or *xiaokang*) society between 2021 and 2035, the second objective points more explicitly to China's place in the world as a modern socialist great power by 2050.⁶⁰ These goals can be understood as each representing different poles of China's rise, one domestic (the CCP creating a well-off society) and the other international (the CCP bringing China to the status of great power under modernized socialism). The question then becomes: What happens when changes in the domestic economy take place simultaneously with changes in the international sphere?

China's Rise: Not a Given Development

Economists have been warning that risks within the Chinese economy are accumulating, including the bubbles of debt and real estate and the need to reform state-owned enterprises. As such, the growth of the Chinese economy already finds itself on the

slippery slope of the middle-income trap.⁶¹ Add to these challenges the growing hostility on the part of the United States, which now views China as a great-power competitor, and a more complicated perspective on the rise of China emerges.

Does the Chinese leadership recognize that its strategic opportunity is drawing to a close and is it now shifting toward the pursuit of historic opportunities? In other words, is the country still biding its time, or is this period recognized as being the correct time to push forward? It is important to note that “striving forward” is a crucial element during this transition from the strategic to the historic.⁶² Interestingly, since 2016, an increased urgency toward China’s rise is visible within frequent invocations of the opportunities and challenges that lay ahead.⁶³

To understand China’s end goal of socialist modernization, we can go back to the role of socialism in China. In his study of the utopianism after the socialist revolution under Mao Zedong, Maurice Meisner argues that, in opposition to what other socialists state, the Chinese utopian vision of a future perfect social order is increasingly prominent rather than defined in more attainable terms.⁶⁴ However, presenting Chinese socialism as a sort of “unrestrained utopianism” is, as Richard Pfeffer argues, fundamentally incorrect.⁶⁵

By identifying the windows of opportunity in Chinese policy making, it becomes clear that while attainable goals are defined in more direct terms, more distant ones remain utopian in nature until these goals also become closer. Deng Xiaping’s three-step strategy is a case in point. Whereas the 2001–2050 period was described as a largely undefined third step, this fifty-year period of time was subsequently made more concrete as the years passed and new administrations came to the fore.

Conclusion

While China today still finds itself in a self-defined period of strategic opportunity (2002–2020), there is an increasing urgency discernible within the country’s reading of the domestic and international spheres. This is most visible within the changes of the strategic guidelines that accompany this period

of strategic opportunity, which has gone from “doing some things” to “accomplishing great things” and, more recently, toward “striving for achievement.”

This latest change, in particular, suggests that the period of strategic opportunity is coming to an end and will flow into the “period of historic opportunity” (2021–2050), during which China will become a great-power under modernized socialism, one hundred years after the founding of the PRC.

However, the Chinese leadership explicitly refers to the last few years of the period of strategic opportunity as a “period of historic transition” (2017–2022), as caused by the twin pressures of the country’s economic slowdown and the Trump administration’s labeling of China as a strategic competitor. During this period, the two centennial “goals of struggle” will converge and for this reason, the periods of opportunity figure as an important heuristic device to understand the increasing Chinese assertiveness since 2008. More specifically, this assertiveness may yet grow in strength between 2021 and 2035 as this period will lay the foundations for the eventual end goal of China’s rise.

As such, this article shows that thinking about China’s rise as a return to its imperial past is inherently flawed, as it is important to understand the impact of internal and external developments upon this rise. Indeed, since Chinese sources divide the period between 2002 and 2050 into several periods of opportunity, these periods can be employed as useful heuristic devices to understand the rise of China. In the present study, China’s rise is more explicit both in terms of its trajectory and its end goal.

Rather than noting the shift away from “biding time” toward “striving for achievements,” this study shows that the strategy is more divided and conducive to change, while the growth trajectory is linear and not cyclical. One suggestion is to perceive these strategic guidelines as the guiding force behind the periods of opportunity and the growing urgency to realize China’s rejuvenation. Instead of seeing a one hundred-year strategy aimed at supplanting the United States, this article shows that China is first and foremost concerned with its own (socialist) modernization that will bring it to great-power status, both economically and politically. ■



Notes

Epigraph. James N. Mattis, "Remarks by Secretary Mattis at the U.S. Naval War College Commencement, Newport, Rhode Island" (speech, U.S. Naval War College Commencement, Newport, RI, 15 June 2018), accessed 18 June 2019, <https://dod.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/1551954/remarks-by-secretary-mattis-at-the-us-naval-war-college-commencement-newport-rh/>.

1. Michael Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower* (New York: Henry Holt, 2015), 28–30.

2. David Tweed, "This Is the Man Trump Described as 'The Leading Authority on China,'" Bloomberg, 26 September 2018, accessed 28 March 2019, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-09-27/trump-identifies-the-leading-authority-on-china-who-is-he>.

3. Alan Rappeport, "A China Hawk Gains Prominence as Trump Confronts Xi on Trade," *New York Times* (website), 30 November 2018, accessed 28 March 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/30/us/politics/trump-china-trade-xi-michael-pillsbury.html>; Alastair Iain Johnston, "Shaky Foundations: The 'Intellectual Architecture' of Trump's China Policy," *Survival* 61, no. 2 (March 2019): 189.

4. Mattis, "Remarks by Secretary Mattis at the U.S. Naval War College Commencement, Newport, Rhode Island."

5. The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, December 2017), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>.

6. Johnston, "Shaky Foundations," 189–202. Alastair Iain Johnston notes that *The Hundred-Year Marathon* is based on a misreading of *The China Dream: Great Power Thinking and Strategic Posture in the Post-American Era* by the "rather eccentric Chinese military propagandist [Col. Liu Mingfu]," whose book referred to Mao Zedong's social-economic campaign of the Great Leap Forward (1958–1962), in which China would attempt to surpass the United States economically within twenty to thirty years. Furthermore, the one hundred-year period in *The China Dream* refers to an evolution of thinking about China reaching primacy from former President of the Republic of China Sun Yat-sen to Chinese politician Deng Xiaoping, the period from 1900 to 2000 instead of 1949 to 2049.

7. Linus Hagström and Björn Jerdén, "East Asia's Power Shift: The Flaws and Hazards of the Debate and How to Avoid Them," *Asian Perspective* 38, no. 3 (July–September 2014): 337–62. In their paper, Hagström and Jerdén note that the debate on a power shift in East Asia is inherently flawed since its focus is primarily on the "isolated or bilateral or regional cases related specific issue areas" instead of explaining changes at the macrolevel.

8. Shaun Breslin, "Still Rising or Risen (or Both)? Why and How China Matters," *The Pacific Review* 30, no. 6 (March 2017): 870–84; Brantly Womack, "International Crises and China's Rise: Comparing the 2008 Global Financial Crisis and the 2017 Global Political Crisis," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 10, no. 4 (Winter 2017): 383–401.

9. Manjari Chatterjee Miller, "The Role of Beliefs in Identifying Rising Powers," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 9, no. 2

(Summer 2016): 211–38. Miller defines a rising power as "rising to become a great power."

10. Ibid.; Karl Gustafsson, "Recognising Recognition through Thick and Thin: Insights from Sino-Japanese Relations," *Cooperation and Conflict* 51, no. 3 (2016): 255–71; Steven Ward, *Status and the Challenge of Rising Powers* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017). Other interesting studies on status demands of rising powers include the works of Steven Ward of Cornell University and Karl Gustafsson of the Swedish Institute of International Affairs.

11. Hagström and Jerdén, "East Asia's Power Shift"; Miller, "The Role of Beliefs in Identifying Rising Powers," 211–12; William Wohlforth, "Not Quite the Same as it Ever Was: Power Shifts and Contestation over the American-led World Order," in *Will China's Rise Be Peaceful? Security Stability and Legitimacy*, ed. Asle Toje (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2018), 57–77.

12. Xi Jinping, "为实现民族伟大复兴, 推进祖国和平统一而共同奋斗——在《告台湾同胞》发表40周年纪念会上的讲话" [Push forward the common struggle for the peaceful reunification of the Motherland (and) the realization of the great rejuvenation of the (Chinese) people: A speech delivered at the 40th anniversary of the message to the Taiwanese compatriots], Xinhua News Agency (speech, Great Hall of the People, Beijing, 2 January 2019), accessed 18 June 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2019-01/02/c_1123937757.htm.

13. On the racial aspects of this "great rejuvenation," see Jeremy E. Taylor, "Nation, Topography, and Historiography: Writing Topographical Histories in Hong Kong," *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 15, no. 2 (Fall 2003): 45–74; James DeShaw Rae and Wang Xiaodan, "Placing Race, Culture and the State in Chinese National Identity: Han, Hua, or Zhongguo?," *Asian Politics & Policy* 8, no. 3 (2016): 474–93.

14. Miller, "The Role of Beliefs in Identifying Rising Powers," 211–12 and 216–18.

15. Luo Gang, "五四: 不断重临的起点——重识李泽厚 '启蒙与救亡的双重变奏'" [The May fourth movement: A constantly revisited starting point on Li Zehou's "The Dual Variation of Enlightenment and National Salvation"], *Journal of Hangzhou Normal University* 1, no. 4 (2009); Matt Schiavenza, "How Humiliation Drove Modern Chinese History," *The Atlantic* (website), 25 October 2013, accessed 10 May 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/china/archive/2013/10/how-humiliation-drove-modern-chinese-history/280878/>; for figure 1, see Tom Miller, "A Dream of Asian Empire," Gavekal Dragonomics China Chartbook, accessed 23 March 2019, <https://gavekal.com/doc.cfm?id=9167&src=rss>. Indeed, throughout the twentieth century, China has found itself in a debate between national salvation versus enlightenment. As the Chinese Communist Party presents itself as the pastoral power, without its guidance and leadership, there shall be no new China. Indeed, the demise of the party would lead directly to the downfall of the country.

16. Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon*, 31–51.

17. Johnston, "Shaky Foundations," 189.

18. Andrea Ghiselli, "Revising China's Strategic Culture: Contemporary Cherry-Picking of Ancient Strategic Thought," *The China Quarterly* 233 (2018): 166–85. Much like the writings of Thucydides, the work of China's famous strategist Sun Tzu suffers from cherry picking and a direct conversion between the past and the present.

19. Jiang Zemin, "高举邓小平理论伟大旗帜, 把建设有中国特色社会主义事业全面推向二十一世纪-江泽民在中国共产党第十五次

全国代表大会上的报告” [Hold high the great banner of the Deng Xiaoping Theory and push forward the cause of comprehensively building socialism with Chinese characteristics in the 21st century: Report of Jiang Zemin at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China] (report, Beijing: 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, 12 September 1997), <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/64168/64568/65445/4526285.html>.

20. “The dialectical method therefore holds that the process of development should be understood not as movement in a circle, not as a simple repetition of what has already occurred, but as an onward and upward movement.” See Joseph V. Stalin, *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* (New York: International Publishers, 1938), accessed 18 June 2019, <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1938/09.htm>.

21. Nikolai Bukharin, *Historical Materialism: A System of Sociology* (New York: International Publishers, 1925), 53–88 and 247–76; Schlomo Avineri, “Marx and Modernization,” *The Review of Politics* 31, no. 2 (April 1969): 172–88. Schlomo Avineri notes that Marxism is somewhat of a dichotomy as Karl Marx, “the father of Marxism,” presented a “unified theory ... premised on the changing nature of the relations between productive forces and productive relations [while warning] against a mechanistic application of his theory to every and any historical situation.”

22. This argument is expressed in Xi Jinping’s “shoe theory” when he argues: “[Whether] the shoe fits or not, you can only know by fitting it on your own foot. [Whether] a country’s development path [fits], only the country’s people can know.” See Qin Han Xiong, “What Deeper Message is Conveyed in Xi Jinping’s Shoe Theory?,” Communist Party of China News Network (CPC), 25 March 2013, accessed 28 March 2019, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2013/0325/c241220-20903516.html>.

23. George Magnus, *Red Flags: Why Xi’s China is in Jeopardy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 53–74.

24. Sun Daizhen and Li Jing, “中国方案的生成逻辑” [The formational logic of the China plan], *Foreign Theoretical Trends* 12 (2017): 10–16.

25. In a study by Raghu Garud, Arun Kumaraswamy, and Peter Karnøe, path creation is defined as entertaining “a notion of agency that is distributed and emergent through relational processes that constitute phenomena.” See Raghu Garud, Arun Kumaraswamy, and Peter Karnøe, “Path Dependence or Path Creation?,” *Journal of Management Studies* 47, no. 4 (April 2010).

26. David M. Edelstein, *Over the Horizon: Time, Uncertainty, and the Rise of Great Power* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2017), 14–28.

27. Fredrik Doeser and Joakim Eidenfalk, “The Importance of Windows of Opportunity for Foreign Policy Change,” *International Area Studies Review* 16, no. 4 (2013): 390–406.

28. Ibid., 392–93. Doeser and Eidenfalk note that for the window of opportunity to succeed there has to be a combination between domestic will and external opportunity. Indeed, when the time is perceived as ripe, then timing is of the essence within this presumed window. Karin Guldbrandsson and Björn Fossum, “An Exploration of the Theoretical Concepts Policy Windows and Policy Entrepreneurs at the Swedish Public Health Arena,” *Health Promotion International* 24, no. 4 (2009): 434–44. An example of how this window of opportunity operates in policy change can be found in a study by Guldbrandsson and Fossum. Guldbrandsson and Fossum based their study on the framework of John Kingdon, who argues that the window of opportunity materializes through the confluence of the problem, the policy, and the policy streams.

29. Xi Jinping, “承前启后继往开来 朝着中华民族伟大复兴目标奋勇前进” [Forge ahead toward the goal of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese people], CPC, 29 November 2012, accessed 23 March 2019, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2012/1130/c64094-19746089.html>.

30. A classic example of this historical cyclicity can be found in the Chinese literary canon’s *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, which notes: “The empire, long united, must divide; long divided, must unite.” See Moss Roberts, trans., “Afterword: About *Three Kingdoms*,” in *Three Kingdoms: A Historical Novel*, by Luo Guanzhong (Los Angeles: Foreign Languages Press/University of California Press, 2014), 411.

31. By connecting his own name to this theoretical advancement of the country’s ruling ideology, President Xi Jinping was elevated to the heights of the famous statesmen who went before him: Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping. Having “Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era,” Xi’s political theory or philosophy on socialism, enshrined into the 19th National Party Congress’s charter is an honor that was not bestowed upon his immediate predecessors Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao. See Xi Jinping, “习近平：决胜全面建成小康社会 夺取新时代中国特色社会主义伟大胜利——在中国共产党第十九次全国代表大会上的报告” [Finish comprehensively building a xiaokang society, seize the great victory of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era: Report to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China], Xinhua News Agency, 27 October 2017, accessed 24 March 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/19cpcnc/2017-10/27/c_1121867529.htm.

32. Ibid. The “principal contradiction” is an important element within Marxist philosophy as it explains the “movement and change on the basis of Marxist dialectics.” Indeed, the “struggle of conflicting forces and tendencies in all things and phenomena is the source of movement, of change, and of development.” Instead of a contradiction between “an affirmative to a negative judgment” (as in logic), the contradiction here denotes that “an incompatibility has arisen between the productive forces and the relations of productions so that the social mechanism is unable to function properly; that the social system collapses as a result of opposed tendencies active within it.” See also Adam Schaff, “Marxist Dialectics and the Principle of Contradiction,” *The Journal of Philosophy* 57, no. 7 (March 1960): 241–50.

33. Elizabeth C. Economy, *The Third Revolution: Xi Jinping and the New Chinese State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018); Carl Minzner, *End of an Era: How China’s Authoritarian Revival is Undermining Its Rise* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2018).

34. Alastair Iain Johnston, “How New and Assertive is China’s New Assertiveness?,” *International Security* 37, no. 4 (Spring 2013): 7–48; Björn Jerdén, “The Assertive China Narrative: Why It Is Wrong and How so Many Still Bought into It,” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 47–88. For a specific analysis of where this presumed “new assertiveness” manifests itself, see Michael Yahuda, “China’s New Assertiveness in the South China Sea,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 22, no. 81 (2013): 446–59.

35. Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon*, 65–68. A more faithful translation of *taoguang yanghui* is “hide brightness [and] nourish obscurity.” It is part of a multiple character strategy that calls for China to “observe calmly; cope with affairs calmly; hide [their] capacities and bide [their] time; never claim leadership; and do some things.” See Zhang Xiangyi and Qin Hua, “Observe Calmly, Cope with Affairs Calmly, Hide our Capacities and Bide our Time, Never Claim Leadership, and Do Some Things,” People’s Network,

28 October 2012, accessed 24 March 2019, <http://theory.people.com.cn/n/2012/1028/c350803-19412863.html>.

36. "The Three-Step Strategy," Xinhua News Agency, accessed 24 March 2019, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64156/64157/4509545.html>.

37. Jiang Zemin, "江泽民同志在党的十六大上所作报告全文 全面建设小康社会, 开创中国特色社会主义事业新局面" [The full text of comrade Jiang Zemin's work report to the 16th National Party Congress: Comprehensively build a xiaokang society and create a new situation for socialism with Chinese characteristics] (report, Great Hall of the People, Beijing, 8 November 2002), https://www.fmpc.gov.cn/web/ziliao_674904/zyjh_674906/t10855.shtml.

38. Xu Jian, "Rethinking China's Period of Strategic Opportunity," *China International Studies* (March/April 2014): 52.

39. Zheng Bijian, "China's 'Peaceful Rise' to Great-Power Status," *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 5 (September–October 2005), accessed 18 June 2019, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/asia/2005-09-01/chinas-peaceful-rise-great-power-status>; Hiroko Okuda, "China's 'Peaceful Rise/Peaceful Development': A Case Study of Media Frames of the Rise of China," *Global Media and China* 1, no. 1–2 (2016): 121–38.

40. An interesting counterpoint here is given by Rush Doshi who traces back many of today's developments to the periods under Zemin and Hu. Indeed, Shaun Breslin argues, "You don't need to go back to 1978 to see how much China has changed ... 2008 will do." Interestingly, 2008 is often put forward in reference to China's assertiveness. See Rush Doshi, "Hu's to Blame for China's Foreign Assertiveness?," Brookings Institution, 22 January 2019, accessed 24 March 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/hu-to-blame-for-chinas-foreign-assertiveness/>; Shaun Breslin, "China in 2018: Presidents, Politics, and Power," *Asian Survey* 59, no. 1 (2019): 21–34.

41. Chen Dingding and Jianwei Wang, "Lying Low No More? China's New Thinking on the Tao Guang Yang Hui Strategy," *China: An International Journal* 9, no. 2 (2011): 195–216; Yan Xuetong, "从韬光养晦到奋发有为" [From Taoguang Yanghui to Fenfa Youwei], *Quarterly Journal of International Politics* 4, no. 40 (2014): 1–35; Camilla T. N. Sørensen, "The Significance of Xi Jinping's 'Chinese Dream' for Chinese Foreign Policy: From 'Tao Guang Yang Hui' to 'Fen Fa You Wei,'" *Journal of China and International Relations* 3, no. 1 (2015): 53–73.

42. Jiang, "江泽民同志在党的十六大上所作报告全文 全面建设小康社会, 开创中国特色社会主义事业新局面" [The full text of comrade Jiang Zemin's work report to the 16th National Party Congress: Comprehensively build a xiaokang society and create a new situation for socialism with Chinese characteristics]; Li Xueren, "习近平在周边外交工作座谈会上发表重要讲话" [Xi Jinping delivers an important speech to the Peripheral Diplomacy Work Conference], CCTV, 25 October 2013, accessed 26 March 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-10/25/c_117878897.htm.

43. Jiang, "江泽民同志在党的十六大上所作报告全文 全面建设小康社会, 开创中国特色社会主义事业新局面" [The full text of comrade Jiang Zemin's work report to the 16th National Party Congress: Comprehensively build a xiaokang society and create a new situation for socialism with Chinese characteristics]; Gong Xinli, "奋发更有为——学习胡锦涛总书记重要讲话评论" [Striving for bigger achievements: Learning from Secretary General Hu Jintao's important speech], CPC, 31 July 2007, accessed 26 March 2019, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/67481/86695/97208/6053737.html>.

44. Hu Angang and Zhang Wei, "如何认识当今中国的历史方位" [How to understand contemporary China's historical position], *Journal of East China Normal University Humanities and Social Sciences* 5 (2017): 13–18.

45. China's defeat in the Opium Wars of 1839–1842 and 1856–1860 with Great Britain led to the country having to make forced concessions to Western powers. See Jeremy E. Taylor, "The Bund: Littoral Space of Empire in the Treaty Ports of East Asia," *Social History* 27, no. 2 (2002): 125–42; Jia Ruixue, "The Legacies of Forced Freedom: China's Treaty Ports," *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 96, no. 4 (October 2014): 596–608.

46. William A. Callahan, "National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism," *Alternatives* 29, no. 2 (March 2004): 199–218; Zhang Feng, "The Rise of Chinese Exceptionalism in International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 2 (2011): 305–28.

47. Xi Jinping, "习近平: 决胜全面建成小康社会 夺取新时代中国特色社会主义伟大胜利——在中国共产党第十九次全国代表大会上的报告" [Finish comprehensively building a xiaokang society], 18 October 2017, accessed 18 June 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/19cpcnc/2017-10/27/c_1121867529.htm.

48. "[China's] GDP Growth (Annual %)," The World Bank Group, accessed 26 March 2019, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=CN>.

49. "习近平首次系统阐述“新常态” [Xi Jinping for the first time systematically expands on the concept of the 'new normal'], Xinhua News Agency, 9 November 2018, accessed 26 March 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2014-11/09/c_1113175964.htm; Nele Noesselt, "Introduction: 'New Normal' under Xi Jinping," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 22, no. 3 (2017): 321–25; Xi, "习近平: 决胜全面建成小康社会 夺取新时代中国特色社会主义伟大胜利——在中国共产党第十九次全国代表大会上的报告" [Finish comprehensively building a xiaokang society]. With this statement, Xi Jinping set the tone for a complete overhaul of China's economic and governance models.

50. "习近平: 以时不我待只争朝夕的精神投入工作 开创新时代中国特色社会主义事业新局面" [Xi Jinping: Seize the momentum to implement the work spirit of the 19th Party Congress and initiate a new era for the cause of a new phase for socialism with Chinese characteristics], Xinhua News Agency, 5 January 2018, accessed 26 March 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/2018-01/05/c_1122217981.htm. Similarly, in such a period of historic opportunity, society can expect a rise in the nationalist rhetoric, as a result of this greater urgency to achieve the goals that were set out.

51. He Chengxue, "新“三步走”: 实现“两个阶段”战略目标的行动指南" [The new "three-step strategy": An operational guide for the realization of the "two stages"], China Social Science Network, 17 November 2017, accessed 26 March 2019, http://www.cssn.cn/mxz/201711/t20171117_3745816.shtml; Xi, "习近平: 决胜全面建成小康社会 夺取新时代中国特色社会主义伟大胜利——在中国共产党第十九次全国代表大会上的报告" [Finish comprehensively building a xiaokang society]. One can argue that the definition of these "two stages" presents a present-day update of the "three-step strategy" by Deng Xiaoping.

52. Jamil Anderlini, Wang Feng, and Tom Mitchell, "Xi Jinping Delivers Robust Defence of Globalisation at Davos," *Financial Times*, 17 January 2017, accessed 26 March 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/67ec2ec0-dca2-11e6-9d7c-be108f1c1dce>.

53. Xi Jinping, "习近平: 在第十三届全国人民代表大会第一次会议上的讲话" [Xi Jinping: Speech at the first session of the 13th National People's Congress] (speech, Great Hall of the People, Beijing,

20 March 2018), accessed 18 June 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2018-03/20/c_1122566452.htm. While a National Party Congress takes place every five years, the National People's Congress is an annual gathering of the Chinese party-government.

54. “立‘新’除‘弊’ 习近平纵论新型政党制度” [To construct the “new” and remove the “old”: Xi Jinping expands on the new type of political party system], Xinhua News Agency, 5 March 2018, accessed 26 March 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2018-03/05/c_1122491671.htm.

55. Xi, “习近平：在第十三届全国人民代表大会第一次会议上的讲话” [Xi Jinping: Speech at the first session of the 13th National People's Congress].

56. Kerry Brown, “The Year China's Luck Ran Dry,” East Asia Forum, 9 December 2018, accessed 28 March 2019, <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2018/12/09/the-year-chinas-luck-ran-dry/>. Brown argues that two assumptions on which China's rise in the last few decades, the first being the United States' enduring commitment to the global rules-based order and then secondly the increasing unpredictability of the external world.

57. Former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd described these Chinese conferences as “major, authoritative gatherings of the entire leadership, designed to synthesise China's official analysis of international trends, and assess how China should anticipate and respond to them in the prosecution of its own national interests.” See Kevin Rudd, “Kevin Rudd Speaks to the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy: Xi Jinping, China and the Global Order — The Significance of China's 2018 Central Foreign Policy Work Conference” (speech, National University of Singapore, Singapore, 26 June 2018), accessed 18 June 2019, <http://kevinrudd.com/portfolio-item/kevin-rudd-speaks-to-the-lee-kuan-yew-school-of-public-policy-xi-jinping-china-and-the-global-order-the-significance-of-chinas-2018-central-foreign-policy-work-conference/>.

58. “习近平在中央外事工作会议上强调坚持以新时代中国特色社会主义思想为指导努力开创中国特色大国外交新局面” [At the Central Foreign Affairs Work Conference, Xi insisted on (employing) the new era of Socialist Diplomatic Thought with Chinese Characteristics as the guide to initiate with great effort the new situation of great power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics], Xinhua News Agency, 23 June 2018, accessed 28 March 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/leaders/2018-06/23/c_1123025806.htm.

59. Constantino Pischedda, “Wars within Wars: Why Windows of Opportunity and Vulnerability Cause Inter-Rebel Fighting in Internal Conflicts,” *International Security* 43, no. 1 (Summer 2018): 138–76.

60. For more information on these centennial goals, see Cui Zhiyuan, “Xiaokang Socialism: A Petty-Bourgeois Manifesto,” *Chinese Economy* 36, no. 3 (2003): 50–70; Bart Dessein, “A New Confucian Social Harmony,” in *From Dog to Rabbit: 5 Years* (Ghent, Belgium: China Platform/Ghent University, 2011), 72–77.

61. George Magnus, *Red Flags: Why Xi's China is in Trouble* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018); see also Bruno Maçães, *Belt*

and Road: A Chinese World Order (London: Hurst, 2018), 75–76.

This slowdown is also described as the middle-income trap. Because of rising labor costs, China is no longer competitive in sectors of mass production, but, because of low productivity, it is also not able to compete in greater value-added industries.

62. President and Professor of China Foreign Affairs University Qin Yaqing argues that the shift from “keeping a low profile” toward “striving for achievements,” as evident in the discourse on an assertive China, is “inadvisable, and continuity through change is a [more] realistic description of China's present international strategy.” Changes then, occur “mainly through issues perceived as relevant to core national interests.” See Qin Yaqing, “Continuity through Change: Background Knowledge and China's International Strategy,” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 7, no. 3 (Autumn 2014): 285–314; Wei Xingsheng, “在大有可为的历史机遇期奋发有为” [Striving for achievement in the period of historic opportunity in which great things can be accomplished], *QS Theory CN*, 10 September 2018, accessed 28 March 2019, http://www.qstheory.cn/laigao/2018-09/10/c_1123407336.htm; David Gitter, “Is China's Period of Strategic Opportunity Over?,” *The Diplomat* (website), 28 March 2016, accessed 28 March 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2016/05/is-chinas-period-of-strategic-opportunity-over/>.

63. Wang Yang, “汪洋代表全国政协第十三届全国委员会常务委员会作报告（全文）” [Wang Yang delivers work report of the standing committee of the National People's Congress during the 13th National People's Congress (full text)] (report, Great Hall of People, Beijing, 3 March 2019), <http://finance.jrj.com.cn/2019/03/03161127110607.shtml>. During the second session of the 2019 meeting with the 13th National People's Congress, the “period of historic transition” and 2019, in particular, were explicitly referred to by members of the Politburo Standing Committee (China's apex political-ruling body). Building toward a “xiaokang society,” a modernized and prosperous Chinese society, for example, was described by Wang Yang, the chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, as being a “pivotal issue during a pivotal year.” See Su Feng, “习近平新时代中国特色社会主义思想与历史交汇期的基本关系” [On the basic relationship between Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and the period of historical convergence], *Gansu Theory Research* (甘肃理论学刊) 6, no. 244 (November 2017): 9–14. The declaration of this period of historic transition, according to Su Feng, can be understood as an important strategic judgment as it is crucial to understand the development of “Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for the New Era.”

64. Maurice Meisner, “Maoist Utopianism and the Future of Chinese Society,” *International Journal* 26, no. 3 (1971): 535–39.

65. Richard M. Pfeffer, “Mao and Marx in the Marxist-Leninist Tradition: A Critique of ‘The China Field’ and a ‘Contribution to a Preliminary Reappraisal,’” *Modern China* 2, no. 4 (1976): 430–37.

Extract from “The FBI and the National Security Threat Landscape: The Next Paradigm Shift”

Christopher Wray, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Remarks prepared for delivery

Council on Foreign Relations, Washington, D.C., 26 April 2019

Changing Threat Landscape

The nature of the threats we face is evolving—criminal and terrorist threats are morphing beyond traditional actors and tactics. We still have to worry about an al Qaeda cell planning a large-scale attack.

But we also now have to worry about homegrown violent extremists who are radicalizing in the shadows. These folks aren’t targeting the airport or the power plant. They’re targeting schools, sidewalks, landmarks, concerts, and shopping malls, with anything they can get their hands on, and often things they can get their hands on pretty easily—knives, guns, cars, and primitive IEDs [improvised explosive devices]. They’re moving from radicalization to attack in weeks or even days, not years, online and in encrypted messaging platforms, not a camp or a cave.

On the cyber front, we’re seeing hack after hack, and breach after breach. And we’re seeing more and more what we call a “blended threat,” where cyber and espionage merge together in all kinds of new ways.

We still confront traditional espionage threats, with dead drops and covers. But economic espionage dominates our counterintelligence program.

More than ever, the adversary’s targets are our nation’s assets—our information and ideas, our innovation, our research and development, our technology. And no country poses a broader, more severe intelligence collection threat than China.

China has pioneered a societal approach to stealing innovation any way it can, from a wide array of businesses, universities, and organizations. They’re doing this through Chinese intelligence services, through state-owned enterprises, through ostensibly private companies, through graduate students and researchers, and through a variety of actors working on behalf of China.

At the FBI, we have economic espionage investigations that almost invariably lead back to China in nearly all of our 56 field offices, and they span almost every industry or sector. The activity I’m talking about goes way beyond fair-market competition. It’s illegal. It’s a threat to our economic security. And by extension, it’s a threat to our national security.

But it’s more fundamental than that. This behavior violates the rule of law. It violates principles of fairness and integrity. And it violates our rules-based world order that has existed since the end of World War II.

Put plainly, China seems determined to steal its way up the economic ladder, at our expense. To be clear, the United States is by no means their only target. They’re strategic in their approach—they actually have a formal plan, set out in five-year increments, to achieve dominance in critical areas.

To get there, they’re using an expanding set of non-traditional methods—both lawful and unlawful—weaving together things like foreign investment and corporate acquisitions with cyber intrusions and supply chain threats.



