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ABSTRACT <p>China's economic growth since the late-1970s has placed the nation on the cusp of becoming a global superpower. China has used its economic prosperity to modernize its military and effectively maneuver itself into regional, and to a lesser extent, global economic agreements. The question for the United States is whether China's newfound modernization and prosperity are indicative of a rising challenger to United States hegemony or a peaceful rise towards increased regional influence. Many of China's hard and soft power initiatives have conflicting messages of challenger and "good neighbor." Through analysis of China's historically defensive viewpoint of "active defense," this essay outlines how China's rise is inevitable, however, peaceful. The essay further demonstrates that unilateral policies regarding China, as well as misunderstandings about China's strategic culture could have disastrous results for both nations. Through analysis of China's balancing actions against the United States, this essay provides counter-balancing initiatives, in the form of hard and soft power, which the United States can undertake to mitigate China's rise on the global scale.</p>			
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Counter-Balancing the Rising Dragon

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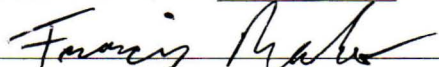
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Executive Summary

Title: Counter-Balancing the Rising Dragon

Author: Major Jeremy Osborne, United States Marine Corps

Thesis: It is through military modernization, multi-lateral alliances, global integration of China's economy, and proxy issue involvement, that the United States can peacefully counter-balance China's rise.

Discussion: China's economic growth since the late-1970s has placed the nation on the cusp of becoming a global superpower. China has used its economic prosperity to modernize its military and effectively maneuver itself into regional, and to a lesser extent, global economic agreements. The question for the United States is whether China's newfound modernization and prosperity are indicative of a rising challenger to United States hegemony or a peaceful rise towards increased regional influence. Many of China's hard and soft power initiatives have conflicting messages of challenger and "good neighbor." Through analysis of China's historically defensive viewpoint of "active defense," this essay outlines how China's rise is inevitable, however, peaceful. The essay further demonstrates that unilateral policies regarding China, as well as misunderstandings about China's strategic culture could have disastrous results for both nations. Through analysis of China's balancing actions against the United States, this essay provides counter-balancing initiatives, in the form of hard and soft power, which the United States can undertake to mitigate China's rise on the global scale.

Conclusion: Short of a preventive war with the PRC, the United States cannot prevent China's rise as a global superpower. This does not mean that conflict with China is inevitable, however, ASEAN needs to assume a larger security role within the region in order to counter-balance China's rise.

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Preface

By highlighting the inevitable rise of China within the global environment, I offer potential actions that the United States, with an emphasis on the military, could undertake to adapt to a changing geopolitical environment. I do not believe that the United States military is as efficient as it needs to be in order to be successful in adapting to the changing strategic environment. I opine that from a cost-benefit analysis, large, very costly military programs need to be scrutinized for future survivability and relevancy.

I would like to thank the military and civilian faculty of the Marine Corps Command and Staff College for their guidance and direction during my research, especially Dr. Paul Gelpi who was instrumental in helping to frame an abundance of areas for scrutiny to a more manageable size.

For over two thousand years, Chinese Strategic culture has evolved around Confucianism. Scott McDonald observed that, “Chinese intellectual tradition developed separately from that of the West and approaches the world from a different perspective.”¹ Understanding China’s significance within the strategic environment of the Asia-Pacific region will continue to be critical for the United States. Whether it is economics, politics, security, or sovereignty Asia-Pacific nations will always have to deal with the Chinese juggernaut. Economic reforms initiated by Deng Xiaoping in 1978 laid the foundation for China’s double-digit Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth over the next 20 years.² China has averaged seven to eight percent GDP growth since Deng Xiaoping’s reforms were implemented.³ These reforms transformed China’s ability to influence not only regional issues, but also the global strategic environment too. Where as some see the rise of China as a threat to the security of the United States,⁴ it is important to understand that Chinese “strategic culture is neither pacifistic nor belligerent.”⁵ Short of preventive war, it would be difficult for the United States to thwart China’s rise as a global superpower.⁶

A preventive war scenario between the United States and China is one that political and military leaders of both nations should strive to avoid. The economic, political, and humanitarian cost of a preventive war would be catastrophic to both nations. Chinese strategic thinking on warfare has evolved into a medium that differs

¹ Scott D. McDonald, Brock Jones, and Jason M. Frazee, “Phase Zero How China Exploits It, Why the United States Does Not,” *Naval War College Review* 65, no. 3 (Summer 2012): 124.

² Ying Ma, “China’s America Problem,” *Policy Review*, no. 111 (Feb/Mar 2002): 51.

³ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁴ John J. Mearshimer, “Can China Rise Peacefully?” *The National Interest* (October 25, 2014). <http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/can-china-rise-peacefully-10204>

⁵ Andrew Scobell, *China’s Use of Military Force: Beyond the Great Wall and the Long March* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 192.

⁶ Robert J. Art, “The United States and the Rise of China: Implications for the Long Haul,” *Political Science Quarterly* 125 (Fall 2010): 359.

significantly from the American public's view of warfare. For example, fabricated stock market crashes, computer virus invasions, rumors, and scandals that affect a country's exchange rate, economic or political leadership are Chinese tactics and procedures of conducting warfare.⁷ The appearance of these "new-concept" weapons (i.e. the Internet), in which commonplace things become weapons of war, is foreign to the American public and only part of China's "beyond-limits combined war" philosophy.⁸

At the heart of China's "beyond-limits combined war" philosophy is supra-domain combinations or the combining of battlefields.⁹ Supra-domain combinations emphasize that "each domain may, like the military domain, constitute the principal domain of future warfare. But one of the objectives of "supra-domain combinations" is to consider and select which domain will be the main battlefield, the one most favorable for the accomplishment of the objectives of the war."¹⁰ For example, what if China was able to amass a large amount of capital and without notice launch an attack on the financial market systems of the United States. After this financial crisis has been created, a computer virus and hacker detachment that was secretly embedded inside Wall Street and other major financial markets, begins to attack our civilian networks; electrical grids, traffic dispatching network, financial transaction network, telephone communications, and mass media networks. Results of this scenario are social panic, riots, and a political crisis within the United States. At this point and time, when the United States is at its weakest, enemy military forces are utilized in gradual stages until the United States

⁷ Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare*, (Beijing: PLA Literature and Arts Publishing House, February 1999), 25.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 205.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 190.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 190.

capitulates to China's demands.¹¹ A preventive war with China would certainly contain some part of these forms of warfare if not all of them.

