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**WHO'S NEXT?  
AND ENDS, WAYS AND MEANS ANALYSIS OF THE RISE OF  
POTENTIAL HOSTILE COMPETITORS**

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## ABSTRACT

**AUTHOR:** Douglas W. Johnston, Jr., Commander, United States Navy  
**TITLE:** Who's Next? An Ends, Ways and Means Analysis of the Rise of Potential Hostile Competitors

**FORMAT:** Strategy Research Project

**DATE:** 18 March 1999    **Pages:** 30    **CLASSIFICATION:** Unclassified

Predicting the rise of a peer competitor of the United States is the subject of much thought and speculation. While it is important to forecast all potential competitors, the focus must be on the rise of a hostile competitor. This paper analyzes the prospects for the development of a potential peer and the geopolitical implications for the United States. It concludes that watching for emerging competitive ideologies while analyzing ends, ways, and means provides a solid predictive framework. Taking steps to counter or discredit hostile ideologies and to prevent or mitigate cataclysmic events might help prevent the rise of a hostile competitor. If done ineffectively, it might facilitate the rise of one.



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# **WHO'S NEXT? AN ENDS, WAYS AND MEANS ANALYSIS OF THE RISE OF POTENTIAL HOSTILE COMPETITORS**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Naming a peer competitor is significant for rational security strategy. Firstly, it has a negative connotation: labeling a nation as a potential threat. Secondly, an administration that names a competitor must be ready to compete. Ronald Reagan's "Evil Empire"<sup>1</sup> reference to the Soviet Union is a prime example. His wake-up call inspired and re-ignited the national will to stand against Soviet expansion. When Reagan sounded his clarion, he was ready to compete. This was clear in his policy and in his budget submissions. As a result, history credits Reagan as the leader of the effort that won the Cold War and brought down the Soviet Union.

A new super power has yet to appear. One may be inevitable. Thus, careful analysis of the ends, ways and means that are needed for a peer to compete provides a basis for planning national defense.

## **CURRENT THINKING**

The Clinton Administration has a wait and see approach to the rise of a competitor. The assessment of the global security environment in the 1996 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) lists as threats regional dangers, proliferation of advanced technology, transnational dangers (terrorism, migration, refugees, drugs, and international organized crime), and threats to the homeland. But, the QDR predicts that "the emergence of a regional near-peer or global peer is unlikely before 2015."<sup>2</sup> Beyond 2015, Russia and China are seen as possible competitors, but the obvious was stated: "the future is quite uncertain."<sup>3</sup> Likewise, the President's 1998 National Security Strategy lists threats but makes no mention of a peer competitor.

*The Economist*, in an article entitled *The Next Balance of Power*, points out that the current thinking of policy makers is contradictory. They stated that it is impossible to "foresee what is going to happen in big power politics in the next 30 or 40 years," while at the same time saying "there is unlikely to be any great challenge to the security of Europe and America in the next generation or so."<sup>4</sup>

*The Economist* argues that it is "possible to make a reasonable guess at how power will redistribute itself around the world in the opening decades of the new century."<sup>5</sup> It likens the search for the next competitor to conducting "geopolitical detective work" which asks four questions:

- 1) Whether the would-be great power's economy will be rich enough to buy it a military force that can be used far afield, not just in the area immediately around its borders.
- 2) [Does] the country in question have a government capable of running a vigorous foreign policy?
- 3) Whether the country's people want a muscular foreign policy.
- 4) Whether the country concerned also has some solid practical reason for getting involved in what goes on outside its frontiers.<sup>6</sup>

*The Economist* came to the conclusion that China will become a super power competitor of the United States.<sup>7</sup> It did not estimate how soon this would occur.

### **ENDS, WAY, AND MEANS**

*The Economist's* questions provide a reasonable start for predicting a future super-power. Viewing a potential peer from an ends, ways, and means perspective provides an additional structure for predicting who may become a competitor. In this analysis, ends are the reasons for, or objectives of, strategic reach, which is the ability to influence other nations. Strategic reach requires diplomacy, military power, economic sustainment, and alliances. Ways refer to how a nation's resources are applied. Means are the tangible and intangible resources available. Combined, ways and means allow strategic reach.<sup>8</sup> A

potential competitor must possess all three interrelated factors, ends, ways, and means in order to compete.

Who are the potential peer competitors of the United States in the early twenty-first century? Henry Kissinger believes that there will be at least six major powers - "the United States, Europe, China, Japan, Russia, and probably India."<sup>9</sup> Like Kissinger, *The Economist* included the U.S., Europe, China, Japan, and Russia, but discounted India because of geographic isolation and the reflective nature of Hinduism. It added a united Islam to the list of potential peers.<sup>10</sup> This analysis will include all the nations listed by Kissinger and *The Economist* and, for contrast, the United States. A hypothetical united Islam includes Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates.

This analysis does not predict the future, but rather provides a framework for making educated estimates. In the words of British statesman Benjamin Disraeli: "What we anticipate seldom occurs; what we least expect generally happens."<sup>11</sup> Maybe the reason anticipated events seldom occur is that we take steps to counter them, whether willingly or not. This paper assumes that the United States will continue to be a great power well into the next century. It focuses on the most obvious potential peers, but there may be others, particularly in the Southern Hemisphere. Brazil, for example, is emerging as a regional economic power and diplomatic leader.

