STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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THE TREATY OF GOOD NEIGHBORLY FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: IMPLICATIONS FOR AMERICA'S POLICY TOWARD CHINA

BY

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ABSTRACT

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On July 16, 2001, the Presidents of China and Russia signed a treaty for good neighborliness, friendship, and cooperation. Many analysts heed the warning for the United States to closely monitor Sino-Russian synergy resulting from the friendship treaty. Considering that only a month earlier, China, along with Russia and four Central Asian states announced the creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the initial perception of many was that China was actively participating in, or perhaps leading, a regional effort to gang up on the United States. Sufficient analysis suggests that China's evolving strategy is to be a major player in defining the rules for the United States' participation in Asian affairs. The China-Russia strategic partnership and the July friendship treaty serve as one of China's primary means to assert itself against the United States. This study reviews and analyzes the treaty and addresses the economic, regional and military implications for United States policy toward China. The implications of this study suggest that China's own interests, not the interests of its strategic partnership with Russia, will ultimately drive China's relations with the United States. The United States should grasp recent improving relations with China and build a solid foundation for shaping current and future U.S.-China relations. The most effective strategy for the United States falls between containment and engagement. Finding effective ways to engage China, while containing its more aggressive tendencies, is at the core of defining U.S. policy toward China.

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THE TREATY OF GOOD NEIGHBORLY FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: IMPLICATIONS FOR AMERICA'S POLICY TOWARD CHINA

> "Ultimately, the United States wants to see both Russia and China integrated globally and to establish stable and enduring bilateral partnerships with each country. To the extent that the Sino-Russian partnership contributes to these goals, it is no threat. To the extent it distracts either country or the surrounding region from them, it must become an object of increasing U.S. attention."
>
> **—Sherman Garnett, Dean, James Madison College, Michigan State University[1]**

On July 16, and for the first time in over fifty years, the presidents of China and Russia signed a treaty for good neighborliness, friendship, and cooperation. The new treaty is the result of a very different global situation than what existed in 1950 when Mao Tse-Tung and Joseph Stalin expressed mutual anti-Western sentiments just prior to the Korean War. The overall aim of the treaty, according to the Chinese government, is to guide the steady development of relations and bilateral ties with Russia in the 21st Century.[2] Within the United States, the significance and the threat posed by the treaty are subject to mixed reviews.

Many analysts heed the warning for the United States to closely monitor Sino-Russian synergy resulting from the friendship treaty. Considering that only a month earlier, China, along with Russia and four Central Asian states announced the creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the initial perception of many was that China was actively participating in, or perhaps leading, a regional effort to gang up on the United States.[3]

Sufficient analysis suggests that China's evolving strategy is to be a major player in defining the rules for the United States' participation in Asian affairs. The China-Russia strategic partnership and the July friendship treaty serve as one of China's primary means to assert itself against the United States. This study reviews and analyzes the treaty and addresses the economic, regional and military implications for United States policy toward China. The implications of this study suggest that China's own interests, not the interests of its strategic partnership with Russia, will ultimately drive China's relations with the United States. The United States should grasp recent improving relations with China and build a solid foundation for shaping current and future U.S.-China relations. The most effective strategy for the United States falls between containment and engagement. Finding effective ways to engage China while containing its more aggressive tendencies is at the core of defining U.S. policy toward China.

THE SINO-RUSSIAN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND THE TREATY

The relationship between Russia and China experienced peaks and valleys over the past sixty years. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s both countries enjoyed a strategic alliance that served their mutual objectives during World War II and the Korean Conflict. By 1960 and through the 1970s, as each aspired to be the world's leader of international communism and socialism, ideological differences between the Soviet and Chinese Communist Parties surfaced and continued to deteriorate. The result was open hostility, including bloody military clashes along their borders.[4]

THE PAST DECADE

The current cooperation between China and Russia has its roots in the 1980s, as Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev and Chinese premier Deng Xiaoping sought to get beyond the decades of ideological, military, and political mistrust and competition. Diplomatic efforts and successes of Russian president Boris Yeltsin, Russian foreign minister Yevgeny Primakov, Russian President Vladimir Putin, and Chinese president Jiang Zemin during the 1990s nurtured normalization and provided the momentum to push the relationship beyond cooperation and into a strategic partnership.[5] The partnership flourished over the past decade, as leaders of both sides accentuated common interests and built on them. For China, the threat of the Soviet Union was gone and the door was open.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War left the United States as the world's sole superpower. For two countries aspiring to be superpowers like the United States, Sino-Russian cooperation became a fact of life. Central to the partnership's momentum are their common desires to prevent the United States from being a global hegemon and to dilute U.S. influence in their respective regions. In essence, China and Russia envision a multipolar world where they, along with the U.S., are "major pillars of the international system."[6]