The technological gap that exists between the United States and other nations is referred too as the "generation gap." This "generation gap" has developed over time as the United States has continued to effectively innovate military technology and surpass most nations in military capabilities. These technological advances have also created vulnerabilities to the United States. China would certainly seek to exploit these vulnerabilities given the chance.¹² For example, the more high-tech a soldier becomes the more difficult it is to deal with unconventional and low-tech warfare.¹³ The United States military extensively trains with the understanding that their conventional forces will have technological superiority over their enemies. This mindset and training regiment creates a military force where technology is its greatest ally, however, is also its worst enemy. In a GPS, data-link, or communication denied environment, some of the United States military's vulnerabilities in conventional warfare would be exposed. These expanding domains of warfare illustrate the expanding scope of human activity and highlight numerous reasons why a preventive war with China should be avoided.

Chinese strategists and decision makers also understand that war, or even serious security competition, with the United States is not in China's best interest.¹⁴ The damage that would be conducted against the Chinese and American economies would be devastating. United States political and military leaders understand that China is balancing against the United States and its network of bi-lateral alliances within the Asia-

¹¹ Ibid., 145. This scenario summarizes one that is presented in *Unrestricted Warfare*.

¹² Ibid., 22

¹³ Ibid., 22

¹⁴ Mearshimer, "Can China Rise Peacefully?"

Pacific region through hard and soft power; the question is how should the United States counter-balance the rise of China. By demonstrating how China's rise is inevitable, and while not certain, peaceful, it is through hard and soft power, specifically, military modernization, multi-lateral alliances, global integration, and regional issue involvement, that the United States can peacefully counter-balance the rising dragon.

Twelve nations border China within the Asia-Pacific region. Sovereignty situations often require strong and weak nations to align with one another. These alliances are typically mutually beneficial economically, diplomatically, militarily, or combinations of all three. Thus, balancing is "allying with others against the prevailing threat."¹⁵ In peacetime, regional security and economic prosperity are the most advantageous reasons for nations to balance. Weaker nations often look to balance a stronger nation's power by joining with other weak nations through trade and security agreements.¹⁶ When a nation joins another weak nation, the weaker side increases the new member's influence within the alliance; therefore, balancing is a rational policy, for economic reasons. For security reasons, weaker nations often seek agreements with stronger nations to balance the power of another strong nation.¹⁷ Stephen Walt emphasizes that, "because perceptions are unreliable and intentions can change, it is safer to balance against potential threats than to rely on hope that a state will remain benevolently disposed."¹⁸

¹⁵ Stephen M. Walt, "Alliances: Balancing and Bandwagoning," in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, eds. Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, (New York, NY: Pearson Longman, 2007): 110.

¹⁶ Walt, "Alliances: Balancing and Bandwagoning," 114.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 114.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 114.

While neither China nor the United States specifically mention each other what Walt calls “potential threats,” understanding that China is balancing against the United States and its bilateral alliances through both hard and soft power is imperative. “Hard power” is the use of military and economic means to influence the behavior or interests of other political bodies,¹⁹ or what Ernest Wilson defines as, “the capacity to coerce another to act in ways in which that entity would not have acted otherwise.”²⁰ Examples of hard power are military modernization efforts, the threat of military intervention, coercive diplomacy, or the implementation of economic sanctions.²¹

Soft power or “the ability to attract and co-opt rather than coerce, use force, or give money as a means of persuasion,”²² is often a more effective means of achieving strategic objectives. According to Joseph Nye, a nation’s soft power rests on three resources: “its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when others see them as legitimate and having moral authority).”²³ Relatively new forms of international actions known as “soft balancing” have emerged because of the Bush administration’s aggressive unilateral approach to national security.²⁴ Pape states that soft balancing actions are, “those actions that do not directly challenge U.S. military preponderance but that use nonmilitary tools to delay, frustrate, and undermine aggressive unilateral U.S. military

¹⁹ Daryl Copeland, “Hard power Vs. Soft Power,” *The Mark* (February 2, 2010).

<http://pioneers.themarknews.com/articles/895-hard-power-vs-soft-power/#.VSb-JaaNswJ>

²⁰ Ernest J. Wilson, “Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power,” *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616 (March 2008): 114.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 114.

²² Joseph S. Nye, *The Future of Power*, (New York: Public Affairs, 2011): 84.

²³ *Ibid.*, 84.

²⁴ Robert A. Pape, “Soft Balancing against the United States,” *International Security* 30, no.1 (Summer 2005): 7-10.

policies.”²⁵ While soft balancing actions may not be able to prevent a nation from achieving its military aims, they will increase the costs of using power, reduce the number of countries willing to cooperate, and possibly shift the balance of economic power.²⁶ China’s strategic vision of “active defense” is implemented through soft balancing, hard and soft power and is how China is balancing against the United States and its network of bilateral alliances within the Asia-Pacific region.

Since the late 1970s, China has been following a three-stage defense modernization strategy;²⁷ “lay a solid foundation by 2010, make major progress by 2020, and be capable of winning wars under conditions of “informationization” by the middle of the 21st Century.”²⁸ Following a strategic vision of “active defense,” China seeks to implement its defense modernization strategy. At the core of “active defense” is the understanding that it is not strictly defensive but has an “offensive” component to it.²⁹ According to the Chinese perspective, the emphasis on self-defense will allow China to achieve its ultimate goal of peace and stability.³⁰ For example, Andrew Scobell explains, the Great Wall of China stands as a symbolic representation to soldiers and civilians of China’s historical *defensive* strategy. The Great Wall’s symbolic importance to the Chinese people is paramount to understanding and projecting future actions from the

²⁵ Ibid., 10.

²⁶ Ibid., 10.

²⁷ PRC Ministry of National Defense, “Chapter II-National Defense Policy,” White Paper on China’s National Defense (January 15, 2007).

http://eng.mod.gov.cn/Database/WhitePapers/2007-01/15/content_4004364.htm.

²⁸ Kamlesh Kumar Agnihortri, “China’s Naval Aviation and its Prospective Role in Blue Water Capabilities of the PLA Navy,” *Maritime Affairs* 6, no.2 (Winter 2010): 24.

<http://www-tandfonline-com.lomc.idm.oclc.org/doi/pdf/10.1080/09733159.2010.559783>.