## **ENDS**

In analyzing a potential peer one question to ask is, "what drives the peer, what does it want to accomplish?" *The Economist*'s fourth question -- [Does] "the country concerned have some solid practical reason for getting involved in what goes on outside its frontiers?" -- is one of ends.

Nations compete because of ideological differences, national pride, mistrust, desire for economic improvement, and the burdens of over-population, or any combination of the five. For example, the oft-stated end desired by the Soviet Union in competing with the United States (and other capitalist nations) was the spread of Marxism-Leninism. But the seeds for Soviet inclination to compete were sewn well before the introduction of Marxism. Russia was motivated by insecurity and mistrust of its neighbors as well as what Thomas Ganschow called a "messianic culture" which developed from its Orthodox religious heritage.<sup>12</sup>

Marxism is a virtually dead political ideology that is unable to compete with democratic capitalism. With Marxism's demise, there seems to be no new ideology that competes. Religion may be the basis for new extremism. Hard-line Shiites in Iran and Sunnis such as Osama bin Laden use their interpretation of the Islamic religion as a rallying ideology against the United States. An example is bin Laden's answer when asked by Palestinian journalist Jamal Ismail why, in view of Islamic law's prohibition against killing civilians in war, he (bin Laden) asked Muslim's to target civilian Americans all over the world:

If the Israelis are killing the small children in Palestine and the Americans are killing the innocent people in Iraq, and if the majority of the American people support their dissolute president, this means the American people are fighting us and we have the right to target them.<sup>13</sup>

Such arguments can, under the right conditions, be the genesis of a hostile ideology.

U.S. foreign policy attempts to shape a future that fosters international cooperation while advancing American interests and values. In a 1997 speech, President Clinton outlined U.S. objectives for our relations with China. They are fairly generic and apply to all U.S. international relations. They are a profound interest in:

1. Promoting a peaceful, prosperous and stable world.
2. Peace and stability in Asia.
3. Keeping weapons of mass destruction and other sophisticated weapons out of unstable regions and away from rogue states and terrorists.
4. Fighting drug-trafficking and international organized crime.
5. Making global investment as free, fair, and open as possible.
6. Ensuring that today's progress does not come at tomorrow's expense.<sup>14</sup>

Rational government leaders seek ends they perceive are in their national interest. Henry Kissinger called this concept "realpolitik," which he defined as "foreign policy based on calculations of power and the national interest."<sup>15</sup> Often the ends sought by others are reasonable and the same as those sought by the United States. It is possible for a nation to be in competition with others without engendering hostility. This is the case in normal commerce between nations. Competition becomes a national security issue when the ends sought by a competitor are so contrary to those sought by the United States that they endanger the well-being of its citizens.

Even if a nation or nation-like entity has the means and ways to compete, it is arguable that they would not compete without ends. The Soviets stated goal was worldwide communism. Whether or not this was truly their aim is debatable, but it gave legitimacy and momentum to their strategy. Such a clearly enunciated end is not always the case. The desired end may be unstated or may not be fully understood by the competitor.

The end envisioned for U.S. national security policy is clearly stated in the current National Security Strategy. This strategy sets out three core objectives. They are to:

- 1) Enhance our security.
- 2) Bolster America's economic prosperity.
- 3) Promote democracy abroad.<sup>16</sup>

The objectives of the National Security Strategy seem to follow Kissinger's *realpolitik*: "foreign policy based on calculations of power and the national interest." Some argue that promoting democracy is pointless. But, emergence of democracy enhances stability while creating nations friendly to the United States.

Some recent U.S. military operations did not seem to support the national interest. These include humanitarian operations in Somalia, democratization efforts in Haiti and support of the Kurds in Northern Iraq. In an article published in *Naval Institute Proceedings*, Ensign Matthew Gilbreath opines that such peacekeeping and humanitarian operations are driven more by idealism, which he feels is the "political opposite" of *realpolitik*. Gilbreath's idealism "concerns itself with furthering U.S. ideals (e.g. democracy, freedom, constitutionalism) independent of the effect that those efforts may have on our national well being."<sup>17</sup> He feels this is a shift from the realism that has dominated U.S. foreign policy for the past 50 years. Others see no shift, that we have always been driven by mixed motives. He makes a compelling case for increased idealism:

It is time to temper our pragmatic outlook with a great deal of idealism. Never before has such a great opportunity presented itself. The most educated, affluent nation in the world has the most powerful military in history -- and we have no one to fight for survival. No rival superpower is expected to emerge until at least 2010. Now is our chance to spread the ideals of the world's greatest and most successful experiment in freedom yet. We should render humanitarian aid to foreign peoples--because we can. We should alleviate suffering and build infrastructure because it is the right thing to do. We should attempt to negotiate and enforce peace wherever possible because only the United States has the ability.<sup>18</sup>