The Chinese government is taking the long view here—and that’s an understatement. They’ve made the long view an art form. They’re calculating. They’re focused. They’re patient. And they’re persistent.

Overlaying all these threats is our ever-expanding use of technology. Next-generation telecommunication networks, like 5G, and the rise of artificial intelligence and machine learning. Cryptocurrencies, unmanned aerial systems, deep fakes—a lot of stuff I wasn’t particularly focused on when I was in the private sector is suddenly blinking red right in front of me, in front of all of us.

And we grow more vulnerable in many ways by the day.

Taken together, these can be called generational threats that will shape our nation’s future. They’ll shape the world around us. And they’ll determine where we stand and what we look like 10 years from now, 20 years from now, 50 years from now.

How We’re Addressing the Threat

Our folks in the FBI are working their tails off every day to find and stop criminals, terrorists, and nation-state adversaries. We’re using a broad set of techniques, from our traditional law enforcement authorities to our intelligence capabilities.

We’ve got task forces across the country, with partners from hundreds of local, state, and federal agencies. We’ve got

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director Christopher Wray discusses the national security threat landscape 26 April 2019 during an interview with Council on Foreign Relations President Richard Haass in Washington, D.C. (Photo courtesy of the FBI)

task forces targeting everything from terrorism to violent crime to cybercrime to crimes against children to crime in Indian country—you name it.

We’ve got legal attaché offices stationed around the world to focus on joint investigations and information sharing.

We’ve got rapid response capabilities we can deploy at a moment’s notice, for any kind of crime or national security crisis.

And on the nation-state adversary front, along with our partners, we’ve got a host of tools we can and will use, from criminal charges and civil injunctions to economic sanctions, entity listing, and visa revocations.

But we can’t tackle all these threats on our own. We’ve got to figure out how to work together, particularly with all of you in the private sector. We need to focus even more on a whole-of-society approach. Because in many ways we confront whole-of-society threats.

To view the entire speech transcript, please visit <https://www.fbi.gov/news/speeches/the-fbi-and-the-national-security-threat-landscape-the-next-paradigm-shift>.

Pivot Out of the Pacific

Oil and the Creation of a Chinese Empire in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

Capt. Philip Murray, U.S. Army



Oil stands alone as a resource of tremendous strategic value for modern nation-states. Difficult to find, expensive to extract, and often geographically concentrated in remote hinterlands, the quest for oil incites geopolitical anxieties among global powers. Events of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries demonstrate that access to, and possession of, oil resources often greatly enhance the chances of economic and military success. For this reason, the location, volume, and access to oil resources generate great intrigue among global actors. Oil enables military maneuvers, sustains industrial and agricultural output, and fuels domestic transportation networks. As such, oil is a powerful strategic source of strength and vulnerability. National security and energy strategies are often written separately, but in the age of petroleum, they are inextricably linked. Within the field of grand strategy, oil represents the unassailable cornerstone of “means” by which all “ways” and “ends” are accomplished.

In the history of oil-consuming nations, China’s experience stands out as uniquely complex. Within the span of more than thirty years (1985 to present), China changed from the fifth largest exporter of oil to the leading consumer of oil imports globally.¹ China’s increasing reliance on foreign oil imports has been a cause for concern for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the United States, and other leading oil-importing nations. Beginning in 1963, China achieved oil independence, but, in 1993, China began consuming more oil than it could produce domestically (see figure 1, page 87).² Chinese strategists view the country’s increasing reliance on foreign oil imports as a strategic vulnerability and an extreme constraint on Chinese strategic action. Basing its continued political dominance on continuous economic development, the CCP’s options

are limited. In the last decade alone, Chinese demand for crude increased to roughly 5.5 million barrels per day, more than that of any other nation. The only option available



(Previous page: composite graphic by Arin Burgess, *Military Review*; graphic elements courtesy of Vecteezy, www.vecteezy.com)

to China after it became a net importer of crude oil in 1993 was competition on the global market. To the great concern of the United States and other observers, Chinese national oil companies (NOCs) rapidly expanded into the global oil market, and the institutions of Chinese state power followed in pursuit.

China’s rise as a global power was, by no coincidence, concurrent with its emergence as a major global importer of foreign oil. The transition from exporter to consumer has spurred wide disagreement about the goals and implications of Chinese grand strategy. In contemporary times, China has risen to become the world’s largest consumer of oil imports and the eighth largest producer of crude (see figure 2, page 88).³ From 1993 to the present, the United States and other major actors with interests in the global oil economy have observed Chinese energy security strategy with great suspicion. Much like concerns over Chinese national security strategy, many speculators are concerned that China is pursuing a neomercantilist energy security strategy with the goal of overthrowing the current economic world order.⁴

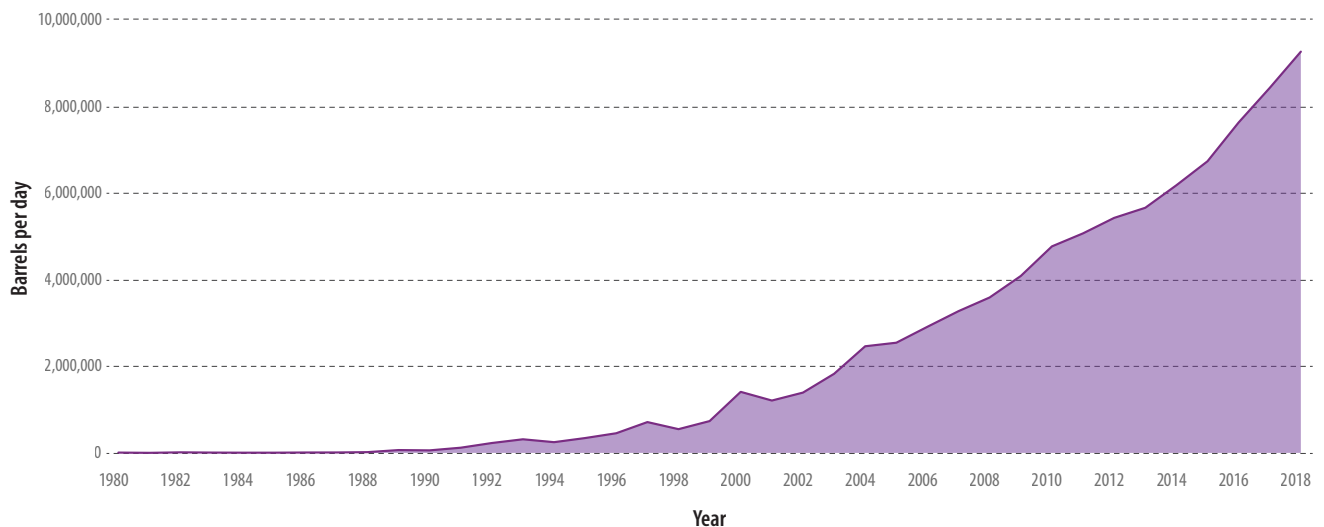
Meanwhile, official Chinese statements on energy security strategy have emphasized the country’s commitment to mutual benefit, international development, and equitable profit sharing among all nations. Analyzing Chinese energy security strategy from the perspective of its NOCs as independent actors provides a better picture of the underlying fundamentals of Chinese grand strategy. In most instances within China’s short history as an oil consumer, the NOCs act first in pursuit of their own profit-driven interest, and then national grand strategy follows in support of increased access, profit, and sustained secure energy resources. There is a reason that China was rapidly able to secure, develop, and reap the benefits of international oil-producing nations in the early 1990s, but China did not draft a comprehensive petroleum security strategy until 1997.⁵

Contrary to the views of many contemporary Chinese grand strategy theorists, contemporary

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This satellite image of China and its neighboring states was compiled using data from a sensor aboard the NASA-NOAA Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership satellite launched in 2011. Each white area on the Earth's surface is a concentrated source of light, providing a good indicator of the extensive requirements for electricity in cities. In its aggressive program to increase its economic development, China has become a major energy consumer and the world's largest importer of oil. (Image courtesy of NASA)



(Figure courtesy of CEIC, www.ceicdata.com; data as reported from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries)

Figure 1. China's Crude Oil Imports from 1980-2018

Chinese grand strategy is not a replication of an ancient pattern of peculiar behavior and, in fact, is based on profit-driven decision-making and the pursuit of energy security for continued economic development. Though the modern Chinese nation-state is a relatively new creation, the legacy of its pre-modern historical precedents do not imbue it with a uniquely pacifistic approach to foreign policy unlike that of other countries. On the contrary, the pursuit of oil resources abroad to fuel the continued economic growth and prosperity of the emerging modern Chinese nation has necessitated the adoption of a strategy of capitalist informal imperialism abroad. As the author argues below, China's energy security history has serious implications on our understanding of Chinese grand strategy that are not well explained by prevailing theoretical constructs.

The Fairbank Model—Lasting Impact on History and Grand Strategy

Harvard historian John King Fairbank, considered by many to be the eminent authority on twentieth-century Chinese history, developed a theory explaining the Chinese view of the relationship of Chinese foreign relations to grand strategy based on a unique Chinese cultural perception of the world. His theory, laid out in *The Chinese World Order*, remains influential for contemporary political theorization

about Chinese grand strategy, and has even undergone a revival since the advent of China's "rise."

The implications of Fairbank's initial theory of Chinese foreign relations and grand strategy have had far-reaching repercussions on policy makers and grand strategists both within and outside of China. In response, recently published works within the emergent New Qing History school of thought have challenged the fundamental principles underlying Fairbank's thesis. However, while some historians have begun course correcting the field of East Asian history to update Fairbank's model, some grand strategists have not caught up with the new empirical research and interpretation. As a result, although the foundation of Fairbank's theory rests on old, incomplete, and inaccurate historical narratives, it continues to shape outsiders' perceptions of Chinese state policy and grand strategy.

The most popular definitions of grand strategy conceptualize three constituent elements: ends, ways, and means.⁶ Far from a purely military calculation on the use of force, grand strategy provides a method of planning that considers the limitations and adversarial impediments on achieving desired political ends. For strategists, history provides foundational knowledge and case studies for the formulation of grand strategy.⁷

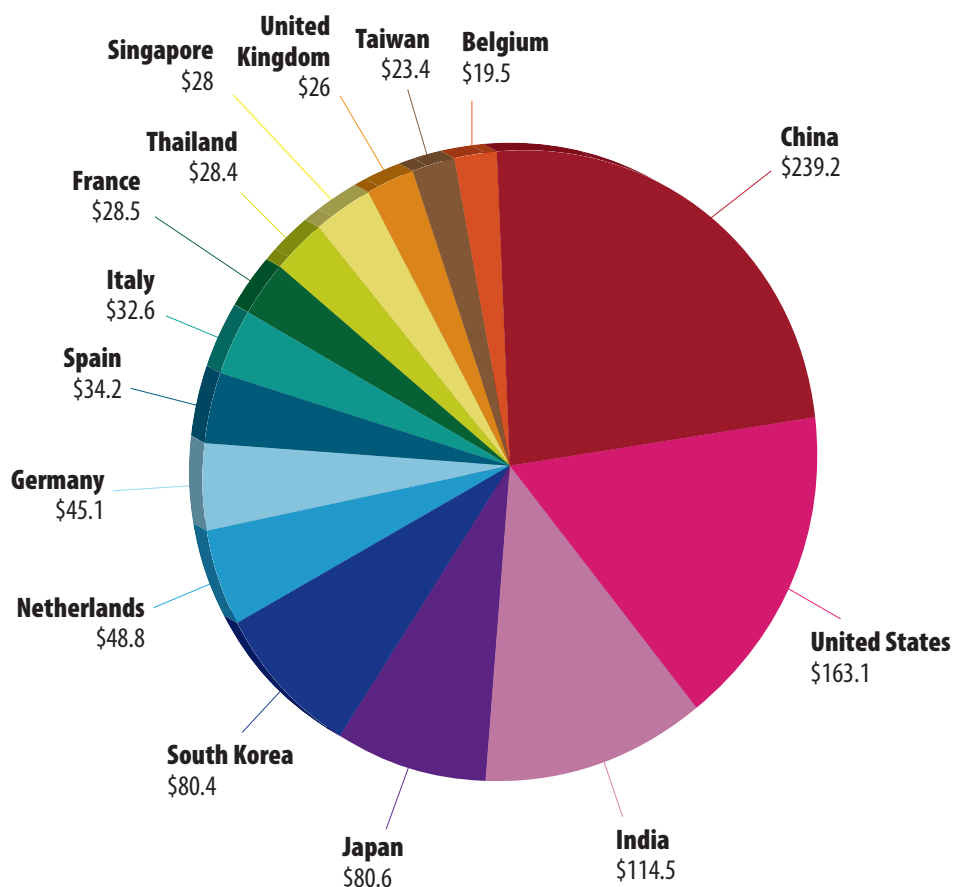
To greater or lesser degrees, various strategists adhere to deterministic schools of thought regarding

history, culture, environment, and geography. One consequence is that experienced statesmen such as Henry Kissinger and popular strategy authors like Robert Kaplan expend painstaking analysis in fruitless efforts to explain how the modern Chinese state exercises its unique world order in foreign relations.⁸

Other scholars such as Wu Shicun, president of the National Institute for South China Sea Studies, and Wang Qingxin, professor of East Asian international relations at the State University of New York at Buffalo, also continue to assert claims of a unique Chinese view of world order and practice of foreign relations based on Fairbank's ideas.⁹

When it comes to the study of Chinese grand strategy, historical and cultural determinism based on Fairbank's original theory of "the Chinese world order" has dominated the field.

Fairbank argues that the Chinese world order represents a uniquely Eastern (Chinese) model of foreign relations distinct from the European Westphalian international order. As Fairbank states in his preliminary framework, the Eastern model of foreign relations is so distinct and uniquely Chinese that "international and even interstate do not seem appropriate terms for it. We prefer to call it the Chinese world order."¹⁰ This broad concept by Fairbank is often referred to as *Tianxia* (all those under heaven): the concept of universal kinship and Sinocentric cultural political authority that centrally underpins Fairbank's thesis.



In 2018, these fifteen countries purchased 83.9% of all crude oil imports.

(Figure by Arin Burgess, *Military Review*. Data courtesy of World's Top Exports, <http://www.worldstopexports.com>)

Figure 2. Top Fifteen Countries that Imported the Highest Dollar Value (in billions) Worth of Crude Oil during 2018

For Fairbank, all external polities or *Tianxia*—that is, polities neighboring "Chinese" states—were irresistibly drawn into participation in the system of Chinese world order. "Chinese" states are those that subsequent Chinese official histories and modern Chinese national historians recognize as legitimate successors in a chain of "Chinese" dynasties. In fact, these states varied as much in their territory, the ethnic makeup of their elites, their ruling ideology, and other factors as did various kingdoms of western Europe in classical through modern times. Fairbank describes this system of relations as a graded and concentrically radiating hierarchy ordered by Confucian ideology. Peripheral polities interacted diplomatically and commercially with the "Chinese" center through what Fairbank named "the tributary system."

Stressing the importance of Confucian hierarchy to the model, the tributary system ritually defines the Chinese world order and confirms the hierarchical superiority of Chinese cultural hegemony. In Fairbank's version, Japan and Korea were understood by "Chinese" imperial courts to be vassal states. Thanks to the power of Chinese culture and ritual subservience to the emperor, "Chinese" civilization could, according to the Chinese World Order theory, control its neighbors within an orbit of peaceful coexistence without resorting to military force.

Fairbank was aware that this model was more ritualistic Chinese conceit than an accurate description of the East Asian past (he knew that the Chinese historical sources describe many wars). However, problematic in its many variations, this theory has spawned and perpetuated a common belief in the "Confucian peace": the idea that international relations in East Asia were historically more peaceful than elsewhere, and, indeed, that Chinese power actually eschews violence and exercises a preference for peaceful/defensive strategies.

The painful truth is that the Chinese World Order model hardly works as an explanation of Chinese and East Asian interpolity relations in the past and carries no significant explanative value for understanding the grand strategy of the People's Republic of China. To fully explain the spectrum of Chinese strategy and actions, the limited power of Tianxia is too simplistic to survive historical scrutiny. Contemporary scholars of Chinese history such as Peter C. Perdue have effectively argued against outdated arguments based on the Fairbank model that assert the tributary system represents a unique strain of East Asian foreign relations.¹¹ The practice of tributary relations, albeit a ritualized feature of some dynasties' diplomacy, never replaced reliance by states on the East Asian mainland on the use of raw military power and aggressive realpolitik. In particular, the Qing, the immediate imperial predecessors of twentieth-century Chinese republics, built an empire twice the size of their predecessors the Ming through military expansion and savvy diplomacy. The new acquisitions in Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet were manifest imperial possessions, not "tributaries."

The notion of a unitary China stretching back for centuries and managing foreign relations through the Fairbankian Chinese World Order/Tianxia/tributary system model still shapes thinking and has confounded the formulation of an accurate understanding of

Chinese grand strategy in contemporary contexts.

Byproducts of this exceptionalist misrepresentation are "capitalism with Chinese characteristics," "communism with Chinese characteristics," and "international relations with Chinese characteristics."¹² These commonly used slogans often obfuscate the fact that the Chinese nation-state acts along lines similar to those of other modern post-Westphalian nation-states (a category to which both the Republic and People's Republic of China obviously belong). In no other aspect has the Chinese nation-state's behavior been more emblematic of classic nation-state imperialism than in its pursuit of oil resources.

Fairbank's theories regarding Chinese grand strategy and foreign relations have a persuasive coherency, seductive to historians and strategists alike. It is simpler to work with the notion of one monolithic Chinese strategic modality of behavior than to comprehend a complex, varied Chinese history filled with small but powerful actors such as NOCs.

In no small way, Fairbank's theories have shackled the study of Chinese grand strategy to the confines of historical and cultural determinism, but an evaluation of the history of the Chinese search for petroleum security dispels any notion that Chinese grand strategy is monolithic or even somehow uniquely Sinocentric. The pressures of a global capitalist world order, fueled by petroleum, have inspired strategic behavior closely paralleling that of other world powers. As China became an ascendant great power, Chinese NOCs gained massive economic and political influence to help the Chinese state develop informal imperial connections across the globe.

Chinese Petroleum Security Strategy Becomes Global

The evolution of China from an oil-exporting to an oil-importing nation hastened the speed with which the country became a powerful international actor. The pace of Chinese economic expansion and energy consumption places extreme demands on the CCP and the global oil economy. It has also raised concerns about the exact strategic ends the CCP is pursuing with its global energy security strategy. In response, the Information Office of the State Council released *China's Energy Policy 2012* stating,

China did not, does not and will not pose any threat to the world's energy security. Abiding by the principle of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit, it will further strengthen its



cooperation with other energy producing and consuming countries as well as international energy organizations, and work together with them to promote a sustainable energy development around the world. It will strive to maintain stability of the international energy market and energy prices, secure the international energy transportation routes, and make due contributions to safeguarding international energy security and addressing global climate change.¹³

This statement paints an optimistic image for the future of the global oil economy with a rising China. However, the Chinese ownership of the NOCs and the secrecy with which China conducts business have led many to conclude that every action China's NOCs take is in concert with a CCP grand strategy to overthrow the international economic order. But, in fact, it is the profit-driven actions of Chinese NOCs that have pulled the Chinese state into expansionist tendencies, not a premeditated grand strategy. Furthermore, the buildup of overseas Chinese oil extractive industries mimics the United States' investment model in the Middle East since the end of World War I. That is to say, major petroleum corporations sought access to petroleum resources overseas and then the major institutions of state power followed in support over time.

Assessments regarding Chinese oil security strategy range along a spectrum. Some see an ultranationalistic mercantilist power bent on overthrowing the economic world order, while others see a rising but peaceful giant on a path toward international cooperation. However, contrary to popular conception, China does have a multiplicity of corporate interests and voices of dissent within its institutions of national power. Not unlike any other contemporary nation-state, predicting China's national strategies is highly contingent on ever-changing domestic and global conditions. I tend to agree with authors Philip Andrews-Speed and Ronald Dannreuther's assessment:

China is pursuing all of these strategic options simultaneously and with varying effect, so that it is not possible to provide a simple picture of a China inexorably integrating with the global international economy and the West, nor of a China seeking definitively to balance against the West or to challenge the West through hegemonic expansion.¹⁴

However, it is hard to ignore the contingent relationship between the expansion of Chinese NOCs into the global energy market and the subsequent intensification of an informal Chinese empire overseas. If one were to identify a crosscutting ideology common to all the contemporary strategy paradigms, it would be profit-seeking.

Hunt for Oil Sources Drives National Strategy

The CCP did not direct the strategic moves to increase reliance on foreign oil imports or move overseas. In fact, historical experience engendered in the CCP leadership a strong preference for domestic production over all other sources. For example, in the 1950s, China experienced the repercussions of relying on foreign oil after the Soviet Union restricted the sale of petroleum products to gain political influence over Chinese affairs.¹⁵ Increasing Chinese domestic oil production, combined with the global oil crises caused by the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries' 1973 oil embargo and the 1979 Iranian Revolution, reinforced the concept that self-sufficiency in oil production was key to sustaining economic development and national sovereignty.¹⁶

Several factors stemming from the economic and political climate in China in the late 1970s and early 1980s created circumstances that allowed Chinese NOCs to begin laying down industrial roots overseas. First, under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, a Chinese politician who led the People's Republic of China from 1978 to 1989, the Chinese increasingly began to use market forces as a mechanism to achieve the ambitious goals outlined in their public policy plans.¹⁷ Released in 1981, the Chinese sixth five-year plan represented the first step in the economic reforms aimed at incorporating free market forces into planning.¹⁸ This meant greater autonomy for corporations within the energy sector to make their own business strategies.

Second, the CCP began to rely heavily on the foreign exchange income generated from crude oil sales—approximately 20 percent of all Chinese foreign exchange earning according to the 1983 report *China's Sixth Five-Year Economic Plan (1981-1985)*.¹⁹ The reliance on export income created a hunger for and reliance on the profits generated by the crude oil exporting industry. The CCP's dependence on oil export revenue strengthened the political power of the newly created NOCs in the early 1980s.

Third, by 1985, Chinese production of domestic crude oil became decreasingly profitable for NOCs within China. Dips in the global price of oil following Saudi Arabia's decision to flood global markets in 1985, decreasing volumes of Chinese oil reserves, and increasing production costs (already well above international averages) coalesced to make Chinese domestic crude oil production a less viable source of revenue for Chinese corporations.²⁰

However, despite the clear warning signs, the CCP continued to plan for increased domestic production. While the Central Intelligence Agency estimated that Chinese oil reserves were diminishing, the CCP optimistically continued to plan for an average 8 percent annual increase in domestic production during its sixth five-year plan (1981–1985) and an average 4 percent annual production increase during its seventh five-year plan (1986–1990).²¹ A 1994 *Oil and Gas Journal* article noted that Chinese exports peaked at 612,800 barrels per day in 1985 and required no imports to support domestic consumption between 1985 and 1987.²² But, by 1988, exports plunged, and imports picked up by 100 percent per year.²³ Approximately 15 billion yuan renminbi were invested in the discovery of new wells, as well as an unknown number of billions in foreign investment.²⁴ However, because of the aforementioned rising cost in production and declining reserves, by 1987, most Chinese production had plateaued or was declining due to production costs. Because of this, in 1987, China National Import &



Chinese workers from the Zhongyuan Petroleum Exploration Bureau of Sinopec and Sudanese workers drill an oil well 26 October 2010 in South Sudan, Africa. China has invested billions of dollars in the oil sector and has a large number of Chinese workers in the oil fields in Sudan. The Export-Import Bank of China is receiving one-sixth of South Sudan's oil production to fund a large infrastructure project around the central region of Sudan. China is working with number other African nations to explore for, and develop, oil fields. (Photo by Imaginechina via Associated Press)

Export Corporation (Sinochem), a company engaged in the exporting and importing of petroleum resources, successfully lobbied the CCP to allow investment in foreign oil ventures overseas.²⁵ At the same time, China

National Petroleum Company (CNPC), responsible for onshore upstream production, began its own refining operations with preferences for imported foreign oil.²⁶ CNPC profits rose so high from its reliance on more affordable foreign oil that other companies followed suit.²⁷ By 1991, Sinochem had successfully invested in

profitable. Luckily, the foundations they laid starting in the late 1980s allowed the Chinese economy to continue growing unimpeded by oil shortages. Between 1987 and 1996, Chinese oil production increased by only an average 2 percent a year.³¹ But foreign oil supplies satisfied the burgeoning demand of a state that today holds the

“From the perspective of foreign observers, China is expanding to different markets in pursuit of a coherent grand strategy and is leveraging all of its institutions of state power to do so.”

oil facilities in more than five different countries; and in 1993, China produced its first barrel of foreign oil in Alberta, Canada.²⁸ Chinese NOCs moved to expand overseas operations well before Chinese consumption outstripped domestic production in late 1993.

Because of the strategic value of petroleum and the high volume of tax revenues the oil industry provided, the Chinese NOCs ability to effectively lobby the CCP and bureaucrats in Beijing became unrivaled by other institutions of the Chinese state. In his article “The Structure of China’s Oil Industry: Past Trends and Future Prospects,” Michal Meidan lists fourteen prominent officials who either started their careers in the oil industry and moved to important government posts or vice versa.²⁹ Based on information from the Chinese state available to the public, it appears that Chinese NOCs were able to effectively expand operations overseas without orders from the State Planning Committee. Also, it appears that if lobbying failed, or was too inconvenient, the NOCs could just bypass the CCP and the State Planning Committee altogether. An example of this occurred when the Daqing Oil Corporation under CNPC signed an agreement with Tyumen, a Russian city in Siberia, for a joint development project to refine two million metric tons of Russian crude oil per year at Daqing, China.³⁰ As exemplified in the Tyumen deal, Chinese NOCs became, and remain, influential corporate actors within the People’s Republic of China, capable of leveraging total resources of the state to support their own profit-making strategies.

To highlight the point, Chinese NOCs began seeking opportunities for foreign investment and infrastructure purchases even before they became a political or strategic necessity. They did so because it was extremely

position of the number one oil-consuming nation in the world, right above the United States.

Driven by profit, the overseas investments and petroleum producing operations of Chinese NOCs made themselves a strategic necessity for the Chinese nation-state and the CCP. As such, they continue to leverage their political power to make their personal “going out” strategy dovetail with, or embed into, the official grand strategy of the Chinese state.³² The implications of this confluence of CCP and NOC strategy manifested itself as greater Chinese involvement in petroleum-producing states, especially those outside of the influence of American hegemony.

A Unique Approach to Petroleum Energy Security or a Familiar Story?

Much like the beginning of Chinese foreign investment in oil, U.S. foreign policy followed the investments of its major oil corporations when configuring grand strategy. After investing heavily in Saudi Arabia’s oil fields during the 1930s, the United States partnered closely with Saudi Arabia, and American oil companies jealously guarded their concessions from other foreign oil within the kingdom.³³ Like China later, the United States also emphasized equal profit sharing and mutual benefits for all the oil-producing nations and “oil majors” involved in extractive industries across the Middle East.³⁴ Furthermore, American involvement in the Middle East came to involve much more than just corporations and profit sharing. Complex diplomatic entanglements and power politics to maintain stability and security for business ensued.

After the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, President James Carter Jr. established a doctrine that stated the United States would militarily intervene against any power that attempted to disrupt the free flow of trade within the Persian Gulf.³⁵ All subsequent U.S. presidents have likewise proclaimed this strategy. Energy historian Robert Lieber aptly points out that the Carter doctrine was an important precursor to the First Gulf War and that the decision to attack Iraq in the First Gulf War was made primarily out of concern for continuity in the global oil market.³⁶ If one were to read only publicly available news sources and presidential speeches from August 1990 to 1991, one would begin to think that the primary reason for standing up to Saddam Hussein on behalf of Kuwait was concern over international law and humanitarian suffering.³⁷ However, National Security Directive 45, *U.S. Policy in Response to the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait*, and National Security Directive 54, *Responding to Iraqi Aggression in the Gulf*, clearly show that oil production and reserves were a leading factor for the United States' decision to go to war against Iraq.³⁸ Lieber wrote that after Hussein invaded Kuwait, he effectively controlled over 20 percent of the world's oil production and had positioned himself to seize up to 50 percent (via Saudi Arabia/United Arab Emirates).³⁹

A comparison to this famous U.S. example shows how the Chinese government is following a path to power similar to that of the United States, rather than striking out on a new path or creating a new Sinocentric world order. China's NOCs lobbied for increased reliance on foreign oil imports—contrary to the CCP's demonstrated preference for self-sufficiency—in order to gain greater profits from increasing domestic demand. Despite CCP apprehension about overreliance on foreign oil imports, the cash flow and strategic value of petroleum made the NOC corporate strategy preferable to other grand strategic options. Within a matter of years, as domestic consumption surpassed domestic production, the entire Chinese state became wrapped up in supporting the NOCs' overseas operations. As Philip Andrews-Speed and Ronald Dannreuther note,

Many overseas ventures involve not only China's government and its NOCs, but also the state-owned banks and the construction and service companies. This gives the impression of 'China Incorporated' arriving

in the host country as part of highly coordinated national strategy.⁴⁰

But the Export-Import Bank of China, now in charge of foreign development efforts, was not created until a year after the first barrel of Chinese oil had been produced overseas in Canada. From the perspective of foreign observers, China is expanding to different markets in pursuit of a coherent grand strategy and is leveraging all of its institutions of state power to do so. However, the history of Chinese NOCs shows that the opposite has been true: other institutions of Chinese state power have been leveraging the Chinese oil industries to support their own corporate strategies.

After overseas investment in oil infrastructure began to expand, the Chinese government created and leveraged such institutions as the Export-Import Bank of China to support the business ventures of the NOCs overseas. A prime example of this dynamic may be seen in infrastructure development within South Sudan. Four years after the first CNPC investment in Sudan, the Chinese government allowed the Export-Import Bank of China to invest 1.15 billion yuan renminbi for further oil exploration as well as generous concession terms for profit sharing of the oil proceeds.⁴¹ As Chinese investment and operations increased in Sudan, so too did other involvement. In his paper "China's Oil Venture in Africa," Hong Zhao notes,

The number of Chinese workers working in Sudan has tripled since the early 1990s, reaching 24,000 in 2006. Chinese non-oil investments are significant as well, including hydro-electric facilities, a new airport for Khartoum, and several textile plans.⁴²

Eventually, the Chinese government found itself diplomatically reliant on the continuation of the Sudanese government for the maintenance of Chinese overseas business ventures and security of their overseas citizenry. This reliance became problematic with the 2003 outbreak of the War in Darfur, a conflict that continues to this day, and the genocide of the non-Arab population in Sudan (in which the Sudanese president was complicit). Subsequently, the Chinese notoriously ignored the United Nations Security Council's embargo on weapon sales to Sudan and sold over \$14 million USD worth of military equipment to the Sudanese government between 2003 and 2006.⁴³ Notably, several Chinese-managed oil facilities were attacked by these militants in 2007 and 2008.⁴⁴ Obviously, these circumstances



bear little resemblance to a supposed pacifist, uniquely Chinese approach to foreign relations but rather display familiar features of pathway dependency derived from reliance on foreign oil in the capitalist world order.