²⁹ Wang Naiming, “Adhere to Active Defense and Modern People’s War,” in *Chinese views of Future Warfare*, ed. Michael Pillsbury (National Defense University Press, 1998), 37-38. Active defense emphasizes, “that the nature of our military strategy is defensive, but also active in requirements. It requires the organic integration of offense and defense, and achieving the strategic goal of defense by active defense should be lead to counter attack and offense.”

³⁰ Ibid., 39.

Chinese government or military. Scobell illustrates, “elites sincerely believe that they are heirs to an ancient and enduring strategic culture that is purely defensive. This conviction will continue to move these leaders to rationalize virtually any military operation as a defensive action.”³¹

Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms enabled China to sustain its defense modernization strategy. Towards the end of the 20th century, the average annual growth of China’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 8.78 percent. While China’s percentage of GDP spent on the military has remained constant at 2.05 percent, increased GDP growth yields resources that are more available.³² China’s growth in economic power has allowed China to mobilize its resources internally to meet their Defense modernization strategy. China’s economic growth has produced significant improvements in fixed and rotary wing aircraft, the Peoples Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), and the Anti-Access/Aerial Denial (A2/AD) military capabilities.

Military modernization is the most prevalent example of hard power initiatives. While not openly stated, military options against Taiwan and the diminishment of American and other regional nation’s conventional military advantages is a Chinese priority.³³ While neighboring nations like India and Japan also possess significant air-superiority platforms, China is balancing with its J-20 aircraft against the American F-22. China views American fifth generation (stealth) aircraft as a significant threat and seeks

³¹ Scobell, *China’s Use of Military Force*, 198.

³² Data is from the world bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS>. Compared with the United States, since 1995 the average annual GDP growth is 2.25 percent with the military expenditure averaging 4.33 percent annually. Most notably, the United States decreased its percentage of GDP spent on the military from 4.2 to 3.8 percent from 2009 to 2014.

³³ Alexandra Jones, “Responding to the Rise of China,” *Security Challenges* 3, no.1 (February 2007): 19. <http://www.securitychallenges.org.au/ArticlePDFs/vol3no1Jones.pdf>.

to balance this capability by making significant investments in indigenous fixed-wing aircraft. Flight testing of the J-31, the timing and debut of which coincided with President Obama's attendance to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting in Beijing, November 2014, was not coincidental.³⁴ The J-31 and development of carrier-based fighter aircraft (J-15) that possess Low Observable (LO) technology (J-20 and J-31) demonstrates a commitment to air power projection and are examples of China's use of hard power as a balancing effort against the United States and its bilateral alliances within the Asia-Pacific region. The United States should view China's fixed wing modernization as well as PLAN Carrier Strike Group (CSG) initiatives as balancing actions against the United States.

In September 2012, former Russian aircraft carrier *Varyag* was commissioned in the PLAN as China's first Initial Operations Capable (IOC) aircraft carrier.³⁵ The Chinese renamed the ship *Liaoning* and intend it to be used for aviation training, basic carrier skills proficiency, and technical experience.³⁶ While the *Liaoning* is not as large, fast, or capable as American aircraft carriers, "it is expected to be used for Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) protection, overseas deployments for countering threats, [Exclusive Economic Zone] EEZ and territorial claim enforcement, humanitarian aid, disaster relief and a limited role in delaying U.S. response during cross-strait

³⁴ Wendell Minnick, "With J-31 Flight, China Makes a Statement," *Defense News*, November 15, 2014. <http://archive.defensenews.com/article/20141115/DEFREG03/311150035/With-J-31-Flight-China-Makes-Statement>. The development of the J-31 indicates a major Chinese modernization effort. Once the J-31, whose mission sets are unknown, becomes Initial Operations Capable (IOC), it is expected to replace the J-15 as the primary carrier-based aircraft.

³⁵ Ronald O'Rourke, *China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities Background and Issues for Congress*, CRS Report for Congress RL33153 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, April 9, 2010): 46. <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33153.pdf>. China purchased the *Varyag* in 2002 and performed a 10-year modernization and refit effort.

³⁶ Agnihortri, "China's Naval Aviation," 38.

contingency.”³⁷ In April 2014, Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) Hagel visited the ship and crew of the *Liaoning* and returned “impressed” by the advancements the Chinese had made in naval capability.³⁸ However, China’s main goal is to construct one or two Short Take Off But Arrested Landing (STOBAR) capable decks to incorporate their J-20 and possibly, J-31 aircraft.³⁹

The Z-18F helicopter is one of China’s military modernization efforts to balance the United States in the Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) arena. Maximum weight restrictions disqualify current Chinese frigate and destroyer helipads from supporting the Z-18F. Therefore, the *Liaoning* is the only mobile platform for the Z-18F to operate from. Initial observations indicate that the Z-18F is capable of carrying 32 sonobuoys and 4 lightweight torpedoes such as the Yu-7. While not confirmed, the Z-18F is likely fitted with a data-link like the KA-28s in service with the PLAN. The data-link capability would enable the Z-18F to operate in third-party targeting mode for long-range anti-ship cruise missiles launched from frigate or destroyer escorts.⁴⁰

Although military modernization is the most prevalent example of how China is balancing the United States through hard power, China has also taken controversial actions. For example, the collision of an American EP-3E and Chinese F-8 aircraft in 2001,⁴¹ the harassment of the USNS *Impeccable* in March 2009,⁴² the ramming of two

³⁷ Ibid., 38.

³⁸ Cheryl Pellerin, “Defense Secretary Visits Chinese Aircraft Carrier Liaoning,” *American Forces Press Services*, April 8, 2014. <https://geneva.usmission.gov/2014/04/09/defense-secretary-hagel-visits-chinese-aircraft-carrier-liaoning/>. The SECDEF visit followed a series of successful sea trials where the *Liaoning* launched and recovered numerous aircraft, to include the J-15.

³⁹ Agnihortri, “China’s Naval Aviation,” 38.

⁴⁰ Andrew Tate, “China unveils ASW version of Z-18 helicopter,” *IHS Jane’s Defense Weekly*, August 20, 2014. <http://www.janes.com/article/42184/china-unveils-asw-version-of-z-18-helicopter>.