Can the United States afford idealism if a competitor emerges with less noble intentions? Even well intentioned pursuit of national interest may negatively impact others. According to Robert Samuelson, writing in *Newsweek*, this happened in the recent world financial market turmoil. Samuelson listed four

events where national entities abandoned the high road and moved to protect themselves at the expense of other nations. First, Hong Kong temporarily abandoned free market practices because of what was viewed as an attack on the Hong Kong economy by "global investors. At about the same time, "Russia defaulted on government debt" and "Malaysia imposed currency controls that barred investors from withdrawing their funds." Finally, even the United States Federal Reserve abandoned free market practices when it organized the 1998 bailout of Long-term Capital Management. <sup>19</sup>

The obvious point is that nations protect themselves first. If an event is threatening, defensive actions could escalate into hostile competition. At its extreme, hostile competition could feed the rise of a superpower competitor. While international order is the goal of most nations, some may resort to self-defense to protect their stake even if it threatens this order.

## **WAYS**

The "how" resources are used for strategic reach is the second part of the ends, ways and means equation, the "ways." Ways include diplomatic, military, and economic influence. Also included are the direct application of military and economic power, and the skilled use of diplomacy. This application ranges along a continuum from benign actions associated with soft power such as negotiation and sanctions up to the application of hard power with limited objectives up to full-scale war. The list of "ways" includes such things as diplomatic initiatives to sway the opinions of other nations, economic sanctions, and deployment and employment of military forces to achieve an objective or end.

The full gamut of ways was used in the Gulf War. First soft power was applied through diplomatic initiatives to encourage Iraqi withdraw from Kuwait. This included efforts to politically isolate Iraq and build international opinion against it. The United Nations Security Council condemned the invasion of

Kuwait and ordered economic sanctions. Hard power was authorized in the form of a sea and air blockade to enforce the sanctions. When the combination of hard and soft power failed to gain the desired political end, hard power (land, sea, and air) accomplished the mandated end - the liberation of Kuwait.

Examples of "ways" used by the United States include direct military action as employed in the Gulf war, or more recent aerial attacks on Iraq during operation Desert Fox (Winter 1998 - 99). In each case, military actions came after exhaustive diplomatic efforts and economic sanctions (both in the category of "ways") to persuade Iraq to comply with U.N. resolutions. Other "ways" recently employed by the United States include peace keeping operations such as Bosnia and Haiti, and humanitarian relief operations in Somalia, Rwanda, and Bangladesh.

Similar ways are employed by the other nations. But no other nation has the full spectrum of ways that the United States has. Most, if not all, participants in efforts against Iraq employed diplomatic or economic ways. Many provided forces for direct military action. Also, under U.N. auspices each of the nations had the opportunity to influence the Somalia and Haitian operations and some even committed forces. But all the efforts listed so far were lead by the United States. Thus, the United States is the indispensable power to catalyze coercive action of this magnitude.

## **MEANS**

While ends and ways answer the questions of why and how of competition, means are the who and what. Henry Kissinger classified means in three areas, "political, economic and military."<sup>20</sup> He further stated that the traditional concept of power involving a synthesis of the three had broken down during the Cold War. Accordingly, the Soviet Union was a "military superpower and the same time an economic dwarf," while Japan was an "economic giant,"

but "militarily irrelevant."<sup>21</sup> Thus a nation can compete with the United States without possessing all three means listed by Kissinger. This point has major strategic implications. While Soviet military competition with the United States was sinister, Japanese economic competition was and is viewed by all but the most paranoid (or protectionist - U.S. labor) as normal. Soviet military competition was fueled by state interest masked as political ideology that called for the annihilation of the American political and economic system. Soviet nuclear weapons threatened our very existence. Japanese economic competition, also fueled by national interest, does not carry an ideological mask. In the classic economic tradeoff of guns versus butter, the Soviets bought more guns, while the Japanese bought more butter. The United States was unique because it bought guns and butter in sufficient quantities to satisfy its people and compete militarily.

The key question is: does the competitor have the means, if applied, to negatively impact the American way of life and to what degree? The Soviets had the means, including military forces capable of a global reach and the national will to raise and utilize such a military. In the political arena, the Soviets had the ability and willingness to conduct a robust foreign policy. But because it was unidimensional and coercive it was not very attractive to most people. Today's competitors require similar military and political capabilities. Additionally, they must also be able to create or obtain the technology needed to counter the U.S. technological edge. Charles Maynes argues that the technological edge gives the United State dominance:

The greatest nation in the world today is the United States. It is hard to argue that its arrival at such a pinnacle of power and influence is the result of great statecraft. Rather, the United States casts such a gigantic shadow on the rest of the world because of a combination of an enormous population married to the highest level of technology.<sup>22</sup>

As previously mentioned, means are both tangible and intangible. They provide the governmental apparatus to project power. Tangible assets include military personnel and arms capable of inflicting damage on an enemy. These elements of hard power include trained personnel, tanks, bombers, and aircraft carriers among many other things. Industrial capacity and resources to create such forces are also tangible assets. Beyond the resources for inflicting direct damage, a global competitor must have the means to transport forces and support them. This includes cargo aircraft and ships capable of heavy, long distance transport. Thus, aviation and merchant marine capacity are important.