The Future of Chinese Grand Strategy

As the Chinese government becomes more entangled with greater oil infrastructure investments and diplomatic relationships with regimes in conflict areas like Sudan, Iran, Iraq, and Yemen, the likelihood for meddling in domestic affairs or outright conflict to maintain the status quo increases. The reliance on foreign oil has necessitated increasing expeditionary military capabilities to support overseas Chinese citizens and investments from disasters or physical threats. As recently as April 2015, the People's Liberation Army Navy was called upon to evacuate Chinese citizens from Yemen when the Yemeni Civil War (2014–present) endangered them.⁴⁵ The strategic reliance on Middle Eastern and African oil imports has also required the development of a larger fleet of Chinese ships to defend shipping lanes through the South China Sea. While there has never been an embargo against China by a Western power or multilateral economic organization, Chinese strategists like People's Liberation Army Col. Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui often cite the history of Iran and the First Gulf War as evidence of Western proclivity for economic warfare through embargos and military coercion.⁴⁶ Consequently, China views its investment in a blue water navy as a necessity for both its national security strategy and its national energy security strategy.⁴⁷

Additionally, the Chinese have long aspired to drill oil in the South China Sea. As of 2014, the oil extraction in

this area contributed only to 5 percent of domestic production and less than 2 percent of total Chinese consumption.⁴⁸ However, Chinese and foreign investors remain optimistic about the potential of oil production in the South China Sea. Because of this, the South China Sea retains high strategic value not only as a maritime route for transit of and commerce but also as a potential source of massive oil reserves. None of these strategic decisions related to the South China Sea were made by the CCP with the goal of upsetting the world economic order but rather out of necessity to protect the oil trade supply routes the Chinese NOCs had been building incrementally since the 1980s to make a profit and fuel economic growth.

Viewed in this light, many Chinese strategic decisions can be understood in relation to Chinese demand for petroleum resources and not as part of some larger plot to overthrow the economic world order. Even if the creation of new world order is the expressed “end” that many Chinese grand strategists are attempting to reach, as Michael Pillsbury argues in his book *The Hundred-Year Marathon*, the path leading there will depend on competition over oil resources.⁴⁹ Despite talk of win-win scenarios and alternatives to the Western capitalist economic world order through Sinocentric foreign relations, China has built itself an informal empire around overseas petroleum. Thus far, the Chinese strategists are not approaching the problem in a new way but rather are seeking profit where the market affords opportunities. Given the plentiful profits and vulnerability of overseas investments, the Chinese state and the CCP have been highly receptive to implementing the policy suggestions of the state oil lobby, as opposed to taking centralized control of the oil industry and China's grand strategy. ■

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Philippine Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana (*left*), Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Zhao Jianhua, and Philippine Armed Forces Chief Gen. Eduardo Ano (*right*) inspect Chinese-made CQ-A5b assault rifles 5 October 2017 during a turnover ceremony at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City, Philippines. The weapons and ammunition are part of China's military donation to the Philippines' fight against Muslim militants who laid siege to Marawi in southern Philippines. (Photo by Bullit Marquez, Associated Press)

China's One Belt, One Road Initiative and Its International Arms Sales

An Overlooked Aspect of Connectivity and Cooperation?



Capt. James Daniel, U.S. Army

In 2013, China's leaders proclaimed the One Belt, One Road (OBOR) policy was primarily aimed at integrating China with other Eurasian countries for the purpose of encouraging trade and investment. Since then, in specific examples of arms sales to OBOR countries, China has started to sell drones to Central Asian countries and submarines to Indonesia, and it has provided munitions and armaments of an undisclosed nature to Ukraine. While the OBOR story is centered on economic development, and experts focus on the economic ramifications of regional integration, Chinese arms sales that coincide with OBOR suggest that China's goals extend beyond peaceful development into the realms of strengthening military and defense cooperation as well as possibly developing patron-client relationships. By looking at China's arms trade relationships with OBOR countries by region and accounting for the types of weapons that are being sold, it is possible to understand the connection between China's OBOR policy and its arms sales. Since China has used arms sales in the past as a diplomatic tool, these observations will undoubtedly lead to follow-on questions, which deserve closer attention and analysis as China continues to execute and shape OBOR.

Historical Economic and Political Ramifications of Chinese Arms Sales

To understand the current situation, this article will assess the historical economic and political ramifications of Chinese arms sales to its chosen client countries from the 1980s until the present day. Chinese arms sales to OBOR countries will be assessed based on regional breakdown to include those categorized as Maritime Silk Road (MSR), eastern European, and Central Asian client states.

Limitations. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control, and disarmament, maintains an arms transfer database that shows all international transfers of major conventional arms since 1950.¹ However, since the existing SIPRI data includes only major conventional arms transactions that are recorded on international trade registers, and due to China's close-hold culture regarding its international arms sales and state-owned military-industrial complex, researching the OBOR-arms sales connection is limited by incomplete and opaque data. In fact, data on Chinese

arms export revenues and state-owned enterprises is so opaque that SIPRI specifically excludes Chinese firms from its tracker of top one hundred arms-producing and military services companies in the world, stating, "Although several Chinese arms-producing companies are large enough to rank among the SIPRI Top 100, it has not been possible to include them because of a lack of comparable and sufficiently accurate data."²

Without access to China's reliable small arms export volume, and without the means to determine unrecorded or classified state-to-state transactions, this author is challenged to assess, with a high degree of confidence, results that can measure a complete picture of China's arms sales as an instrument of state power. For example, regarding China's newly established relationships with Central Asian countries, would China risk drawing the ire of its important geopolitical neighbor, Russia, and damage OBOR prospects by selling arms to Central Asian countries or other key countries with which Russia and other friendly states have arms sales relations? Not attempting to claim complete understanding of the complex political and economic relationships at play beyond the scope of OBOR, it is the hope of the author that analyzing this narrowly focused question can shed new light onto China's strategic imperative and provide data points as to how China will choose to interact with future partners as it extends its influence beyond its immediate border and regional footprint.

Historical foundations. During the 1980s, China emerged as a top exporter of conventional arms to developing nations because Chinese arms were readily available, inexpensive to purchase, and easy to maintain and operate.³ However, Chinese arms export volume fell dramatically during the 1990s, after the conclusion of the Iran-Iraq War and the demonstrated superiority of high-tech Western weapons over inexpensive, low-quality Russian and Chinese arms.⁴ It was during this period that China established the procedural guidelines it used

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to make decisions on to whom to sell weapons. China sold its weapons abroad in light of both commercial and strategic considerations to include a desire to

- strengthen foes of rivals,
- expand political influence in regions in which it had long-term strategic objectives such as the Middle East and Southeast Asia,
- maintain its defense industries in the face of diminished domestic procurement,
- procure foreign exchange reserves,
- subsidize research and development programs with the inclusion of foreign recipients in the customer base, and
- stimulate more rapid weapons technology development by competing in foreign markets.⁵

A key aspect of Chinese arms sales is that they are frequently subsidized now as they were in the 1980s and 1990s.⁶ Despite Chinese arms being inexpensive and widely available, the Chinese government has refrained from selling weapons to potential foes in previous sales, which indicates the primacy of strategic considerations in Chinese arms sale decision-making.⁷

Current primary Chinese motivations to sell arms abroad are assessed to include arms in exchange for resources and hard currency, cultivation of friendly state relations by hardwiring security and military agreements, and support of Chinese security interests and China's 1980s client relationships. For example, the Iran-China arms for oil relationship rested on China's need for imported oil and a need for Iran to serve as a bulwark against Soviet expansionism.⁸ And, in another relevant instance, Myanmar became an important Chinese arms client in the 1990s due to Chinese interest in supporting a similarly minded autocracy in a democratizing world, complicating India's security planning, acquiring access to Myanmar's Indian Ocean naval facilities, and protecting Chinese commercial interests in Myanmar itself.⁹

Recent media syntheses of Chinese arms export data have determined that China's arms exports have increased 74 percent from the latest two five-year periods (2007–2011 and 2012–2016), accounting for 6.2 percent of world arms sales and ranking third behind the United States and the Russian Federation.¹⁰ China conducts sales with over forty-four countries; 60 percent of China's total arms sales are centered on key customer relationships in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar. China has also continued its relationship

as a major arms supplier to African countries, which together constitute 22 percent of China's total arms export volume.¹¹ No other major arms exporter expanded its arms sales volume to the extent China did between 2007 and 2016; its efforts to expand its market can be seen in its increased presence as a seller in Latin America, exemplified by the sale of Type 90 multibarrel rocket launchers to the Peruvian army in 2015.¹²

Although China's arms sales during the 2010–2014 period amounted to \$15 billion, they paled in comparison with the U.S. and Russian totals of approximately \$96 billion and \$70 billion, respectively. However, its outreach to new markets suggests that arms sales have and will remain a pillar of Chinese strategy to engage in outreach with countries with which it is interested in expanding both geopolitical and economic ties.¹³

One Belt, One Road Background

In autumn of 2013, China's General Secretary Xi Jinping visited Kazakhstan and Russia while Premier Li Keqiang paid calls to Southeast Asian countries. During his visit, Xi announced an initiative to create an economic belt linking China with Mongolia, Central Asia, Russia, Iran, Turkey, the Balkans, eastern and Central Europe, and ultimately Germany and the Netherlands.¹⁴ While calling on Southeast Asian countries, Li announced China's plans to develop the MSR, which would connect China with Southeast Asian countries via Malaysia, Vietnam, and Indonesia; Bangladesh; India; the Persian Gulf; the Mediterranean; and ultimately Europe, terminating in the Netherlands and Germany.¹⁵ Integrated together, the twin projects became known as the OBOR initiative, through which China would usher in a new age of connectivity and cooperation amongst its immediate neighbors and throughout the Eurasian landmass (see figure, page 100–101).

To fund this initiative, China, through the financial support vehicles of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank as well as through the China Development Bank, has allocated up to US\$1 trillion that is to be executed over a time span of thirty-five years.¹⁶ By seeking to upgrade and develop new lines of rail, sea, energy, and communications infrastructure, China has the potential to exert its influence over sixty countries with a combined population of over four billion people that together comprise one-third of the world's gross domestic product.¹⁷

Whether arms sales are directly related to OBOR or not, it is important to ascertain how economic and security interaction between China and OBOR countries is happening. OBOR's official narrative, according to the Chinese State Council, is that OBOR is China's initiative to connect Eurasian countries with China and each other for the purposes of peaceful development

loans to poverty stricken countries in a bid for influence and preferred access to political and economic resources.

Since China's leadership officially announced OBOR as a foreign policy initiative in September and October 2013, according to SIPRI and open source data, its arms sales have expanded to include the OBOR participant countries of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan,

“By seeking to upgrade and develop new lines of rail, sea, energy, and communications infrastructure, China has the potential to exert its influence over sixty countries with a combined population of over four billion people that together comprise one-third of the world's gross domestic product.”¹

and economic integration.¹⁸ However, the expansion of Chinese arms sales to OBOR countries adds another dimension with which to view China's future geopolitical intentions. This hardwiring of economic, security, and diplomatic relations could be a strong sign of a trend set to continue as OBOR develops.

China's diplomatic efforts to integrate and exert influence over OBOR countries will be in part underscored by the scope and direction of Chinese international arms sales. Analyzing China's new and strengthened arms client countries by conducting a before-and-after comparison of existing arms trade register data for ten years prior to OBOR's announcement from 2001 to 2012, and after its announcement from 2013 to 2016, will help clarify the relationship between OBOR and arms sales. Historically, China has used arms sales as a tool of diplomacy. How will it use arms sales as a tool of diplomacy in the OBOR context?

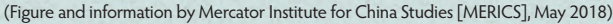
While OBOR's potential economic benefits are well publicized, often with allusions to the Silk Road of old that connected China to the Middle East and Europe, the possibility of changes to the political and security status quo remain unclear. Common narratives from foreign observers have noted that OBOR's policy value to China is to spur economic competition and development, resist U.S. influence, and vie for leverage across the Eurasia landmass.¹⁹ Key to achieving the objectives mentioned above is the concept of Chinese neoimperialism. This model involves heavy Chinese investment and subsidized

Belarus, and Ukraine.²⁰ Existing relationships prior to the announcement of OBOR that have been sustained and strengthened in terms of arms export volume include the countries of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Egypt, Malaysia, Kenya, Iraq (indirectly due to planned rail passing through the country), Indonesia, and Iran.²¹ China's increased scope and volume of arms exports ostensibly is due to their low-cost appeal, a lack of Chinese political scrutiny, and having no strings attached. However, the sudden expansion of Chinese arms exports to OBOR countries with which no previous arms relationship had existed prior to OBOR's announcement could hint at China's future geopolitical intentions for OBOR countries as well as a continuation of its influence model of hardwiring defense, economic, and political ties with countries of interest.

Data Analysis and Trends

According to SIPRI data from the international arms trade register covering recorded activity from 2002 to 2012, China placed sixth in the world rankings of major arms exporters by dollar-based revenue (see table 1, page 102).²² Its major customers included countries such as Iran, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar.²³ In the final four years of data, Chinese arms exports expanded dramatically to account for a 100 percent increase year on year from 2008 to 2009. This trend continues through the end of the observation period. Concerned about its image to the





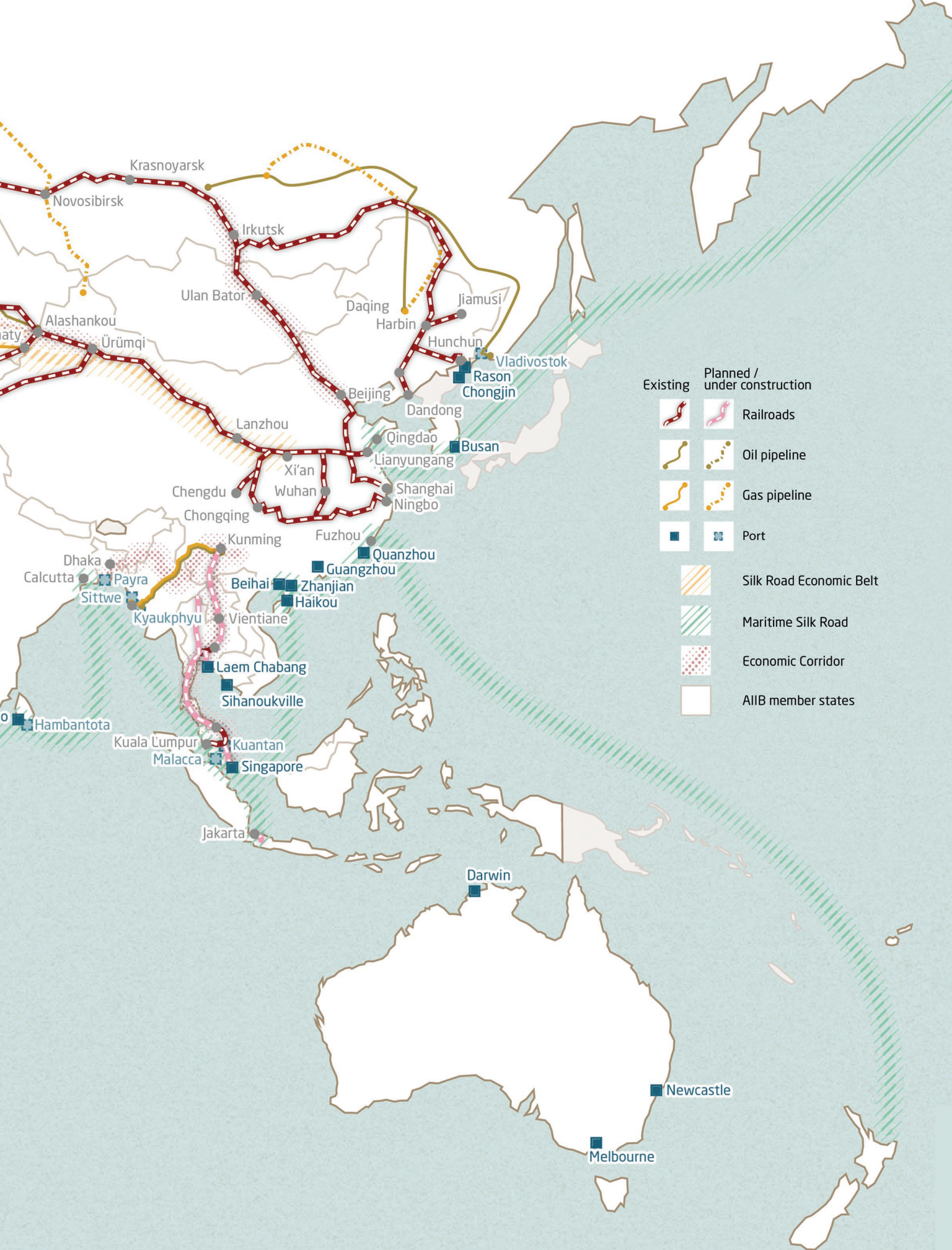


Table 1. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) 2002–2012 World Rankings of Major Arms Exporters by Dollar-Based Revenue (in millions)

Rank 2002–2012	Supplier	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
1	United States	4964	5647	6833	6790	7505	7892	6828	6927	8090	9100	9132	79709
2	Russia	5736	5171	6284	5175	5194	5568	6265	5030	6172	8658	8317	67569
3	Germany (FRG)	902	1660	1121	2063	2762	3310	2378	2534	2735	1345	820	21630
4	France	1474	1441	2324	1842	1706	2410	2007	1929	899	1766	1033	18831
5	United Kingdom	1090	744	1206	1060	987	974	967	1050	1151	1025	899	11153
6	China	526	700	400	286	670	505	3636	1140	1477	1274	1599	9212
7	Italy	478	365	263	832	541	725	422	521	529	939	753	6367
8	Netherlands	233	336	218	505	1156	1209	463	486	381	540	805	6333
9	Israel	574	444	679	510	406	544	359	737	655	572	449	5920
10	Ukraine	307	307	198	282	544	626	382	415	479	568	1492	5610
	Others	1632	2334	2081	2193	3384	2939	3464	3551	3240	4354	3054	32225
	Total	17917	19147	21608	21549	24854	26701	24162	24319	25808	30141	28353	264560

(Table generated from SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, <http://armstrade.sipri.org/armstrade/page/toplist.php>, data accessed 17 April 2019)

international community during the buildup to the 2008 Olympic Games, the data suggests China was very careful to limit its arms export activities. Once the event had been successfully staged and concluded, export revenues could rise without the risk of incurring any negative international attention.

Countries that would be included in the OBOR footprint to include Egypt, Iran, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and Syria all had existing and, in most cases, sustained arms purchasing and licensing agreements from China.²⁴ Two countries that obtained licenses to import and assemble Chinese weapons domestically were Egypt and Iran.²⁵ Both of

these countries had historical arms transactions with China. Egypt, besides ordering eighty Karakorum-8 training aircraft in 1999 (delivered from 2001 to 2005), was one of the first countries to order Chinese unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).²⁶ Eighteen Aisheng ASN-209 Chinese drones were ordered in 2010 and delivered to Egypt from 2012 to 2014.²⁷ In the case of Iran, it licensed the right to manufacture antiship missiles, portable surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), and armored personnel carriers.²⁸ Since only two countries were granted a license to manufacture and assemble Chinese weapons, this indicates China's acknowledgment of both states being friendly to China's interests and is a strong

Table 2. SIPRI 2013–2016 World Rankings of Major Arms Exporters by Dollar-Based Revenue (in millions)

Rank 2013-2016	Supplier	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
1	United States	7647	10312	10184	9894	38037
2	Russia	7779	5103	5554	6432	24869
3	France	1517	1705	2080	2226	7528
4	China	2113	1168	1764	2123	7168
5	Germany (FRG)	727	1762	1792	2813	7092
6	United Kingdom	1580	1575	1139	1393	5687
7	Spain	728	1050	1150	483	3412
8	Italy	877	700	692	802	3071
9	Israel	432	399	694	1260	2784
10	Ukraine	671	640	347	528	2186
	Others	2982	2865	3052	3120	12020
	Total	27053	27278	28448	31075	113854

(Table generated from SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, <http://armstrade.sipri.org/armstrade/page/toplist.php>, data accessed 17 April 2019)

predictor of future arms transactions. Both states have a strong role in the development of OBOR, Egypt especially as an MSR port of call and because of its possession of the Suez Canal.

Designated OBOR countries to include Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and Syria collectively purchased antitank missiles, air search radar, armored personnel carriers, training aircraft, infantry fighting vehicles, fighter aircraft, short-range air-to-air missiles, light transport aircraft, tanks, naval patrol craft, helicopters, portable SAMs, antiship missiles, land-based SAM systems, artillery, and armored recovery vehicles.²⁹ This suggests China is looking to

expand its commercial interests by direct sales or, as with Iran and Iraq, access to oil reserves. China also is likely seeking to shore up its long-term influence by using these conventional weapons sales to develop friendly state relations. While some of these transactions were one-time deals, many of them were organized as initial orders followed by sustained deliveries lasting many years.³⁰ Many of the export orders that took place in the years leading up to OBOR continued to be delivered after the policy was announced. For the purpose of this paper, which seeks to explain the relationship between OBOR and Chinese arms sales, these long-term and sustained transactions will be identified and isolated.

Compared with the decade preceding the OBOR initiative, in September–October 2013, China accelerated its international arms sales to supplant both the United Kingdom and Germany to place fourth in total worldwide arms export revenues from 2013 to 2016 (see table 2).³¹ Based on 2012–2016 data, major importers of Chinese arms continued their defense relationship as Pakistan accounted for 35.14 percent of total Chinese exports, Bangladesh accounted for 17.85 percent, and Myanmar

for 10.07 percent (see table 3, page 105).

Countries that continued to transact with China based on existing orders placed in the pre-OBOR era of 2002–2012 included Bangladesh, Egypt, Iran, and Indonesia. These countries and others expanded the scope of their imports, demonstrating a strengthening of their security relationship with China following the announcement of OBOR. States such as Malaysia, Bangladesh, Iraq, Indonesia, Kenya, Sri Lanka, and Syria placed more orders for Chinese arms, which included antiship missiles, naval vessels, SAMs, training aircraft, submarines, artillery, naval ordnance to include torpedoes, naval guns, antiaircraft guns and

associated fire control radar, UAVs and appropriate ordnance, helicopters, naval patrol aircraft, and anti-tank missiles.³² Most of these countries comprise the region designated as the MSR, and Beijing is clearly willing to provide naval weaponry to them, perhaps in a gambit to expand its client network for intermilitary cooperation and ensure its continued access to critical sea lanes in support of OBOR's development.

By grouping other OBOR countries in an alternate category, those who did not have a preexisting relationship with China and only started to import Chinese arms after the policy was announced in 2013, it is possible to examine China's geopolitical intentions behind the policy. OBOR countries that initiated an arms importing relationship with China after 2013 include Belarus, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan.³³ Each of these country's purchases of arms will be examined in greater detail than those already mentioned in previous categories.

Kazakhstan placed an order for two Pterodactyl-1 UAVs in 2015, and these were delivered in 2016. Neighboring Turkmenistan purchased ordnance for the CH-3 UAV in the form of ten AR-1 antiarmor air-to-surface missiles.³⁴ Both Central Asian states receiving high-tech weaponry with no precedent for doing so indicates that Beijing most likely is looking to secure access to natural resources, to quickly develop friendly relations, and to potentially provide support for antiterrorism operations to secure its own investments in the region.

The countries in this group are all members or associate parties to the Commonwealth of Independent States and traditionally in Russia's sphere of influence. As such, one would expect the dominance of security and defense relationships to be between these countries and Russia, so China's willingness to initiate limited arms sales to these countries is a new development that merits analysis. It could be that because of OBOR, the limited scale of weapons sales, Russian willingness to tolerate minor transactions, the nature of the weaponry itself, and the domestic situations of each of these countries, Chinese weapons are both necessary and attractive from a buyer's perspective.

Central Asian Arms Sales

A 7 July 2015 military affairs article for iFeng, an online news website, roughly titled "China's increased arms sales to Central Asia has resulted in a stern warning from Russia," referenced a report written in

Kanwa Asian Defence.³⁵ The magazine is a publication prepared and disseminated from a registered Canadian organization on Asian defense affairs. A 2015 magazine report indicated that China seeks to use OBOR as a vehicle to execute an energy import/weapons export strategy with Central Asian countries.³⁶ Specifically seeking to secure supplies of oil and natural gas, the article makes assertions with evidence derived from the Kanwa report that China has signed oil and gas agreements with Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Kuwait, while all the mentioned countries have purchased Chinese arms.³⁷ In addition, the report revealed that Kazakhstan has already employed Chinese-made drones and, furthermore, has submitted purchase-accompanying ordnance orders for Hongqi-9 missiles.³⁸ This deal was borne out of an arrangement to trade Chinese weaponry for Kazakh natural gas.³⁹ SIPRI data discussed earlier in the paper seems to collaborate this claim that Kazakhstan did indeed purchase Chinese drones, while no transactional record is available from SIPRI's international trade registers for the Hongqi-9 missiles.

At the same time, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan were both reported to be in talks with China in the hopes of purchasing Hongqi-9 missiles in exchange for exporting energy resources as well as driving away U.S. military influence from Central Asia.⁴⁰ Of particular interest are China's extensive sales of weaponry to Azerbaijan to include rocket artillery, drones, and fighter planes.⁴¹ This conventional weapons trade is indicative of China's desire to develop friendly relations with Azerbaijan and to offer it an alternative to Russian imports.

From an international affairs perspective, the article reports that China not only has engaged in a contest to secure Central Asian energy, but it has also received a stern rebuke from Russia for selling weapons that have the potential to "kill or injure."⁴² It can be inferred that from this rare rebuke reported over open media that Russia is uncomfortable with Chinese arms being exported to its neighbors that have traditionally been tied to its own sphere of influence. In a potential foreshadowing in the development of arms exporting relationships with OBOR countries, the article further notes that China has already signed energy-for-conventional-weapons trade agreements with Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Algeria, and Egypt for systems such as self-propelled artillery, drones, and Guardian

Table 3. Top Twelve Importers of Chinese Arms, 2008–2018

	Pakistan	Bangladesh	Myanmar	Algeria	Venezuela	Tanzania	Indonesia	Thailand	Morocco	Nigeria	Iran	Sudan
2008	\$250 M	\$10 M	\$10 M	—	\$41 M	—	\$3 M	—	—	—	\$47 M	\$28 M
2009	\$758 M	—	\$17 M	—	\$54 M	\$25 M	—	\$12 M	—	—	\$47 M	\$6 M
2010	\$747 M	\$13 M	\$5 M	\$18 M	\$89 M	—	\$2 M	—	\$221 M	\$156 M	\$62 M	\$17 M
2011	\$578 M	\$81 M	\$277 M	—	\$8 M	\$76 M	\$8 M	\$2 M	\$34 M	—	\$52 M	\$18 M
2012	\$583 M	\$151 M	\$254 M	—	\$51 M	\$113 M	\$65 M	\$20 M	\$34 M	—	\$31 M	\$29 M
2013	\$719 M	\$480 M	\$190 M	—	\$97 M	\$118 M	\$74 M	\$24 M	—	—	\$9 M	\$28 M
2014	\$413 M	\$204 M	\$64 M	\$68 M	\$74 M	\$14 M	\$35 M	\$8 M	—	\$57 M	\$9 M	\$32 M
2015	\$620 M	\$451 M	\$184 M	\$247 M	\$100 M	\$20 M	\$41 M	\$1 M	—	\$22 M	\$9 M	\$27 M
2016	\$751 M	\$261 M	\$169 M	\$499 M	\$76 M	—	\$42 M	\$77 M	—	\$36 M	—	\$12 M
2017	\$559 M	\$204 M	\$8 M	\$17 M	—	\$2 M	\$37 M	\$131 M	—	—	—	\$32 M
2018	\$448 M	\$75 M	\$105 M	\$33 M	—	—	\$30 M	\$50 M	—	—	—	\$32 M
Total	\$6.426 B	\$1.930 B	\$1.283 B	\$882 M	\$590 M	\$368 M	\$337 M	\$325 M	\$289 M	\$271 M	\$266 M	\$261 M

(Table generated from SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, <https://sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>, data accessed 16 August 2019; M=numbers in millions [USD] worth of arms; B=numbers in billions [USD] worth of arms)

1 and 2 long-range self-propelled rocket artillery systems.⁴³ In terms of trading naval armaments, both Algeria and Iran are noted for buying Chinese-made guided missile corvettes; the latter has also purchased ship-to-ship and ground-to-air missiles, and the two countries have exchanged military technology directly with each other.⁴⁴ China, while acknowledging Russia's warning through open media coverage, simultaneously chose to provide ordnance to both Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as drone customers.

An iFeng article, published by the Hong Kong-based Phoenix Satellite Television Holdings, referenced a 2015 Kanawa Defense report that mentioned 60–80 percent of arms transactions between China and OBOR countries

involve the use of trade credits in the form of loans that facilitate the exchange of commodities for weaponry.⁴⁵ Pakistan proves to be a strong example for employing this model, as it was granted Chinese loans so that it can be encouraged to purchase weapons such as its recent order of four missile guided corvettes and diesel submarines.⁴⁶

Sales to Maritime Silk Road Countries

Countries along the MSR to include Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Bangladesh are all identified as major conventional arms markets for Chinese exports.⁴⁷ China has followed the arms for oil and natural gas model with these governments as well.⁴⁸ The Kanawa report mentions that China





targeting these MSR countries is no accident; it has “plans to establish naval bases and ports in these countries in order to provide support for submarine operations that are inseparable from the development of OBOR.”⁴⁹

It is this added layer and depth of geopolitical analysis that reveals China’s further intent to add a security and arms component to its OBOR campaign to connect and cooperate with Eurasian countries. Following the decades old relationship China has had with its major end conventional markets, particularly in Africa and Southeast Asia, weapons sales have proven to be a means for China to obtain much needed raw material commodities while providing a means for it to exert influence over the development of its third-world partnerships. In its most mature relationships, weapons technology is exchanged in addition to conventional arms for energy as was the case with Iran in the 1980s and 1990s. The militarization of the MSR provides a concrete example of how China sees OBOR as a potential means to establish and maintain control of vital sea lanes through which critical natural resources are to be imported. However, not all of China’s MSR endeavors have been successful.

The Pakistani army tests Chinese-made weapon systems including the A-100 Multiple Barrel Rocket Launcher, the SLC-2 weapons locating radar, and VT-4 tanks during military exercise Azm-E-Nau in 2009. These weapons systems were later adopted into the Pakistani military. Over the past decade, China has supplanted the United States as Pakistan’s largest arm supplier. (Photo courtesy of the Inter-Services Public Relations Pakistan)

A recent example of how China’s effort to sell arms to an MSR country was reported in a local television report broadcast by a Chinese domestic media organization, Xiamen Media Group, that did not appear in the SIPRI data. Noted in the report, China initially won a contract to sell three S26-T submarines over South Korean and German competitors to Thailand. However, the Thai government later abruptly cancelled the order. The report, using this example, revealed the difficulties that China has had selling its weapons abroad.⁵⁰ The cancelled contract, originally valued at over \$1 billion, left Chinese commentators reasoning that it failed because of a technological shortfall, a Thai domestic political consideration, or international considerations.⁵¹ The failure of the Thai contract was not a singular case; in 2013,

Turkey invited competitive bidding for an anti-aircraft missile, and China's Hongqi-9 seemed to be the favored contract.⁵² Due to perceived U.S. opposition toward the deal through the National Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Turkey abruptly cancelled the contract.⁵³

The Xiamen Media Group report recognizes a Chinese objective of OBOR being to establish a cooperative network of arms trade contacts for Chinese exports.⁵⁴ For the previous decade prior to 2015, commentators observed that China sold 74 percent of its arms exports to Asian countries, 13 percent to African countries, 7 percent to Middle Eastern countries, and 6 percent to South American countries.⁵⁵ Successes of Chinese arms exports include starting to sell weapon parts to Russia, deepening its existing weapons relationships with Pakistan, and building trust with Central Asian and Middle Eastern countries.⁵⁶ As a political reality of great powers, whose decisions to sell weapons to friendly states are often interpreted as a signal of trust and intent to deepen a client state's dependence on its arms due to ongoing ammunition and maintenance needs, the commentators agreed that China's way forward is to expand its network of friendly states.⁵⁷ While no government official is cited in this report, that it was both synthesized and allowed to broadcast on domestic television reveals a rare case in which sensitive government and international policy is subject to public scrutiny and opinion.