Events and developments of the previous decade have provided significant common ground for the fostering of the partnership. Russia fell into a deep internal decline as China sought economic reform and regional prominence. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) enlargement and involvement in the Balkans concerned Russia. The United States defense pledge and arms sales to Taiwan frustrated China. Both countries vehemently oppose the U.S. National Missile Defense (NMD) program. Russia and China fear NMD since it will checkmate or negate one of their national powers, strategic nuclear weapons. Lastly, both countries demonstrate a consistent inclination to work in concert within the United Nations, particularly partnering on Security Council matters. Consequently, resentment toward the United States

grew and created resistance to U.S. diplomatic efforts, the formation of anti-U.S. coalitions of the day, and the possibility of enduring alliances.[7]

For the most part, China and Russia gracefully skirted friction points. The approach is somewhat lopsided at times, with defense relations tending to outdistance other forms of economic intercourse and leadership interaction being greatly more robust than contact between the two societies themselves.[8]

THE TREATY

The Treaty of Good Neighborly Friendship and Cooperation covers virtually every aspect of the decade-old Sino-Russian strategic partnership. In this regard there is nothing new and the United States should be able to pursue successful bilateral relations with both China and Russia. The fanfare and official commentary surrounding the signing of the treaty offered little subtlety in relaying to the Bush Administration that the United States has a mistaken notion of what kind of world it is. In his statement after signing the treaty, President Jiang claimed that China and Russia believe that "more active cooperation between our countries in discussing missile defenses and disarmament will enhance our efforts in building a mutipolar world and establish a fair, rational international order."[9] Although the rhetoric likely overstates what Russia and China intend or are capable of achieving, Sherman Garnett believes one should not underestimate the strategic significance of this formalization of their strategic partnership. "Unquestionably, it helps a weakened Russia and an emerging China worried about an assertive United States, sending a signal of major-power solidarity on missile defense, intervention in Kosovo, and the need to respect traditional Russian and Chinese zones of influence."[10]

The treaty contains twenty-five articles of cooperation in language covering eleven pages. Virtually every conceivable area of cooperation is addressed, perhaps diluting the essence of the treaty. However, analysis of the treaty reveals four major areas of strategic direction and partnership:

- basic principles
- border issues
- security basis
- cooperative areas[11]

The treaty text opens with statements of basic principles, including political equality, mutual economic benefit, security trust, and consultation in world affairs. Among these general

principles there are two critical statements: neither will target nuclear weapons against the other and adherence to a one China policy.[12]

The second theme provides assurance for the 4,300-km border, a long-time burden for both China and Russia. Article six fixes the current borderline as permanent and to be respected in the context of international law. Currently, ninety-eight percent of the border is settled except two islands along the Heilongjiang/Amur River. Article seven goes on to call for more confidence building and force reductions in the border area.[13]

Perhaps most significant is the third area, outlining parameters for future bilateral relations. Both countries agree to refrain from developing and conducting foreign and defense policy that might jeopardize the interests of the other. As such, China and Russia agree to not join an alliance or take action if it threatens to undermine the sovereignty, security, or territorial integrity of the other. Lastly, Article nine specifies that if one faces a threat of aggression, the two countries should "immediately consult each other with the aim of removing the threat."[14]

To achieve the above goals, the treaty delineates several areas of cooperation. The most prominent include: strengthening dialogue at all levels; observing international laws for stability and peace; jointly safeguarding "global strategic balance and stability"; furthering regional stability; and promoting cooperation and exchanges in the areas of science, military technology, economics, combating terrorism, separatism extremism, and cross-border crimes in both bilateral and multilateral spheres.[15]

Despite recent treaties, cooperation, and agreements long-standing contradictions in political objectives continue to exist between China and Russia. Therefore, China will logically continue to protect its national and unilateral regional interests above all else. In other words, at the end of the day, China will look out for China when dealing with the United States. Looking out to 2010, Dr. Bates Gill of the Brookings Institution projects that China will remain generally skeptical of "American global primacy" and will seek a more balanced multipolarity to equalize its relations with the United States. With that said, however, he believes the increasing complexity of the international situation will lead to an overall effort by China to "stabilize and improve the strategically critical relationship with the United States" while strengthening their interests in the region.[16]

AMERICAN POLICY IMPLICATIONS

While an all-out dispute between the United States and China is unlikely, attempts by the Sino-Russian strategic partnership to limit American policy initiatives will obviously define our relations with China, and Russia, for that matter. Dr. Ariel Cohen of the Heritage Foundation,

describes the motivations of today's treaty as "much more complex", involving "serious geopolitical, military, and economic considerations". According to Dr. Cohen, the treaty should serve notice to the United States and its allies that a major geopolitical shift is emerging in the Eurasian balance of power and it carries serious implications for the United States and its allies. The Moscow-Beijing connection requires United States policy makers to closely evaluate and monitor the realities of the partnership to ensure the preservation of our national security interests and objectives.[17]

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

While their economic relations are predominately state matters, economic cooperation is an important, but not a critical bond of the Sino-Russian strategic partnership. Geographic proximity and the complementary nature of their economies have allowed Chinese and Russian economic collaboration in various sectors for several years. As the Russian Federation came into being, China engaged itself with encouraging and supporting trade and the development of bilateral economic relations. However, economics is not, and will not become the driving force of the partnership.