People are also a tangible means. While the relative size of a population is important, but its relative quality is more important. Population quality factors enable competition. Included are education levels and structure, intellectual freedom, creativity, work ethic, and general health. Also, demographic trends must be considered. A nation with an aging population will focus and use resources differently than a nation with a younger population.

The U.S. technological edge depends on population quality. Without improvement in population quality, technological advances generally come from imitation of others, if they come at all.

An equally important tangible resource is a professional diplomatic corps. Without it, robust foreign policy implementation would be impossible. Factors to consider in evaluating a nation's diplomatic corps include educational and intellectual freedom. A sound education system coupled with a well thought-out training program will produce higher quality diplomats, or at least a larger pool from which to select them. Likewise, a tradition of intellectual freedom and

creativity enhances the diplomat's thinking and communicative skills. A skilled diplomatic corps wields a nation's soft power, and can make military power a more credible instrument. When Theodore Roosevelt said "speak softly, but carry a big stick," he voiced the proper relationship between soft and hard power.

Intangible means include national will, values, the intelligence and industry of the people, diplomatic ability, and creativity. National will is the most important intangible means in a democracy because it determines how tangible resources are allocated and to what end. National will is weakened in a nation with an authoritarian or totalitarian government because the government makes the decision of how and why resources are allocated. National will in a democracy shapes international involvement. Political will in a non-democracy is at the whim of the individual or party in power. The extensive U.S. involvement in world affairs would not be possible if the people did not want it. European reluctance to use hard power in world politics reflects the people's reluctance to use force, the result of two disastrous World Wars and the rise of U.S. dominance in NATO. Thus there is little political will for much beyond defensive forces in Europe. Contrast the United States and Europe with China where the government decides what is best for China, allocating resources as it sees fit and generating its own political will within the communist party with little or no input from the people.

Table 1, derived from the Central Intelligence Agency Fact Book, lists means possessed by the nations (or the combined national means in the case of the European Union and a United Islam) as basis for comparison. The first two categories, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Per Capita GDP, provide a

comparison of current means. The statistics are from 1997 and give a reliable comparative perspective. They form a basis for determining the current relative strengths of the national economies.

Similar to the GDP figures, the number fit for military service is another comparison of current means. It provides relative manpower levels. From a manpower perspective, all the nations listed in the table could field sizable forces. The significance of the number fit for service is diminished when consideration is given to the relative ability of each nation to equip and transport forces and to keep them supplied once deployed.

	<b>U.S.</b>	<b>E.U.</b>	<b>CHINA</b>	<b>JAPAN</b>	<b>RUSSIA</b>	<b>INDIA</b>	<b>ISLAM</b>
<b>GDP</b>	\$7.61 trillion	\$6.7 trillion	\$3.39 trillion	\$2.85 trillion	\$767 billion	\$1.538 trillion	\$1.59 trillion
<b>Per Capita GDP</b>	\$28600	\$18800		\$22700	\$5200	\$1600	\$8000
<b>#Fit for Military Service</b>	69.4 Million	73.7 Million	196.8 Million	27.1 Million	30 Million	151.7 Million	60.3 Million
<b>Literacy Rate</b>	97%	97%	81.5%	99%	98%	52%	63.4%
<b>Industrial Production Growth Rate</b>	3.1%	2.31%	13%	2.4%	0	11.2%	2.9%
<b>Electrical Capacity</b>	703 Million kW	436 Million kW	210 Million kW	200 Million kW	215 Million kW	83.3 Million kW	114.3 Million kW
<b>Population Growth Rate</b>	.89%	.31%	.93%	.23%	.29%	1.72%	2.9%
<b>Merchant Marine:</b>							
<b>#of Ships</b>	414	3050	1957	773	600	306	1086
<b>Tonnage</b>	10.3 Million Tons	53.1 Million Tons	24.6 Million Tons	15 Million Tons	5.7 Million Tons	6.8 Million Tons	15.9 Million Tons

**Table 1<sup>23</sup>**

While the first three categories provide a comparison of current means, the next four categories -- literacy rate, industrial production growth, electrical capacity, and population growth rate -- deal less with current means and more with potential capacity. These factors can be used to predict if a nation will be able to produce the means to compete.

The final category in table 1, Merchant Marine, is important since many merchant ships are readily convertible to meet military requirements. Further analysis of ships by type with emphasis on ships of particular military importance, such as roll-on / roll-off, containerized cargo, and passenger liners could also provide a clue as to the relative capability to transport and sustain a military force.

## **PEER ANALYSIS**

### **EUROPE**

Europeans are in the midst of an identity struggle. The Union, composed of eleven nations with their own national identity, has yet to define itself. While it has taken steps to promote a common economic structure, other purely European common structures are yet to take form. This is evidenced in the continuing dominance of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as the principal defense structure in Europe with the U.S. playing a preeminent role.

