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Joint Military Operations
Term Paper

China and the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act: Advantageous or Disadvantageous to
the Pacific Commander?

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The content of this paper reflects my own personal views, and
is not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the
Department of the Navy.

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As we enter the twenty-first century, the United States finds itself as the sole superpower in the world. The new world order envisioned by President Bush has not materialized. Instead of a stable security environment, America is faced with dangers and uncertainty. The Theater Commanders charged with shaping the security environment in their areas of responsibility will be faced with significant security challenges. The area of the world that will pose the greatest challenge is Asia. While the twentieth century was the "American Century" the twenty-first century will be the "Asian Century."

Asia has become an economic powerhouse. The United States must realize that it is an Asian as well as an European country and as such must remain engaged and interested in Asian affairs. As the sole remaining superpower in the region, the United States has been the stabilizing factor enabling the Asian countries to realize economic gains. This position now puts the U.S. at odds with the rising star in Asia, China. Most significant in terms of economic growth has been the rise of China. After undergoing the "century of humiliation," the Communist Revolution led by Mao Zedong threw out the last of the colonial powers, united the country and made significant gains militarily and economically. However, since the end of the Pacific War in Asia, the United States has become the major economic and military power in other Asian countries. The United States has also been the guarantor of peace and regional stability enabling the countries of the Pacific Rim to concentrate on economic improvements .

At the end of the Twentieth Century, China undertook significant economic reforms, realized tremendous growth and became an economic power to be reckoned with. China must now be recognized as a regional power in Asia. Since the inception of the Peoples Republic of China, the United States has at various levels been in conflict with them. One source of



confrontation has been the U.S. policy of supporting and protecting of Taiwan. As an outgrowth of that commitment for continuing support, the United States Congress is now considering the passage of House Resolution 1638 known as the "Taiwan Security Enhancement Act." Passage of this Act will have implications that will effect the operational commander's ability to do his job. Therefore, will passage of this act be advantageous or disadvantageous to the Pacific Commander?

This paper will explore whether passage of House Resolution 1638 will be advantageous or disadvantageous to the Pacific Commander in shaping Asian security. I will present the historical perspectives of China and the United States and how each looks at security in the region. I will also show how recent actions by the U.S. President almost assure passage of this resolution, how passage will exacerbate the Pacific Commander's security concerns and what actions can be taken to mediate those concerns. Lastly, I will review what I consider the real concerns and future implications for the Commander in the Asian region. To do this we will go beyond the rhetoric surrounding Taiwan to explore China's true intentions balanced against its capabilities.

Background: China

China is the oldest civilization in the world. It was only during the last 150 years that China was not the regional hegemon. The attitude of the Chinese collective toward security is best summed up by a quote by Mao Zedong: "The Chinese have always been a great, courageous, and industrious nation; it is only in modern times that they have fallen behind. And it was due entirely to oppression and exploitation by foreign imperialism and domestic reactionary

governments...ours will no longer be a nation subject to insult and humiliation. We have stood up.”¹

Since its founding, the Peoples Republic of China’s main goal has been to return to its historic major power status. The Chinese leadership and people believe that given its history, vast territory, contribution to civilization, huge population and tradition of being the center of a Confucian Sino-centric based world order, it has a right not only to be preeminent in Asia but also influential globally. China’s perceptions toward the world have also been influenced by its sense of vulnerability growing out of the “century of humiliation” and also from a combination of relative economic and technological weaknesses, unfavorable positions in the global balance of power and direct military threats from the United States and Soviet Union.²

China’s attitude toward the world in terms of its own security has always been as it is today, state centered. The state is the paramount referent of security on both domestic and international levels. Historically, the state has been the protector of the people. The state has also been regarded as the protector of the race (greater Han people) and the culture.³ The Communist Government structure in China today in many ways is similar to the traditional Confucian based system of old.

Early in the current regime, the Peoples Republic of China faced many domestic problems, and for the most part, has concentrated on internal security concerns solidifying the power of the

¹Xinbo, Wu, Asian Security Practice: Material and Ideational Influences, (Stanford University Press, 1998) 115.

² Xinbo, Wu, Asian Security Practice: Material and Ideational Influences, (Stanford University Press, 1998) 122.

³ Ibid, 123.

Communist Party. It has been only recently that the strategic environmental conditions created by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war have enabled China to look outward and begin its quest to regain historic influence. Under Deng Xiaoping, China undertook economic reforms and modernization realizing significant gains. The people seemed to be gaining more freedoms, and the world was beginning to view China as a member of the family of nations. But in 1989, the Tiananmen Square incident reminded the world that regime legitimacy is the number one priority for the Chinese Communist Party. That incident coupled with the collapse of socialism in both Eastern Europe and the USSR alarmed the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party. They believed that their legitimacy to rule was seriously undermined by those events. They also felt isolated as the sole remaining major socialist power in the world and believed were they next target of the United States.