To foster its economic ties with Russia and to develop trade ties, China signed a trade agreement for the protection of investment with Russia in 1992. However, China's hopes have not merely centered on improving trade alone. China has long been interested in obtaining technical information through a healthy collaboration with Russia. On 12 December 1996, the Sino-Russian Conference on Economic and Technical Collaboration was held in Beijing. As a result of the conference, both countries announced their intentions to encourage major companies to further direct trade and investment and to pursue technical collaboration.[18]

Today, Russia is China's eighth largest trading partner. The total value of Sino-Russian trade is about $5.7 billion. Chinese exports to Russia equal $1.5 billion and imports from Russia total $4.2 billion; accounting for a trade deficit with Russia of $2.7 billion. The trade structure, however, remains relatively weak and is still dominated by traditional products. Textiles and food products constitute the bulk of Chinese exports to Russia; imports from Russia are mainly steel, chemical fertilizers, and timber.[19] To date, the targeted $20 billion in trade established by Presidents Jiang and Yeltsin in 1997 remains far from reach. Russia simply cannot meet China's needs for high technology and foreign investment to maintain its current GDP growth. This is a significant concern for the Communist Party in maintaining its hold on power. The ideological basis of power continues to wane as China enjoys economic growth and average

standard of living improvements. This will not be a stimulus for a deeper Sino-Russian economic partnership.[20]

China's quest for sustained economic growth will result in the West continuing as China's leading trade partner. In 2000, China's global trade totaled $454 billion. The United States, Taiwan, Japan, and Europe accounted for over $284 billion of China's total trade; including $83 billion in trade surplus with the United States alone. Russia and Central Asia constitute only $7.7 billion of China's trade.[21] In light of these figures, it is foreseeable that China will wish to maintain a protocol of normal relations with the United States in order to continue receiving vital economic benefits and development.

From 1990 to 1995, China's economy grew at double-digit rates and kept pace with the United States economic surge in the last half of the decade, despite Asian economic woes. This impressive growth occurred along with China's transition to a market-oriented economy and deeper integration into the world economy. Today, the most dynamic sector in China is the flourishing market-oriented sector, constituted by a growing number of privately owned firms. A comparative analysis of the past twenty years reveals impressive results. In 1978, roughly ten percent of China's GDP was attributed to trade. By 1998, trade accounted for about thirty-six percent of China's GDP; twenty percent of the thirty-six percent GDP growth coming from export increases. Of notable significance is the fact that the private sector market generated approximately three-quarters of the total export growth since 1978.[22]

However, China's burgeoning economy and the transition to a consumer economy come with a strategic price. China's economic future and national security are heavily dependent on access to inexpensive and abundant supplies of energy. As China continues to pursue its impressive economic growth rate of the last twenty years, it will face major energy and raw materials shortages. These demands will accelerate, fueled by further economic and population growth. In 1993, China transitioned from being a long-time exporter of oil to its East Asian neighbors to a net importer.[23] By 1999, China was importing 30 million tons of oil annually. By 2010, China's requirements are projected to reach 100 million tons a year.[24] Currently China has a twenty-percent shortfall in meeting its demand for electrical power and consumption of the major fuels for its electrical power plants will increase dramatically. Coal consumption will increase 110 percent and natural gas consumption will increase by 631 percent. Also by 2010, projections have China facing a water deficit of ten percent of its total consumption. By 2020, China will not have the capability to supply itself with oil, iron, steel, and other minerals.[25] Among other motivations, this obviates Chinese interests toward the Spratly Islands. The competing and intersecting demands of increasing the standard of living by sustaining an

economic growth requiring spiraling energy and raw materials consumption is a complex situation for China. How China addresses this situation and its various strategic consequences will be of great interest to the United States.