The move toward a common European identity took a step forward on January 1, 1999 with the introduction of a common European currency, the euro. Ten of the eleven E.U. countries adopted the euro as its trading currency, with Great Britain abstaining. Economic stability is the stated reason for the euro's creation. But, as pointed out by Michael Elliott in *Newsweek*, some feel that competition with the United States is the real reason:

In a much-read article in *The National Interest* this fall, Harries (Owen Harries editor of *The National Interest*) argued that a very successful European monetary union "would amount to the creation of a second...superstate." In Harries view, that would mean trouble, because "there is a lot of accumulated resentment in Europe of its subordination to...the United States over the last half century." Such resentment Harries argued, could one day be translated into "competition, obstruction and rivalry; possibly...outright hostility."<sup>24</sup>

Many experts feel that "the euro will undermine the U.S. dollar's dominance in the global monetary system, threatening America's ability to maintain its profligate economy by borrowing cheaply from overseas."<sup>25</sup> Others feel that the euro will have no effect on the U.S. dollar's dominance in world trade and may even be good for business because a unified Europe offers a more stable trading environment.<sup>26</sup>

European influence on world affairs will remain about the same as it is today. It will continue to use national economic and diplomatic "ways," to maintain its traditional role. As shown in Table 1, it has combined current means comparable to the United States and could conceivably field a military capable of worldwide influence. Several factors make this unlikely. Firstly, European domestic politics will not support much more than defensive forces. Secondly, with a minimal to negative population growth rate, the population is aging. As a result the number fit for military service is declining, as is the pool of working adults. This will put pressure on domestic economies and become a disincentive for military spending. Finally, NATO, with U.S. involvement, will remain a viable organization. This will serve to link U.S. and European security interest into the foreseeable future. NATO expansion to include Eastern European nations formerly in the Warsaw Pact will serve to stabilize the region.

The European Union continues to strive toward a common foreign and security policy (abbreviated in E.U. documents as "CFSP"), but has yet to gain

formal recognition as an international body. This is explicitly stated in an E.U. Parliament resolution dated 28 May 1998:

Parliament considered that, while developments in the CFSP showed some progress, the criticisms made in its resolution of June 1997 remained valid. Regretting in particular that no interinstitutional agreement on its right to be informed and consulted had been concluded, it called yet again to be formally consulted on the basic choices of CFSP... Considering in general that the CFSP in its current form limited Europe's ability fully to exert its influence, Parliament called on the Council and the Member States to use and develop the instruments offered by the Treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam in order to create a genuine common policy and proposed transforming the Commission representations into proper diplomatic representations of the Union in those countries where the majority of Member States were not fully represented.<sup>27</sup>

## **CHINA**

China is an inward looking nation, more concerned with domestic stability than with having a major impact on the rest of the world. While it has a multi-trillion dollar economy, its per capita output of \$2,800 is miniscule in relation to the others in this comparison except India. China's industrial growth rate of 13 percent stands out as a significant factor in predicting future capability. While behind, China is trying to catch up. But its relatively low literacy rate of 81.5 percent combined with governmental policies that discourage individualism and creativity make their near-term ability to match the U.S. technological edge doubtful.

China's inward looking nature argues against the emergence of a compelling ideology to compete with democracy and free market economies. Jean-Marie Guéhenno asserts that China's integration in the global order is in doubt. He points out that the challenges of size and economic forces are pulling apart the fabric of Chinese society. He theorizes that "The Chinese leadership will find it increasingly hard to maintain its central control while encouraging

economic initiative; the temptation will arise to use ethnic nationalism to resist pressure for democratization and to shore up a weakened center"<sup>28</sup>

As pointed out by Christopher Patten, the last British governor of Hong Kong, China's relationship with the United States is its greatest concern. He provides two reasons, U.S. military strength, and the size of its markets.<sup>29</sup> Aside from China's disdain over U.S. official and unofficial criticism of its human rights record, the issue of the reunification of Taiwan with China creates the most friction between Washington and Beijing. This was underscored in February 1999 when China, as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, vetoed continued peace keeping operations in Macedonia because Macedonia recently diplomatically recognized Taiwan.<sup>30</sup>

China continues to insist that Taiwan is sovereign Chinese territory. In an article, entitled "2 Years After Saber-Rattling, China, Taiwan Set for Talks", John Pomfret points out that just two years ago "China was firing missiles over Taiwanese territory and practicing amphibious landings along the coast of Fujian province."<sup>31</sup> This was an effort to influence Taiwanese elections in which the opposition party, generally associated with the drive to declare Taiwan an independent nation, stood to gain power. Chinese provocations led Taiwan to put their armed forces on alert and to man defensive positions along their coast. The United States reacted by sending two aircraft carrier battle groups into the Taiwan Strait and after a few weeks, the situation returned to status quo ante. In this case, China's "way" of influencing events was to threaten military action. But this failed and probably stiffened Taiwanese resistance to reunification.<sup>32</sup>

Two years after their failed effort, China took another tack. Pomfret points out, the new "ways" being tried by China in their effort to reunify Taiwan. These include dialogue and what Pomfret calls a "charm offensive" by the Chinese. The dialogue is in the form of renewed talks between China and Taiwan

following China dropping its insistence that Taiwan accept its "one China" policy prior to the start of any talks. At the same time, the Taiwanese President called for "gradual steps to seek reunification in the future."<sup>33</sup> Other experts feel that China is seeking a dual track of negotiation while stepping-up military development in order to reunite Taiwan by force.<sup>34</sup>

The Taiwan issue has the potential to lead to hostile competition between China and the United States because of the potential for misunderstanding and military accidents leading to hard feelings that left unchecked can escalate. The following imaginary scenario illustrates this:

Following numerous failed talks, China and Taiwan increase tensions with numerous missile firing exercises and troop movements in and around the Taiwan Strait. The United States, sensing the rise of unease in the region, responds in the same manner that brought success in the past -- with a show of force. A carrier battle group is stationed in the immediate vicinity of the Strait.