⁴¹ “Chinese board U.S spy plane, remove equipment,” *CNN World*, April 3, 2001. <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/asiapcf/east/04/03/china.aircollision.01/index.html?s=1>

Japanese Coast Guard vessels in September 2010,⁴³ and China's establishment of an Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) within the South China Sea in November 2013.⁴⁴

These aggressive military actions demonstrate China's commitment to using hard power to balance the United States and its network of bilateral alliances; however, the often overtly aggressive means of hard power does not always have the intended outcome. Soft power is often a more effective means of achieving strategic objectives.

Through free trade and energy agreements, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HA/DR) efforts, and protests China uses soft power to balance the United States and its bilateral alliances within the Asia-Pacific region. In November 2014, China and Australia signed the Chinese-Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA).⁴⁵ As China's largest two-way trading partner in goods and services, the Australian and Chinese economies will greatly benefit from reduced tariffs and a pledge of investments over the next 10-years.⁴⁶ The timing of the ChAFTA signing, immediately after President Obama left Australia, should be viewed what Pape calls a "soft-balancing" action by the

⁴² Ann Scott Tyson, "Navy Sends Destroyer to Protect Surveillance Ship After Incident in South China Sea," *Washington Post*, March 13, 2009. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/12/AR2009031203264.html>

⁴³ Shannon Tiezzi, "Japan Seeks Chinese Compensation Over 2010 Boat Collision Incident," *The Diplomat*, February 14, 2014. <http://thediplomat.com/2014/02/japan-seeks-chinese-compensation-over-2010-boat-collision-incident/>

⁴⁴ Simon Denyer, "China's move to establish air defense zone appears to backfire," *Washington Post*, November 27, 2013. http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/chinas-move-to-establish-air-defense-zone-appears-to-backfire/2013/11/27/74313faa-5784-11e3-bdbf-097ab2a3dc2b_story.html

⁴⁵ Australian Minister for Trade and Investment, "Landmark China-Australia Free Trade Agreement," media release, November 17, 2014, http://trademinister.gov.au/releases/Pages/2014/ar_mr_141117.aspx

⁴⁶ Ministry of Commerce, PRC. *China, Australia Practically Conclude Free Trade Agreement Negotiations*. China FTA Network, 2014. http://fta.mofcom.gov.cn/enarticle/chinaaustralia/chinaaustralianews/201411/19037_1.html. The Chinese press reports that, "the signing of the agreement will allow the two countries to fully utilize their respective economic advantages, boost win-win cooperation, bring mutual benefits and promote the in-depth development of bilateral economic and trade ties."

Chinese.⁴⁷ ChAFTA is an economic balancing effort against the United States and its regional economic alliances.

In June 2014, China and Russia signed a 30-year energy agreement, estimated at \$400 billion. This economic agreement provides another example of China's soft-balancing actions against the United States and its economic alliances.⁴⁸ Given China's economic growth and increased demand for resources, a Chinese-Russian energy agreement is not surprising. What is surprising is in November 2014, on the sidelines of the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, China and Russia signed an additional energy cooperation agreement. This second energy agreement between China and Russia complements their first by establishing a western supply route for natural gas, in addition to the eastern supply route that was established in June 2014.⁴⁹

The Chinese-Russian energy trade agreements are not only soft power balancing efforts against the United States, but also avenues for future cooperation between China and Russia over the next 30-years. The Chinese government will rely on Russia in diplomatic, economic, and military matters that involve the United States and its allies in venues such as the United Nations (UN), P5+1, G-8, G-20, and Six-Party negotiations. When discussing Six-Party negotiations, McDonald explains, that by "seizing the opportunity to step onto the world stage and lead a multilateral process, the PRC has managed to gain praise from the Western world for contributing to international

⁴⁷ Dave Boyer, "China, Australia strike major free-trade agreement after Obama leaves," *The Washington Times*, November 17, 2014. <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/nov/17/china-australia-strike-major-free-trade-deal-after/>

⁴⁸ Remi Piet, "Russia-China energy deal: Geopolitical tectonic shift," *Al Jazeera*, June 17, 2014. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/06/russia-china-energy-alliance-ge-201461765254926525.html>

⁴⁹ VOA, "Russia, China Sign Energy Deals at APEC Summit," *Voice of America News*, November 9, 2014. <http://www.voanews.com/content/russia-china-sign-energy-deal-at-apec-summit/2513909.html>

processes, thus fitting the West's picture of a responsible stakeholder. However, the Chinese have most to gain from the Six Party process by keeping it going, thereby preventing resolution of one of the main security concerns of the United States, as well as keeping the world focused on North Korea rather than the PRC."⁵⁰ China's 30-year energy agreement with Russia should be viewed as, "the backbone of a long-lasting alliance strong enough to challenge the current US hegemony."⁵¹

The last example of soft power balancing is diplomatic protests. The United States and South Korea execute bilateral military exercises along the west coast of the Korean peninsula every year. The Chinese consistently protest these naval exercises as provocative and on more than one occasion, the United States has acceded to PRC demands.⁵² When the United States acquiesces to these protests, it empowers the Chinese to further their initiatives where they historically have had little influence. For example, the PRC has successfully undermined diplomatic efforts toward Iran by consistently opposing United States or multilateral actions to stop the development of Iranian nuclear weapons.⁵³ China is also effective in balancing the United States and its alliances by protesting arms sales to Taiwan. Brock Jones mentions, "the perception that PRC markets are essential to U.S. businesses shapes economic calculations that reach into the debate on policy toward the PRC."⁵⁴ In early 2010, shortly after the United States announced an arms deal with Taiwan, China made an explicit threat to stop all trading with United

⁵⁰ McDonald, Jones, and Frazee, "Phase Zero How China Exploits It," 127.

⁵¹ Piet, "Russia-China energy deal."

⁵² Ibid., 126.

⁵³ Ibid., 127.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 129.

States. Had the United States not acquiesced to China's protests, Boeing and other major U.S. companies would have suffered a tremendous economic downturn as a result.⁵⁵

Continuing with the Taiwan example, from the Chinese perspective, if China were to take military action against Taiwan, these actions would be justified since Taiwan is viewed as part of China. Chinese leadership would view military action taken towards the defense of Taiwan, as offensive actions against China, therefore, self-defense, a key component to "active defense," would be justified. The likelihood of Chinese military action against Taiwan remains low and the peaceful re-unification with Taiwan remains a priority for China; however, United States political and military leadership need to understand that China will build upon a perception that, "the PRC is locally too strong, allies are too few, economic and military costs are too high, and victory is too difficult to risk coming to Taiwan's aid."⁵⁶ Using perception to its advantage, China's *true* regional intentions remain masked. The real question is whether China's rise will remain peaceful.