Sales to Eastern European One Belt, One Road Countries

In 2013, Belarus placed an order for six A-200 301 mm multiple rocket launchers that were ultimately produced domestically in 2016.⁵⁸ The conventional nature of this transaction suggests that China is likely looking to expand its network of friendly states and tie Belarus into the OBOR network.

Ukraine, while not reported in an international trade register for transacting major conventional weapons systems from China, was mentioned in a 2016 article from the U.S.-based Voice of America organization as having purchased unidentified weapons from Beijing.⁵⁹ The article summarized Ukraine's receipt of Chinese military aid despite its risks to China's geopolitical relationship with Russia. The secret nature of this transaction was likely out of sensitivity to Chinese-Russian relations, but it allowed Ukraine to receive much needed aid and for China to transact on a

weapons-for-weapons, grain, or technology basis and to cultivate friendly state-to-state relations.

Since several OBOR countries are located along Russia's periphery where potential for geopolitical discord and competition exists, Ukraine's example reveals the extent to which China will go to sell arms as an instrument of international policy for strengthening diplomatic relations. In a shift from condemning Ukraine's Orange Revolution jointly with Russia, from the beginning of 2014 to 15 July 2016, China assumed a neutral position on Russia's annexation of the Crimea while maintaining its military support.⁶⁰ As the only non-NATO country providing military assistance to Ukraine in the wake of hostile Russian military action in 2014, China ranks sixth amongst countries calculated by volume of military hardware behind the United States, Canada, Poland, the United Kingdom, and Australia while ahead of France and Turkey.⁶¹ Ukraine publicly announced that while donor countries supplied technological goods, which were sustainment necessities, China's contributions would not be disclosed but summarized by Ukraine's military as "nonlethal weapons," "classified materials," and possibly as "many categories of military hardware."⁶² Defense analysts predicted that Chinese hardware assistance could likely include motor vehicles and training jets that could be converted into ground attack aircraft such as the L-15, of particular interest since Ukraine has historically produced its engines.⁶³ As of late 2015, Ukraine has also entered into talks with China to produce the aircraft within Ukraine's borders under license.⁶⁴ In exchange for Ukraine's assistance in providing China restricted technologies that Russia has historically refused to disclose or sell, China has used its arms sales and assistance in part to recompense Ukraine.⁶⁵ Deepening economic and political ties evidenced by reciprocal heads-of-state visits, trade volume increases, united manufacturing efforts, and the simplification of bilateral visa procedures culminated with both Ukrainian and Chinese high-level officials declaring Ukraine a critical juncture of OBOR.⁶⁶

Ukraine's Crimean crisis provided China the perfect opportunity to use the tried and tested technique of providing military aid and arms sales as a diplomatic tool to strengthen bilateral relations for the purpose of establishing the foundations for OBOR and to sustain already existing technology for arms transfers. By keeping the nature and precise amount of Chinese aid secret, Ukraine could allow China to save face with Russia by



claiming its aid was nonthreatening. In keeping with China's policy for selling weapons to Russia's neighbors by claiming them to be of a nonthreatening nature, as evidenced in Chinese drone sales to Kazakhstan, obfuscation is a likely indicator of lethal military hardware being provided to the Ukrainian military. In a continued trend from Chinese sales of Hongqi-9 missiles to Uzbekistan

Kabul to set up an antiterrorism regional alliance with Tajikistan, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.⁷⁰

Another possible explanation for China's arms sales to Central Asia is the perception that waning Russian economic and political power requires an advance of Chinese power to secure China's safety against terrorism. That Russia provided intelligence to both the Taliban

“While Russia continues to sell its weapons to Central Asia, it has failed to match the lower prices that East Asian sellers such as China, India, or Vietnam are able to offer.”

and Tajikistan, no SIPRI data from international trade registers exists for any bilateral arms sales or agreements between China and Ukraine. To what extent these patent examples of China disregarding Russia's warnings of selling lethal weapons to its neighbors, including former satellites in which it is engaged in clandestine proxy war, will damage Russian-Chinese efforts at geopolitical cooperation and the OBOR policy remains to be seen.

Central Asian Geopolitical Considerations

It is important to note the changes in the Central Asian arms market that are occurring independent of OBOR as well as the changing dynamics of the Russia-China-Central Asia relationship with China's rise. According to Stephen Blank's 2014 *Diplomat* article that covered the Kazakh arms deals, the Russians were considered to be losing ground to the Chinese as a result of the latter's process of importing the former's weapons and "indigenizing" them.⁶⁷ So while Russia continues to sell its weapons to Central Asia, it has failed to match the lower prices that East Asian sellers such as China, India, or Vietnam are able to offer.⁶⁸

Blank published another article in the *Central Asia Caucasus Analyst* that explains China's motivation to sell arms to Central Asian countries possibly lies in part because of ongoing worries about Islamic extremism in Xinjiang Province and potential spillover effects from bordering countries.⁶⁹ As recent as 2016, Chinese troops conducted joint exercises with the Tajikistan armed forces while the chief of staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army also made plans to visit

resistance as well as to NATO and the Central Asian states demonstrates to the Chinese that neither Russia nor weak Central Asian governments can be counted on to secure Chinese interests against terrorism.⁷¹ Russia is deemed to lack the funds to support the region while also continuing its heavy-handed behavior such as demanding below market price for commodities and selling them at markup elsewhere.⁷² While OBOR is likely to be a major factor in China's decision to sell arms to Russia's Central Asian neighbors, continued political and security rivalry with Russia as well as the potential for instability has perhaps made Chinese involvement necessary. If Russia continues its retreat from Central Asia due to economic weakness and continued tolerance of China's investments and development of OBOR, initial orders for Chinese arms will undoubtedly increase. Even without OBOR, China has too much at stake to not secure political support in Central Asia. Conducting arms sales constitutes one option among many for China to do so.

Conclusion

China's OBOR will be a developing narrative of the twenty-first century. Its potential to change the geopolitical and economic landscape of Eurasia will undoubtedly result in changes in diplomatic relationships and great power strategies. Since September and October 2013, when China's maritime road and economic belt were announced by General Secretary Xi and Premier Li, China's customer base for arms exports has expanded to include OBOR participant countries that previously had no relationship with China. This development, while a result of the interplay of complex

geopolitical considerations between China and Russia as well as China's overall strategy to extend its influence beyond its national and regional borders reflective of Xi's nationalist China Dream policy, is part of a concerted effort by China to build stronger political and security ties with OBOR designated countries. As pipelines, telecommunications lines, roads, and other infrastructural projects "hardwire" country-to-country relations, arms exports are indicative of a maturing and long-term security relationship due to the deliberate decision for a client country to model their military development, organization, and capabilities along the lines of the selling country. The necessity for ongoing maintenance of military hardware as well as the need for continued munitions imports or licenses to manufacture adds another layer of depth for countries with military-to-military relations. Among China's preferred methods to sell its arms to mostly countries designated as emerging or frontier markets are to advance credits for the client country to purchase arms for debt, conduct a quid pro quo exchange of weapons for commodities, or in other cases, arms for cash.

Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Belarus, and Ukraine were added to China's arms sales base since OBOR. That half of these countries are situated in Central Asia is telling of China's future geopolitical and security intentions. Relationships with designated OBOR countries that existed prior to the policy announcement whose arms export volume has been

sustained and strengthened include the designated MSR countries of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Egypt, Malaysia, Kenya, Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan.

Since it has been only five and one-half years since the announcement of OBOR and few data points exist that could determine whether the OBOR policy is the driving force behind expanding China's arms sales footprint, the final assessment is inconclusive. Looking forward, it is worth considering China's historical motivations for selling arms abroad in the 1980s and 1990s, and whether China will continue its push to sign bilateral and multilateral agreements with designated countries. China may choose to further assert itself in the former Soviet republics through new agreements and more export volume while carefully managing the risk of upsetting the Russian-Chinese bilateral relationship. Past examples of China's actions in the nonaligned Third World provide the basis for the prediction that China will indeed continue to use arms exports as an instrument of diplomatic policy. While some transactions will be disclosed via international trade registers, China will most likely continue to obfuscate sales with new clients and with whom relationship management is sensitive. While in some cases acting out of pure economic incentive to expand its overseas markets, countries are generally very deliberate in choosing to whom they sell arms. The OBOR policy borne out of the China dream will provide justification for China to continue cultivating its defense relationships. ■

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Précis: *Unrestricted Warfare*

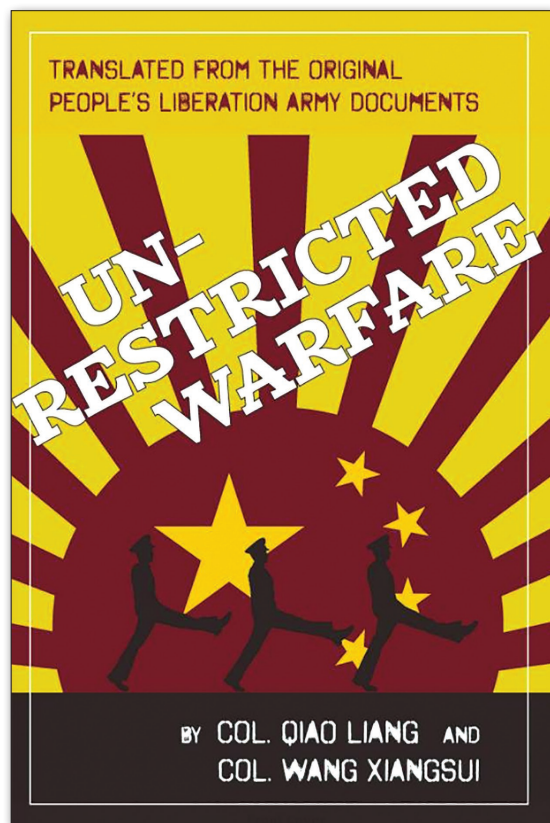
In 1999, Chinese People's Liberation Army Cols. Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui published what would prove to be a highly influential book titled *Unrestricted Warfare*. The authors argued that modern war at that time had evolved past using only armed forces "to compel the enemy to submit to one's will" into using all military and nonmilitary means to compel an enemy to capitulate to a state's political objectives. According to their analysis, in the modern, highly competitive, globalized world, the roles of soldiers and civilians had been fundamentally erased because the equivalent of war among states in the modern world would now be ongoing continuously and everywhere.

The authors go on to postulate tactics for developing countries to use against more technologically advanced nations in the event of an overt outbreak of hostilities, implying that such measures should be used to chart the course China had to take to compensate for its then military inferiority to the United States. They outline the synchronized employment of a multitude of means to be used concurrently with military force to prevail in a conflict including hacking into government websites underpinning an opponent's administration of government, disrupting financial institutions, exploiting the West's open me-

dia, promoting social discord, and conducting urban warfare. In a separate interview translated by the U.S. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Qiao was quoted as stating that "the first rule of unre-

stricted warfare is that there are no rules, with nothing forbidden." The authors' contentions foreshadowed not only the direction of Chinese development across the spectrum of its elements of national power but may have been the origin of more recent similar assertions by modern Russian military theorists. As a result, any serious student of modern warfare would be well advised to become acquainted with this influential work. There are various commercial translations available of *Unrestricted Warfare*. However, *Military Review* recommends an abridged version derived from a translation by FBIS available at <https://www.c4i.org/unrestricted.pdf>. For those interested in more detail, the background and significance of *Unrestricted Warfare* on modern military thought, we invite

you to read "A New Generation of Unrestricted Warfare," by retired Lt. Gen. David W. Barno and Dr. Nora Bensahel, published in *War on the Rocks* on 19 April 2016. To view the article, please visit <https://warontherocks.com/2016/04/a-new-generation-of-unrestricted-warfare/>. ■



Several versions of *Unrestricted Warfare* have been published. The cover art shown here is from a version published by Echo Point Books & Media in 2015.

Young Army Movement

Winning the Hearts and Minds of Russian Youth

Maj. Ray Finch, U.S. Army, Retired

Ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian leaders have been searching for a usable ideology to replace the former communist creed. The promises of democracy and liberalism were largely discredited during the painful economic transition of the 1990s. Although the Russian constitution claims that there is no official state ideology, as the Kremlin leadership has turned from democratic principles to a more autocratic model over the past several years, the ideological void has been filled with a potent mixture of militant patriotism, conservative Orthodoxy, and Soviet nostalgia. While this unofficial new ideology has been promulgated among all sectors of Russian society, the Kremlin leadership has focused its greatest emphasis upon Russian youth.

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This article examines the recently formed ЮНАРМИЯ (Young Army) movement, the Kremlin's latest attempt to mobilize and provide basic military skills to young Russians.

Even before Russia's annexation of the Crimea in early 2014, the Putin administration had been mentally preparing the Russian people for war. Besides the extensive reporting on their armed support for the Assad regime in

Syria and the pro-Russian rebels in southeastern Ukraine over the past decade, Kremlin-directed propaganda has bombarded the Russian people with the assertion that the West (the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO]) harbors aggressive designs against their country. Not surprisingly, the Kremlin leadership has placed an increased emphasis upon military readiness and patriotic morale, particularly with regard to developing and channeling the patriotic sentiments of the country's younger generation.¹

Background

The Young Army movement is the Kremlin's latest attempt to mobilize and provide basic military skills to Russian youth. Providing military training programs for Russian youth is not a recent development. During the Soviet period, basic military training was incorporated into most school curricula. In addition, there were other state-sponsored paramilitary (e.g., Volunteer Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and Navy [DOSAAF]; Komsomol, Pioneer) and sports organizations (e.g., Central Army Sports Club [CSKA]) designed to both improve physical fitness and morale while providing basic and specialized military skills to young Russians.² When the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) collapsed, these programs continued, albeit with reduced funding and support. During the difficult decade of the 1990s (and the awful fighting in Chechnya), military training and efforts to inculcate a greater sense of patriotism among Russian youth were not top Kremlin priorities. It was not until after Vladimir Putin's first term as president in 2004 that the Kremlin began to search for ways to



Young Russian members of Yunarmiya attending military-patriotic games where they take part in weapons assembly, marksmanship, and physical endurance competitions. (Photo by Kirill Zykov, Moskva News Agency)

both attract Russian youth to military service and to prepare them for future challenges.

The Kremlin's newfound concern for Russian youth was likely sparked by the role that Ukrainian young people played in Ukraine's Orange Revolution of 2004-05 and in other political protests in the post-Soviet era.³ In response to the threat of a "color revolution," the Kremlin created political youth groups such as НАШИ (*Nashi*), which were designed to demonstrate both political support for the Kremlin and suppress unofficial youth protest movements within Russia.⁴ These groups were directed at enlisting high school and college-age students into pro-Kremlin political activities. These state-sanctioned movements were fortified during and after the Arab Spring (2011–12), which, again, was portrayed in Russian media as a Western-incited attempt to gain greater political influence in the Arab world. In return for their loyal political support, young Russians had the chance to receive education and career opportunities.⁵

Leading up to the 2011 State Duma (Russian parliament) and 2012 presidential elections, pro-Kremlin youth groups like Nashi played a supporting role in ensuring regime stability, particularly among young

Russians who spoke out against voting chicanery and Putin's automatic claim to the top Kremlin post.⁶ When these groups proved insufficient in stopping public protests, Russian authorities employed harsh measures to detain and arrest youth protesters. The subsequent trials, where detained protesters received harsh prison sentences, sent a clear message to the younger generation: street protests will not only jeopardize your future employment prospects but could also land you in prison.⁷ Rather than admit that these young Russians were angry with the country's political status quo, top Kremlin leaders alleged that these youth protests had been instigated by Western governments to weaken Russia.⁸

After the annexation of the Crimea and subsequent hostilities in southeastern Ukraine in early 2014, the Kremlin intensified efforts to militarize Russian consciousness. Instead of seeing the protests in Kiev (where, again, Ukrainian youth had played a pivotal role) that led to the removal of the Russian-backed Ukrainian leader as a genuine expression of popular dissatisfaction, the Kremlin-supported media depicted this instability as a deliberate attempt by the West (and the United States in particular) to use the façade of democratic reform to



gain a foothold within the Russian sphere of interest.⁹ Similarly, rather than portraying the ongoing conflict in southeastern Ukraine as Kremlin military support for ethnic Russians living in the Donbas region, it was depicted as a civil war, where Western-backed, ultranationalist Ukrainians wanted to oppress ethnic Russians and pro-Russian Ukrainians living in the region. In short, much of the Kremlin-supported media portrays today's conflict in Ukraine as a proxy war between Russia and the United States/NATO.¹⁰ Russian youth were soon to be mobilized to defend against this threat.

While youth organizations like Nashi had helped with channeling the political aspirations of Russia's younger generation, as the Kremlin turned toward a more assertive foreign policy, a youth group was needed to reflect this more militant approach. According to some sources, in mid-2016, Russian Minister of Defence Sergei Shoigu came up with the idea of the Young Army movement. However, with Russia being Russia, other reports credited Putin, who initially suggested the creation of a pioneer-like movement six months earlier.¹¹ Regardless, the movement began to develop quickly once it fell under the mandate of the Russian Ministry of Defence.

Russian Minister of Defence General of the Army Sergei Shoigu presents the flag to the chief of the Yunarmiya staff, Olympic champion Dmitry Trunenkov, 2 June 2016 during the first rally of the all-Russian military-patriotic social movement Yunarmiya at the military-themed Patriot Park in Moscow. (Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation)

Alongside the desire to co-opt youth and provide them with the basics of military training, the Kremlin also tapped into widespread concerns that today's younger generation needed greater structure, guidance, and discipline. While Russian children today have lived during one of the country's most stable and prosperous periods, their society is still recovering from a difficult twentieth century.¹² The social, political, and economic strains of this earlier period have generated negative pathologies (e.g., substance abuse, social alienation, corruption) that continue to fester. For instance, up until quite recently, Russia had one of the highest suicide rates among youth.¹³ Gang activity also appears to be a growing problem, particularly linked with the spread of social media.¹⁴ Though much

improvement has been made over the past decade, drug and alcohol abuse remains a problem among Russia's younger generation.¹⁵ Although it focuses upon military readiness, the Young Army movement was partially created to address these problems and has been warmly received by much of Russian society.

Centralizing and standardizing youth patriotic education and training were also factors behind the creation of the Young Army movement. After the collapse of the USSR and the decline of state-run programs, various local and regional patriotic groups were developed, some of which did not always align with the Kremlin's narrative or objectives.¹⁶ Placing emphasis and funding on the Young Army movement has helped consolidate these efforts and standardize youth training throughout the country.

The Movement's Leadership

To generate support for this new initiative, the Kremlin enlisted well-known sports and cultural figures to serve in leadership and public-relations positions. In today's Russia, the nation's elite understand that it is essential to answer when the Kremlin comes calling.¹⁷ Former gold medalist and Olympic bobsledder Dmitry Trunenkov was chosen as the movement's first director. While he helped to get the movement off the ground, he lasted less than two years. He was likely asked to resign after the International Olympic Committee made doping allegations against him, requesting that he return the gold medal he had won in the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics.¹⁸ The optics of having a suspected cheater running the Young Army movement made for poor public relations, and Trunenkov was replaced in July 2018 by former cosmonaut and Hero of the Russian Federation Roman Romanenko.

The movement is also staffed by other senior military personnel, military veterans, sports and media personalities, and relatives of high-ranking officials.¹⁹ While these VIPs are mostly used for public relations and recruitment efforts, most of the real work appears to be handled by local officials, bureaucrats, and personnel attached to the Ministry of Defence. Except for the top officials and those directly employed by the military, the remainder of the Young Army cadre are volunteers. The available literature does not spell out the training requirements and qualifications of this cadre, but many appear to be veterans and associated

with other groups who work with Russian youth (e.g., DOSAAF, military cadet schools, sporting clubs, etc.). Some concerns have been expressed over the qualifications of these personnel.²⁰

The Young Army movement is funded by both governmental and semiprivate business interests, though it appears the bulk of the funding is provided by the state and, specifically, the Ministry of Defence.²¹ According to the movement's website, a number of banks, media companies, military-industrial firms, and other military and youth clubs support the Young Army movement. It was recently reported that since Shoigu has made the Young Army movement a priority, he would like to see equal support from both military officers and those companies involved in weapons production.²²

Program Objectives

There are both official and unofficial goals of the Young Army movement. According to its published mandate, the objectives of the movement are aligned with the overall youth policy of the Russian Federation and center upon "the comprehensive development and improvement of the personality of children and adolescents meeting their individual needs in the intellectual, moral, and physical realms."²³ The movement is also designed to increase "the authority and prestige of military service in the society," to "preserve and enhance patriotic traditions," and to carry out the "formation of youth readiness and practical ability to the fulfillment of civic duty and constitutional responsibilities for protection of the fatherland."²⁴ Besides providing youth with opportunities to learn about military-technical topics, participation will also help members "combat extremist ideologies, develop a sense of responsibility, and form a moral basis founded upon Russian traditions."²⁵

To carry out these objectives, the Young Army movement educates youth on the duties of citizenship and patriotism via the study of the country's military history. It also imparts upon members what are regarded as the proper moral attitudes inherent in Russian society (e.g., responsibility, collective effort). To better prepare for military service, the movement strengthens members' physical conditioning and endurance and provides them with the basics of military service (e.g., marching, first aid, weapons training).



Young Army Oath

I, _____ joining the Young Army movement, in front of my comrades, solemnly swear:

To always be faithful to my homeland and to my Young Army comrades.

I swear!

To follow the regulations of the Young Army movement, to be an honest Young Army member, following the traditions of valor, courage, and mutual friendliness.

I swear!

To always be a defender of the weak, to overcome all obstacles in the struggle for truth and justice.

I swear!

To strive for victories in school and in sport, to live a healthy lifestyle, to prepare myself to serve for the good of my country.

I swear!

To honor the memory of the heroes who fought for the freedom and independence of our homeland, to be a patriot and a worthy citizen of Russia.

I swear!

With honor and pride to carry the high calling of Young Army.

I swear!²⁶

How these objectives are being met can be gleaned from the movement's extensive promotional literature, particularly its virtual, online presence. The internet is filled with photos, brochures, videos, and presentations highlighting all the various activities of the Young Army movement. There are now branches in all eighty-five Russian regions and neighboring countries with significant Russian populations (e.g., Kazakhstan, Armenia, Belarus), as well as other more distant countries, including the United States. Among other activities, members, in their sharp red and tan uniforms, take part in exercising, singing, acting, disassembling AK-47s, playing sports, riding horses, volunteer work, performing tactical maneuvers, standing watch over memorials to fallen heroes, ballroom dancing, physical therapy, and marching in formation.²⁷

According to its website, as of 18 June 2019, there are now over 544,000 young Russians enrolled in the movement.²⁸

According to the movement's program guidance for 2018, the Ministry of Defence has also focused its Young Army efforts on working with orphans (seven to eighteen years) and youth who have been removed from their homes because of parental neglect. As cited in the ЮНАРМИЯ. НАСТАВНИЧЕСТВО ПРОГРАММА ДЕЙСТВИЙ 2018 (2018 Young Army Instructions Action Plan), Russia currently has more than fifty thousand orphans, and, according to their data, only 10 percent of this population ends up leading a productive, happy life.²⁹ The instructions action plan asserts that the overwhelming majority of orphans end up involved in crime, substance abuse, or suicide. It describes how the Young Army movement might provide care, guidance, and support to this population, although it leaves many of the logistical, economical, and administrative details up to local officials.³⁰

Unofficial Objectives

As suggested earlier, alongside the official objectives of the Young Army movement, the Kremlin leadership is also concerned with co-opting the protest potential of Russia's younger generation. Just as the movement was getting off the ground in early 2017, nationwide protests took place in Russia against corruption. These protests included large numbers of young people who had earlier posted videos on the internet of their teachers warning them against participation.³¹ These anticorruption protests (which again were allegedly sparked from abroad) provided impetus to those who maintain that Russian young people are susceptible to foreign manipulation. Young Army training and curriculum will likely be designed to combat this influence and teach young Russians to connote protest with disloyalty.

Similarly, another unofficial objective of this movement is to ensure that Russian young people adopt the Kremlin's narrative and pursue government employment. Recent reports such as "От МИФИ ДО СИНЕРГИИ: КАКИЕ ВУЗЫ ДАДУТ ЛЬГОТЫ ЮНАРМЕЙЦАМ" (From MPhI to Synergy: Which Universities will Give Benefits to Students) have surfaced that assert that Young Army members will be given preferential status for entrance into higher education.³² Some observers have suggested that membership in the Young Army movement will not only facilitate future mandatory military service but could also be used as a prerequisite for state employment,



particularly in what is referred to as the “power ministries” (e.g., military, Federal Security Service, National Guard, etc.).³³ Such incentives could further dampen any protest potential among young Russians.

Given the Byzantine nature of Russian politics, some observers have suggested that the Young Army movement might prove to be an effective electoral platform for Shoigu in 2024, when Putin is expected to step down. Such speculation appears rather far-fetched, and perhaps better reflects the often conspiratorial nature of modern Russian political analysis.³⁴

Preliminary Results

Numbers wise, the Young Army movement has so far enjoyed spectacular results. In just three years, it has attracted more than 540,000 Russian boys and girls from age eight to seventeen, from all eighty-five regions of the country, as well as a number of foreign countries where Russian children reside (to include Syria and the separatist regions in Ukraine).³⁵ The movement’s virtual presence is nothing short of cutting edge. Prospective members can become familiar with all the many activities

Young naval cadets prepare to celebrate the upcoming Knowledge Day, or first day of the school year, 31 August 2016 at the Vladivostok Presidential Cadet School, a branch of Nakhimov Naval School, in Saint Petersburg, Russia. (Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation)

of the movement, watch videos, play online games, and, most importantly, register to join. The movement’s staff compiles bimonthly reports, where all the many activities of its members in various locations throughout Russia and abroad are recorded, to include how many times the Young Army has been mentioned in the media.

One recent initiative may help ensure that the movement’s public relations remain robust. In January 2019, it was reported that the movement would now include “young correspondent” training, wherein members will learn the latest skills in digital journalism.³⁶ According to a recent video describing the plan, this training is designed to give members the basics of digital journalism, focusing particularly on how best to manipulate images to tell a story.³⁷

The movement will likely continue its exponential growth, at least for the short term. To help recruitment, it was recently announced that there would be a Young Army representative in every school in 2019.³⁸ As suggested earlier, to achieve this impressive growth, the Ministry of Defence has resorted to various forms of coercion. In some military districts, officers have been directed to enroll their children whether they want to join or not. A similar directive was apparently sent to various enterprises within Russia's military industry, where workers were ordered to enroll their children.³⁹ These strategies may be expanded to reach the one million enrollment mark by May 2020.⁴⁰

Obstacles

Many analysts suggest that the flag-waving surge in patriotism, which resulted from Russia's annexation of Crimea, has since tapered off. "Victories" such as Putin's 2018 reelection and the successful hosting of the World Cup later that summer provided temporary boosts, but there are concerns that the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and Syria, recent changes to the pension system, and continued sluggish economic growth might be eroding support for the current Kremlin leadership.⁴¹ Substituting patriotic rhetoric for economic growth and prosperity may work for children, but parents might think otherwise.

no doubt remember the military's deceit and destruction in previous and current conflicts (e.g., Afghanistan, Chechnya, southeastern Ukraine). While official regard for the Russian military remains quite positive, there are indicators that the state-sponsored patriotic rhetoric may not correspond with local reality.⁴³ Moreover, deciphering polling data in Russia has become more of a challenge since the Kremlin has reasserted control in certain areas.

Over time, systemic problems within Russian society and economy may also undermine the appeal of this movement. As Yevgeny Roizman, former mayor of Yekaterinburg, Russia, observed, "Young people in Russia today question whether the ability to assemble and disassemble a Kalashnikov represents the skills needed for the twenty-first century economy."⁴⁴ Some parents have questioned the relatively high cost of Young Army uniforms and associated gear, suggesting that some may be profiting from this patriotic enterprise.⁴⁵ While joining the Young Army movement is free, there are significant costs with purchasing the required uniforms and associated kit (approximately \$500).⁴⁶ There are also individual costs to participate in summer training camps, excursions, and some specialized training. Some Russian observers have suggested that pecuniary motives may be a motivating factor to increase enrollment in the movement to one million by 9 May 2020 (the seventy-fifth anniversary of victory in the Great Patriotic War).⁴⁷

Russian youth, like their counterparts around the world, are tech-savvy and exposed to alternative sources of information. Even though the Kremlin leadership appears to be moving toward greater control over internet traffic, digital access today remains largely uncensored. Combining this open information access

with typical adolescent rebellion may reduce the fervor for marching in unison or low crawling through the mud.

Implications for the U.S. Military

Over the past decade, the Kremlin leadership has promoted a narrative that asserts the United States is attempting to weaken the Russian state. In the Kremlin's

For those interested in reading more about the use of military and paramilitary organizations to foster patriotism, *Military Review* recommends, "The Role of the Singapore Armed Forces in Forging National Values, Image, and Identity," published in the March-April 2017 edition of *Military Review*. Authors Col. Fred Wel-Shi Tan and Lt. Col. Psalm B. C. Lew describe the deliberate and calculated program instituted by the Singaporean government to reify national values and a unique national identity among Singaporean youth that transcends multicultural ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. To view this article, visit https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_2017430_art006.pdf.



Recent statistical data suggests that despite the increased focus on instilling patriotism within the younger generation, many young Russians are skeptical of the country's future and are considering pursuing a future outside of the motherland.⁴² Moreover, while the parents of these young Russians might value the opportunities and discipline provided by the Young Army movement, they

portrayal, the United States, while preaching human rights and democracy, employs its robust military powers unilaterally to ensure its global hegemony. The children enrolled in the Young Army movement, as well as their parents, have been exposed to this incessant anti-American propaganda. To date, the Kremlin's message appears to be working, where even retired American generals are targets of their wrath.⁴⁸ In polling data over the past decade, the United States has been rated as the top geopolitical threat.⁴⁹ While Young Army members pursue other objectives, training to defend Russia from an American threat likely serves as one of the movement's primary goals. In a possible future conflict, Russian military personnel fed with this anti-American diet will harbor strong antagonistic feelings toward their United States counterparts, motivated by a sense of grievance and belief that their cause is just.