During an announced missile firing exercise, a Chinese missile malfunctions and homes in on the U.S. aircraft carrier. A cruiser escorting the carrier is able to shoot down the missile, but debris hit the ship and kill three sailors. Despite irrefutable evidence, China claims that Taiwan fired the missile. It states that the U.S. had no business placing warships in the Taiwan Strait and resented U.S. intervention in internal matters. An irate Congress, with little debate, passes an immediate unilateral trade embargo on China by a near unanimous vote. The President, sensing public ire and knowing that a veto would be over-ridden, has no choice but to sign the bill imposing the embargo. At the same time, the United States sends an additional carrier battle group into the region as well as two Amphibious Readiness Groups each carrying a battalion of Marines.

After several weeks of rhetoric and with increased U.S. naval presence in place, China decides to act. A combined sea, air and land-based missile attack is launched against both Taiwanese and U.S. forces. The attack is successfully countered with China losing five ships and twenty-four aircraft. U.S. losses are minimal. As a result, China enters talks and eventually the situation returns to status quo. However, severe trade restrictions remain in effect.

China, smarting from its humiliation, starts an arms build-up designed to counter U.S. strength. Also, as a result of the trade embargo, China is forced to seek trading partners among countries that are either hostile, or ambivalent toward the United States. They leverage this trade with exports of weapons and technology. In the process, China creates a set of client states that share their hostile view of the United States. They also step-up their clandestine efforts to gain restricted U.S. technology. This leads to move and counter-move between the United States and China creating, in-effect, a new Cold War.

## **JAPAN**

Japan is a prosperous nation with a per capita gross domestic product second only to the U.S. in this comparison. But, the United States provides the stability that allows prosperity. For this reason, Japan will not become a hostile competitor unless the world changes dramatically. Even with a changed world, it is questionable whether Japan has the means to compete. With the nearly flat population growth rate noted in table 1, Japan's population is aging even faster than that of Europe. Like Europe, this will cause manpower shortages and place the increased burden on the economy of caring for an older population. Additionally, Japan relies on imports of most raw materials for industrial production.

Certainly Japan is a world economic power, but globalization and a flawed economic system have exposed its weakness. Japan cannot be a world power in isolation. The only way Japan would become a hostile competitor of the United States would be in alliance with another nation that could provide for its security needs. This could only happen if Japan perceived that the United States could no longer meet those needs. Such an eventuality is possible if China becomes strong enough to rival the United States. But, even with this, historic animosity would make it very difficult for Japan to shift allegiance. Japan would only join China's camp out of fear.

Japan's dependence on the United States for its security was proved once again in August 1998 when North Korea launched a ballistic missile that flew over Japan. The launch alarmed the Japanese because it proved that North Korea was capable of striking targets in Japan. As a result, the U.S. Secretaries of Defense and State signed an agreement with Japan in October 1998 to conduct joint missile defense research. *Navy Times* editorialized that "The agreement with Japan is an important signal that the United States will continue to be a stabilizing influence. Asian allies are looking for signs of U.S. commitment and leadership. This is one."<sup>35</sup>

## **RUSSIA**

There are only two reasons Russia is in this comparison. The first is her history as a world power and the second is her nuclear arsenal. Russia has become a Third World nation with a first world weapon system, the nuclear warheads and the missiles that deliver them. The scary part is the potential for nuclear disaster as the faltering state loses control over its weapons and expertise to build them and they proliferate to hostile entities, both legitimate

states and non-state actors. William Safire, an editorialist for the *New York Times* summed up the situation:

With Russian inflation running at 100 percent a year, Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov told a little joke about being forced to accept demands to be disclosed next week by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

"A man is handed a letter from his wife," he said at the World Economic Forum. "He opens it and the page is blank. 'How can that be?' he is asked. 'It's all right,' he replies. 'We don't talk.'"

He had begged Al Gore to lean on the IMF for repayment delay and new loans, and was turned down for good reason: The former spymaster has no economic plan to deal with congenital corruption beyond "optimizing the prison population."

But if Russia goes under, 30,000 nuclear missiles and the scientists and engineers behind them go on sale. The nation is not "too big to fail" (its population is smaller than Indonesia's, and is slumping toward half that of the United States), but the fallout from its collapse could be dangerous.<sup>36</sup>

Safire is almost right. Except if Russia collapses it not only "could" be dangerous, it will be dangerous.