As a nation of 1.3 billion people, China's rise is natural.⁵⁷ A nation's population growth requires increased resources, security, economic, and political stability. Given its population's needs, the increased regional influence that China has achieved reflects a nation's natural influential increase. Key priorities for the Chinese government remain domestic and to a lesser extent, regionally focused, not globally. McDonald believes that, "the single issue that keeps them up late at night is the fear that the growing discontent of rural farmers and migrants could metastasize into a revolutionary force that topples them

⁵⁵ Ibid., 129.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 129.

⁵⁷ The Ripon Forum, "The Rise of China and the Interests of the US," *Council on Foreign Relations* 41, no.2 (April/May 2007). <http://www.cfr.org/china/rise-china-interests-us/p13455>.

from power.”⁵⁸ In population alone, China is 4x larger than the United States. Failure to upgrade its innovative capacity or human capital will only negate China’s chances of joining the top tier of economic powerhouses.⁵⁹

A peaceful and prosperous China is a nation that the United States should welcome. The United States should continue to encourage further Chinese emergence into the global economic society and benign competition.⁶⁰ As China continues to focus on developing its comprehensive national power, the United States should avoid a “kneejerk interpretation of any regional interaction.”⁶¹ Comparisons between China’s rise and the former Soviet Union’s following World War II should be avoided.

The geopolitical threat posed by China’s rise is not the same as the former Soviet Union’s.⁶² As Robert Art explains, “if China ends up dominating the Korean peninsula and a significant part of continental Southeast Asia, so what? As long as Japan remains outside the Chinese sphere of influence and allied with the United States, and as long as the United States retains some naval footholds in Southeast Asia, such as in Singapore, the Philippines, or Indonesia, China’s domination of these two areas would not present the same type of geopolitical threat that the Soviet Union did.”⁶³ Domination of the Korean peninsula is unlikely. China’s historically defensive posture does not demonstrate a global expansionist ambition. Spreading communism is not a national goal of the Chinese government. Supporting this assumption is the fact that China has *not* sought,

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Steve Chan, “So What About a Power Shift? Caveat Emptor,” *Asian Perspective* 38, issue 3 (July-September 2014): 375.

⁶⁰ The Ripon Forum, “The Rise of China and the Interests of the US.”

⁶¹ Linus Hagsrom and Bjorn Jerden, “East Asia’s Power Shift: The Flaws and Hazards of the Debate and How to Avoid Them,” *Asian Perspective* 38, issue 3 (July-September 2014): 362.

⁶² Art, “The United States and the Rise of China,” 367.

⁶³ Ibid., 173.

“military alliances or overseas bases as Moscow did in supporting friendly or client states in the regions.”⁶⁴

These examples do not prove that China will be “an aggressive, warlike nation, nor simply a strictly peaceful one.”⁶⁵ The examples illustrate that China will seek to shape the regional and to a lesser extent, global environment in ways that are favorable to its national interests.⁶⁶ Influence within *regional* markets and security is the underlying ambition of China. If the United States were to “behave toward[s] China largely the way it behaved toward the Soviet Union during the Cold War,”⁶⁷ China would interpret the United States containment policies as offensive and oppressive actions. Escalation of tensions between the United States and China may result and the containment policies implemented would negatively affect future interactions between the two nations. Through military modernization, multi-lateral alliances, global integration, and regional issue involvement, the United States can peacefully counter-balance the rising dragon.

As Mearshimer states, “the ideal strategy for the United States would be to stay in the background as much as possible and let China’s neighbors assume most of the burden of containing China.”⁶⁸ While ideal, this approach would not proactively promote the national interests of the United States. Lacking a security requirement like Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Association of Southeastern Asian Nations (ASEAN) is primarily an economic alliance between nations. Security alliances within the Asia-Pacific region are primarily bilateral (i.e. Japan and the United States).

⁶⁴ Chan, “So what about a Power Shift,” 383.

⁶⁵ Art, “The United States and the Rise of China,” 364.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 364.

⁶⁷ Mearshimer, “Can China Rise Peacefully?”

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

What ASEAN does is form a diplomatic fence around China. A major benefit of this arrangement is that ASEAN could serve to restrict or at a minimum influence economic and diplomatic decisions of China.⁶⁹ The lack of a multi-lateral security agreement between the Asia-Pacific nations is what forces the United States to maintain its bilateral security agreements and modernize its military against current and emerging Chinese capabilities. Therefore, United States military modernization must remain on the forefront to counter-balance the rise of China.

Robert Ross mentions, “[the] challenge for the United States in balancing China’s military modernization is developing an effective response to its missile program and thus neutralizing a developing access-denial capability.”⁷⁰ The question is, what is “an effective response?” United States military modernization efforts like the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) or F-35, the F-22 Raptor, ISR [Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance]-based weapon systems, remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) and unmanned underwater vehicles (UUV), seek to achieve this “effective response.”⁷¹ While Chinese military modernization efforts are in response to American as well as regional aircraft capabilities, American military modernization efforts are primarily in response to China’s Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) capabilities. Currently, the United States is exploring all avenues of countering the increased A2/AD threat and should continue to strive for military innovation within this domain.

⁶⁹ Dana R. Dillon, “Countering Beijing in the South China Sea,” *Policy Review* 167 (Jun/Jul 2011): 65.

⁷⁰ Robert Ross, “US Grand Strategy, the Rise of China, and US National Security Strategy for East Asia,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, (Summer 2013): 28.

http://www.au.af.mil/au/ssq/digital/pdf/summer_2013/ross.pdf

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 27.

For the near future, the DOD will rely heavily on fourth generation aircraft like the AV-8B, A-10, F-15, F-16, and F/A-18 for all operational requirements and contingencies. The F-22 will be relied heavily on for air-superiority. Coupled with permanently overseas-stationed squadrons, incorporating the F-22 into overseas rotation cycles will enhance American presence and deterrence within the Asia-Pacific region. The Japanese and Korean bilateral security alliances with the United States will be key to future successes within the Asia-Pacific region. Yearly bilateral training exercises between the United States and Japan and Korea should incorporate land based, long-range MV-22 training missions. These training missions should not be masked from the public nor should they be executed in remote areas where observation from China would be restricted. Maximizing and exploiting the demonstrations of this long-range capability will reinforce United States capability and continued resolve in support for its bilateral security alliances within the region. Proficiency in land-based operations will lay the foundation for long-range ship to shore movements to be trained to as well.