Conclusion

The current Kremlin leadership remains determined to restore Russia's great-power status—at least in the military realm. They are motivated by a belief that the West (the United States in particular) is intent upon stymieing the Kremlin plan. Alongside increased efforts at military modernization and reform, the Kremlin has harnessed

and mobilized a good portion of the country's media and industry. It has also implemented programs like the Young Army movement to mobilize, train, and co-opt Russia's newest generation. Numbers wise, the movement has been an overwhelming success and will almost certainly reach the one million enrollment mark by May 2020.

Questions remain, however, over the long-term viability of this movement. There are growing doubts whether a nondemocratic, largely corrupt Kremlin leadership can foster a healthy sense of patriotism among youth, particularly in an information environment that remains largely uncensored. Moves to restrict information access among youth would likely exacerbate an already strong desire to seek their fortunes abroad. While Russia does indeed possess a rich military history to draw upon, the memories of past victories may prove insufficient in detracting from growing social and economic disparities. A lesson from the Soviet Union's collapse may be instructive: despite the incredible patriotic-propaganda efforts to prop up the decrepit regime, there were zero protests when the hammer and sickle were ultimately lowered over the Kremlin in December 1991. Russians had learned that patriotism sometimes serves as the "last refuge for scoundrels," and Russian youth may rediscover this lesson in the future. ■

Notes

1. The rationale behind these mobilization measures has been manifold but stems primarily from this perceived threat from the West and anxieties over political legitimacy.

2. DOSAAF, or ДОСААФ; Добровольное Общество Содействия Армии, Aviации и Флоту (Volunteer Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and Navy), focuses primarily on providing young Russians with specific skills (e.g., driving, flying, parachuting, engine repair, radio operation) that might be useful both in and out of the military. The organization is still alive and boasts of having over 1,200 branches throughout Russia. It is also considered a cofounder of the Young Army movement, and, after its formation, DOSAAF changed its age requirements to students eighteen years and older. Nikolay Staskov, DOSAAF deputy director, interview by Anatoliy Yermolin, *Echo Moscow*, podcast, 23 March 2019, accessed 20 June 2019, <https://echo.msk.ru/programs/voensovet/2393597-echo/>.

CSKA, or Центральный спортивный клуб Армии (Central Army Sports Club), focuses primarily on developing the country's top athletes. It is also still alive and well.

3. Kremlin leaders have been particularly concerned with gaining the political support of Russian young people. They have observed the prominent role that the younger generation played in sparking what the Kremlin refers to as "color revolutions." Digitally connected and impressionable, young people are particularly susceptible to the revolutionary notion that the state's power ought to be derived from the consent of the governed. Moreover, given their digital connectivity to nonstate sources of

information, young people are prone to question the official state narrative and, therefore, must be indoctrinated at an early age.

4. *Nashi* translates as "ours" as opposed to "theirs" (e.g., belonging to foreign powers). For excellent background on Russian youth movements sponsored by the Kremlin, see Alexander Baunov, *Going to the People—And Back Again: The Changing Shape of the Russian Regime* (Moscow: Carnegie Moscow Center, January 2017), accessed 4 June 2019, http://www.css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-security-studies/resources/docs/CarnegieMoscow-292_Baunov_Russian_Regime_Web.pdf.

5. Julia Ioffe, "Russia's Nationalist Summer Camp," *The New Yorker* (website), 16 August 2010, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/russias-nationalist-summer-camp>. These perks were particularly attractive to young Russians living outside of major cities, where such prospects were often lacking. One of the major initiatives was a week-long forum/camping trip at Lake Seliger, located some two hundred miles from Moscow, where participants could attend lectures and other activities hosted by pro-Kremlin politicians and artists.

6. For additional background on the political maneuvers and subsequent protests, see Andrew E. Kramer and David M. Herszenhorn, "Boosted by Putin, Russia's Middle Class Turns on Him," *New York Times* (website), 11 December 2011, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/12/world/europe/huge-moscow-rally-suggests-a-shift-in-public-mood.html>. Recall that in September 2011, during a meeting of the pro-Kremlin political party One Russia (United Russia), then President

Dmitry Medvedev announced that he was going to return to the prime minister position, while Vladimir Putin would reassume the presidency (he did not bother to mention anything about an election). Many observers suggest that Putin never really left the top Kremlin position and remained in control even while serving under Medvedev.

7. "'Bolotnaya' Protester Released from Russian Prison after Serving Term," RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, 26 July 2017, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-bolotnaya-ushevsky-freed-prison-term/28640261.html>.

8. Ellen Barry, "Rally Defying Putin's Party Draws Tens of Thousands," *New York Times* (website), 10 December 2011, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/11/world/europe/thousands-protest-in-moscow-russia-in-defiance-of-putin.html>.

9. Much has been written in the Russian media regarding how the United States has stoked democratic political change via "color revolution." For instance, see Yuri Belous, "Государственный департамент США продюсирует цветные революции, как шаблонные голливудские сиквелы" [The U.S. State Department is producing color revolutions like Hollywood sequels], *Politruddia*, 7 April 2015, accessed 4 June 2019, <http://politruddia.com/world/arabskaya-vesna-i-778/>. According to the Kremlin's narrative, once the United States and NATO have secured a staging base in Ukraine, they could better plan offensive military operations against Russia.

10. Dmitry Rodionov, "Точка на карте, где столкнутся США и Россия" [Point on the map where the USA and Russia will collide], *Svobodnaya Pressa* (website), 4 May 2018, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://svpressa.ru/war21/article/199387/>.

11. See "Российское движение школьников создано в день рождения комсомола" [Russian school movement created on the Komsomol birthday], Interfax News Agency, 29 October 2015, accessed 7 June 2019, <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/476307>. At the initial stage of its development, the Young Army was not an independent project but rather a subdivision of another children's and youth organization, the Russian school children movement-RDSh (Российского движения школьников-РДШ), which is subordinate to Rosmolodezh (Federal Agency for Youth Affairs). Putin signed the decree on the creation of the RDSh, on 29 October 2015, on the anniversary day when the Komsomol was formed in the Soviet Union (1918). Pioneers were junior members of the Komsomol. In the text of the decree, the president explains the task of the movement—"promoting the formation of personality on the basis of the value system inherent in Russian society."

12. The list of strains is long: World War I, revolution, civil war, purges, World War II, stagnation, collapse of the USSR, followed by the economic disaster of the 1990s.

13. Daria Litvinova, "Suicide Watch: Why Russian Teens Are Killing Themselves," *Moscow Times* (website), 27 May 2016, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/05/27/suicide-watch-why-russian-teens-are-killing-themselves-a53017>.

14. Aleksandr Boyko, "Новая криминальная чума России: Банды малолеток уже крышуют торговые центры" [New criminal plague in Russia: Underage gangs already running protection rackets in shopping malls], *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (website), 28 January 2019, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.kp.ru/daily/26934/3985431/>.

15. Anna Semenets, "Недетские проблемы" [Nonchild problems], *Rosbalt*, 2 June 2018, accessed 4 June 2019, <http://www.rosbalt.ru/moscow/2018/06/02/1707756.html>. Over the past several years, the Kremlin-sponsored media have highlighted reports of youth misbehavior (e.g., poor grades, gang activity, drinking or dancing on the graves of veterans, etc.), suggesting a need for greater discipline and accountability among Russia's younger generation. While statistics have shown signs of improvement over the past few years, according to a 2018 poll, drug addiction and alcoholism were considered the top social problems for Russian youth.

16. T. Stanovaya, "Молодежные организации в современной России" [Youth organizations in modern Russia], *Росмолодежь* [Rosmolodezh], ac-

cessed 4 June 2019, <http://rosmolodezh.ru/rosmolodezh-federalnoe-agentstvo/rosmolodezh-oficialnye-dokumenty/299-2010-10-13-10-27-11>.

17. Russian patriotic sentiments run deep, and most Russians are able to distinguish love for their country from love of the current administration. Some of the VIP involvement surely stemmed from a genuine desire to improve and strengthen the younger generation. However, since the state owns the major TV and media outlets, as well as funding for other activities (e.g., movies, arts, science), the Kremlin can easily "punish" those who fail to support government initiatives.

18. "IOC Requests Three Russian Bobsledders to Return Sochi Gold Medals," TASS Russian News Agency, 15 December 2018, accessed 4 June 2019, <http://tass.com/sport/1036240>. Dmitry Trunenkov refused to return the medal. Admitting guilt might have corroborated charges of a state-sponsored doping program against the Kremlin.

19. Ilnur Sharafiyev, "Making Real Men out of Schoolchildren: Meet the 'YouthArmy,' Russia's New Hope for Military-Patriotic Education," trans. Kevin Rothrock, *Meduza*, 6 October 2017, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://meduza.io/en/feature/2017/10/06/making-real-men-out-of-schoolchildren>. For example, TV commentator Dmitry Guberniev, former pole vaulter Yelena Isinbaeva, sports network *Match TV* general producer Tina Kandelaki, and Minister of Defence Sergei Shoigu's daughter, Ksenia, all hold (or have held) leadership positions within the Young Army movement.

20. For some excellent background of the Young Army movement and a critical Russian perspective, see Sergey Sukhankin, "Yunarmia: A Call from the Past, or Farewell to the Future?," International Centre for Defence and Security, 8 June 2018, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://icds.ee/yunarmia-a-call-from-the-past-or-farewell-to-the-future/>.

21. "Semiprivate" because business ownership in Russia today remains under "provisional" control, and "private" ownership remains in the realm of theory. Should a business owner fall afoul of the Kremlin, he or she could likely be charged with a crime and have his or her business expropriated by the state. Much has been written about this topic over the past twenty years. For a recent example, see Maxim Trudolyubov and A. L. Tait, *The Tragedy of Property: Private Life, Ownership and the Russian State* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2018).

22. Ksenia Mironova and Ivan Sinergiev, "Военным заводам заказали Юнарию: Минобороны просит создать отделения движения на всех предприятиях ОПК" [Military plants ordered Young Army: The Ministry of Defence asks all defense enterprises to create a branch of the movement], *Kommersant*, 12 March 2019, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3908185>.

23. "УСТАВ ВСЕРОССИЙСКОГО ДЕТСКО-ЮНОШЕСКОГО ВОЕННО-ПАТРИОТИЧЕСКОГО ОБЩЕСТВЕННОГО ДВИЖЕНИЯ ЮНАРИЯ" [Charter of all-Russian children and youth military-patriotic public movement of the Young Army] (Moscow: Constituent Assembly, 28 May 2016), accessed 19 June 2019, https://yunarmy.ru/static/docs/Устав_ВВПОД_ЮНАРИЯ.pdf.

24. Ibid.

25. Mironova and Sinergiev, "Военным заводам заказали Юнарию." Regulations and founding documents regarding the mission and objectives of the Young Army movement can be found at Юнария [Young Army], accessed 20 June 2019, <https://yunarmy.ru/docs>.

26. Ray Finch, trans., "Young Army Oath," Moscow Department of Education, accessed 11 June 2019, https://gym1583s-new.mskobr.ru/files/klyatva_yunarmeja.pdf.

27. See the weekly reports for examples of these activities at ЖУРНАЛ "ЮНАРИЯ" [Young Army Magazine], accessed 19 June 2019, <https://yunarmy.ru/magazines>.

28. "Юнария" [Young Army], Юнария.

29. "ЮНАРИЯ. НАСТАВНИЧЕСТВО Программа действий 2018" [Young Army. Instructions action plan, 2018], Yunarmy, accessed 7 June 2019, https://yunarmy.ru/static/docs/469ff-9351c893a05e73eccfac782483_2-compressed.pdf. Most sources suggest that the orphan population in Russia is much larger (approximately

five hundred thousand), and that the Young Army movement will only be working with a small percentage.

30. Alexei Tarasov, "Детство — под ружье; Милитаризация русской жизни на марше. 'Юнармия' приходит в детдома" [Childhood — Under the gun: The militarization of Russian life on the march. "Yunarmiya" comes to the orphanage], *Novaya Gazeta* (website), 13 March 2019, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.novayagazeta.ru/articles/2019/03/13/79863-detstvo-pod-ruzhie>. Shortly after it was announced that the Young Army movement planned to enlist orphans into its ranks, *Novaya Gazeta*, one of the few remaining independent newspapers in Russia, conducted an investigation on this proposal, uncovering that the move may have been predicated more upon increasing the enrollment numbers of the movement than on actually helping orphans.

31. Neil MacFarquhar and Ivan Nechepurenko, "Across Russia, Protesters Heed Navalny's Anti-Kremlin Rallying Cry," *New York Times* (website), 12 June 2017, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/12/world/europe/russia-aleksei-navalny-kremlin-protests.html>.

32. Anna Deryabina and Elena Vinogradova, "От МИФИ до 'Синергии': какие вузы дадут льготы юнармейцам" [From MEPI to 'synergy': Which universities will give benefits to students], *Open Media*, 30 March 2019, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://echo.msk.ru/blog/openmedia/2398355-echo/>.

33. Alexander Golts, "Как российскую молодежь научат любить 'калашников'" [How Russian youth will be taught to love "Kalashnikov"], *Open Media*, 22 March 2019, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://echo.msk.ru/blog/openmedia/2393571-echo/>.

34. Oleg Kashin, "Министр-политик. Россия — наше Отечество, а отец наш — Сергей Шойгу" [Minister politician. Russia is our Fatherland, and our father is Sergei Shoigu], *Republic*, 13 March 2019, accessed 24 June 2019, <https://republic.ru/posts/93268>.

35. Specific data taken from weekly reports, see ЖУРНАЛ "ЮНАРМИЯ" [Young Army Magazine], accessed 19 June 2019, <https://yunarmy.ru/magazines>. For additional background, see Neil MacFarquhar, "Patriotic Youth Army Takes Russian Kids Back to the Future," *New York Times* (website), 22 March 2018, accessed 19 June 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/22/world/europe/russia-soviet-youth-army.html>; Evan Gershkovich, "Russia's Fast-Growing 'Youth Army' Aims to Breed Loyalty to the Fatherland," *The Moscow Times* (website), 17 April 2019, accessed 19 June 2019, <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/04/17/russias-fast-growing-youth-army-aimst-to-breed-loyalty-to-the-fatherland-a65256>.

36. "В парке 'Патриот' стартовал первый Всероссийский патриотический форум: Я — ЮНАРМИЯ!" [The first All-Russian patriotic forum "I am Young Army!" began in the park "Patriot"], *Yunarmy.ru*, 22 February 2018, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://yunarmy.ru/news/755>.

37. For a good example of this training in action, see "Юнармейцев учат отличать фейковые новости от достоверных" [Young Army members learn how to distinguish fake news from genuine], YouTube video, posted by "Королёв ТВ" [tvkorolev], 9 March 2017, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOxegKCSbF4>.

38. "Движение Юнармия уже в следующем году должно быть представлено в каждой школе, — заявил зам.главы Минобороны" [Next year, the Young Army movement should be represented in every school, the deputy head of the Ministry of Defence said], *Echo Moscow*, podcast video, 2 November 2018, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://echo.msk.ru/news/2308021-echo.html>.

39. Trudolyubov and Tait, *The Tragedy of Property*.

40. Golts, "Как российскую молодежь научат любить 'калашников'" [How Russian youth will be taught to love "Kalashnikov"].

41. See, for instance, Svetlana Pavlova, "Недовольство растёт. Более половины россиян готовы к пенсионным протестам" [Dissatisfaction

is growing. More than half of Russians are ready for pension protests], *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, 3 September 2018, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.svoboda.org/a/29467970.html>. Despite the lack of Kremlin-media coverage, the domestic economic situation has only grown worse over the past six months.

42. Naira Davlashyan, "41% российской молодежи хочет уехать на ПМЖ за границу (опрос)" [41% of Russian youth want to leave for permanent residence abroad (Survey)], *Euronews*, updated 2 November 2018, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://ru.euronews.com/2019/02/04/ru-41percent-of-russian-youth-would-like-to-live-abroad>.

43. Attitudes toward military service have improved dramatically over the past decade, but many young Russian men still look for ways to avoid the draft. For background on current attitudes, see Pavel Aptekar and Ivan Prosvetov, "Отношение к армии в России перевернулось" [Attitude toward the military in Russia has turned around], *Vedomosti* (website), 22 February 2018, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.vedomosti.ru/opinion/articles/2018/02/22/751758-otnoshenie-k-armii>. For additional information as to why some remain reluctant to serve and avoid the draft, see Svyatoslav Ivanov, "Хотят ли русские служить? Популярность армии растёт быстрее, чем готовность идти служить" [Do Russians want to serve? Army popularity grows faster than willingness to serve], *Gazeta.ru*, 22 February 2016, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://www.gazeta.ru/army/2016/02/22/8081159.shtml>.

44. Yevgeny Roizman, interview by Alexy Solomin and Alexey Naryshkin, *Echo Moscow*, podcast, 27 February 2019, accessed 5 June 2019, <https://echo.msk.ru/programs/personalnovsh/2378597-echo/>.

45. Sergey Yezhov, "Дети войны. Кто загоняет школьников в Юнармию и зарабатывает на закупках для нее" [Children of war. Who is driving schoolchildren into Yunarmiya and making money on purchases for it?], *Sobesednik* (website), 28 November 2018, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://sobesednik.ru/obshchestvo/20181127-deti-voyny>.

46. Alexandra Volkova, "Зачем армии юнцы" [Why does the army need youngsters], *Versia.ru*, 19 June 2019, accessed 20 June 2019, <https://versia.ru/net-li-oshibki-v-tom-cto-yunarmiya-koncentruietsya-na-piare>. One article recently claimed that for parents to purchase "the 22 most necessary items for each youngster — shoes, jackets, pants, etc. ... , will be more than 30 thousand rubles [\$500]."

47. Anastasia Khlopokova and Anna Deryabina, "Как связанная с Пригожиным фирма может заработать на Юнармии" [How a company associated with Prigozhin can earn money from Young Army?], *Open Media*, 30 May 2018, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://echo.msk.ru/blog/openmedia/2212238-echo/>.

48. Ekaterina Timofeeva, "В Екатеринбурге школьники на соревнованиях стреляли по фото американского генерала" [In Yekaterinburg, schoolchildren in competition shoot at a photo of an American general], *Snob.ru*, 1 December 2018, accessed 4 June 2019, <https://snob.ru/news/168981>. The photo was of retired U.S. Army general Robert Scales who in 2015 allegedly advocated "killing Russians" to stop any penetration into Eastern Europe. The organizer of the shooting competition referred to Scales as an "enemy of the people."

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Potential for Army Integration of Autonomous Systems by Warfighting Function

Maj. Thomas Ryan, U.S. Army
Vikram Mittal, PhD

Strategists analyze military history to understand the evolution of war. However, they often turn to science fiction to predict the future of war. *Star Wars: Episode 1—The Phantom Menace* captures a standard vision of the future of ground combat—autonomous robots marching into war with the guidance of their human overlords. This view follows fairly simple logic: Combat is dangerous, so why not use technology to reduce the risk to humans? Meanwhile, other movies are equally adept at capturing the opposing view of the use of autonomous systems in combat. Take *The Matrix* and *Terminator* movies as examples. These movies preach a cautionary tale that autonomous systems can create an unparalleled capacity to destroy an adversary; however, left unchecked, the overuse of autonomy can destroy humanity.

These beliefs are captured in the Army's official stance toward the use of autonomous systems, which

clarifies that autonomous systems are intended to support the warfighter, not replace them.¹ As such, the vision of dropping a large number of robotic combatants onto a battlefield, as seen in the *Star Wars* movies, is science fiction. However, the use of autonomous systems moving soldiers into combat is readily becoming science reality.

It is widely known that the Army has steadily been investing in the development of autonomous systems. As shown conceptually in figure 1 (on page 124), which plots the combat power of the Army against the total end strength, the use of autonomous systems provides a strategic advantage. Autonomous systems provide a combat multiplication factor that allows the Army to increase its combat power while potentially reducing troop numbers. Currently, the investments in autonomy are limited by financial constraints as well as the state of technology. Though these limited investments still result in a significant increase in the combat multiplication factor, these increases are small compared to what is possible if autonomous systems are integrated to their maximum capacity.

Marines with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment test new equipment such as the unmanned Multi-Utility Tactical Transport (MUTT) vehicle 8 July 2016 in a simulated combat environment at Marine Corps Base at Camp Pendleton, California. The MUTT is designed as a force multiplier to enhance expeditionary power, enabling marines to cover larger areas and providing superior firepower with the smallest tactical footprint possible. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Julien Rodarte, U.S. Marines)

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This article sets out to explain the maximum extent that the Army can integrate autonomous systems into its operations given the inherent limitations of the technology. These limitations determine the appropriateness of using autonomous systems to perform each of the broad range of Army tasks that are captured through the warfighter functions. While certain tasks will remain human driven, other tasks can be fully automated, although most tasks will fall somewhere between. In turn, this analysis provides insights and guidance into the resource allocation and implementation of autonomous systems.

Warfighting Functions

To remain competitive in a multi-domain operational environment, the question is not “should we” but “where do we” become more autonomous? The Army is made up of over a million different soldiers comprising over 450 different military occupational specialties, ranging from infantrymen to plumbers to veterinarians. Some of these jobs could greatly benefit from the addition of autonomy while others would not. The broad range of tasks associated with these different duty positions are typically captured in the six warfighting functions.

A warfighting function is a group of tasks and systems (people, organizations, information, and processes) united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish missions.² The six warfighting functions of the U.S. Army are

- ◆ mission command: the integration of the other five warfighting functions to enable a commander to balance the art of command and the science of control;
- ◆ movement and maneuver: the achieving of a position of relative advantage over the enemy and other threats to the employment of force;
- ◆ intelligence: the gathering and processing of information to develop an understanding of the enemy, terrain, and civil considerations;
- ◆ fires: the use of Army indirect fires, air and missile defense, and joint fires through the targeting process;
- ◆ sustainment: the providing of support and services to ensure freedom of action, extend operational reach, and prolong endurance; and
- ◆ protection: the preserving of the force so that a commander may apply maximum combat power to accomplish a mission.³



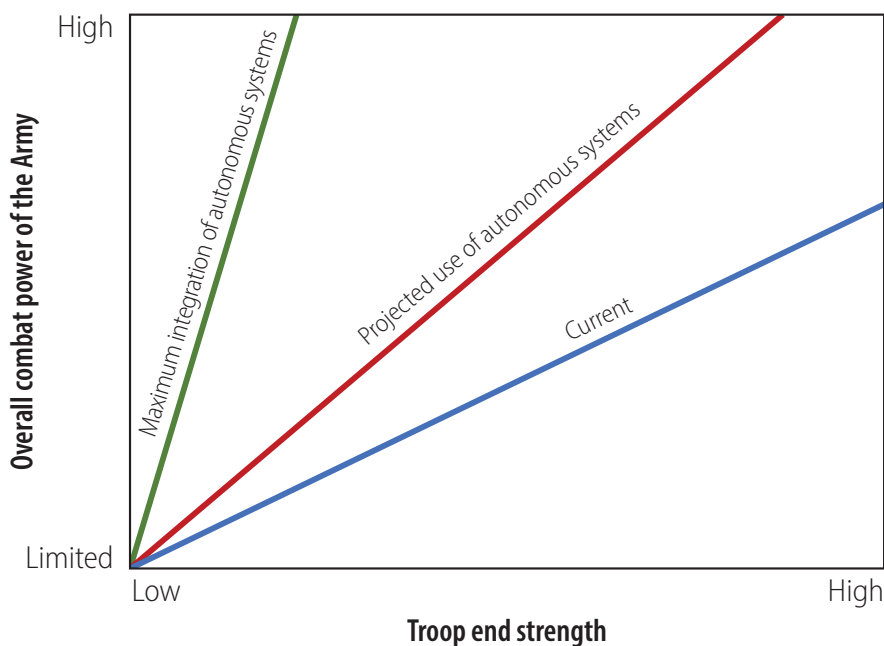
Each warfighting function is comprised of several top-level subfunctions. For example, the sustainment warfighting function includes providing logistics, personnel, and health-service support. In turn, each of these top-level subfunctions include several lower-level subfunctions. Providing logistics support, for example, comprises providing maintenance, transportation, supply, field services, operational contract, distribution, and general engineer support.

Altogether, 205 different lower-level subfunctions constitute the full scope of Army missions.⁴ These lower-level functions are fairly specific and provide enough granularity for analysis of the appropriateness of autonomy for that function. For example, little autonomy can be applied toward providing religious support. However, a high level of autonomy can be applied toward employing communications security. The results are then aggregated up for each top-level subfunction and warfighting function.

Rules for Autonomy

A review of different federal policies and strategies provided a set of rules related to the implementation of autonomous systems in ground combat. The appropriateness of applying autonomy to each lower-level subfunction is subject to the following six rules:

1. Autonomous systems should be used over humans in potentially dangerous situations, subject to the other rules.
2. Autonomous systems will be preferred over humans for computationally intensive tasks, thus allowing an overall reduction in the likelihood of human mental errors. Similarly, autonomous systems should be used for severely mundane tasks that require mental endurance.
3. Military command positions, whether they be American, allied, or adversary, will remain human.



(Figure by authors)

Figure 1. Trade-Off between the Overall Combat Power and Troop End Strength at Varying Levels of Integration of Autonomous Systems

4. Humans will be preferred over autonomous systems for certain tasks that require a human-to-human connection, such as key leader engagements and chaplain support.
5. The usage of autonomous systems cannot result in a decrease in the Army's ability to perform its missions.
6. Human judgment, or "human-in-the-loop," will be required for any activities that involve killing a human.

The United States has already laid the groundwork for the sixth rule with Department of Defense Directive 3000.09, *Autonomy in Weapon Systems*, which limits the development of autonomous weapons that do not include humans in the kill chain.⁵ On a global level, similar initiatives are underway, since autonomous killing systems would set off a technical arms race where countries would rapidly develop more advanced artificial intelligence with faster kill chains.⁶

Levels of Autonomy

While autonomous systems are often envisioned as Terminator-style robots, in reality, autonomous systems can range from automated payroll software to remote-controlled drones to cruise control on vehicles.

With a broad range of levels of autonomy, it is useful to categorize autonomy into fixed ranges. The table displays four different levels of autonomy that will be used for this analysis.

A value of 0 indicates that no automation is currently being used; an example of an autonomy level of 0 would be driving a traditional car. A value of 1 indicates that a human uses an automated system to increase their ability to complete the task, such as a cruise control system in the car. A value of 2 indicates that the human and automated system are working together to complete the task, though the human is primarily providing the system with inputs, such as a “self-driving” car with a backup human or remote operator. A value of 3 indicates that the human is taken out of the loop, and the system is performing the task on its own, such as a fully autonomous car that can navigate itself through traffic from one waypoint to another.

Each lower-level subfunction of the warfighting function was analyzed to determine the maximum level of autonomy subject to the rules identified in the previous section.

Intelligence Warfighting Function

The intelligence warfighting function is the most pervasive and encompassing task in the military because its results drive all operations.⁷ As shown in figure 2, the intelligence warfighting function is made up of four subfunctions with the potential to use a significant amount of autonomy.

Currently, autonomous systems are supporting human analysts in virtually all of the subfunctions, since they allow the analysts to more readily collect and process data. Unmanned aerial vehicles have been used for intelligence gathering for decades. Additionally,

autonomous software codes are used for cyberspace monitoring to gather intelligence. There are also systems under development, such as the U.S. Special Operations Command’s hyper-enabled operator, that will use a higher level of autonomy to automate the full intelligence process from collection to analysis.

The use of autonomous systems for these warfighting functions are driven by rules 1 and 2. Intelligence gathering is a dangerous activity, often requiring humans to travel behind enemy lines to collect data about the enemy and terrain. Much of this data can be collected by autonomous systems as they have the capacity to collect and process a large amount of raw data.

Table. Different Levels of Autonomy

Autonomy Level	Description
0	No autonomy, humans only
1	Automated system aids humans
2	Human manages automated system
3	Automated system only

(Table by authors)



(Figure by authors; subfunctions in blue italics indicate areas currently using autonomy)

Figure 2. Autonomy Levels for the Intelligence Warfighting Function

Despite these benefits, certain subfunctions are limited in the amount of possible autonomy. Intelligence support to ground operations will still require a human-in-the-loop to understand the human dimension associated with ground operations. Additionally, targeting requires a human-in-the-loop to allow for human judgment in the data analysis. However, intelligence support to situational understanding, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance can both achieve a fairly high degree of autonomy.

Movement and Maneuver Warfighting Function

The movement and maneuver warfighting function encompasses those functions involved in moving and employing direct force against enemy forces.⁸ The sub-tasks include maneuver operations, tactical movements, direct fires, occupying areas, performing reconnaissance, and other related tasks. Figure 3 (on page 127) displays the possible levels of autonomy for the movement and maneuver warfighting function.

Currently, there is a large push to integrate autonomy into this warfighting function, especially for the tactical movement and reconnaissance subfunctions. For example, the Squad Multipurpose Equipment Transport is a robotic vehicle that follows a dismounted squad, enhancing their movement by carrying much of their equipment. Another important effort is the Future Vertical Lift Aircraft, which will include autonomous flight capabilities, allowing units not to be constrained to the human-limits of flight crews.⁹ Several other programs, such as the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency's Squad X Experimentation Program, are looking at further enhancing the use of autonomous systems, especially for reconnaissance.

Several projects also involve integrating autonomy into tactical maneuver and direct fire operations.

A QinetiQ Talon 5 robot moves a drone 7 May 2019 during a Raven's Challenge exercise at Winter Park, Colorado. Raven's Challenge is an annual event that provides interoperability training in a realistic, domestic, tactical environment to explosive ordnance disposal personnel and public safety bomb squads of both military and government agencies. (Photo by Sgt. Zakia Gray, U.S. Army)



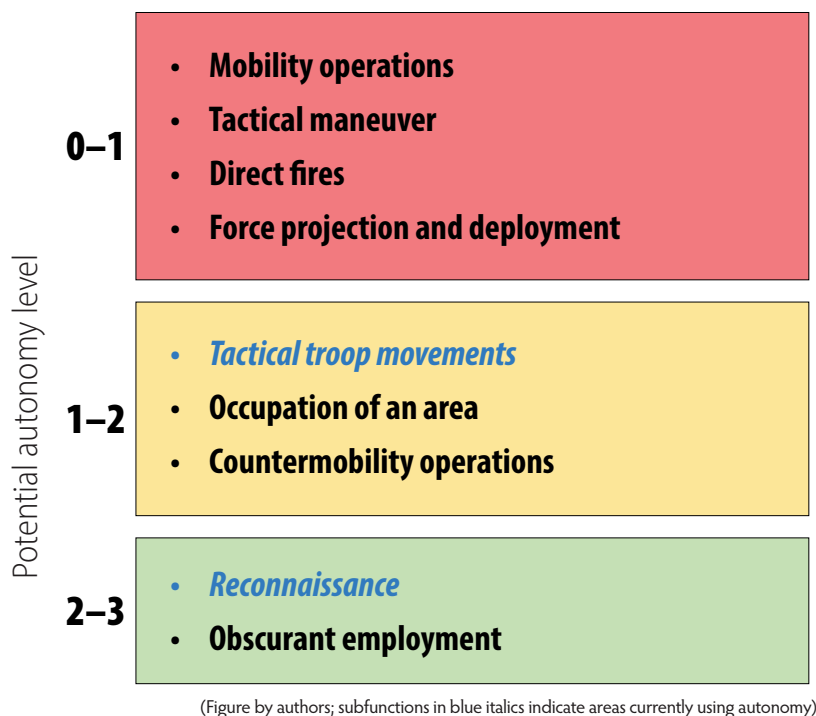


Figure 3. Autonomy Levels for the Movement and Maneuver Warfighting Function

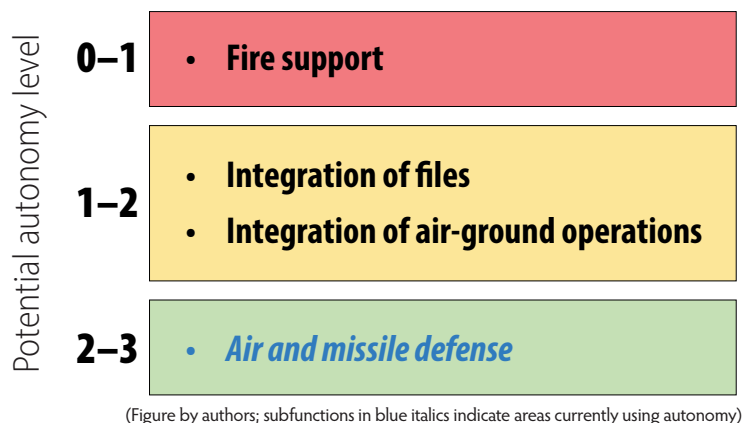


Figure 4. Autonomy Levels for the Fires Warfighting Function

However, these projects are fairly constrained, such as the Advanced Targeting and Lethality Automated System Program, which is simply a remote-operated gun on a mobile platform that provides additional standoff from a target; however, it still requires a designated operator.