Russia is already dangerous. One expert referred to it as "a weak state with pretensions to still being a world power." He went on to say that bitterness over loss of status influences Russia's diplomatic policy. He cited two examples of this. First, Russia seeks a more dominant role for the United Nations where it still has leverage as a permanent member of the Security Council. And second, affiliation with other states desiring to counter the United States such as supporting French contrariness with regard to Iraq.<sup>37</sup>

## **INDIA**

India is not a world power, nor will she become one in the foreseeable future. While it is a regional power, its relative geographic isolation, over-population and self-centered nature of the ruling minority keep it from rising to

world power status. Its international focus stops at its troubled border regions. Even its national focus stops at ensuring the wellbeing of the elite.

India cannot support its current population. It has a relatively high industrial growth rate, but it cannot keep up with the demands placed on it due to over-population. Mary Hager, writing in *Newsweek* pointed out that "demographic fatigue ... feeding, housing and educating an increasing number of children, while at the same time confronting the falling water tables, deforestation and soil erosion that rapid population growth brings," is already taking a toll in India.<sup>38</sup> This problem will only get worse as the population continues to grow.

Like Russia, India's nuclear arsenal makes it a contender on the regional scene. But, unlike Russia, India has yet to develop delivery systems to enable the use of nuclear weapons outside the region. The concern for the United States will be in dealing with the destabilizing potential of India's border conflicts with China and Pakistan.

## **UNITED ISLAM**

In today's world, it is a giant leap to even consider a United Islam, and a greater leap to conceive of such an entity as a world power capable of competing with the United States. While Islam is a force that binds its believers together, this bond is only skin deep. National parochialism, tribal alliances, social inequities, and demographic factors are also core influences in the Islamic world.

In analyzing the future of the Middle East, Charles Maynes used a term similar to the term demographic fatigue used to describe India's state. He considers the region "demographically-challenged."<sup>39</sup> While acknowledging that

resource limitations, particularly water, may be a cause for conflict in the region, demographics will have the greatest impact on the political system. He states:

There is a tendency in many Western countries to equate the Middle East with political violence. For this reason it is instructive to look at the changing demographic picture of Muslim states as a whole. In many of these states a distinguishing feature of the population has been the swelling number of young people, who in their impatience, place severe demands on the political system.... Is it an accident then that some of the most violent societies in the world in the last several years have been Albania, Algeria, Bosnia, Iran, and Turkey? Can we explain this violence by bad leadership alone, or was there a degree of demographic pressure that no government could handle effectively whether the state was to be found in the Middle East or in Europe?<sup>40</sup>

While the trend in the developed world is toward aging populations, the trend in the Islamic world is toward more youthful populations. The 1997 population growth of 2.9 percent is greater than any of the others compared in this analysis.

Even the leadership in the Islamic world is on the verge of change as highlighted recently with the death of King Hussein of Jordan. At the time of his death, King Hussein, who was 63, was among the youngest leaders in the region. Syrian President Hafez Assad is 68, Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat and Morocco's King Hassan are 69, and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak is 70. King Hussein's heir, 37 year old King Abdullah, is recognized as the first of the Middle East's new leaders.<sup>41</sup> Even Iran is in a struggle between the aging hardliners and new leadership elected by its youthful population discontent with the repressive system of the fundamentalist clerics.

Iranians, like many in Islam are in a struggle between the old and the new. David Kibble, a theologian writing on the Islamic background to problems in the Middle East states that "While Islamic fundamentalism may regularly hit the newspaper headlines, it is only a temporary phenomenon. Its internal

contradictions and weaknesses combined with its passage into the new millennium cannot but ensure its demise in the longer term."<sup>42</sup>

This is overly optimistic. While the impact of fundamentalism may decrease, it will continue to influence Muslim society as long as there is an Islamic religion. What is important is that, as new generations come of age in an information age, they cannot be sheltered from the influences of the rest of the world. Islam must come to grips with this reality and evolve to meet the needs of its population.

### **CONCLUSION**

While nobody can predict the future, analysis of ends, way, and means provide an easily understood basis for detecting factors that could lead to the rise of a global competitor of the United States. By looking at means and ways, an analyst can first determine if a nation is a potential competitor. But, possession of sufficient means and ways even in the presence of viable ends does not presuppose that competition will occur or that if it does occur it will be hostile. Hostile competition occurs because of opposing ideology, profound misunderstanding, and lack of trust because of a real or perceived threat. Cataclysmic events can serve to turn this mistrust into real competition, or they can become the basis for greater cooperation. Watching for the emerging competing ideologies while analyzing ends, way, and means provides a solid predictive framework. Taking steps to counter or discredit opposing ideologies and to prevent or mitigate cataclysmic events might help prevent the rise of a hostile competitor. If done ineffectively, it might facilitate the rise of one.

The evidence suggests that China is tilting toward hostile competition. Reunification with Taiwan and criticism of China's human rights record remain hot button issues. As illustrated, the Taiwan issue provides a ready flash point.

The United States may have to decide if supporting democracy in Taiwan is worth the cost of creating a hostile China. Perhaps the greater good would be served by supporting the peaceful reunification of Taiwan on mutually agreeable terms while continuing the encouragement of democracy in China.