There is no debate that, “China is the dominant land power in East Asia; the United States is, and should remain, the dominant naval power there because maritime supremacy is essential if the United States is to remain a significant political-military player in the region.”⁷² China’s PLAN initiatives are increasing Chinese naval capabilities. Chinese efforts to use the *Liaoning* for HA/DR missions will be viewed as “good neighbor” efforts by Asia-Pacific nations; however, American political and military leadership should not view these efforts negatively. Continued modernization of China’s naval capabilities is inevitable and adaptation to this change is paramount for the

⁷² Art, “The United States and the Rise of China,” 376.

United States Navy.⁷³ Even with a more modernized Chinese navy, American naval capabilities, with unparalleled systems integration capabilities and wealth, will be able to do what maritime supremacy requires: “maintain the capabilities necessary to defeat on the high seas any Chinese navy that is built, thereby ensuring that its power projection capabilities are superior to those of China's.”⁷⁴

The United States Navy should continue to ensure naval dominance by deploying *Ohio*-class submarines with Tomahawk cruise missiles.⁷⁵ These deployments benefit United States security alliances within the region and continue to demonstrate maritime presence; however, shrinking DOD budgets require that “big deck” carrier deployments be scrutinized. Even though “the carrier is an effective platform for maintaining a maritime “presence” in East Asia, evaluation of its financial value ultimately rests on its war-fighting capability compared to the cost and effectiveness of other platforms. Given the carrier’s expense and its growing vulnerability to land-based and sea-based missiles, it may become a long-term liability rather than an asset in the effort to balance China’s rise.”⁷⁶ Modernization efforts in the American navy’s amphibious or L-Class carriers would be a solution to the ‘big deck’ carrier’s fiscal liabilities.

As defense budgets of the United States continue to stagnate, the global military advantage of the United States will only be sustained through increased economic efficiency within the Department of Defense. For example, if the United States Navy continues to fund aircraft carriers at their historical rate then the ability to balance against

⁷³ Ibid., 379.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 379.

⁷⁵ Ross, “US Grand Strategy, the Rise of China,” 27.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 28.

China's rise may become challenged.⁷⁷ With China's annual defense budget increases expected to surpass those of the United States a cost based arms race with China is not in the best interest of the United States.⁷⁸ For purely economic reasons, the United States cannot rely solely on military modernization as a balancing effort against China. The United States must incorporate soft power initiatives if it is to have a balanced, counter-balance approach to China's rise.

The economy of a nation drives innovation, social order, and power, and in the liberal-global economy, the potential for nations to prosper is limitless. Competition and innovation within the global market should be welcomed and encouraged. Even if China continues to increase its defense spending, growth within the US economy is expected to continue keeping the United States the most powerful nation in the world for some time to come.⁷⁹ Thus, the most advantageous counter-balance to China's rise is through the global economic and security systems. A unilateral approach to restrict China's growing economy, and therefore power, would be to block all Chinese exports to the United States.⁸⁰ However, since China plays such a significant role in the American economy, retaliation for this form of "economic warfare" would be extremely disruptive to the American economy.⁸¹ The United States and China are in what Art calls, "a mutually assured destructive relationship economically: each can retaliate against economic

⁷⁷ Ibid., 28.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 28. When discussing "big deck" carrier funding, Ross states that "it will limit funding for more-capable and cost-effective platforms, including submarines, RPAs, and UUVs deployed on smaller, less vulnerable, and less costly surface ships and/or submarines.

⁷⁹ Art, "The United States and the Rise of China," 358.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 364.

⁸¹ Ibid., 365.

warfare waged by the other, and the consequence is that neither can easily coerce the other through economic warfare”⁸²

The United States cannot acquiesce to China’s economic and political power being used to create free-trade zones and alliances that exclude the United States.⁸³ American interests would best be served by incorporating China into multilateral economic alliances. China’s incorporation would foster a multination approach to counter-balancing China’s economic growth.⁸⁴ Multilateral alliances are win-win situations for the United States and its regional allies. As Alexandra Jones notes, “Asian countries get protection, geopolitical predictability and access to the American market, the US gets frontline strategic partners, a geopolitical presence in the region and capital to finance its deficits.”⁸⁵ The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is an example of how the United States should continue to promote economic security and prosperity through multilateral alliances.

By promoting the TPP, the United States would continue to promote the national interests of the United States.⁸⁶ American firms would enjoy stable regional market access and the TPP would demonstrate a form of capitalism very close the American model.⁸⁷ This model would ensure that the rules of the TPP reflected the national interests of the United States: “intellectual property rights, liberalization of services and

⁸² Ibid., 365.

⁸³ The Ripon Forum, “The Rise of China and the Interests of the US.”

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Alexandra Jones, “Responding to the Rise of China,” *Security Challenges* 3, no.1 (February 2007): 19. <http://www.securitychallenges.org.au/ArticlePDFs/vol3no1Jones.pdf>.

⁸⁶ Matteo Dian, “Responding to the Rise of China,” *US Foreign Policy.com*, September 30, 2014. <http://www.us-foreign-policy.com/#!/Responding-to-the-rise-of-China-/c138k/008F4890-C056-48DF-92CC-7B63F79ECE11>

⁸⁷ Ibid.

investment, expansion of e-commerce, promotion of regulatory coherence, limitation of the role of the State Owned Enterprises.”⁸⁸ Total exclusion of China from multilateral economic alliances (i.e. the TPP) would be counter-productive for the United States.⁸⁹ One unintended outcome would be China viewing the TPP as a form of economic warfare, the results of which could be detrimental to the American economy.

To avoid the appearance of economic warfare, the United States must continue to promote Western order by encouraging engagement, integration, and restraint.⁹⁰ China’s incorporation into these organizations, “however broad or narrow based,”⁹¹ is the best capitalistic investment for the United States. As John Ikenberry mentions, “the more [these] orders bind together capitalist democratic states in deeply rooted institutions; the more open, consensual, and rule-based it is; and the more widely spread its benefits, the more likely it will be that rising powers [i.e. China] can and will secure their interests through integration and accommodation rather than through war.”⁹² Multilateral economic alliances in and of themselves are not enough to effectively counter-balance against the rise of China.