Background: The United States

The United States' strategic tradition toward Asia has been influenced by ignorance, racism and a missionary zeal to change the "East" to fit with its western ideals. Since the first American clipper ship, the "Empress of China," visited Canton in 1784 until today, Asia has either been of secondary interest to the United States or an enigma, which resulted in our actions compounding feelings of mistrust and suspicion among the Asian countries we dealt with. The Asians did not understand the Americans and the Americans did not understand the Asians.⁴ Even today the knowledge of each others histories, cultures and languages remains small to the extreme. The Americans know very little about China and its aspirations and true intentions. It is this way because Americans still tend to view the world through Euro-centric lenses which lends

⁴ Thomson Jr., James, Peter W. Stanley, John Curtis Perry, Sentimental Imperialists: The American Experience in East Asia, (New York: Harper and Row, 1981) 302-311.

itself to misunderstandings and miscommunications. This tendency has caused considerable tension in the past and will be the root of conflict in the future.⁵

The Present : The Taiwan Factor

Today, as a growing regional power, China's national interests and aspirations are coming head to head with the interests of the United States. China views Taiwan as a province of the Peoples Republic and has been calling for reunification for years. Tensions between the United States and China now seem to be coming to an impasse over the Taiwan situation.

Since 1988, great changes have taken place in relations across the Taiwan Straits and on Taiwan itself. The expansion of cross-straits exchanges in social, economic and cultural areas has greatly improved, but against that backdrop political relations have deteriorated. A new generation of Taiwanese now enjoy great economic wealth and new democratic freedoms. There is an increasing desire by the people to form an independent country recognized by the world. As a result of this and the recent election of the Pro-Independence candidate Chen Shui-bian, China has now made the Taiwan issue a primary concern. Traditionally, the United States' policy has been to give the Taiwanese the means to defend themselves, while also recognizing the "one China, two systems" concept. In all previous policy statements, China has not given a time table for the resolution of what they see as an internal matter.⁶ But, in China's most recent White Paper published 21 February 2000, China intimated that they could not wait indefinitely for a resolution to the Taiwan problem and now reserved the right to use military force to do so.⁷

⁵ Ibid, 308.

⁶ Frankel, Max, "Nixon and Chou Agree to Renew Contracts; U.S. to Withdrawal Gradually from Taiwan," New York Times Feb. 28, 1972.

⁷ Sicherman, Harvey, "China's Three Ifs," Global Beat: East Asian Security, <<http://www.nyu.edu/globalbeat/asia>>.

Most recently, China has heated up the rhetoric over the Taiwan issue for a number of reasons. As stated before, the first is government legitimacy. The economic reforms initiated and implemented by Deng Xioping have run their course. The Chinese people have grown used to economic freedom and now desire more reform. The problem for the leaders of the Communist party is that further reforms necessary to fuel further economic expansion would threaten their legitimacy. Now looking for a tool for legitimacy, the leaders of China are now presenting the Communist party as being the protector of Chinese nationalism. The Chairman of the Communist party, Jaing Zemin, since taking power, has always based his legitimacy as Chairman on economic reform and promotion of Chinese nationalism through Taiwan reunification by 2005.⁸ Most recently, confrontational rhetoric has heated up as a result of the Taiwanese people electing a Pro-Independence president and the U.S. Congress proposing to pass House Resolution 1838, known as the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act (TSAE).

Taiwan Security Enhancement Act

As a result of hostile actions taken by China toward Taiwan, Senator Jesse Helms(R-NC) has sponsored a bill for the Senate entitled the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act. Passed by the U.S. House of Representatives 341-70 in 1999, the bill has yet to pass the U.S. Senate. Senator Helms was concerned because of the modernization of the Chinese military, especially the development and deployment of missiles pointed at Taiwan, the United States commitment to the security and that the survival of Taiwan had to be strengthened. He felt that China's quantitative edge in naval and air power coupled with China's ongoing modernization drive will prove overwhelming in any sort of military confrontation, and that Taiwan's future success in deterring

⁸ Zemin, Jiang, "Continue to Promote the Reunification of the Motherland," 30 January 1995. <<http://members.aol.com/suehampton/prc>>.