MILITARY CAPABILITIES, PURCHASES, AND MODERNIZATION IMPLICATIONS

In October 2000, the PRC articulated its military modernization strategy in its White Paper on National Defense. China views the United States as its major threat to regional military supremacy and the reunification with Taiwan. Named by name or by indirect references, the United States is particularly criticized in the white paper. The U.S. is a "certain country" which continues to develop national and theater missile defenses; as a country seeking to enlarge military blocs, strengthen military alliances, and attain greater military superiority; and as a country attempting to expand its military presence in East Asia.[26] China's assertions ring loud that they perceive the United States' security policy and actions as major factors in destabilizing security in the Asian-Pacific region. Within self-imposed limitations, Beijing's economic ascendancy on the Asian continent is allowing China the opportunity to concentrate on owning a first-class military capability. While expenditures are difficult to compare, China is currently engaged in the largest military expansion in the world.[27]

Perhaps the most significant impetus for China's strategic partnership with Russia is defense cooperation and arms sales. For the most part, arms sales and defense agreements achieve the needs of each country and will continue to do so well into the future.[28] The arrangement enhances China's military modernization while keeping Russia's defense production lines open for business. For the past decade, China was Russia's most valued defense customer, with Chinese purchases constituting seventy percent of Russia's total foreign arms sales. Capturing the exact value of China's defense expenditures to Russia over the past decade is difficult because amounts vary by source. However, recent figures provided to Congress put China's estimated expenditures at $15 billion. Between 1991 and 1995, China bought Russian weapons worth an estimated $1 billion per year with the amount doubling to $2 billion per year between 1996 and 2001. It is also reported that China and Russia sweetened the deal by agreeing to a military sales package worth approximately $20 billion out to 2004.[29]

China's armed forces are indeed modernizing, but the pace is moderate and piecemeal. Faced with a current force structure that is relatively ancient, the rate of retirement exceeds the rate of acquisition of all major weapons systems. Ground forces require a significant amount of time and resources to modernize, but China's effort seems to be taking longer than most. Given the current situation, pace of modernization, and overall American technology primacy, some

predict that China will not even begin to approach a military balance of power with the United States by 2025.[30]

GROUND FORCES

Modernization of the People's Liberation Army is based on a program to reduce and reorganize its personnel and equipment to create a more modern and mobile army. Unlike the other services, the PLA is more a product of defense technology purchases and reverse engineering of Russian designs, rather than the sale of combat systems. For approximately three decades, China's tank inventory numbered about 10,000 tanks; virtually all self-produced. As of 1 January 2000, the Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies estimates the size of China's tank force at 10,100. Approximately 8,000 of the tanks are Chinese-produced versions of the Soviet T-54/-55 Type 59. China began producing these tanks in the late 1950s and continued production until the early 1980s.[31]

Recent trends reveal that China is introducing tank systems of its own design to pursue its modernization program. In 1988, China introduced the Type 80 tank, representing the first major break from the T-54/-55 design. The Type 80 tank incorporated computerized fire control, laser ranger finder, and gun stabilization technology. China is currently producing the Type 85-II/III, introduced in the 1990s as a follow-on to the Type 80 tank. In addition to the Type 80 technology, the Type 85's automatic loading system reduces the crew from 4 to 3. The most recent design to come out of China is the Type 90-II tank, first revealed in 1991. This design closely resembles the Russian T-72 and is almost identical in performance. However, the Type 90-II has not entered full production and will not do so for the near future.[32] Therefore, in terms of relatively modern technology, China's inventory approximates 2,100 tanks. In short, China's armor systems technology remains decidedly behind that of the United States.

However, China is getting a fair share of its ground forces' capabilities through purchases from Russia. China has focused on Russia's surface-to-air missile systems, purchasing about 100 Russian long-range SA-10s for protection of key government and industrial complexes. China also purchased a considerable number of SA-7s, the Russian version of the Stinger missile. Finally, China has made recent purchases including the BMP-3 Infantry Fighting Vehicle, advanced artillery systems, and multiple-rocket launchers.[33]

AIR FORCES

China's recent air force purchases from Russia indicate China's interests in power projection, shifting from a defensive to an offensive strategic doctrine. Notable sales include 72 Su-27 fighter-ground attack aircraft. It is reported that Russia and China agreed to co-produce

200 Su-27s in China, with China possessing 300 operational Su-27s by 2003.[34] The co-production agreement is most likely the result of China's inability to master the advanced technology requirements of today's combat competitive aircraft. Designed to give China air superiority, Su-27 technology includes advanced radar and AA-11 radar guided missiles.[35] China's purchase of ten IL-76 heavy lift transport aircraft provides modest lift capability for troops and equipment outside of China's borders. China will most assuredly reverse engineer these aircraft to allow building of its own heavy transport in the future.[36] Five B-6 bombers were converted for aerial refueling, extending Chinese air coverage to much of the western Pacific. From another angle, this capability allows China to perform long-range escort, air-to-air, and ground attack missions over the South China Sea.[37]

NAVAL FORCES

Overall, the PLA Navy appears to be the largest benefactor of recent Chinese military spending. Along with the ground and air components, the navy is moving to a more offensive strategic doctrine. Indications are China desires to project its navy beyond its coastal defense boundaries. Last year, China purchased the ex-Soviet carrier *Kiev* and is expected to deploy a carrier of its own, capable of carrying twenty-four advanced fighters plus helicopters. The ship is likely to be conventionally powered, as China's nuclear power experience is currently limited to submarines only. The first Chinese carrier could be in service around 2005, with a second carrier deployed by 2009. An additional carrier could be brought into service every three years thereafter.[38]