The level of autonomy is set for the movement and maneuver warfighting function based on rule 6, and a high level of autonomy is possible for two of the subfunctions—performing reconnaissance and employing obscurants—because they do not require the use of lethal force. A lower level of autonomy can be integrated into three of the other subfunctions—tactical troop movements, occupying an area, and countermobility operations. These subfunctions can involve the use of force, so human involvement is required though it can be primarily oversight. The other four subfunctions—mobility operations, tactical maneuver, direct fires, and force projection—involve the direct use of force, as such, autonomy can be used in only a very limited capacity.

The integration of autonomous systems is fairly limited by the requirement of having a human in the kill chain. As such, autonomous systems are more useful for defensive operations than offensive operations. Offensive operations involve closing in on and killing the enemy, which inherently requires a human in the loop. However, security and defensive operations tend to involve deterring the enemy, which can be done without lethal force, hence allowing autonomy.

Fires Warfighting Function

Army Doctrine Reference Publication 1-03, *The Army Universal Task List*, gives the four top-level subfunctions for the fires warfighting functions: integrate fires, provide fire support, integrate air-ground operations, and employ air and missile defense.¹⁰ Each subtask and the associated autonomy levels are displayed in figure 4.

The current usage of autonomy in the fires warfighting function is limited to detecting threats and supporting the computations required for providing direct fire support. However, humans are still required to aim and fire weapons. Most artillery

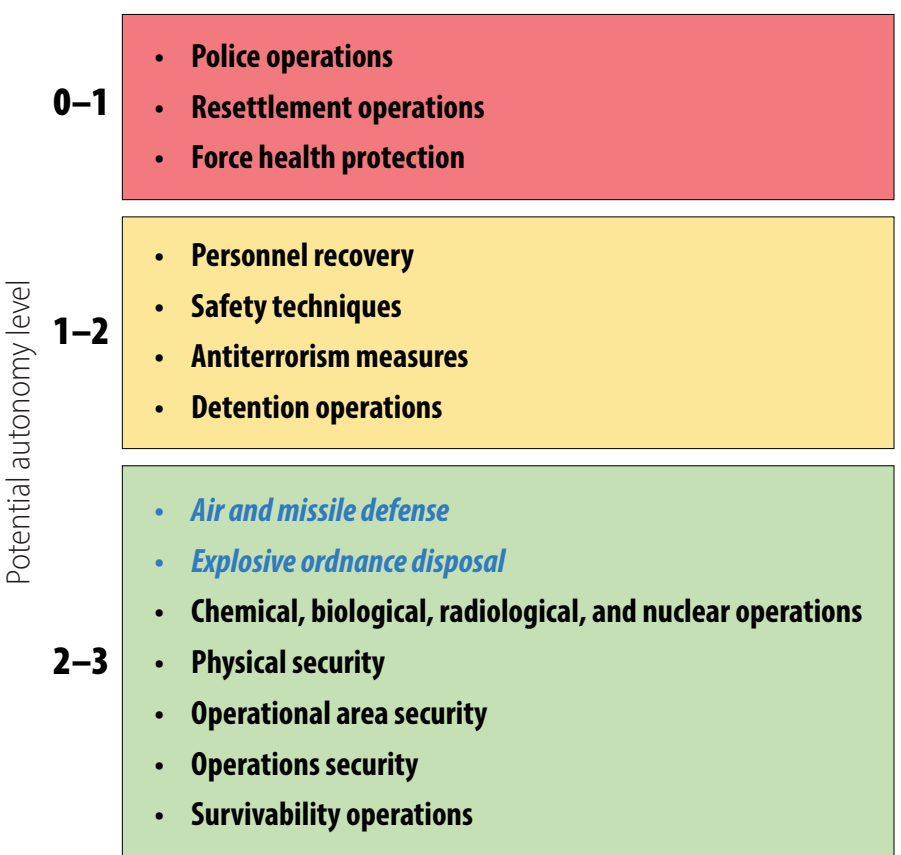
systems, such as the M109 Paladin, include computer software to help automate the targeting process. Additionally, these systems are being upgraded with advanced automated technology to allow for better threat detection, faster targeting, and automated aiming.

Similar to the movement and maneuver warfighting function, rule 6 sets which subfunctions in the fires warfighting function can use autonomy. Fire support involves the direct employment of force against an enemy, so although autonomy can support the soldier, its usage is limited. The integration of fires and air-ground operations are both supporting subtasks. Therefore, a certain amount of autonomy is applicable, although humans are still required for prioritization of fires. Air-missile defense is a defensive operation and does not require killing humans. Additionally, it is a computationally intensive process that requires very fast action. As such, this subfunction is ripe for the use of autonomous systems.

Protection Warfighting Function

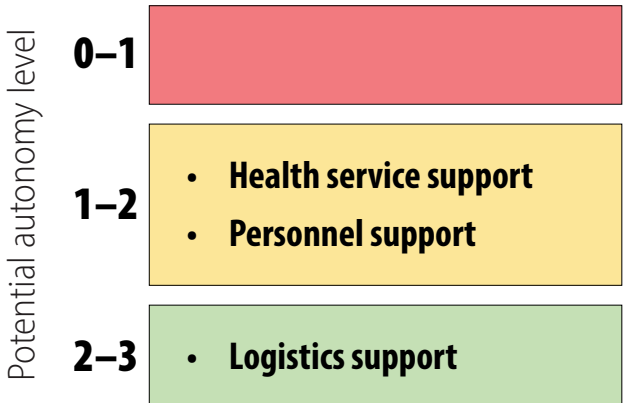
The protection warfighting function is comprised of fifteen top-level subfunctions ranging from law-and-order operations to explosive ordnance disposal to air-missile defense.¹¹ These subfunctions are categorized by their possible levels of autonomy in figure 5.

The protection warfighting function is primarily defensive in nature. As previously discussed, autonomy can be better applied to defensive operations rather than offensive. However, the use of autonomy for this warfighting function is set by rule 4, since some of its functions require substantial human-to-human interaction, including police operations, resettlement operations, and health protection. Other subfunctions still require



(Figure by authors; subfunctions in blue italics indicate areas currently using autonomy)

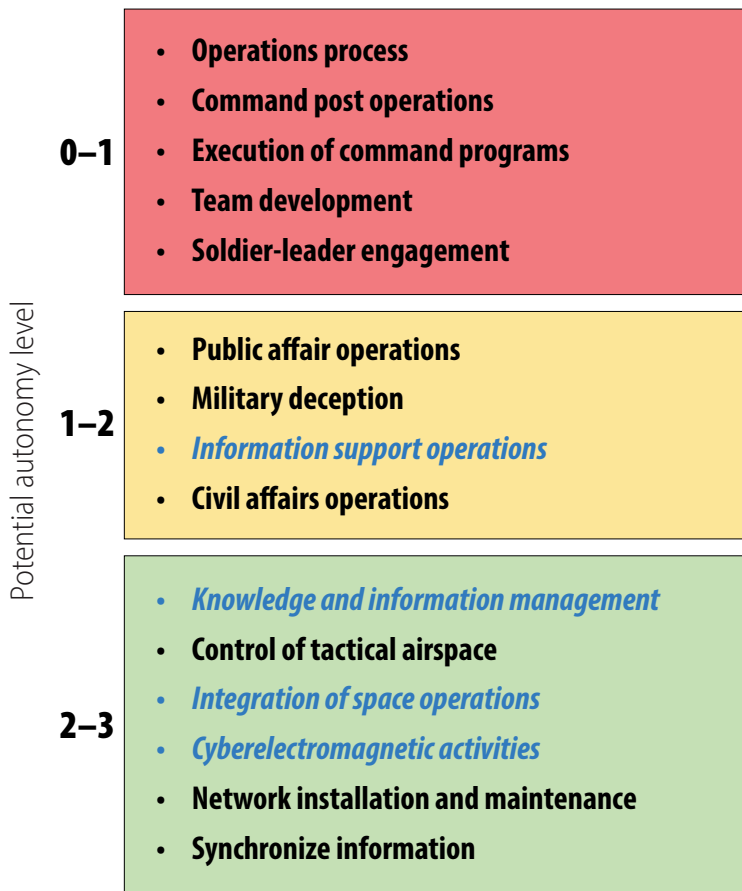
Figure 5. Autonomy Levels for the Protection Warfighting Function



(Figure by authors)

Figure 6. Autonomy Levels for the Sustainment Warfighting Function

some human-to-human interaction, such that a human must be kept in the loop. These subfunctions include personnel operations, safety, antiterrorism measures,



(Figure by authors; subfunctions in blue italics indicate areas currently using autonomy)

Figure 7. Autonomy Levels for the Mission Command Warfighting Function

and detention operations. However, the bulk of the tasks associated with the protection of warfighting functions can incorporate a large amount of autonomy.

Despite the high potential, the current usage of autonomous systems in the protection warfighting function is somewhat limited. Air-missile defense systems use autonomous systems to track and destroy incoming fires. Additionally, explosive ordnance disposal personnel use remote-controlled autonomous systems such as TALON and PackBot robots to provide standoff from explosives.

The protection warfighting function has numerous opportunities for the use of advanced autonomy in future operations. These opportunities are for a number of reasons. First, protection is inherently responsive in nature, such that an action is performed following a specific input. These actions normally require a fast response time, and autonomous systems have the potential

to have faster response times than humans. Second, many of the tasks follow doctrinal steps, which require minimal human judgment and are ripe for autonomy. Third, many of these tasks involve placing humans in compromising positions.

Take survivability operations for example. The construction of a fortified battle position requires digging fighting positions and placing and filling Hesco baskets (used to construct large barriers). A remote-operated front loader, often used for commercial applications, would allow a soldier to perform these tasks from a protected location. With further integration efforts, one could imagine drawing a battle position on a map, and a team of autonomous systems surveying the area, performing the threat assessment, designing an optimal battle position, and constructing it prior to humans arriving on-site. Upon completion of the fortified position, autonomous systems could help detect and deter encroachment into the area.

Sustainment Warfighting Function

The sustainment warfighting function is broken down into three high-level tasks: logistics, personnel, and health service support.¹²

Figure 6 (on page 128) displays how much autonomy can be applied to each of these subfunctions.

Currently, autonomous systems are used sparingly for the sustainment warfighting function. Automating the tasks that fall under logistics would require significant updates to the bulk of military vehicles and equipment. This process is expensive, resources are limited, and current sustainment capabilities are sufficient. However, with the increased threat of improvised explosive devices and the dangers associated with convoy operations, autonomous convoys, which leverage self-driving technology, would reduce troop numbers while also saving lives.

Similar to the protection warfighting function, rule 4 sets the limits on the maximum autonomy levels for each subfunction. Both health service support and personnel require a certain amount of human-to-human interaction; however, certain portions of these subfunctions can be automated.



For example, financial management support, which falls under personnel support, can benefit from autonomous software that handle payroll. However, chaplain support, which also falls under personnel support, will still require a chaplain.

Logistics can achieve a significantly higher degree of autonomy. Many of the tasks included under logistics support follow set procedures; for example, performing preventive maintenance checks and services on a vehicle requires going down a checklist and making sure that the vehicle functions properly. When processes follow very set procedures, they are ripe for autonomy.

Additionally, there are numerous strategic benefits from incorporating autonomy into the sustainment warfighting function. The displacement of humans by autonomous systems would expand operational reach. Enemies have traditionally targeted supply lines as easy targets, which then require additional security, drawing away soldiers from more critical missions. Autonomous systems would require less security and can assume more risk, allowing them to move faster and through areas that are not safe for humans.

A marine with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment looks down at an autonomous "dragon fire" system 13 July 2016 at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California. The system, meant to enhance observation of an enemy before marines engage them, was built by the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory. It is durable, invertible with front and rear cameras, and both day and night capable. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Julien Rodarte, U.S. Marines)

Mission Command Warfighting Function

As the name implies, the mission command warfighting function involves providing command guidance and leadership to integrate the other five warfighter functions to perform unified land operations. The mission command warfighting function can be broken down into fifteen subtasks, which are categorized by possible autonomy levels in figure 7 (on page 129).

Rules 3 and 4 set the maximum limits for the use of autonomy in this warfighting function. Leadership and command guidance must be provided by humans, so autonomy is limited for the operations process, command-post operations, and execution

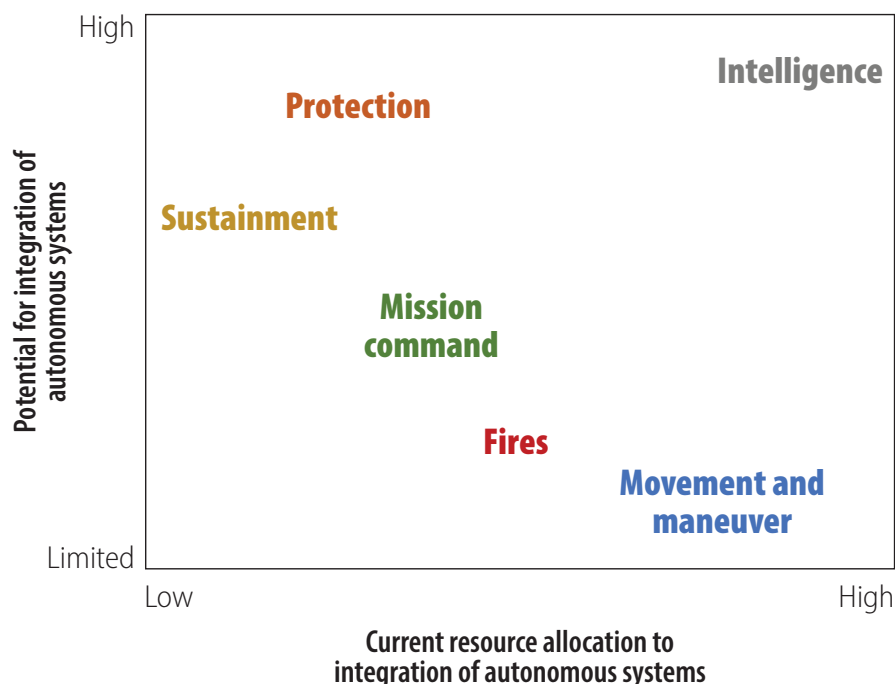
of command programs. Additionally, human-to-human interactions are required for team development and soldier-leader engagements. A slightly higher degree of autonomy can be applied to tasks that are not directly tied to leadership positions. These tasks include public affair operations, military deception, information support operations, and civil affairs operations. However, the usage of autonomy will only play a supporting role due to the necessary human-to-human interactions associated with these tasks.

Several of the subfunctions are tied to the virtual domain, and the application of automation would greatly enhance these subfunctions. These include knowledge management, control of tactical airspace, integration of space operations, cyberelectromagnetic activities, and network and synchronizing information.

Due to the requirement of humans being in leadership positions, little effort has been put into developing autonomous systems to support this warfighting function. However, there is a significant opportunity for certain subfunctions that are not related to being in leadership positions.

Current Resource Allocation toward Autonomy

Figure 8 plots the current resource allocation toward autonomous systems against the overall potential for integration. The plot shows that a significant amount of resources are allocated for the intelligence, movement and maneuver, and fires warfighting functions. However, both the movement and maneuver and the fires warfighting functions are limited into how much total autonomy can be applied to it. Meanwhile, much fewer resources have been allocated for the protection and sustainment warfighting



(Figure by authors)

Figure 8. Current Resource Allocation toward the Integration of Autonomous Systems Plotted against the Overall Potential for Integration

functions, which have a significant potential for the overall integration of autonomous systems.

The current alignment of resources to potential for automation is not optimized. This is due to equipment and technology development for the movement and maneuver, fires, and intelligence warfighting functions receiving priority over the other three warfighting functions. For example, though the *Army Equipment Modernization Strategy* includes investments for all warfighting functions, priority is given to these three warfighting functions, with more risk being assumed for the other three warfighting functions. Likewise, most of the Army science and technology near-term, mid-term, and long-term investments are related to these warfighting functions.¹³

While the investments in the fires and movement and maneuver warfighting functions offer new capabilities to the soldier, a much larger benefit can be made from applying autonomy to the sustainment and protection warfighting functions. Since these warfighting functions can achieve a much higher amount of

integration of autonomous systems, the combat multiplication factor is higher. More simply stated, entire companies of protection and sustainment personnel can be replaced with autonomous systems supported by a few personnel for leadership and quality assurance. These new autonomous systems will potentially be faster, more efficient, and safer.

Note that though man-unmanned pairings and integrating robots into the squad is in the distant future, commercial technology is currently available to support the sustainment and protection warfighting function. Self-driving vehicles that can convoy, robotic maintenance systems, package delivery systems by drones, autonomous network monitoring, and GPS-guided farm equipment are all technology that could have military applications.

Reduction in Numbers and Benefits

The integration of autonomy into the warfighting functions creates opportunities for a reduction in troop count, assuming that the Army wishes to maintain a given level of combat power. Typically, an autonomy level of 1 will result in a new capability that will allow the Army to complete the task more expeditiously. An autonomy level of 2 will not only result

in a new capability but also the ability to reduce the number of soldiers. This reduction is typically at an individual level, such that individuals in a squad could be replaced with an autonomous system. Meanwhile, an autonomy level of 3 will result in replacing an entire unit with an autonomous system, only leaving a few humans for quality assurance.

The sustainment and protection warfighting functions both have a significant number of tasks that can be automated. Additionally, in the Global War on Terrorism, approximately 70 percent of deployed soldiers were tied to these two warfighting functions. As such, the application of autonomy toward these warfighting functions would allow for a significant reduction in boots on the ground.

The largest benefit of replacing humans with autonomous systems is safety. Using autonomous systems in dirty, dangerous, and dull situations reduces the risk to soldiers. However, there are substantial cost savings as well. For monetary reasons, the U.S. government has strived to reduce troop numbers in the past while maintaining the overall strength of the force. The most cost-effective, long-term method is through incorporating autonomous systems. Though these systems carry an initial high development cost,

An autonomously activated device emits vapor to obscure the rear of a utility task vehicle 26 April 2019 during the Robotic Complex Breach Concept, a military event focused on autonomous technologies at Yakima Training Center, Washington. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Nathaniel Hamilton, U.S. Marines)



the reduction in troop numbers across the Army would offset these costs. Soldiers carry a large life cycle cost since they must be trained, paid, billeted, and equipped while they are in the service; additionally, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provides health care after they leave the military.

Alternatively, the Army may decide to keep its end state. In that case, the use of autonomous systems could afford a redistribution of personnel by military occupational specialty. The current heuristic is that for every individual combat soldier, there are approximately two to three support soldiers. Increased investment in autonomy for the sustainment warfighting function has the ability to significantly reduce this ratio. With a constant end state, this could result in an increase in combat soldiers.

Conclusion

Some may perceive the future of autonomous systems in the Army as formations of armed robots marching into combat; however, this situation is unlikely due to the constraints placed on autonomous systems in combat. Moreover, it is shortsighted

because it only addresses a small portion of the tasks that the Army is required to perform.

This study set out to determine what the maximum integration of autonomous systems into the Army would look like. In particular, it looked at each of the warfighting functions and supporting subfunctions to determine the applicability of using autonomy to support that function. In some instances, an autonomous system could perform the function with little human oversight, while in other instances, only humans can perform the function.

The results found that while autonomy could benefit all the warfighting functions, the intelligence, protection, and sustainment warfighting functions could benefit the most. This finding does not align with the current Army investments into autonomous systems, which are more focused on the movement and maneuver, intelligence, and fires warfighting functions. Significant benefits can be realized through the application of autonomous systems to the protection and sustainment warfighting functions, resulting in an increase in combat power while reducing troop numbers. ■

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Do Large-Scale Combat Operations Require a New Type of Leader?



Maj. Dana M. Gingrich, U.S. Army

Situation update: Last night, the brigade on our right lost half a battalion to indirect fire and a penetration during an integrated enemy attack. Our brigade did not receive the brunt of the attack but still lost eighty-two people in the last twenty-four hours. We have intermittent communications with our division headquarters, but we have maintained contact with the enemy through reconnaissance and fires. The enemy overextended the penetration throughout the day; this presented an opportunity. Our commander decided to transition to the offense to exploit the enemy's exposed flank. Moving north and east through the night to counterattack the enemy's second echelon force, our lead battalion destroyed the enemy's division logistics element, causing their offensive to grind to a halt. Do these battlefield conditions require a new type of leader?

In Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations*, large-scale combat operations are described as “intense, lethal, and brutal” and require agile and adaptive leaders to overcome the complexity and chaos of tomorrow’s battlefield.¹ Today’s leaders do not need prior experience in these conditions to be successful because the Army Leader Development strategy transcends the range of military operations. In fact, the large-scale combat environment requires leaders to demonstrate competencies outlined in FM 6-22, *Leader Development*, now more than ever.² Leaders must lead by example to model the desired behavior for their organizations, leaders must develop others to instill mission command within their organizations, and leaders must prepare themselves to accept prudent risk to seize opportunities on a dynamic battlefield. Historical examples demonstrate that leaders who *lead by example*, *develop others*, and *prepare self* are primed to fight and win in large-scale combat operations.

Then a brigadier general, Douglas MacArthur led by example by modeling battlefield courage that the 42nd Division needed to overcome the perils of trench warfare during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive in World War I. Then a lieutenant general, George Patton Jr. *developed others* by instilling mission command in his staff and subordinate leaders who maneuvered the Third Army across Western Europe to counterattack during the Battle of the Bulge. Gen. Dwight Eisenhower prepared himself by accepting prudent risk to launch the most audacious amphibious assault in history during the invasion of Normandy, France, in World War II. These historical figures honed their leader competencies during their own professional development; then, they leveraged these competencies to lead organizations through the complex environment of large-scale combat operations.

MacArthur Leads by Example

Sometimes it is the order one disobeys that makes one famous.

—Col. Douglas MacArthur, 27 February 1918³

In February 1911, MacArthur, then a captain, took command of his first engineer company at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. In his previous assignment, MacArthur received an evaluation report that read “exhibited less interest in and put in less time” in his role as a staff engineer.⁴ Command was different. MacArthur thrived under the responsibility of command, leading his soldiers on long forced marches, training engineer tasks, and developing skills necessary for combat. He began to experience the power of leading by example.

Six years later, MacArthur took charge as chief of staff in the newly formed 42nd Division, nicknamed the Rainbow Division after its formation of National Guard



units from across the United States.⁵ In the three months before setting sail to Europe, the division hardly had enough time to learn the basics of warfighting, let alone to build the necessary cohesion to fight and win in the savage trenches of the western front.

MacArthur understood what needed to be done to instill confidence in his men as they moved into the trenches for the first time. In the early morning of 9 March 1918, MacArthur reassured his men as he walked down the trenches through ankle deep mud. When the time came, MacArthur went over the top of the trench first and later wrote, "For a dozen terrible seconds I felt they were not following me. But then ... in a moment they were around me, ahead of me, a roaring avalanche of glittering steel."⁶ The Rainbow Division endured artillery barrages and machine-gunfire during that first assault, but the men carried the objective.

Is today's leader as prepared as MacArthur to lead soldiers in large-scale combat? For those leaders who lead by example, FM 6-22 lists strength indicators: provides presence at the right time and place, displays self-control and composure in adverse conditions, and encourages others.⁷ MacArthur clearly demonstrated these strengths the morning of the Rainbow Division's first offensive. He walked the trenches allowing his presence to calm nerves.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower (left) and Britain's Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery (far right) confer with a junior U.S. Army officer on the progress of tank maneuvers in England 25 February 1944 in preparation for the invasion of Normandy in June 1944. (Photo from the Everett Collection via Alamy Stock Photo)

He overcame his worry of leading the charge alone by encouraging his soldiers as they rushed past him into the German trenches. MacArthur led by example, but this was a leadership style that he first learned as a company commander seven years before the Great War.

MacArthur's company at Fort Leavenworth was formed of new volunteers. As commander, he had to not only train the men for combat but also build cohesive teams by developing organizational culture. Edgar Schein, an expert in organizational change, states that primary embedding mechanisms like modeling behavior and coaching are how leaders form organizational culture.⁸ MacArthur experienced this effect with his soldiers by leading them on long road marches and challenging them through realistic training, leading by example. The result: a well-prepared combat engineer company. The Rainbow Division was no different. The unit was a collection of various National Guard units thrust into war. MacArthur

used the same approach. He modeled his desired behavior, this time in the trenches, and the result was the same. He led by example, and the Rainbow Division prevailed in its first engagement in large-scale combat.

As a company commander, MacArthur could still directly influence the development of each one of his soldiers. This was not the case for the thousands of soldiers in the Rainbow Division, making his example in the trenches that much more impactful. One colonel, a tank commander, would write home to his wife about his experience with MacArthur. While MacArthur was at an observation point preparing for another offensive, this tank commander moved forward to meet him. A German artillery barrage began creeping toward the two officers. When the barrage got extremely close to the two officers, the colonel flinched and looked at MacArthur who was standing steadfast in his position.⁹ The two officers would never meet each other again, but the colonel would never forget the meeting.

That colonel was George S. Patton Jr. Would the Army have received the courage of “Old Blood and Guts” Patton in World War II, if MacArthur had not led by example?

Patton Develops Others

A man should not be damned for an initial failure with a new division. Had I done this with Eddy of the 9th Division in Africa, the army would have lost a potential corps commander.

—Lt. Gen. George S. Patton Jr., 7 July 1944¹⁰

Leaders must develop others to fight and win in large-scale combat. The adversary’s ability to conduct division coordinated attacks, degrade communications, and mass indirect fires creates an environment that necessitates shared trust and disciplined initiative at the point of contact. Leaders develop a shared trust with their staff and subordinate commanders. The leader trusts his or her subordinates’ decision-making ability, and the subordinates trust they will not be relieved on the chance of a wrong decision. Developing this leader-follower relationship sets the foundation for mission command with leaders providing mission orders and subordinates taking disciplined initiative within the commander’s intent.¹¹ Patton developed others to create mutual trust in the Third Army, and the results were immeasurable.

The Third Army chief of intelligence, Col. Oscar Koch, began receiving reports of German formations massing in the Ardennes Forest on 6 December 1944. Patton told

Koch to monitor the reports as they continued to plan for offensive operations. This all changed on 16 December 1944 when the Germans launched a massive offensive, punching through the First Army north of Patton, an offensive later known as the Battle of the Bulge.

Within forty-eight hours, the First Army, commanded by Gen. Omar Bradley, was scrambling to stop the Allied retreat and Eisenhower, the supreme Allied commander, called an emergency meeting with his senior officers. Patton knew his plans had changed. At 0730 on the morning of the meeting with Eisenhower, Patton called in key staff members to provide an update. At 0830, he called the entire staff and his corps commanders. In less than two hours, Patton and his team developed three different courses of action that could move the Third Army from its current position to a position one hundred miles north to counterattack the German forces. Then, Patton left.¹²

After briefing Eisenhower and Bradley on his plan, Patton called his headquarters to give the code word for the selected course of action; then he stayed at his new headquarters. Over the next forty-eight hours, Patton’s staff and subordinate commanders coordinated the movement of hundreds of thousands of soldiers, tanks, and trucks from their current position to an attack position within range of Bastogne. While his staff focused on coordinating the movement, Patton focused on developing others. One day after his meeting with Eisenhower, Patton met face-to-face with seven different division commanders to ensure that they understood his intent and to provide them encouragement as they prepared to counterattack at Bastogne.¹³ Patton had developed shared trust, so he knew that with clear intent, his staff and subordinate commanders would achieve results.

Were Patton’s competencies unique to his experience in large-scale combat? FM 6-22 states that a leader who *develops others* encourages subordinates through actions while guiding them, pushes decisions down to the lowest practical level, and presents challenging assignments that require team cooperation.¹⁴ Patton also developed others in the Third Army. He understood the desperation of Allied forces after the German offensive at the Battle of the Bulge and challenged his staff and corps commanders to respond in forty-eight hours. Once the divisions began moving, Patton ensured he met with his subordinate commanders to provide clear intent and encouragement. Then he stepped back, allowing his commanders and staff to demonstrate their abilities to lead and execute. As a result, the Third

Army was prepared to overcome logistical challenges and degraded communications while anticipating the next fight. Patton clearly demonstrated his ability to develop others to foster mission command, but this was a competency he gained well before leading large-scale combat operations.

In 1921, then Maj. Patton first met Capt. Eisenhower, five years his junior. The two officers shared a passion for understanding new technology and developing techniques for incorporating tanks into modern warfare.¹⁵ A few years later, in 1925, Patton graduated from the Command and General Staff School in Fort Leavenworth and found out that Eisenhower, his friend, would be attending the following year. Without asking, Patton sent Eisenhower a trunk full of all his notes and letters of encouragement for the upcoming year; Eisenhower graduated number one in his class.¹⁶

Patton understood the impact of developing others well before leading the Third Army. If Eisenhower had not graduated at the top of his class at the Command and General Staff School, would Gen. George C. Marshall have ever recognized his future potential?

Eisenhower Prepares Self

OK, we'll go.

—Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, 5 June 1944¹⁷

Ten thousand U.S. dead and wounded, three thousand more from Great Britain and Canada, twelve thousand aircrew lost, and one commander's decision that changed the course of World War II.¹⁸ How does one person develop the courage to make that decision? The Army mission command philosophy calls this accepting prudent risk when the commander judges the mission accomplishment as worth the cost of deliberate exposure to potential injury or loss.¹⁹ Eisenhower did more than accept prudent risk; he prepared himself throughout his entire military career for that decision.