The United States must continue to encourage Southeast Asian nations to form multilateral security alliances that include the United States. Inclusion in these security alliances ensures that the United States maintains secure footholds in the Asia-Pacific region to promote America’s national interests. Working with ASEAN is a good starting

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Art, “The United States and the Rise of China,” 366.

⁹⁰ John G. Ikenberry, “The Rise of China and the Future of the West,” *Foreign Affairs* 81, issue 1 (Jan/Feb 2008). <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/63042/g-john-ikenberry/the-rise-of-china-and-the-future-of-the-west>.

⁹¹ Art, “The United States and the Rise of China,” 389.

⁹² Ikenberry, “The Rise of China and the Future of the West.”

point, however, agreement over security issues between the nations remains challenging. United States leadership on security policies within the Asia-Pacific region must not appear simultaneously punitive and unprovoked towards China.⁹³ The *appearance* of unprovoked punitive actions taken by the United States against China will diminish Southeast Asian nation support.⁹⁴

Through securing multilateral security alliances within the region, the United States can then ensure communication, transparency, and the reach of these arrangements supplement existing bilateral security agreements.⁹⁵ President Obama's "pivot towards the Pacific" demonstrates one of the ways the United States recognizes the security reality within the region. By reaffirming America's commitment in military matters, the "pivot" seeks to reassure Southeast Asian nations of America's commitment to security and stability within the region.⁹⁶ Through leadership in enforcing international norms, the United States must reaffirm its commitment to multilateral institutions as a means to address interests.⁹⁷ The Chinese interests of the South China Sea and Taiwan will only be resolved through United States and multinational involvement.

Numerous countries claim to have sovereign authority over the islands within the South China Sea. These disputes cannot be permitted to have an impact on the Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) through the region.⁹⁸ The Sea Lines of Communication are

⁹³ Art, "The United States and the Rise of China," 382.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 382.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 389.

⁹⁶ Mearshimer, "Can China Rise Peacefully?"

⁹⁷ The Ripon Forum, "The Rise of China and the Interests of the US."

⁹⁸ Dillon, "Countering Beijing in the South China Sea," 63. Approximately one-half of the world's shipping and a significant portion of North East Asia's oil from the Middle East pass through the South China Sea.

critical to the movement of oil and resources to all South East Asian nations.⁹⁹ The South China Sea connects the economies of Europe and Asia, thus making it one of the busiest Sea Lines of Communication in the world. Natural resources such as hydrocarbons are abundant and with unresolved boundaries and military intimidation, the South China Sea is a likely area for future conflict.¹⁰⁰ American maritime supremacy is vital to ensuring these resources are not restricted, however, engaging ASEAN and understanding *their* regional concerns is critical to establishing a legitimate and balanced policy on counterbalancing China's rise.¹⁰¹

From the United States security perspective, the worst solution to any South China Sea controversy would be for ASEAN to acquiesce to China's claim that the entire region is their sovereign territory.¹⁰² The United States must engage ASEAN on matters of SLOC and economic security and encourage them to become regional leaders in these matters. Unilaterally attempting to mitigate South China Sea disputes would prove detrimental to American interests within the Asia-Pacific region. Any indication of a great power, anti-China policy from the United States would create reluctance in ASEAN to accept United States assistance.¹⁰³ In order for any territorial or economic dispute to be resolved, it must be done from a multilateral, preferably ASEAN lead, position. Only then, with the legitimacy of having been brokered by regional nations, would any resolution have a chance of withstanding challenge.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Art, "The United States and the Rise of China," 372.

¹⁰⁰ Dillon, "Countering Beijing in the South China Sea," 55.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 53.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 57. "The ideal solution would be for the ASEAN countries to stand up to China and insist on a multilateral resolution to the disputes based on the provisions of the United Nations Convention of the Law

United States interests would be best served by articulating “a vision for the nations of Asia that contrasts with the re-imposition of ancient Chinese hegemony.”¹⁰⁵ Traditional Western principles of open commerce, political independence, and territorial sovereignty should be emphasized and agreed to before American military assistance is provided.¹⁰⁶ The United States cannot “hope” that these regional issues will resolve themselves peacefully; however, the United States cannot adapt policies that appear to be anti-Chinese either. ASEAN countries must “act individually and collectively to create a substantive deterrent to Chinese encroachment.”¹⁰⁷ This multilateral and ASEAN lead approach must carryover to the largest and likely most controversial issue between the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) and the rest of the world, the Republic of China (ROC).

An effective United States policy towards the ROC must begin with the understanding that “fundamental to the modern Chinese worldview and identity is the belief that Taiwan, which split from the mainland as a result of an unfinished civil war, should be returned to China rather than exist as a separate, independent entity, as many Taiwanese natives hope.”¹⁰⁸ This is not implying that military conflict with China is inevitable, only that future United States policy decisions should be made once the Chinese viewpoint is understood. If not, then the expected outcomes of policy decisions would be falsely assumed since the context of the question would be strictly a Western

of the Sea and the code of conduct (UNCLOS) specified by the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, which China signed in 2002. This solution is not possible unless ASEAN develops the political, economic and military resources to challenge China's influence. In the short term, backing from the United States and other regional powers including Japan, India, and Australia could be an incubator while ASEAN develops an indigenous deterrent capability. In the long term, it must stand up for itself.”

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 53.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 53.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 65.

¹⁰⁸ Ma, “China’s America Problem,” 49.

viewpoint. For example, “what Washington views as an important strategic and moral effort to defend democratic Taiwan from provocative military posturing by the communist regime has been interpreted by many Chinese as an effort to deny them the eventual unity of the motherland.”¹⁰⁹ Misunderstanding China’s defensive policy of “active defense” could lead to a misunderstanding of motives and context. This misunderstanding could further lead to an escalation of force where it is not warranted.¹¹⁰

Chinese scholars within the United States should be consulted on policy decisions regarding the ROC. In 2008, the University of Tennessee and the University of Denver conducted a joint survey of United States scholars teaching Chinese politics and international relations involving China in American universities. Approximately half of the respondents agreed with the statement that, “the United States has a balanced policy towards Taiwan and China.”¹¹¹ In fact, “over 90% of our respondents think that U.S.-China relations are either fair or good.”¹¹² While security analysts like Mearshimer believe that conflict with the PRC over the ROC is inevitable,¹¹³ Chinese scholars within the United States do not agree.¹¹⁴ The majority of American Chinese scholars think, “that mainland China will *not* use force to unify Taiwan since any military attack on Taiwan may invite U.S. military intervention and will definitely derail economic development in

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 49.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 49.