China has been disappointed with its domestic attack submarine program since 1974. While their program made some progress, China turned to Russia in recent years. China's purchase of four *Kilo*-class attack submarines provides it with one of the world's quietist diesel submarines and a credible threat to carrier vessels. The *Kilo* is armed with wake-homing and wire-guided acoustic homing torpedoes. Capable of ignoring acoustic ship defense and evasive maneuvers, the wake-homing torpedo is reported to be particularly effective.[39]

Of major concern is China's acquisition of two *Sovremenny*-class destroyers. These vessels are China's largest and most formidable destroyers and are reportedly equipped with SS-N-22 Sunburn anti-ship cruise missiles, designed to strike *Aegis*-class guided missile ships protecting U.S. aircraft carriers. The missiles have a range of sixty miles and fly at twice the speed of sound only a few yards above the water, making them hard to intercept.[40]

NUCLEAR FORCES

Russia has imposed limits on what it is willing to sell to China, drawing the line at complete weapons systems that could pose a threat to the homeland. Logic hints it is in Russia's interests to hold back on its nuclear weapons and missile technology. Nonetheless, there are numerous allegations of Russian transfers of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) to China. The allegations, however, have not been verified. However, as China seeks to improve its strategic capability in a cost-effective manner, it appears Beijing believes the existing PLA nuclear arsenal is adequate to provide credible strategic deterrence.[41]

Sources currently estimate China's ICBM arsenal at approximately twenty missiles. Projected additions to China's nuclear forces are two additional long-range ballistic missiles, which are currently in development. The 8,000 km Dong Feng-31 (DF-31) and the 12,000 km DF-41 are expected to be solid-fueled and based on mobile launchers. While these missiles have a shorter range than the 13,000 km liquid fueled, single multi-megaton DF-5 warhead, what is not known is how many DF-31 and DF-41 missiles China plans to deploy or how many warheads the missiles can carry. Nonetheless, China is believed to be pursuing multiple re-entry vehicle (MRV) and multiple independently-targetable re-entry vehicle (MIRV) capability for these systems. First deployment of the DF-31 could occur before 2005, followed by the DF-41 by 2010.[42]

China possesses three types of intermediate and medium range ballistic missiles. Capable of posing strategic threats to regional countries like Japan and India, these missiles are a lesser threat to Russia and pose a threat to the United States only through vulnerability of U.S. bases in South Korea, Japan, and Guam. It is believed China possesses 108 intermediate and medium range ballistics missiles. China's regional ballistic missile capabilities dramatically improved with the introduction of the DF-21, their first solid-fuel medium-range missile. The solid-fuel design provides a faster launch time by eliminating the potentially dangerous fueling procedure of earlier Dong Feng models.[43]

China is reported to be planning to build four to six new Type 094 SSBNs. Each vessel is expected to carry sixteen JL-2 missiles, capable of carrying up to six warheads per missile. The initial launch date is allegedly scheduled for 2002 but development of the JL-2 missile may take longer because the land-based missile on which it is based, the DF-31, has been test-launched only once. Six SSBNs would allow China to keep two submarines in the Pacific at all times, able to strike Asia, Europe, and North America. With the maximum number of warheads per missile on six submarines, the number of China's total deployable submarine-based

warheads will rise to 576. If the warheads are not independently targetable, the minimum number likely to be on station and capable of striking the United States is 192.[44]

Given China's modest nuclear strike capability against the United States, it is obvious why Beijing is adamantly opposed to U.S. national and theater missile defense initiatives. Despite Washington's assertion that U.S. missile defense is for protection from rogue states' weapons of mass destruction, Beijing views it as explicitly aimed at China. Whether directed against China or not, if U.S. missile defense achieves its ends, then it severely dilutes the deterrent value of China's nuclear arsenal. As a result, China could seek to tie U.S. missile defense plans to Chinese nonproliferation policies, since a principal concern of Beijing is the view that it will spurn other countries to pursue more robust strategic offense capabilities. Even worse, China could decide to return to more hard-line proliferation practices as a means to undermine U.S. missile defense. However, for the time being, Beijing appears somewhat assured of U.S. intentions, has toned down its anti-missile defense rhetoric in recent months, and seems prepared to engage in more productive discussions with Washington.[45]

TECHNOLOGY SHARING

Russia's military assistance to China in the areas of advanced conventional weapons production licensing and the sharing of missile technologies poses a significant threat in the Pacific region. Approximately 1,500 Russian scientists and engineers work in Chinese design and production facilities, assisting China in advancing its defense research and development programs. In addition, Russia and China are co-developing military capabilities to allow them to attack U.S. computer-based infrastructures through information warfare. Finally, the two countries share a broad program for the training of military students, scientists, and engineers.[46]