Just four years earlier, in 1940, Eisenhower, then a colonel, was disheartened after being called to the War Department in Washington, D.C., exclaiming that he would be “spending the war in another frustrating desk job.”²⁰ Eisenhower was not a war hero like MacArthur and Patton, who both received valorous awards in World War I, but his experience during that time became the foundation to prepare himself. In 1917, Eisenhower wrote a letter to the War Department requesting to deploy to combat in Europe. His request was denied, and

he was sent to Camp Colt, Pennsylvania, to establish and command the Officer Candidate School. Although gravely disappointed, Eisenhower set aside his personal feelings and developed Camp Colt into the finest training program in the Army, thereby, earning the temporary rank of lieutenant colonel. When he finally earned a command in Europe, he was so excited that he volunteered to take a reduction in rank to major if it would get him overseas sooner. The war ended before he would be deployed, and his only response was “I suppose we'll spend the rest of our lives explaining why we didn't get into this war.”²¹

A leader without experience must rely on doctrine. Eisenhower did not have relevant combat experience, so he focused on becoming a student of doctrine. He took an assignment at Fort Meade, Maryland, as a tank commander, where he first met a then Maj. George Patton. The two officers bonded through trying to understand the full capabilities and limitations of tanks, so much so that they stripped a tank down to its nuts and bolts and put it back together again. Both Eisenhower and Patton then wrote articles on the future of tank warfare, thinking they were closing a gap in Army doctrine. The chief of the infantry wrote Eisenhower a scolding response for suggesting any role change of the infantry.²² Another setback.

Eisenhower shouldered more challenges. Later that year, he lost his son at a young age from scarlet fever, which also led to marriage troubles. He was then charged for breaking an Army regulation on housing allowance because his son had not been technically living with him while receiving treatment. Eisenhower endured. In 1922, he finally received his first break while working for then Brig. Gen. Fox Conner, who later taught Eisenhower three years of postgraduate education in military history.²³ Conner recognized Eisenhower's potential and worked behind the scenes

to secure him a slot at the Command and General Staff School. Eisenhower would not disappoint.

Were Eisenhower's setbacks what allowed him to accept prudent risk on D-Day? FM 6-22 states that a leader who *prepares self* removes emotions from decision-making; expands

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Capt. Eric Cannon (*seated*), commander of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, briefs his subordinate leaders the evening before an 8 May 2019 attack on the fictional town of Razish at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California. (Photo by Matthew Cox, courtesy of [Military.com](https://www.military.com))



knowledge of technical, technological, and tactical areas; and sets aside time for self-development, reflection, and personal growth.²⁴ It was not the setbacks that caused Eisenhower to accept prudent risk; it was how he prepared himself through those setbacks. When assigned to establish Officer Candidate School at Camp Colt, Eisenhower removed his own emotion after not getting a combat assignment and focused on his impact of developing other combat leaders. He also recognized after World War I that he did not have combat experience, so he committed to expanding his technical and tactical knowledge. Last, Eisenhower reflected. When given the opportunity to work for Conner and then attend the Command and General Staff School, Eisenhower recognized it as an opportunity not to be squandered. Commanders who accept prudent risk focus on creating opportunities rather than preventing defeat.²⁵ At every setback, Eisenhower focused on creating an opportunity, not simply accepting defeat.

Eisenhower's self-preparation throughout his career guided his decision-making, leading to his order to invade Normandy on 6 June 1944. He revealed his character not just in his resolve to launch the largest invasion in history but also in his courage to accept responsibility in the letter that was never sent:

Our landings in the Cherbourg-Havre area have failed to gain a satisfactory foothold and I have withdrawn the troops. My decision to

attack at this time and place was based upon the best information available. The troops, the air and the Navy did all that Bravery and devotion to duty could do. If any blame or fault attaches to the attempt, it is mine alone.²⁶

Conclusion

Today's leaders may not have led soldiers through sustained artillery barrages or corps-on-corps-level attacks. Just because we do not have the experience does not mean we are not ready. MacArthur had never experienced peer combat when he led the Rainbow Division out of the trenches. Patton was a World War I veteran but had never led an Army staff and maneuvered multiple corps on the battlefield. Eisenhower had never experienced combat before taking command of all allied forces in Europe. The key to these leaders' success was that they developed their competencies well before reaching the battlefield.

Today's leaders are in a similar situation—some have combat experience and some do not—but they all have the ability to develop their leader competencies, the competencies MacArthur learned while leading basic trainees, Patton learned through peer leadership, and Eisenhower learned by preparing others for war. Army leader development transcends the range of military operations. Leaders who *lead by example*, *develop others*, and *prepare themselves* will be ready to fight and win in large-scale combat operations tonight. ■

Notes

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3. Arthur Herman, *Douglas MacArthur: American Warrior* (New York: Random House, 2016), 110.

4. *Ibid.*, 71–73.

5. *Ibid.*, 99–101.

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9. Herman, *Douglas MacArthur*, 130.

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13. Carlo D'Este, *Patton: A Genius for War* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), 687–88.

14. FM 6-22, *Leader Development*, 7-46–7-50.

15. D'Este, *Patton*, 297–98.

16. *Ibid.*, 332.

17. Tim Rives, "'OK, We'll Go': Just What Did Ike Say When He Launched the D-Day Invasion 70 Years Ago?," *Prologue* (Spring 2014): 40, accessed 17 June 2019, <https://www.archives.gov/files/publications/prologue/2014/spring/d-day.pdf>.

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19. ADRP 6-0, *Mission Command*, 2-5.

20. D'Este, *Eisenhower*, 300.

21. *Ibid.*, 126–29, 136.

22. *Ibid.*, 151–53.

23. *Ibid.*, 167.

24. FM 6-22, *Leader Development*, 7-39–7-41.

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Don't Get Wounded

Military Health System Consolidation and the Risk to Readiness

Lt. Col. F. Cameron Jackson, U.S. Army

Absent some advance in material sciences, physics, or metaphysics, the infantrymen of the future will have to cease their habit of becoming wounded due to enemy action, disease, or nonbattle injury. In the future, the best medical advice available to the medical planner 2028 for the infantryman 2028 will be “don’t get wounded.” The reason is simple. The direction of military health system (MHS) consolidation is proceeding according to policy preferences, reports, and guidance derived from a past operational environment, not from the high-intensity operational environment anticipated in large-scale combat operations (LSCO), and not as directed by the 2017 *National Defense Strategy* and accompanying *Defense Planning Guidance*. As a result, the medical capability to meet high-demand casualty requirements will not be in place in the event of a LSCO.

This article argues that MHS consolidation must be placed into a strategic pause in order to allow service, department, and congressional stakeholders an opportunity to relook current consolidation efforts and the underlying assumptions and objectives that guide these efforts, and then refocus reform on readiness. By basing planning on lessons from recent small-scale combat operations, we are at risk of shaping the medical force out to 2028 in ways that will make LSCO medically unsupportable.

To address this issue, this article will look at the political and operational environment that generated MHS consolidation efforts, keying in on the 2015 *National Security Strategy*. Next, it will situate MHS consolidation within the broader policy objective of creating a form of nationalized healthcare system. It will then pivot to the 2017 *National Security Strategy*: the return to competition, the change it requires on how we conceptualize medical support to LSCO, and the risk we will cause if we fail to do so.

Previous page: The third floor ward of the 49th General Hospital at the Manila Jockey Club in Manila, Philippines, during World War II. The hospital began in Manila 1 March 1945 and was able to take over treatment of numerous casualties at a time when the Leyte hospitals were full and the Sixth U.S. Army installations were lacking medical capacity. This photo is indicative of the greatly increased medical requirements for large-scale combat operations. (Photo courtesy of the Army Medical Department Center of History and Heritage)

The 2015 National Security Environment

Multiyear policy preferences are not contained in a single document or statement. Therefore, it is important to understand how policy is made within the federal government. The executive branch sets the strategic direction for the majority of the federal government (especially those parts within the executive branch) and performs its duties in consultation and negotiation with the coequal legislative branch. Through Congress, the executive branch seeks to resource the strategy, develop new laws, or find relief from past laws. Congress expresses intent through legislation and appropriations, conference reports, congressional delegation and staff visits, and engagement with department leaders. This communications process, occurring in an ever-changing milieu, is inherently iterative. The executive branch, in consultation with the departments within the branch, establishes the *National Security Strategy*. The Department of Defense (DOD), in response, produces the *National Defense Strategy* and its partner, the *Defense Planning Guidance*. The services take that guidance and produce strategies. This collection of documents then drives processes like Programming, Planning, Budgeting, and Execution; the Future Year Defense Program; and the Army Structure Memorandum.

MHS consolidation efforts began within the idea of a smaller military force operating out of secure bases on predictable rotations. This milieu is best described by the *National Security Strategy* of 2015. This strategy called for a drawdown of military end strength concurrent with the goal of modernizing the military.¹ The 2015 *National Security Strategy* also set a strategic direction for the force, placing the emphasis on homeland defense and wide-area security operations.² Reflecting these desires, the U.S. defense budget went from approximately \$748 billion in 2010 to \$609 billion in 2017 where it stabilized.³ The active Army went from 560,000 soldiers in 2010 and was heading to 460,000 at the beginning of 2017.⁴ Of note, there were nearly 60,000 soldiers in the nondeployable category for the year 2016.⁵ A smaller, better-equipped Army was the goal. That Army would focus on defense of the homeland and counterterrorism operations abroad; both operations occurring out of installations in the continental United States or relatively secure bases abroad. Under this concept, centralizing support services, like

medical, would logically produce cost benefits and efficiencies. So, from the perspective of an Army operating out of fixed bases, the homogeneous, indistinct provision of medical services from a consolidated agency to the Army was entirely rational.

Consolidation in Context

Further understanding the strategy of consolidation requires an examination of its underlying strategic logic. Dr. David J. Smith (DOD health reform leader) and Vice Adm. Raquel C. Bono (director, Defense Health Agency), lead writers for the *Journal of the American Medical Association* article “Transforming the Military Health System,” cited Sen. John McCain as providing the “strategic logic” for MHS consolidation efforts.⁶ McCain, reflecting the national security environment of 2015, stated, “The United States now faces a series of transregional, cross-functional, multi-domain, and long-term strategic competitions that pose a significant challenge to the organization of the Pentagon and the military, which is often rigidly aligned around functional issues and regional geography.”⁷ McCain’s terminology does not (nor does it have to) map neatly to DOD or military terms, a point he notes in additional floor remarks.⁸ The term “transregional” implies a threat (such as terrorism) crossing national and regional boundaries. This is very different than near-peer threats with definable boundaries and fixed infrastructure/populations that opposing forces can strike. The senator describes cross-functional teams as being “focused on a discrete priority mission. It includes members from every functional organization in the bureaucracy that is necessary to achieving that mission.”⁹

Military medicine, seen in this context, is a function amenable to the application of the cross-functional team concept or further consolidation. In the author’s opinion, McCain’s cross-functional approach also brings to mind the related joint concept of cross-domain synergy. While the cross-functional approach is aimed at Office of the Secretary of Defense staff functions, the cross-domain approach targets warfighting. Both are very similar. Both trend toward the centralization of resources and authority toward Washington, D.C. Both were developed under a national security environment focused on small-scale combat operations. Both seek to address perceived barriers (functional and domain) in the post-Graham-Nichols organization of the DOD. And both require “essentially transcending service and

combatant command ownership of capabilities and assuming a global perspective on military operations to achieve globally integrated operations.”¹⁰ This transcendent language will come up again as we look at normative efforts within MHS consolidation.

We will focus on two decisions driving MHS consolidation that were made in the context of the 2015 *National Security Strategy*. Those decisions are the continued evolution and growth of the Defense Health Agency and the decision to deploy an MHS-wide electronic health record.

Military Health System Consolidation Efforts

While policy implementation is multiyear and executed through a number of documents, policy concepts are often described in fewer documents. In 2009, the Institute for Alternative Futures produced the *AMEDD Futures 2039 Project: Phase*

2 Final Report, which provides a testable blueprint for both MHS consolidation and consolidation objectives beyond the DOD. The purpose was “to develop a capacity for futures thinking within the Army Medical Department (AMEDD), and to explore major trends impacting the AMEDD over the next 30 years.”¹¹ Noting cost as the driving factor, the report suggested, “The economic realities of the cost of health will prompt national governance that integrates the MHS, VA [Department of Veterans Affairs], Health and Human Services, and civilian health organizations. The key stakeholders go beyond combatant commanders and DOD leadership.”¹²

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The 212th Combat Support Hospital setting up and training in a thirty-four-bed field hospital 7 November 2017 during the Guard-Ex Field Training Exercise at Breitenwald training area in Landstuhl, Germany. (Photo by Oliver Sommer, U.S. Army Visual Information Specialist)

In going beyond the combatant commanders and DOD, the report's authors envisioned "a consolidated healthcare system 'beyond jointness,' a system that involves the Joint Military Healthcare System (JMHS) and at least the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), could extend to all levels of government in the form of National Healthcare Insurance and a National Health System."¹³ This transcendent language mirrors thinking within cross-domain synergy concepts. But while cross-domain concepts are largely applicable within the DOD, the cross-functional approach described in *AMEDD 2039* breaches containment as it seeks to address problems outside the department's purview.

Finally, the report describes how "one scenario that can be envisioned is based on escalating costs or OSD/COCOM/JS/service senior leaders growing frustration with having to continually deal with medical issues across multiple organizations. A scenario could play out that results in all medical activities coming under a single organizational structure. That single structure could easily be a [Defense] Health Agency (DHA) framework using the Defense Logistics Institute (DLA) Defense [sic] as a model."¹⁴

The *AMEDD Futures 2039* report points to the ultimate objective of a form of nationalized healthcare system. In this report, we can see the attempt to use consolidation within the MHS as a means to a larger end. Written in 2009, the report had a pessimistic view of healthcare within the United States and saw the drive toward a national health system as a potential solution. This became a policy objective.

To that end, cost is often cited as the driver toward MHS consolidation. Military healthcare costs were projected to hit \$66.6 billion in 2016 and trend beyond \$70 billion in later years, so the need for spending economies was apparent, particularly when compared to the 2009 expenditures of \$46.3 billion. From fiscal year (FY) 2001 to FY 2009, military healthcare expenditures grew at an average annual rate of 11.8 percent with a projected FY 2009–FY 2016 projected growth

rate of 5.3 percent. However, the Budget Control Act of 2011 arrested the projected growth and the MHS expenditures rationalized to a 1.6 percent actual growth, or around \$50 billion dollars a year, from FY 2009 to FY 2016.¹⁵ Following the Budget Control Act of 2011, the DHA came into being.

The March 2012 deputy secretary of defense memorandum “Implementation of Military Health System Governance Reform” established the DHA as a combat support agency, gave them responsibilities for TRICARE (a DOD healthcare program), established multiservice markets, and authorized the placement of military treatment facilities (MTFs) within the National Capital Region under the authority, direction, and control of DHA.¹⁶

The MHS saw further integrative efforts with the passage of National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2017. Signed into law by President Barack Obama on 23 December 2016, it became Public Law No. 114-328.¹⁷ In his signing statement, Obama noted,

Beyond these provisions, I remain deeply concerned about the Congress’s use of the National Defense Authorization Act to impose extensive organizational changes on the Department of Defense, disregarding the advice of the Department’s senior civilian and uniformed leaders. The extensive changes in the bill are rushed, the consequences poorly understood, and they come at a particularly inappropriate time as we undertake a transition between administrations. These changes not only impose additional administrative burdens on the Department of Defense and make it less agile, but they also create additional bureaucracies and operational restrictions that generate inefficiencies at a time when we need to be more efficient.¹⁸

In the context of this article, the key features of the law fall into one of two broad areas. Sections 703 (facilities) and 721 (manpower) required force structure reductions. Sections 702 and 706 required consolidation at different levels within the system. Under Section 702, DHA was given administration of the “benefit.” Through department policy positions and later NDAA-19, the “benefit” became defined as healthcare delivery, veterinary and dental services, public health, education and training, and research and development. Section 706 (of

NDAA-17) directed the secretary of defense to establish “military-civilian integrated health delivery systems through partnerships with other health systems.”¹⁹ An initial read would seem to indicate broad systemic change, but the clarifying language directed the secretary to accomplish this consolidation through “memoranda of understanding or contracts between military treatment facilities [MTFs] and [other health systems].”²⁰ Instead of a broad, systematic military-civilian consolidation, we see law directing actions at the unit (MTF) level; actions that were already ongoing at medical facilities like U.S. Army Medical Department Activity, Fort Drum, New York.

NDAA-18 did not require further changes in the MHS but is interesting for language proposed, but not passed, in the conference report. In this language, the 2017 Senate Armed Services Committee proposed an amendment “that would require the Secretary of Defense, within 1 year of the date of the enactment of this Act, to conduct a pilot program of not less than 5 years duration to establish integrated healthcare delivery systems among the military health system, other federal health systems, and private sector integrated health systems.”²¹

This proposed language, had it passed, would have lifted military, other governmental agencies, and civilian consolidation from an action at the unit (Section 706) level to the MHS as a whole. In the absence of this language, the statutory authority used within the MHS for system-wide consolidation with other governmental agencies and civilian health systems remains the MTF specific authority in section 706.

A review of recent news articles demonstrates how this section 706 authority is driving consolidation outside of the DOD. DHA released an announcement, which reportedly stated “that an initiative known as DOD VA Health Care Staffing Services has reached the ‘strategy development stage.’”²² In a video report on the development, Bloomberg Government described the report as an effort “to merge the healthcare both agencies provide.”²³ Francis Rose (anchor for Government Matters), Rob Levinson (senior defense analyst for Bloomberg Government), and Megan Howard (congressional reporter, Bloomberg Government) noted, “This thing seems to be moving forward,” and “This has really operated under the radar screen,” and “The broad conversation on this is how to combine the military health system with ... the VA’s Veteran’s Health Administration ... that seems like something both the HVAC [House

Veterans Affairs Committee] and the Senate Veterans Affairs committee would be very, very interested in ... am I missing something?”²⁴ After the airing of the report, the VA issued a statement that “the initiative is not a proposal to merge healthcare systems.”²⁵

This confusion is understandable if we consider direction and timing. The move toward a whole of government approach to healthcare is coming from within the MHS, as indicated in the article accompanying the video. Second, using the blueprint provided by the *AMEDD Futures 2039* report, ten years in, we are at the point of MHS consolidation but before the planned point of integration with the VA, Health and Human Services (HHS), and private partners.

Previously, we discussed the proposed but not passed NDAA-18 language directing the secretary of defense toward an integrated healthcare delivery system beyond the DOD. In the Senate Armed Services Committee chairman’s markup for NDAA-2020, we find remarkably similar language reemerging and now recommending

a provision that would authorize the Secretary of Defense to conduct a pilot program for no more than 5 years to establish partnerships with public, private, and nonprofit health care organizations, institutions, and entities in collaboration with the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Transportation.”²⁶

In the author’s view, we must dispense with the idea that the Federal Government is monolithic, united and moving in concert toward some goal. In policy development, competing interests negotiate, sometime clash, and always ebb and flow.

These structural integrative efforts, conceived in a now outdated strategic environment of small-scale combat operations, seek to combine, at some point, the MHS and the VA. The complement to this structural effort is electronic.

Electronic Health Records

By linking electronic systems, future structural integrative efforts become more plausible, both within DOD and without. The 2014 decision to deploy a consolidated electronic health record (EHR) within the MHS saw the implementation of a facilities-based EHR beginning in 2017. As with MHS consolidation, the deployment of the EHR sought to consolidate

disparate health records systems by integrating inpatient and outpatient records, providing data access and decision support, and sharing data between DOD, the VA, and commercial providers.²⁷

In the FY 18 review of the DOD Healthcare Management System Modernization (DHMSM), the director, operational test and evaluation, referred to the new EHR as currently “not operationally effective because it did not demonstrate enough workable functionality to effectively manage and document patient care, ... not operationally suitable because of poor system usability, insufficient training and inadequate help desk support,” and “not survivable in a cyber-contested environment.”²⁸ Even within the national security environment of 2015, we experienced large-scale data breaches like the 2015 Office of Personnel Management hack.²⁹ Consolidated systems can deliver efficiencies but also single points of failure.

These problems are likely solvable, but what they point out is the risk in the pace of change. DOD, DHA, and the vendor need time to evaluate the risks to force and mission. The advantages of an EHR, moving from a documenting system to a care coordination tool, are great. But the deployment of inadequate tools could nullify the advantage. Despite problems, the continued employment of the EHR remains a high priority within the MHS.³⁰ When seen in the context of further systematic consolidation, that decision becomes understandable.

Toward a National Health System

An MHS that moves “beyond combatant commanders and DOD,” merges with the VA, and includes Health and Human Services (HHS) would not, in itself, constitute a national health system. The literature within the MHS is unclear on how this hybrid system would become a national healthcare system. However, we can envision this nationalization occurring through the concept of monopsony, “the term for a commodity market that includes numerous sellers and a single buyer.”³¹

The DOD has a monopsony in the purchase of certain goods and services. In the healthcare space, the MHS, which is an insurance plan and a direct care system, does not. But an MHS moving beyond the DOD as an MHS/VA, and in combination with strategic partners and alliances, could conceivably achieve what Pauly describes as a “partial monopsony.”³² In this scenario, a single buyer could exert enough influence over



the market to drive standards and pricing. A recent Kaiser Health News article asked, “What if huge health insurance companies could push down prices charged by hospitals and doctors in the same way [as Wal-Mart]?” It then noted, “Accepting Wal-Mart logic for healthcare might bolster arguments for an even bigger, more powerful buyer of medical services: the government. A single-payer, government health system ... would be the ultimate monopsony: one buyer, negotiating or dictating prices for everybody.”³³

This monopsony could also drive industry standards. The president of government services at Cerner (the EHR vendor for the DOD and VA), testifying before Congress, indicated as much when he noted, “The power of the DOD and VA to make that choice [choose a common standard] to move forward will influence the commercial marketplaces.”³⁴ A combined MHS/VA, in combination with strategic partners and alliances like HHS, could, potentially, act as a partial monopsony in dictating input prices. This hybridized system would represent more than 56,000 beds out of a total U.S. capacity of over 931,000 beds (all types)

Soldiers with the 131st Field Hospital, 528th Hospital Center, assess a mock patient 15 August 2018 during a simulated emergency as part of a week-long exercise at Fort Bliss, Texas. The exercise was designed to test capabilities, build rapport, and increase efficiency at the Army’s second-ever updated, modular-design field hospital. (Photo by Marcy Sanchez, William Beaumont Army Medical Center)

and a combined beneficiary population of over 19 million people.³⁵ From a partial monopsony position, a combined MHS/VA/HHS health system could drive toward a national healthcare system.

Of course, the construction of a national health system is a multiyear policy objective. Within the context of that policy objective, we can see NDAA-17 as a recognizable waypoint. This fits in with the road map laid out in the *AMEDD Futures 2039* report. We have seen the establishment of the DHA, the consolidation of shared services and the National Capital Region, and now the consolidation of the MHS under a single authority. The next waypoint would be the consolidation of the MHS, VA, HHS, and other strategic partners and alliances.

These final steps would place the MHS on a path toward “a Consolidated Federal Healthcare System, a system that would function as a National Healthcare System.”³⁶

In the end, policy preferences are just that—policy preferences—and presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed officials have the authority to pursue them. As part of the process, military planners at all levels must continue to balance perceived advantages in a single

The Army had a readiness challenge and needed to respond. It responded to the new *National Security Strategy* and 2018 *National Defense Strategy* with a doctrinal focus on multi-domain operations and LSCO fought at the levels of theater armies, corps, and divisions. Inevitably, LSCO will come with large-scale casualties.

It is difficult to produce unclassified casualty estimates tested against validated operation plans;

“From a military perspective, readiness must remain the overriding focus, not efforts aimed at consolidation for administrative ends that may actually be an impediment to readiness.”

policy preference with straightforward assessments of risk to mission or risk to force. The necessity of military doing so is even more important in today’s environment as the 2018 *National Defense Strategy* notes that “(U) Our institution [the Department of Defense] has biased processes to manage low-end limited conflicts versus high-end, large-scale combat.”³⁷ The focus on low-end limited conflicts makes the status quo consolidation of the MHS, beyond the DOD, possible.

Readiness within the 2017 National Security Environment

With the 2017 *National Security Strategy*, great power competition, and the potential for large-scale combat operations, returns. President Donald Trump directed, “To retain military overmatch, the United States must restore our ability to produce innovative capabilities, restore the readiness of our forces for major war, and grow the size of the force so that it is capable of operating at sufficient scale and for ample duration to win across a range of scenarios.”³⁸

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley, reflecting on the Army’s posture in 2015, noted, “If you go back to 2015, I think we were on a downward slope of readiness relative to the tasks required to be able to fight near-peer competitors. Our readiness was probably okay for counterinsurgency and counterterrorism but not for the higher end of warfare. At that time, we really only had two or three brigades at the highest levels of readiness; today we’re in excess of 20.”³⁹

however, we can examine historical plans and planning models. From a date range of 11 September 2001 to 31 December 2012, approximately 15,740 service members required Role 4 or Role 5 hospitalization.⁴⁰ That averages to approximately 118 soldiers per month, or four casualties per day. By comparison, U.S. Transportation Command, the combatant command responsible for patient distribution within the continental United States, provides planning factors in support of LSCO that range from 250 to one thousand casualties per day returning to the United States.⁴¹ The 2019 Army Campaign Plan notes, “Warfare will become more violent, lethal and swift, creating more consequential risks in terms of casualties, cost, and escalation.”⁴² This casualty stream is at the heart of the readiness challenge for military medical forces.

In the author’s view, military readiness is not a priority in MHS consolidation given that consolidation efforts really serve as a means to a larger administrative end unrelated to the return to competition and the large-scale combat operations that implies. As a result, readiness is poorly understood and not properly considered at the enterprise level of the MHS, with its continued focus on discreet, individual tasks such as clinical knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs).⁴³

In the military services, readiness is more clearly defined. At the DOD level, readiness is “the ability of military forces to fight and meet the demands of assigned missions.”⁴⁴ As the term comes through the secretary and the chief of staff of the Army, readiness is sharpened

and refined until it becomes clear guidance. Army Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Nadja West, in her role as the commanding general of U.S. Army Medical Command, provides this commander's assessment:

As directed by the Chief of Staff of the Army, our top priority is Readiness. The Secretary of the Army defines readiness as "ensuring the Total Army is ready to deploy, fight and win across the entire spectrum of conflict, with an immediate focus on preparing for a high-end fight against a near peer adversary." Further, he directs "improving Readiness is the benchmark for everything we do; it should guide our decision-making."⁴⁵

Readiness is without a limiting clause. Readiness is not just individual tasks, like discreet clinical KSAs currently in use as a force-shaping metric (in accordance with section 703). Medical readiness is the ability of the entire medical force to respond to LSCO. Readiness requires military attention at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. From a military perspective, readiness must remain the overriding focus, not efforts aimed at consolidation for administrative ends that may actually be an impediment to readiness.

Readiness is not a focus in MHS consolidation. Instead, the focus is on a limited system "that will have civilians providing the majority of care to beneficiaries and a slimmed-down uniform staff focusing primarily on operational medicine."⁴⁶ This is the very definition of an MHS bias that anachronistically focuses on managing "low-end limited conflicts versus high-end, large scale combat" that the *National Defense Strategy* cautions against. Logically, an MHS not focused on military requirements is just a health system. And those military requirements far exceed the current focus on discrete, individual-level tasks like KSAs, individual soldier readiness, and soldier readiness processing; a complete understanding of medical readiness must include the number of collective tasks required in LSCO. Understanding the task required means abandoning the view of distant, small-scale combat operations appearing occasionally in public view as a CNN chyron and understanding that a theater war will inherently involve the strategic support area in the continental United States. In the event of a theater war, U.S. Navy medical personnel will board ships and slip over the horizon; U.S. Air Force medical personnel will support from bases and build

the vital strategic aeromedical evacuation bridge; and the AMEDD Regiment will leave cantonment with the deploying formations or expand medical capacity within the strategic support area.

Responsibilities of the Army health system at war include

- displacing assigned personnel working in MTFs;
- transferring "the benefit" to the purchased care network in order to provide personnel support to soldier readiness processing;
- receiving multiple U.S. Army Reserve medical support units and troop medical clinic personnel to support mobilization force generation installations;
- executing installation medical supply activities or master ordering facility tasks;
- reception, staging, onward movement, and integration of medical backfill battalions, blood support detachments, and veterinary service detachments;
- initiating bed expansion packages (execution of indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity and medical Q-coded service contracts);
- operating federal coordination centers;
- providing patient reception teams to aeromedical evacuation hubs;
- receiving casualties (250–1,000 per day) who meet the sixty-day hold policy (conserving fighting strength);
- regulating the DOD-VA contingency hospital system;
- providing case management/discharge services for service members within the DOD-VA contingency hospital system using the warrior transition battalions;
- monitoring decision points like reducing graduate medical education to regenerate Army health system capacity lost through attrition; and finally,
- reversing these processes through demobilization tasks.

Is the MHS ready today to execute this wide array of necessary activities? An external evaluation would suggest it is not. U.S. Transportation Command Base Plan 9008 calls for an almost immediate access (on a cost reimbursable basis) to the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS). Access to the NDMS is contingent on "a military health emergency declared by the ASD (HA) [Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs]," which "is deemed to be a public health emergency for purposes of the NDMS statute."⁴⁷ Put in perspective, at

a cost to the American people of some \$50 billion a year, the MHS will be in a state of public health emergency in the first days of war. Unless we refocus.

Broadly speaking, Army medicine faces the same challenges as the Army writ large. Army challenges in strategic deep fires, air defense artillery, and logistical support to LSCO become Army medicine challenges in war-time expansion, casualty reception, and combat power regeneration. The additional complexity Army medicine faces is MHS consolidation efforts. The structure, the engine, of Army medical readiness is in place. But instead of turning it back on, consolidation is pushing us to bolt the M1A2 engine of readiness into the Model T of pre-2017 MHS consolidation efforts in a way that will, predictably, fail. The bitter irony is that we are now changing medical warfighting structure at the exact moment we are directed to return to LSCO planning efforts.

Conclusion

The status quo development of a consolidated MHS and the continued development of a health system that

grows beyond the DOD clearly increases military readiness risk as we continue to transition from small-scale combat operations and return to LSCOs. The assumptions that drove MHS consolidation are likely no longer valid in an environment characterized by great power competition. However, there is time within congressionally mandated timelines, to refocus.

We are at a fork in the road. Down one path is a focus on the “benefit.” We see the MHS following the blueprint of the *AMEDD Futures 2039* report: increasingly civilianize, detach from the DOD, and merge with the VA/HHS/civilian strategic partners and allies to become the nucleus of some form of nationalized healthcare system. Down the other path is readiness, properly understood. Down this path, we go into the future; we see America’s worst day—where her wounded stretch across battlefields measured in thousands of kilometers—and we make a plan for them. If we choose the “benefit,” then the best medical advice to America’s fighting sons and daughters will be “don’t get wounded.” ■

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STEPHEN F. COHEN

WAR
WITH
RUSSIA?

FROM PUTIN & UKRAINE TO
TRUMP & RUSSIAGATE



“The most controversial Russia expert in America.”