¹¹¹ Yang Zhong and Che-huan Shen, “Reading China: How do America’s China Scholars View US-China relations and China’s Future,” *Political Science & Politics* 41, issue 2 (April 2008): 362.

¹¹² Ibid., 361.

¹¹³ Mearshimer, “Can China Rise Peacefully?”

¹¹⁴ Zhong and Shen, “Reading China,” 363. “our China scholars do not believe that there will be a military conflict across the Strait. In other words, they think that mainland China will not use force to unify Taiwan since any military attack on Taiwan may invite U.S. military intervention and will definitely derail economic development in China.”

China.”¹¹⁵ In fact, “30% of our respondents believe that mainland China and Taiwan will peacefully unite into one country in 30 years.”¹¹⁶

If 90% of the polled Chinese scholars believe that U.S.-China relations are fair or good, the likelihood of military conflict is low, and 30% believe that China and Taiwan will reunite peacefully within thirty years, then, as it pertains to the ROC, why would the United States adopt controversial policies that might danger the existing U.S.-China relations? The United States should consider backing away from the military defense of the ROC and resolve the ambiguity within the Taiwan Relations Act as to what defense capabilities the United States will provide Taiwan.¹¹⁷ With an already low expectation of military conflict, “this would remove the most obvious and contentious flash point between the United States and China and smooth the way for better relations between them in the decades to come.”¹¹⁸

However, the United States must not completely abandon the ROC. While clarification is needed with the Taiwan Relations Act, the United States must not assume that the PRC would *never* take military action against the ROC. Given the ROC’s importance within the Asia-Pacific region, the United States has a powerful incentive to prevent the PRC from militarily seizing it. The United States should do three things:

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 363.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 363.

¹¹⁷ Charles Glaser, “Will China’s Rise Lead to War? Why Realism Does Not Mean Pessimism,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2011.

<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67479/charles-glaser/will-chinas-rise-lead-to-war>

¹¹⁸ Ibid. While realists would argue that this capitulation would only demonstrate weakness and abandonment from the United States, “when an adversary has limited territorial goals, granting them can lead not to further demands but rather to satisfaction with the new status quo and a reduction of tension.” By withdrawing the commitment to the military defense of Taiwan, U.S.-China tensions would be eased and therefore increased economic opportunities between the two nations would exist (Mearshimer, “Can China Rise Peacefully?”). With billions of United States dollars from Taiwanese businesses invested in China every year, the reduction in aggressive posturing by the United States and China would serve as an economic win-win-win situation for all three nations.

“maintain a strong naval and air presence in East Asia, not permit U.S. domestic forces to push for a more independent Taiwan, and keep a firm hand on any Taiwanese moves toward independence.”¹¹⁹ Any internal movement from the ROC to declare its independence from the PRC would be catastrophic for the Asia-Pacific region. With a substantial amount of the global economy moving through the South China Sea, conflict avoidance is in the best interests of the United States.

United States policy makers need to be wary of seeing a “self-fulfilling prophecy”¹²⁰ come to fruition. With a population of 1.3 billion, China’s rise is inevitable. However, it is also peaceful. The vital interests of both the United States and China can be protected without posing large threats to one another.¹²¹ A containment strategy for the United States towards China, like the one implemented against the former Soviet Union, would be a mistake. The geopolitical situations are not the same. This is not to say that an appeasement strategy towards China would be the best policy. In fact, “until China’s aspirations and capabilities become clearer, there is a need for the US to hope for the best and prepare for the worst.”¹²² A balanced approach that seeks to further integrate China into the global market system via multilateral economic alliances, while simultaneously counter-balances them with multinational security alliances, would be in the best interest of the United States.

The most likely contentious issue over the next 20 years is the ROC. With 71% of the polled Chinese scholars not expecting a military confrontation with the PRC, the

¹¹⁹ Art, “The United States and the Rise of China,” 380.

¹²⁰ Hagsrom and Jerden, “East Asia’s Power Shift,” 355.

¹²¹ Glaser, “Will China’s Rise Lead to War?”

¹²² Jones, “Responding to the Rise of China,” 27.

United States needs to consider changing its policy on the defense of the ROC.¹²³ As Art states, “the United States does not owe Taiwan political independence from China; it owes Taiwan the opportunity to have its status resolved peacefully with China.”¹²⁴ In fact, if the United States were to gradually ease its commitment to the ROC’s defense it may ease tensions with the PRC and therefore the Asia-Pacific region.¹²⁵ This de-escalation policy by the United States, coupled with a “pivot to the Pacific,” would only strengthen the non-expendable U.S.-Japan alliance. Most security analysts agree that, “the U.S.-Japan alliance remains the key to, and the bedrock of, America's power projection presence in East Asia... therefore, the nurturing and preservation of this alliance remain central tasks for every American administration”¹²⁶

The United States does not need to overreact to China’s hard power balancing actions of military modernization. China’s balancing actions against the United States are expected actions from a country who’s economy is experiencing enormous growth. Continued understanding that the United States and China share many common goals within South East Asia is required.¹²⁷ United States leadership must understand that China may overtake the United States alone, however, China will not overtake the Western order.¹²⁸ Through leadership in military modernization and multilateral alliances, the United States can counter-balance China’s rise peacefully. China can be forced to abide by the Western order of rules and institutions, thereby protecting United

¹²³ Zhong and Shen, “Reading China,” 362.

¹²⁴ Art, “The United States and the Rise of China,” 374.

¹²⁵ Glaser, “Will China’s Rise Lead to War?”

¹²⁶ Art, “The United States and the Rise of China,” 375.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 373.

¹²⁸ Ikenberry, “The Rise of China and the Future of the West.”

States interests.¹²⁹ In the end, the United States will have to adjust to new international conditions. If the United States, by “making some uncomfortable concessions and not exaggerating the dangers,”¹³⁰ adopts a balanced approach of hard and soft power initiatives, major conflict between China and the United States can be avoided.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Glaser, “Will China’s Rise Lead to War?”

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