THE 9-11 INCIDENT AND COMBATING TERRORISM

The Chinese and Russian reactions to the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States suggest apparent seams in the friendship treaty. Despite the treaty's language regarding initial consultation on world affairs and combating terrorism, the two governments responded to Washington on their own accord. Professor Yu Bin of Wittenberg University provides an interesting chronology of the immediate actions in Beijing and Moscow. Yu concludes that while Beijing and Moscow quickly condemned the terrorist attacks, both displayed more interest in echoing Washington than coordinating their bilateral position.[47] In contrast to their quick responses (President Jiang contacted President Bush on September 11 while President Putin called Bush on 12 September), Putin and Jiang did not consult with each other until

September 18 when Chinese and Russian diplomats met to develop joint plans against terrorism. However, Moscow and Beijing had already pledged their individual support to the United States for joint action against terrorism.[48]

In the wake of the September 11 tragedy, there has been opportunity and improvement in U.S-Chinese relations. Again, while Beijing is not necessarily snubbing Moscow, it is pursuing its own vital interests with the United States aside from the friendship treaty. On February 1, 2002, John Pomfret, of the Washington Post, interviewed a Chinese scholar in an effort to gain insight on China's recent pattern of cooperation with the United States. The scholar did not want his named cited, but stated that China faced a choice on September 11: the U.S. or Osama bin Laden. President Jiang realized China's future interests lay with the United States. "We chose the United States," and the U.S. must "shelve its worries about a future China threat, at least for the time being, and focus on current foes in Afghanistan."[49]

Chinese officials appear to be falling off the position that everything the United States does near China's borders is designed to hurt Beijing. As a result, China has been supportive of U.S.-led military efforts to combat terrorism. China resumed intelligence sharing with the U.S. for the first time since the Cold War. While Chinese intelligence has not been critical to U.S. efforts in Afghanistan, the Chinese effort has been constructive and has provided useful material on Islamic radicals.[50] China also backs the U.S. action in Afghanistan and recently pledged $150 million for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Beijing is considering participating in a United Nations' peacekeeping mission that will likely join the current British-led efforts in Kabul. Finally, China has tolerated the United States' establishment of several military bases in Afghanistan and the Philippines and it has demonstrated restraint in its response to a new Japanese law authorizing military participation in the war on terrorism.[51]

President Jiang's cooperation and quick support in combating terrorism was unprecedented. "Never before had China endorsed U.S. military action against a Third World state."[52] While on the whole, U.S.-Chinese relations are far from absolute harmony, China's recent approach to the U.S. appears to demonstrate a positive shift in attitude. In the words of Ye Zicheng of Beijing University, China is acting "more like a responsible, rational country" and is dropping the "idea that Washington is always out to get it."[53]

REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

It is typically difficult for Americans to grasp Chinese motivation and mindset; particularly when it comes to China's expressions of its regional interests. This of course leads to schisms in understanding and position. Simply put, the American framework of thought totals

a mere 226 years, while the Chinese framework encompasses a span of more than 1,400 years. Obviously, the security of U.S. national interests in the Asia-Pacific region are paramount but patience and understanding must be exercised in assessing China's intentions and actions.

China's regional interests and the perceived threat they pose are not necessarily the product of a recent and emerging philosophical shift or aggressiveness. First, China's deep-seated belief in its political, social, and cultural preeminence in Asia stems from its long-standing geopolitical centrality in Asia, economic self-sufficiency, and cultural and political influence over many smaller states, tribes and kingdoms along its borders. Second, China's modern history of defeat and subjugation by Japan and the West has produced an intense desire for international respect as a great power, free from formal alliance structures of other major powers, especially the United States.[54] As China's national power grows, and with the treaty providing security for its "strategic rear", these beliefs predispose Beijing to pushing the United States out of the Asia-Pacific region as the major power and central security provider. In short, China views itself as the eventual regional hegemon. In as much, there are four significant regional implications for the United States.

First, the present balance of power in Asia is unsatisfactory to China on two counts. China is dissatisfied with Japan's economic power and fears resurgent Japanese militarism. Also, Beijing is extremely suspicious of an "orchestrated" U.S. effort to contain China in order to retain American dominance in a unipolar world. In essence, the uncomfortable perception for China is that it must defer to what the United States or Japan wants in Asia.[55]

Second, China has long held strong claims to contested territories along its continental borders and maritime periphery, most importantly Taiwan and the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea. These claims pose potentially vast economic benefits to Beijing and receive popular support within China. A seemingly growing segment of society favors a "state-centric" nationalist ideology dedicated to the pursuit of national reunification and the creation of a strong, wealthy state.[56] China's impressive economic progress reinforced with rising national pride and military capability could encourage China to become more assertive in pressing its claims to these territories. Efforts to employ military force to achieve these aims would undoubtedly challenge U.S. vital interests in preserving Asian stability and peace.