WORD COUNT = 6932.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Ronald Reagan, "Remarks at the Annual Washington Conference of the American Legion, February 22, 1983" in Public Papers of the President of the United States, Ronald Reagan, 1983 vol., bk 1 (Washington D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982-90), 70.

<sup>2</sup> William S. Cohen, Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review (Washington D.C., Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 1997), 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>4</sup> "The Next Balance of Power," *The Economist*, 1998 in U.S. Army War College Readings, Volume 5 -Part B (Carlisle, PA, U.S. Army War College, 1998), 473.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 473.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 473-475.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 474.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Army War College Directive AY 1999, Core Curriculum Course 2: "War, National Policy and Strategy" (Carlisle, PA, U.S. Army War College, 1998), 31.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>10</sup> "The Next Balance of Power," 474.

<sup>11</sup> Benjamin Disraeli quoted in Charles William Maynes, "The Middle East in the Twenty-first Century," *Middle East Journal* Volume 52, No. 1 (Winter 1998): 9.

<sup>12</sup> Herbert McClosky and John E. Turner "The Russian Legacy" in Gary K. Bertsch and Thomas W. Ganshow, Comparative Communism (San Francisco, W.H. Freeman and Company, 1976), 43.

<sup>13</sup> Osama bin Laden quoted in Jamal Ismail, "'I Am Not Afraid of Death,' Osama bin Laden talks about the embassy bombings, the strikes on Iraq and his war on America," *Newsweek* Volume CXXXIII, No. 2 (January 11, 1999): 37.

<sup>14</sup> William Clinton, "China and the National Interest" Remarks at the Voice of America, Washington D.C., November 1997.

<sup>15</sup> Kissinger, 137.

<sup>16</sup> William J. Clinton, A National Security Strategy for a New Century (Washington D.C., The White House, October 1998), iii.

<sup>17</sup> Ensign Matthew Gilbreath, USN, "Because We Can, We Should," *Naval Institute Proceedings* Volume 124/7/1,145 (July 1998): 64.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>19</sup> Robert J. Samuelson, "The Loss of Confidence," *Newsweek* Volume CXXXII, No. 16 (October 19, 1998): 60.

<sup>20</sup> Henry Kissinger, Diplomacy (New York, NY, Touchstone, 1994), 23.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>22</sup> Charles William Maynes, "The Middle East in the Twenty-first Century," *Middle East Journal* Volume 52, No. 1 (Winter 1998): 10.

<sup>23</sup> Compiled from 1995-1997 data CIA World Factbook 1997 available from <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/country.html>>; Internet; accessed 14 December 1998.

<sup>24</sup> Michael Elliott, "Europe Starts to Get Serious," *Newsweek* Volume CXXXII, No. 24 (December 14, 1998): 44.

<sup>25</sup> Paul Blustein, "Experts disagree on euro's effect on U.S. dollar," *The Harrisburg Patriot-News*, 1 January 1999, sec. B, p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. B, p. 5.

<sup>27</sup> "Role of the Union in the World, Common Foreign and Security Policy," *Bulletin EU 5-1998* available from <<http://www.europa.eu.int/abc/doc/off/bull/en/new/pesc.htm>>; Internet; accessed 2 November 1998.

<sup>28</sup> Jean-Marie Guéhenno "Globalization and the International System" *Journal of Democracy* Volume 10, No. 1 (January 1999): 31.

<sup>29</sup> Christopher Patten, "Thinking China With Fingers Crossed," *Newsweek* Volume CXXXII, No. 11 (September 14, 1998): 37.

<sup>30</sup> Nicole Winfield, "Miffed China uses U.N. veto against Macedonia," *The Harrisburg Patriot-News*, 26 February 1999, sec. A, p. 9.

<sup>31</sup> John Pomfret, "2 Years After Saber-Rattling, China, Taiwan Set for Talks," *Washington Post*, 13 October 1998, sec. A, p. 10.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., A, p. 10.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., A, p. 10.

<sup>34</sup> This statement is based on remarks made by a speaker participating in the Commandant's Lecture Series at the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA.

<sup>35</sup> "Sending a Message," *Navy Times*, November 9, 1998, p. 28.

<sup>36</sup> William Safire, "Russia Faltering," *The Harrisburg Patriot-News*, 3 February 1999, sec. A, p. 11.

<sup>37</sup> This statement is based on remarks made by a speaker participating in a Regional Strategic Appraisal Forum at the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA.

<sup>38</sup> Mary Hager, "How 'Demographic Fatigue' Will Defuse the Population Bomb," *Newsweek* Volume CXXXII, No. 18 (November 2, 1998): 12.

<sup>39</sup> Maynes, 11.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Russell Watson, Joseph Contreras, and Christopher Dickey, "The Sons Finally Rise," *Newsweek* Volume CXXXIII, No. 7 (February 15, 1999): 39.

<sup>42</sup> David G. Kibble, "Islamic Fundamentalism: A Transitory Threat?," *Strategic Review* Volume 26, No. 2 (Spring 1998): 12.



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