—*THE CHRONICLE REVIEW*

Review Essay of Stephen F. Cohen's

War with Russia? From Putin & Ukraine to Trump & Russiagate

Robert F. Baumann, PhD

Stephen Cohen has long played the role of contrarian regarding conventional wisdom about Russian behavior. His latest work, titled *War with Russia? From Putin and Ukraine to Trump and Russiagate*, carries on the author's signature line of argument, blending edited versions of past commentaries from *The Nation*—a progressive blog associated with the journal of the same name—with additional reflections compiled since 2014. As Cohen explains in his “Note to Readers” at the opening of the book, events of 2014 both intensified public dialog in the United States about Russian conduct and vaulted him to a heightened level of notoriety. At that time, Russia's seizure of the Crimea at the expense of Ukrainian territorial sovereignty stirred outrage among Western democracies and incited a torrent of criticism leveled at Russian President Vladimir Putin. Russia's subsequent role in instigating a civil war in eastern Ukraine appeared to confirm a pattern of aggression and a wanton disregard for international norms. Some American observers suggested comparisons with Adolf Hitler's invasion of Poland in 1939.

Against this background, Cohen's cautionary remarks that confrontation with Russia is fraught with risks attracted only slight notice. However, he also contended that the West had disregarded Russia's interests for years and that Putin's actions were fully understandable. This claim energized many mainstream commentators in academia and the news media to direct sharp criticism at Cohen. Indeed, so

stinging were some of the verbal assaults that Cohen felt obliged to assert that he has no hidden agendas and considers himself a patriot. Because responses to Cohen's arguments about Russia are so closely associated with critiques of his motives and objectivity, this review will first pause to relate this reader's perspective on Cohen's scholarship and contributions to the field of Russian history and affairs.

Cohen's first major work was a biography of Nikolai Bukharin, one of the original leaders of the Bolsheviks and a close associate of Vladimir Lenin before and after the October Revolution of 1917. Later a victim of Joseph Stalin's purges in 1938, Bukharin was occasionally a moderate voice in Soviet politics, at least when compared with the gang of cutthroats who rode Stalin's coattails to the pinnacle of power in the Soviet Union. For instance, Bukharin diverged from Stalin's position on the aggressive

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collectivization of agriculture, a policy that yielded a human catastrophe across much of Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and elsewhere. The likeness of Bukharin drawn by Cohen was that of a communist intellectual trying to build a Soviet future. In a 1985 work titled *Rethinking the Soviet Experience: Politics and History Since 1917*, Cohen vigorously advanced the proposition that Bukharin—and, in fact, Bukharinism—constituted a realistic alternative path for Soviet development in the 1930s, one that would have been far less brutal than the actual course of events with Stalin at the helm. Thus, boiled down to its essence, Cohen made the philosophical argument for the role of contingency in history. This scholarly position, incidentally, is one that this reviewer vehemently endorses.

Although Cohen's case might have been slightly optimistic concerning both Bukharin's prospects and the likely outcomes had he, not Stalin, ascended to power, the argument was well worth making. I assigned *Rethinking the Soviet Experience* to many of my students over the next decade or two. The book also attracted the notice of reformist Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, who in the late 1980s was searching for a historical narrative that highlighted the roles of Bukharin and Nikita Khrushchev over those of Stalin, Leonid Brezhnev, and Yuri Andropov. Gorbachev understood that in order to salvage the legitimacy of the communist party that he hoped to reform, he needed to carve out an ideological detour around the worst dogmas and deeds attributable to the regime he now headed. Of course, in this endeavor, Gorbachev failed. Bracketed by two sharply divergent political trends, an angry conservative reaction to his right and accelerating liberalization to his left, he lost control of events; the Soviet Union fractured. With the blessing of Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation, the fifteen ethnically based constituent Soviet republics exercised their theoretical right to secede.

More than many observers at the time, Cohen harbored deep skepticism about Yeltsin. Cohen bought into Gorbachev's earnest effort to transform Soviet society and believed he might have succeeded given better luck and more time. In turn, Cohen evinced doubts about Yeltsin's credentials both as a democrat and transformational figure. While many in the West admired Yeltsin's dramatic defiance of the attempted putsch against the Soviet Union's reformist government in 1991, Cohen was not sold that Yeltsin was much more than a savvy opportunist politician.¹ As Cohen notes in his prologue of

War with Russia?, it was Yeltsin, not Putin, who began the de-democratization of Russia by initiating curbs on the powers of parliament and allying himself with so-called oligarchs who bought out key media outlets. While not denying that Putin has tightened the reigns of central authority considerably more since 1999, Cohen correctly rejects assertions that Putin is some kind of autocrat. As he remarks, "If he is really a 'cold-blooded, ruthless' autocrat—'the worst dictator on the planet'—tens of thousands of protesters would not have repeatedly appeared in Moscow streets [in 2011]."² Indeed, the regime did tolerate massive protests. However, two qualifications are in order. First, this was during the presidency of Dmitri Medvedev, and second, Putin would go on to curb the right to public assembly once back in office. Still, Cohen also notes that Putin does not wield authority exclusively. That is true, strictly speaking, but the main reasons are not particularly pleasing. It is not the duma, the Russian parliament, or the courts that exercise a meaningful check on presidential authority. Rather, so-called *siloviki*, prominent (usually outrageously wealthy) figures with connections to the Federal Security Service (a successor security agency of the *Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* [KGB]) or the military, enjoy considerable sway as do the agencies themselves. Public opinion sometimes exerts influence but not usually through democratic institutions intended for that purpose.

Putin's Regime

Disagreement over Putin's regime stands out as one of four intersecting axes of opinion, each reflecting a continuum of opposing positions, taken up in this article. Because Cohen's commentaries are so wide-ranging, it is practical to address only a few major issues that distinguish his views from those of the great majority of his Western contemporaries in the field of Russian affairs. Thus, the first question revolves around the nature of Putin and his presidency. Has he been the victim of demonization by Western commentators, as Cohen claims, or does the common critique largely capture the true spirit of his regime?

Cohen contends that Putin's bad press in the United States stems from his determination to resist the creation of a U.S.-dominated world order.³ In truth, quite a few of America's allies have been uncomfortable with U.S. unilateralism, but they have come to see Russia as an active threat to liberal values. It does not escape



notice that Putin has found partners in China, Syria, North Korea, Sudan, and Venezuela to name a few. If you detect a pattern here, you are not alone. Defining traits of Putin's circle of trust apparently include a disregard for niceties such as the rule of law, contested elections, civil liberties, press freedoms, protection of intellectual property, economic transparency, and so on. In contrast, American support for democratic opportunities of the Arab Spring, wise or not, was anathema to the league of strongman regimes Russia favors. As a 2019 *Time* article summarized, "Today, while some in the West still offer sermons about democracy and human rights, the value that Russia champions on the world stage is sovereignty—which holds that each regime has the right to rule its territory without fear of foreign interference."⁴ In fairness, the United States itself has a checkered past when it comes to lending selective support to undesirable regimes. Thus, Cohen is not straying far from the facts when he argues that anti-Putin rhetoric has at times become a bit overheated.

Nikolai Bukharin (center, wearing hat) at a meeting of the workers and peasants news reporters 15 June 1926 in Moscow. (Photo by Samsonov via Wikimedia Commons)

Cohen concurs with political scientists who describe Putin as a "soft authoritarian" based on the inheritance and retention of some democratic as well as authoritarian elements.⁵ He vehemently rejects characterizations of Putin as a one-dimensional creation of the old Soviet KGB in which he served well over a decade as a young man.⁶ Indeed, Cohen suggests that years of service in East Germany probably gave Putin an appreciation of European culture and perhaps even helped him to think about the West more realistically than many other Russian political figures. Putin's subsequent career has exhibited a measure of pragmatism as well as the strategic resolve to advance Russia's position in global affairs. The key inference here might be that Putin, though problematic, is not a worst-case scenario for the West.

As noted above, Cohen absolves Putin of much of the blame for Russia's steady drift away from legal and democratic norms. Boris Yeltsin centralized authority extensively in the Russian presidency from 1996 on. Yet, during Putin's presidential terms, Russia has tilted increasingly toward authoritarian methods reminiscent of the Soviet period. Recent legislation restricting the criticism of public figures, progressive limitations on opposition political activities, curbs on the activities of foreign religious and nongovernmental organizations (NGO), plans to circle the cultural wagons and seal Russia's internet off from the outside world, and increasingly strident anti-Western rhetoric all seem like harbingers of a return to some version of the past.

Journalist Anna Aratunyan views Putin as a mainstream Russian historical figure, though not necessarily in a flattering way. Generalizing about the nature of Russian politics, she states, "Power, in the Russian tradition, legitimizes itself."⁷ In her opinion, if Putin has authoritarian inclinations, this is not what most contributed to his declining reputation in the West. The turning point, Aratunyan said, was the shooting down of a passenger jet over Ukraine in 2014.⁸ Notwithstanding extensive evidence implicating Russian-supported separatists, Russia denied everything and did its utmost to obfuscate the facts with a bevy of alternative theories. Russia's propaganda campaign was effective domestically but tended to enrage Westerners.

Previously, the darkest shadow hanging over the Putin administration involved the murders of domestic critics such as journalist Anna Politkovskaya or ex-KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko. To be sure, no one has produced evidence linking Putin directly to these events, but unconvincing official investigations inevitably placed the regime in a suspicious light. Journalist Masha Gessen described the circumstances in *The Man without a Face: The Unlikely Rise of Vladimir Putin*. Both victims were involved in multiple unofficial investigations of incidents such as the conduct of security forces during the tragic 2002 siege of the Dubrovka Theatre in Moscow and the series of apartment bombings in Moscow and other cities in 1999. Official investigations left many loose ends. Politkovskaya and Litvinenko were among those who suspected an official cover-up. They also took an interest in matters such as reports of war crimes in Chechnya.⁹ Subsequent to Politkovskaya's murder in October 2006 and just weeks before his own, Litvinenko took up an exploration of the

facts of that case as well. Meanwhile, more recent cases involving regime opponents such as the 2015 assassination of presidential contender Boris Nemtsov in Moscow or the 2018 Sergei Skripal poisoning case in Britain have done nothing to enhance the image of the Russian government.

During the past two years, Putin has also drawn angry rebuke from the West for his encouragement of far-right authoritarian movements in Europe. The emergence of strong nationalist, anti-immigrant political parties in much of Europe has created a new opening for Putin to cultivate influence across the continent. Ironically, the Russian president is now in a position to reciprocate what he believes has been hostile Western outreach to his domestic opponents. Posturing as a defender of Christian civilization, Putin throws multicultural theory back in the faces of condescending Westerners. In turn, Western critics have engaged in rhetorical escalation based on guilt by association with some suggesting, for example, that Putin is a white supremacist. A simple online search of "Putin and white supremacy" will turn up abundant examples.¹⁰

This article is not the place to engage in a serious discussion of the Russian Federation's complicated, and often problematic, ethnic policies. However, in this writer's experience across the former Soviet Union, most non-Russians do not regard Putin as a racist. (This is not to say that they broadly like his cultural policies or his systematic reduction of regional prerogatives.) In fact, the entire conversation about race and nationality in Russia (and other parts of the former Soviet Union) has its own distinctive set of reference points more grounded in peoples' everyday lives than in the constantly shifting currents of theory prevalent among the American professoriate. In the domain of interethnic relations, the Soviet legacy is not entirely negative given extended efforts to build popular identification

Next page: Russian President Vladimir Putin has simultaneously become among the most revered as well as most reviled current world leaders. He is extremely popular among governments that tend toward authoritarianism, while at the same time he is despised by many liberal, democratic states. Western antipathy for Putin reached a zenith with the forcible Russian annexation of the Crimea in 2014 and intervention on behalf of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in 2015. One manifestation of this antipathy has been unrelenting personal vilification of Putin in much of the Western press as reflected in the depictions of Putin on popular magazine covers. Media contempt for Putin has stoked Russian popular animus toward the West, to the point where many Russians view war with the United States and Western states as inevitable, if not already underway. (Images of covers courtesy of each magazine publisher)



with a multinational state. While there remains considerable ethnic and religious prejudice, *Rossiiane*—Russians in a civic and cultural rather than ethnic sense—have discovered their own organically grown means of confronting differences. Remarkably, it is probably easier to find a frank discussion about race in Russia than in the United States because the “rules of engagement” are simpler and more forgiving. Then again, overt expressions of racism in Russia seem to be more common.

The Idea of Fascism and Putin’s Political Outlook

The designation of Putin as a fascist by some prominent Western scholars and journalists has drawn Cohen into yet another debate. As already noted, observers have devoted years of analysis to figure out how best to describe Putin’s approach to politics. Suggestions of fascism appear to stem from three kinds of observations. The first pertains to Putin’s progressive departure from Western-style democratic norms, the second relates to his outreach to right-wing movements in Europe, and the third relies on historical analysis.

Prominent Yale historian Timothy Snyder, among others, leaped into the fray to note parallels between the ideas and actions of influential figures around Putin and those of fascists and Nazis in the late 1930s.¹¹ No doubt unintentionally, Putin himself helped facilitate this comparison by defending the necessity of the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. That agreement stunned the world by declaring a state of nonaggression between former enemies the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. The pact’s secret clauses, finally acknowledged by Soviet historians in the late 1980s, set the stage for the joint invasion of Poland as well as Soviet annexation of the Baltic States. In any case, in this context, Snyder took strong issue with Cohen’s justification of Putin’s decision to protect Russians in eastern Ukraine.¹² In his 2010 work, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin*, Snyder describes the human catastrophe that befell much of Eastern Europe during World War II and successive occupation regimes. Thus, his more recent suggestion of modern-day echoes and criticism of Russian involvement in stirring up fascistic political groups in Europe drew a response from Cohen and some others.

In September 2018, another scholar, Marlène Laruelle of George Washington University, challenged the validity of applying the fascist label to Putin’s Russia. Making a methodological point, she asserted, “Labeling Vladimir

Putin’s Russia a fascist regime is a serious accusation with policy and potentially legal implications.” She continued, “Unfortunately, the most vocal of Russia’s academic accusers seem to have little interest in testing the ‘fascism’ hypothesis using scholarly tools.”¹³ Without defending Russia’s conduct in Ukraine, Laruelle made two essential assertions. First, Snyder and others did not accurately contextualize statements by Putin and those around him.¹⁴ Second, there is no official ideology in Russia today; even if there are influential figures in Russia whose arguments bear some resemblance to those employed by fascists, these do not constitute a guide for Russian actions.¹⁵ She concludes that “the Kremlin does not live in an ideological world inspired by Nazi Germany.”¹⁶

How, then, does Russia see itself? Kirill, the patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow, offered as cogent of an explanation as anyone in November 2017 when he assured his countrymen that Russia’s history does not move in a circle. In other words, Russia was not working its way toward a seismic event such as the Revolution of 1917. “On the contrary,” he argued, “today we are again learning to exult in national unification and reconciliation We are learning from our own mistakes. We have acquired immunity with regard to those forms of radicalism, and for us as never before consensus and common values are important.”¹⁷ Implicit in this statement is that the Putin government has brought stability, even at the expense of civil liberties, and Russia is capable of weathering a crisis. Russia is not deceived by the Western façade of juridical norms that conceal double standards and justify interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states. Ideological arguments aside, to many Russians who endured the turmoil and economic insecurity of the 1990s, the Putin years seem like a change for the better.

Some outside observers wonder whether Russia views itself through the lens of Eurasianism, a vaguely defined outlook framing Russia as a civilization between the East and the West. The idea of Eurasianism has had many proponents over the past century, but they tend to diverge as soon as they get into the details. Curiously, the idea first gained a strong ideological foothold among Russian intellectuals living in exile after the revolution. Alexander Dugin, a professor at Moscow University, is probably the best-known advocate of Eurasianism in Russia today, and he epitomizes the sources of its attraction as well as the reasons it is unlikely to take hold as an official point of view. Boiled down to a bumper sticker about a distinctive

Russian civilization, Eurasianism resonates. Therefore, the proximity of Eurasianists to Putin's government lends a veneer of intellectual substance to the regime. However, as an ideological foundation for national policy Eurasianism, whether as elaborated by Dugin or someone else, is hopelessly complex and even convoluted. By comparison, the works of Karl Marx and Lenin were models of clarity. Scholar Walter Laqueur notes the confusion caused by Dugin's "ideological peregrinations" over the years and observes that he has become a leading conspiracy theorist and opponent of Western liberalism.¹⁸

Russia's Foreign Policy

For over a decade, the nature of Putin's quarrel with the West has been the subject of debate among scholars and policy analysts. Former national security adviser and secretary of state to President George W. Bush, Condoleezza Rice, observed in her memoirs that Putin succinctly spelled out his concerns with the West in 2008. In particular, she cited NATO expansion and the circumstances of ethnic Russians in Ukraine as deeply troubling to Russia. What is most remarkable in that recollection is the consistency of Putin's vision regarding Russia's strategic prerogatives.¹⁹ Those statements effectively foreshadowed Putin's actions during his second stint in the presidency starting in 2012. In reality, as Harvard's Dmitry Gorenburg points out, Russia's general approach to foreign policy has been remarkably consistent since the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991.²⁰ From this perspective, Russia is not just another country but rather a multinational state with legitimate great power aspirations that demand Europe's respect.

Andrei Tsygankov, a political scientist at San Francisco State University, argued in 2012 that the key to understanding Russian behavior in the international arena is to understand that honor is a central motivating force. Simply put, Russia and the West tend to get along better when Russia feels its interests have been respected.²¹ John Mearsheimer, a political scientist at the University of Chicago, sees the 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit as a watershed moment because of the evident interest in adding Georgia and Ukraine as members.²² Since that time, if not earlier, Russia believed its strategic interests had been ignored, if not actually undermined by the West.

Cohen has largely echoed Russia's point of view. Broadly speaking, Cohen believes that the West, not Russia, has been unable or unwilling to set aside Cold

War-era predispositions. As he puts it, "There is the ramifying demonization allegation that, as a foreign policy leader, Putin has been extremely 'aggressive' abroad and his behavior has been the sole cause of the new cold war. At best, this is an 'in the eye of the beholder' assertion, and half-blind."²³ Here Cohen sympathizes with the Russian perspective that the expansion of NATO triggered Russia's responses in Georgia, Ukraine, and elsewhere. He also supports Russia's stance to back the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria on the grounds that it is the lesser of two evils—the other being the Islamic State. He does not lend any serious credence to the former Obama administration policy backing a third force in Syria.²⁴

The most intractable obstacle to a return to normalcy between the West and Russia is the conflict in Ukraine. Here, in particular, Cohen diverges sharply from mainstream Western opinion. Cohen asserts flatly that the yearning of Ukrainians for an independent statehood is a fallacy. On the contrary, he affirms the Russian nationalist line that Ukraine has always been divided and has no past as a unified nation. Proceeding from this observation, he argues that the European Union's attempt to draw Ukraine into a closer relationship constituted a "reckless provocation."²⁵

In fairness to Russia, the historical status of the Crimea has been particularly complex. Russia subjugated the Crimea under Catherine the Great in the eighteenth century and formally annexed it in 1783. During the Crimean War (1853–56), and again during World War II, Russian soldiers died defending the peninsula and the Port of Sevastopol. Russian emotional attachment owes much to this history as well as the fact that the majority of the population there has long been ethnically Russian. (Then again, the Crimean Tatars who did not leave after the initial Russian conquest were subject to Stalin's purges and subsequent deportations.) Anyhow, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev orchestrated the administrative transfer to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1954, an action that Russians sought to reverse with a referendum in January 1991 even before the Soviet Union's demise.²⁶ In short, the Crimean question was on the table between Russia and Ukraine even before it entered the international spotlight.

Perhaps what is most remarkable about Cohen's take on Putin's foreign policy is that he is almost alone among Russian experts in his utter dismissal of the Ukrainian perspective. Western journalists, including a significant



number of Russian émigrés, take serious exception and are quick to note how much Cohen's narrative parallels those of major Russian media outlets owned by Putin cronies that unfailingly support official state positions. Indeed, some critics contend that the American and Western approach to Russia has been entirely too soft. For example, former World Chess Champion-turned-opposition spokesman Gary Kasparov notes, "Obviously Russia violated the agreement [the Budapest Memorandum guaranteeing Ukraine's frontiers in exchange for giving up its nuclear weapons] when it invaded and then annexed Crimea in March 2014." He adds bitterly, "It tells the world that American security promises are worthless."²⁷ All four recent American presidents (Bill Clinton, George H. W. Bush, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama) were far too anxious to work with Russia and placed far too much faith in their personal relationships with Russian leaders (Mikhail Gorbachev, Boris Yeltsin, Dmitri Medvedev, and Vladimir Putin).²⁸

Similarly, émigré journalist Masha Gessen offers a scathing appraisal of the generous treatment Putin received in major American newspapers, including the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Los*

Soldiers, believed to be Russian, ride in armored personnel carriers 10 March 2014 on a road near the Crimean port city of Sevastopol. The annexation of Crimea continues to be the most hotly contested impediment to normalization of relations between Russia, the United States, and other Western nations. (Photo by Baz Ratner, Reuters)

Angeles Times, and the *Washington Post*, which glossed over Russia's failures to meet its own promises and its gradual abandonment of democratic principles.²⁹ Gessen asserts that during Putin's first term as president, few periodicals (*The Economist* being a notable exception), took Russian misbehavior seriously, having moved on to the war on terror or more interesting developments in American and European politics. Gessen adds, "Having told their audiences and themselves that Russia was safely entering a period of political and economic stability, American media effectively declared the Russian story dead, cut the resources available to cover it, and thereby killed their ability to report the story."³⁰ Russia's rising revenues from oil and gas eclipsed interest in the war in Chechnya or pervasive corruption.

Members of the scholarly community have weighed in forcefully as well. Prominent Yale historian Timothy Snyder, in *The Road to Unfreedom*, describes at length the progress of events in Ukraine from the Maidan protest movement in 2013 through the takeover of the Crimea by Russia and the incitement of war in eastern Ukraine. He disassembles official and unofficial claims from Russian sources point by point. He characterizes the purpose of RT (Russian Television), the state-funded television channel, as “the suppression of knowledge that might inspire action, and the coaxing of emotion into inaction.”³¹ Snyder finds a Russian pattern of misdirection, half-truth, and falsehood aimed as much to paralyze critical analysis as to persuade anyone of Russia’s position. For Snyder, there is no mistaking Russia’s role in subverting Ukrainian statehood.

On a theoretical plane, Snyder attributes Russian strategic behavior to “strategic relativism.” The point, simply put, is that if Russia has no prospect of catching up with the West economically or technologically, it could still take the United States and Europe down a notch by means of information warfare.³² He summarizes, “In strategic relativism, the point is to transform international politics into a negative-sum game, where a skillful player will lose less than everyone else.” Surveying Russia’s result in Ukraine to date, Snyder notes that Ukraine has to date withstood outside aggression and even carried out “free and fair elections.”³³ Meanwhile, Russian action provoked a proportionate reaction from the West, chiefly in the form of sanctions.

Another thoughtful observer, Nina Khrushcheva, granddaughter of former Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, likens the annexation of the Crimea to Putin’s version of the Monroe Doctrine. This does not mean she approves, however. She merely asserts that Putin chooses to view the action as within the norms of great power behavior. In assessing Putin’s motives, Khrushcheva highlights Russia’s sense of historic grievance that might successfully fuel Putin’s drive to rally Russian patriotism but “offers no future” in terms of building a better life for the Russian people.³⁴ Addressing comparative assessments of Russia and the West as a now self-identified Westerner, she concludes, “Yet for all the West’s inconsistency and even hypocrisy, since the 1991 Soviet collapse we have (for the most part) lived in the world of comfort and civility, not ideological fervor and militant rejection of legal and economic institutions.

On a larger scale, this has benefited all. Putin’s Russia will never be able to make the same claim.”³⁵

Has the West Become Russophobic?

Cohen sees himself as a balancer, getting readers to see the other side. He laments what he terms “Russophobia” among much of the American political class as well as high-profile journalists and academics. Has Cohen “stayed the course” on this topic since the publication of *War against Russia*? In a recent interview, Cohen disputed the widespread characterization of Russian meddling in the 2016 elections as an “attack” on the United States. Cohen asserts accurately that attempts to exert influence on the politics of another state are not unusual and that the United States has not abstained in the past from doing so where its own vital interests are concerned.³⁶ Official American expressions of encouragement to Putin’s democratic opposition prior to Russia’s 2012 election serve as an illustration. Thus, Cohen has a point, and it is fair to add that Putin probably took American involvement quite personally.

Then again, there are two sides to this story as well. The United States’ counterargument essentially boils down to one of intent and techniques. The United States was trying to encourage democracy in Russia, not subvert it. In addition, the United States was overt and transparent in reaching out to Russia’s opposition, which labored under severe legal and structural disadvantages during the campaign. Angela Stent, a professor of government at Georgetown University, wrote that much of Russia’s educated middle class was offended at Putin’s cavalier dismissal of the democratic process in setting himself up for another run at the presidency. Furthermore, independent investigation of the Duma elections of December 2012 indicated “widespread fraud.”³⁷

Meanwhile, the U.S. perception that Russia’s meddling in the 2016 election constituted an “attack” has gone mainstream in the American political class. As noted above, Cohen cried “foul” and issued a precisely framed rebuttal.³⁸ Quite simply, meddling of this kind is not that new. In the current overheated context, Cohen’s take needs a bit more airing in the general American discourse about the election. This reviewer, having watched the campaign unfold from Uzbekistan while on sabbatical, suggested to an audience in 2017 that Russia’s election interference was possible in large measure because of existing dysfunction in the American domestic political debate. Moreover,

Russia barely scratched the surface in terms of what might have been attempted. Cohen is, alas, mostly correct in contending that public dialog about Russia, swept up in powerful cross-currents of our current rage-driven politics, lacks nuance and a rounded understanding of Russia's viewpoint. This is not to say that the United States should condone malicious disruption by Russia or anyone else. On the contrary, 2016 should be seen as a timely warning that democratic countries must take election security far more seriously and that democratic electorates need to be a lot more cognizant of the power of social media as a vehicle for sowing information chaos.

In a recent interview, Cohen raises a specific instance that he regards as symptomatic of the charged atmosphere concerning Russia. He characterizes the 2018 arrest of Russian citizen Maria Butina as mirroring a Cold War approach. Cohen questions, "What did she plead guilty to? Coming here and advocating Russian perspectives without registering as a foreign agent." He adds, "One of the things that worries me is that Russiagate [the election investigation] has generated too many Soviet-style practices by American authorities."³⁹ Mike Eckel, a senior correspondent for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, referred to the charges against Butina as "espionage light."⁴⁰ To be sure, she evidently did pass what she learned over to someone with official connections. Yet, her activities, including cultivating contacts in organizations such as the National Rifle Association, were out in the open, whatever her intentions. Indeed, the Butina case is not a classic instance of spying, and Cohen reasonably calls on Americans to reflect on its import.

The line Butina crossed was rather fuzzy. The U.S. judge at the sentencing acknowledged that had Butina registered as a foreign agent her conduct might have been legal. Then the judge added, "But it's because she did not register that her conduct was so dangerous and a threat to our country's democratic institutions." The timing of the case seems to have been consequential, thus adding some weight to Cohen's assertions about dangerous atmospherics. The judge explicitly noted that this occurred while Russia was interfering in the American political process.⁴¹ In the meantime, the plot thickened further still when it came to light that the founder of an antiglobalization NGO in Russia was taking care of Butina's legal fees.⁴²

Cohen is concerned about the very idea that contacts can be considered criminal, citing by way of comparison his own extensive dealings with Russians over the course

of half a century. Contacts are the life blood of international academic research, business dealings, journalistic practice, and much more. Consequently, we could be dealing with a precarious precedent. Does Russia tighten its rules enforcement a little bit more for Americans traveling and researching there? Russia already subjects American travelers, journalists, NGOs, and religious organizations to registration rules. Do we want individual Americans in Russia for perfectly legitimate purposes subject to the kind of tough scrutiny based on vague criteria to which Butina might have been subjected? As standard bearers for civil liberties, would Americans be comfortable with this as a new international standard? As Cohen summarizes, "There was a time when contacts were supposed to be good because it was a way of understanding and avoiding conflict."⁴³

Although he mostly disparages journalists and politicians, Cohen attributes a lot of American antagonism toward Russia to a supposed "war party" based in the Department of Defense and U.S. intelligence agencies.⁴⁴ Where the Department of Defense is concerned, this reviewer's experience as a faculty member for thirty-five years at the Command and General Staff College suggests otherwise, although I do not pretend to know what transpires in conversations in the Pentagon where I have rarely ventured. Certainly within the U.S. Army officer corps, or among representatives of sister services, as seen from an academic perch at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, I simply have not sensed reflexive hostility toward Russia since the Cold War. Concern, perhaps, but that is an occupational requirement, especially in light of recent Russian cyber intrusions. Still, hardly anyone views Russia as a natural or permanent enemy of the United States, and many cut Russia some slack over its reaction to NATO expansion.

Conclusion

Overall, it is most useful to understand Cohen's opinions as the product of a lengthy career of scholarship and analysis concerning Russian affairs. His criticism of Russia has always been muted, and he has positioned himself as the author of a counternarrative that focuses on U.S. shortcomings. His long association with *The Nation*, a left-leaning periodical where his wife Katrina vanden Heuvel is the publisher and former editor, aligns well with his critique of American policy. He is thoughtful and enjoys a wide range of Russian contacts. When it comes to assembling the truth, he "connects the dots"

differently than most of his peers. His takes on the Crimea or Maidan, or seeming lack of interest in human rights violations by the Assad government in Syria, puzzle this reviewer and outrage others. Yes, the West should not have been surprised that NATO expansion offended Russia. Yet, sovereign states that feel threatened by Russia do enjoy the right to seek their own affiliations. Russian actions in Ukraine validate those fears.

At times, Cohen is a provocateur, but if he compels us to sharpen our analysis by examining a contrarian position, this is not such a bad thing. He often brings to light questions that others have neglected. He is especially adept at taking sometimes unfocused or ideologically eccentric views emanating from Russia and turning them into succinct, declarative statements. This alone is helpful. In our current volatile climate, dissenting voices are necessary to the conversation. ■

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2020 General William E. DePuy

Special Topics Writing Competition

This year's theme: "Finding the enemy in 2035—What technological, doctrinal, organizational, or other advances or changes must we make to find our adversaries on the battlefield of the future?"

Articles will be comparatively judged by a panel of senior Army leaders on how well they have clearly identified issues requiring solutions relevant to the Army in general or to a significant portion of the Army; how effectively detailed and feasible the solutions to the identified problem are; and the level of writing excellence achieved. Writing must be logically developed and well organized, demonstrate professional-level grammar and usage, provide original insights, and be thoroughly researched as manifest in pertinent sources.

Contest closes 20 July 2020

1st Place	\$1,000 and publication in <i>Military Review</i>
2nd Place	\$750 and consideration for publication in <i>Military Review</i>
3rd Place	\$500 and consideration for publication in <i>Military Review</i>

For information on how to submit an entry, please visit <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/DePuy-Writing-Competition/>.

Next page: This year marks the eighteenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks by al-Qaida extremists that killed nearly three thousand people and injured over six thousand more. The United States responded by initiating the Global War on Terrorism, the invasion of Afghanistan, and the hunt for al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden. In the photo, the burning buildings of the World Trade Center are reflected in the visor of then U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. James Haskell as he overlooks Ground Zero 11 September 2001 in Lower Manhattan, New York. Haskell was an MH-53M helicopter flight engineer assigned to the Air Force Special Operations Command as an aerial gunner. By coincidence, his aircraft was in the area participating in a training mission when the attack occurred. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Michelle Leonard, U.S. Army, courtesy of the 1st Combat Camera Squadron)

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