Taiwan is of course a special matter. Given our long relationship with Taiwan and contention with China over the island, Beijing's intentions regarding Taiwan will continue to be a primary U.S. concern. While military modernization may facilitate a potential attack, success is not necessarily guaranteed. The Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies' conclusion is

that Chinese capabilities remain limited and given the slow pace of modernization, will remain limited for an attack on Taiwan for the next ten to fifteen years.[57] As a result, the United States' interests in retaining its forward presence, adequate force structure, as well as maintaining a healthy alliance with Japan and Taiwan, remain paramount. However, the growing international complexity in the region requires flexible and constructive dialogue in our approach to China.

In broad terms, Chinese disquietude over Taiwan primarily concerns American intervention in the Taiwan Strait. Additionally, concern exists over our military presence; particularly in our alliance with Japan because of our reliance on Japanese assets should conflict break out. Also requiring our attention is what Bates Gill calls "political warfare" by the Chinese leadership to sway Taiwan. This includes fostering otherwise unprecedented economic, academic, and cultural exchanges in the hope of cultivating opposition political leaders who cast doubts on American interests in Taiwan and a stronger Japanese military. The United States must positively affect these efforts by discouraging the Chinese military buildup opposite the Strait, while simultaneously encouraging political and economic interaction.[58]

Third, today China is more dependent on foreign markets, maritime trade routes, and energy supplies. This contributes to a growing sense of strategic vulnerability to external economic factors and the subsequent increased pressures for enhancing China's ability to control events beyond its borders.[59] Coupled with the fact that China's major economic centers line its eastern and southern coastline, one can see the connection with China's motivation to obtain naval capabilities beyond its traditional coastal mission. As China becomes more globally integrated, its need to project security will expand. While China is far from global projection, it is certainly making a focused effort on regional projection.

Fourth, China desires to further its interest in Central Asia. Russia and China border Central Asia, have Islamic neighbors, and want stable regimes in the region. "The last thing China or Russia wants is a radical Islamic regime serving as a refuge for China's Uighurs or Russia's numerous Muslim minorities."[60] Largely content in letting Russia continue its security primacy in the region, China is placing its focus on cultivating economic ties in Central Asia. China's most important security interests lie along its littoral, not inner Asia. Therefore, China is expected to advance its interests by actively participating in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization with Russia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. Beijing's primary interests in Central Asia involve securing access to the vast, yet unexploited, energy supplies and encouraging economic linkages. Chinese energy companies have concluded significant agreements with Kazakhstan that could lead to large-scale operations in Central

Asia, if a pipeline to China's coast can be financed and built.[61] United States engagement in Central Asia has great potential for enhancing stability and economic development. Collective cooperation in neutralizing radical Islamic forces and tapping Central Asian resources could further shared interests and attain mutual objectives of all parties.

A RECOMMENDATION FOR U.S. POLICY TOWARD CHINA

> "There are certain shared interests that we have with China and we have emphasized those interests...On such issues we can talk and we can produce constructive outcomes. There are other interests where we decidedly do not see eye-to-eye...On such issues we can have a dialogue and try to make measurable progress. But we do not want the interests where we differ to constrain us from pursuing those where we share common goals...A candid, constructive, and cooperative relationship is what we are building with China. Candid where we disagree; constructive where we can see some daylight; and cooperative where we have common regional or global interests."
>
> **—Colin L. Powell, Secretary of State[62]**

The strategic nuances posed by the Sino-Russian strategic partnership clearly suggest that a U.S. policy toward China of either pure containment or pure engagement is not feasible or advisable. Containment implies the birth of a new Cold War, with China in the Soviet Union's former position. China, however, is not what the Soviet Union was. Given China's perceptions of a malevolent United States, greedily attempting to keep resources and prestige from Beijing, containment would only further alienate China and lead to obvious conclusions. Additionally, containment would require a unified effort among U.S. allies and significant resources. This is unlikely, since Europe for one, does not perceive any Chinese threat to their interests. The European states have gladly filled the gaps left by U.S. trade with China and have worked to establish economic ties with Beijing.[63]

Engagement alone is not a viable policy approach either. During the Clinton Administration years, engagement provided no punishment for violating norms of conduct such as human rights, nor did it achieve any direction in moving China to the rule of law. In other words, there were no negative consequences, only more engagement. Engagement skirts very real conflicts between U.S. and Chinese interests and provides the United States no leverage to deal with China. Equally important, if a policy of pure engagement fails, the U.S. faces a China that has gained considerable economic and military benefits. Therefore, engagement alone creates a China capable of posing a greater threat to U.S. interests.

The most effective strategy for the United States to follow likely falls between containment and engagement. For example, through this approach the United States could engage in trade while attempting to impose sanctions that exact costs for Chinese companies that violate export control laws, proliferation regimes, and other treaties. Another prime opportunity for engagement is China's new membership in the World Trade Organization. The United States must serve as a role model and mentor. We must perpetuate our support of China's membership by engaging and guiding China economically. Other opportunities for engagement exist in our common interests in defeating Islamic extremism and global terrorism.

Containment must still play a role. The United States must strengthen its ties to countries of Southeast Asia and ASEAN in order to influence the direction and extent of Beijing's influence. Additionally, a flavor of containment is necessary to preserve our security interests in Korea and Japan, including retaining our forward presence and joint force structure. This presence serves as the backstop for our engagement efforts with China and lends credibility of a United States response to Chinese aggression. A strong, but explicitly non-aggressive and non-expansionist U.S. presence in the region could help entice China toward some measures of democratization. This in turn might alleviate U.S. and Taiwanese reservations involving a possible reunification. A more democratic China might be able to attract Taiwan's interest in reunification.

The United States has a window of opportunity to work with China in defining their interests and roles in the Asian-Pacific region. Finding effective ways to engage China while also containing China's more aggressive tendencies is the core challenge in defining U.S. policy toward China. The most effective approach is the pursuit of constructive engagement that, for the near term, maintains elements of strategic ambiguity, but encourages China toward liberalization by using incentives such as future investment. This policy could succeed but only if the United States does not appear to be dictating to China. Optimal U.S. policy requires careful consideration of the effects of U.S. actions, such as the deployment of missile defense.

The United States must remain engaged in the South China Sea. It is becoming clear that, for good or bad, China intends to maintain or expand its presence in the region. While the U.S. does not necessarily need to counter or oppose Beijing's influence, it must maintain a strong and peaceful influential presence. A comprehensive policy towards China that simultaneously acknowledges China's interests in the region and encourages China to see its role as a strong but non-aggressive and non-expansionist regional power will best serve stability. China has expressed its interest in peaceful resolution of tensions and should be

encouraged to work within the context of ASEAN, the organization with the authority to settle disputes in the region.[64]

Taiwan remains at the center of U.S. relations with China and "miscalculation by either party could easily shatter the fragile stability" and cooperation achieved by the recent Bush Administration efforts. While the United States does not have the ability or responsibility to resolve the China-Taiwan issue, it does have the ability to act as a stabilizing or destabilizing force.[65] United States policy must acknowledge and address China's increasing military capability to project military force on Taiwan. On the other hand, the U.S. should work to assure China that it seeks only a stable situation by tempering Taiwan as well. Taiwan's democratization, significant military capabilities, and economic power actually introduce some additional risks. An "in-your-face" approach toward China by Taiwan could increase Chinese fears about Taiwanese goals and possibly provoke aggression. Additionally, Taiwanese defense enhancements could fuel heightened cross-strait tensions. As such, the U.S must make it clear to Taiwan that countering China's military build-up in the Spratly Islands on a tit-for-tat basis is not the best solution. While the U.S. should remain committed to Taiwan's defense and freedom, Taiwan should not be allowed to hinder U.S.-Chinese relations and cooperation.

The United States will continue to have significant interests throughout the Asian-Pacific region. China's geographic position, military enhancements, and ascendancy in the global economy make China a central to U.S. foreign policy in the region. The U.S. must adopt a policy toward China that embraces both engagement and containment -- regardless of slogan. Unnecessary bellicosity and unilateralism will not solve the complexities and challenges we face in our relations with China. The flexibility of this approach allows the United States to be agnostic on some issues regarding China, based on favorable cooperation or behavior. On the other hand, we retain the capability of presenting stark alternatives should China decide not to cooperate in the international system, to challenge the U.S. world role, or to pursue regional hegemony.[66] As the world's only superpower we can secure our national interests while providing the leadership to secure consensus commensurate with our national values and convictions. Our policy toward China must be viewed as a process and we must learn to "pick our battles." If the United States gets it wrong, it could ultimately find itself going it alone in the region.

CONCLUSION

China and Russia have engaged in a strategic partnership over the past decade. The July 2001 Treaty of Good Neighborly Friendship and Cooperation solidifies virtually every aspect of the partnership and offers considerable insight into China's reaction to the United States' position as the world's only superpower. To an extent this partnership defines China's strategic framework in dealing with the United States. The preceding analysis serves to highlight the economic, military, and regional implications for United States policy toward China. While these considerations cover only a small portion of many complex variables, they suggest that at the "end of the day" China's relations and cooperation with the U.S. will serve to further China's interests, not China and Russia's interests. The pursuit of U.S. interests in the Asia-Pacific region poses unique opportunities and challenges. Opportunities can be exploited and challenges can be overcome by an effective U.S. policy toward China. The most effective course of action for the United States is to engage China where it can and to contain China where aggressive tendencies threaten U.S. interests. The Unites States should therefore grasp recent improvements in its relations with China and build a solid foundation for shaping current and future U.S.-Chinese relations.

WORD COUNT=7,340

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