Chinese aggression will depend on acquisition of modern arms, technology and equipment. Helms further explains the Taiwan Relations Act obliges the United States to provide defensive arms to Taiwan based solely on the judgment of the United States regarding Taiwan's needs. With China's threatening buildup it is unlikely that Taiwan's current legitimate needs will decrease anytime soon.⁹

Section 4 of House Resolution Act 1838 outlines the U.S. Congresses' estimation of Taiwan's defense needs. The recommendations would be to increase the technical staff at the American Institute in Taiwan. Congress also would require annual reports from the President to Congress detailing each of Taiwan's requests for defensive services that year. The report would detail further description of defense needs asserted by Taiwan, and decision to reject postpone, or modify such requests.

Section 5 of Act 1838 describes United States' hand in the strengthening of Taiwanese defense. In order to assist their defense, the United States would increase combined training and personnel exchange programs. Also, the U.S. Military would work together with Taiwan to create threat analysis, doctrine, force planning, operational methods, etc. Another key part would be to establish direct, secure communications between United States Pacific Military Command and Taiwan Military Command. Further outlined is the availability of equipment to Taiwan. The U.S. would make available to sale to Taiwan ground-based and naval based missile defense systems. Also available would be reconnaissance and communications equipment to target and cue missile defense systems sold to Taiwan, satellite early warning data and modern air defense equipment including AIM-120 AMRAAM air to air missiles, AWAC's and equipment to better defend

⁹ "Helms Introduces Taiwan Security Enhancement Act," From Prominent Viewpoints. 24 March 1999. <<http://www.taiwaninformation.org>>.

Taiwan from air to air missile attacks. Finally, the U.S. would provide communications infrastructure, anti-submarine systems, naval anti-missile systems, including Aegis destroyers, capable of defeating foreign supersonic anti-ship missiles and communications systems that better enable Taiwan to conduct joint force naval defense operations.¹⁰

In light of Resolution Act 1838 not yet being passed by the Senate, Taiwan remains a hot, prevalent issue in the U.S. Congress. Recent actions by the Clinton Administration, with the support of the Pentagon, have raised the concern of many members of Congress toward Taiwan's security. The Clinton Administration decided not to sell Taiwan U.S. made Aegis equipped destroyers.¹¹ This controversial decision is seen by many as accommodation towards the Chinese and probably assures passage of House Resolution 1838 later this year. Senator Trent Lott(R-MS) had promised passage of the bill by Memorial Day 2000, but recently the new Taiwanese Government requested that passage be delayed until after the 20 May inauguration of Chen Shui-bian. Even so, events indicate that expeditious passage of this bill is likely.¹²

Passage of the TSEA will present a myriad of challenges that will be disadvantageous to the Pacific Commander as he tries to lead America's engagement in shaping a stable security environment in Asia. Specifically, passage of the TSEA will reinforce Chinese perceptions that the United States continues to seek containment of China, and that it seeks the permanent separation of Taiwan from Chinese sovereignty. Chinese leaders also believe that Taiwanese

¹⁰ United States Congress, House Resolution 1838: Taiwan Defense Enhancement Act, Sections 4, 5. GPO, 1999.

¹¹ Brown, Justin, "Pentagon's Compromise Keeps the Peace in Taiwan Strait," Christian Science Monitor 20 April 2000.

¹² Mafson, Dewar, "Taiwan Bill Tested As Island Leaders Urge Delay," Washington Post 27 April 2000.

independence sentiment was possible because of U.S. Military support.¹³ Such support emboldened the Taiwanese to seek permanent independence from China. Also, according to Chinese officials, the reaction of China will be much worse than those following Lee Teng-hue's 1995 United States visit. Li Zha Xing, the Chinese Ambassador to the United States, stresses that the bill negates the "one China, two system principle" and undermines the basic framework of China-United States normalization. It also violates United States' pledges under the three China United States communiqués, and also further fans the flames about the China threat in the United States.¹⁴

The bottom line is that passage of the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act will have consequences that will make USCINCPAC's job shaping the security environment in Asia much more difficult.

Unrestricted Warfare : A Glimpse of the Future?

Based upon the historical perspective and continued misunderstandings and miscommunications, relations with China that once looked positive in the recent past seem to be becoming more strained. In effect, many Chinese regard the United States as a developing enemy. Currently, there appears to be a building and broad public expression of anti-United States sentiment across China; these negative sentiments on both sides could lead to further deterioration in the relationship between the two countries.¹⁵ Indications of the seriousness with which the Chinese take toward this situation and China's military preparations for "the coming conflict" are summarized in a book, published in 1999, titled Unrestricted War by Quio Liang and Wang

¹³ Shambaugh, David, "China's Military Views the World: Ambivalent Security," International Security Vol 24.3 (Winter 1999/2000): 64-65.

¹⁴ Zha Xing, Li (Chinese Ambassador to the United States), Beijing Review 28 Feb. 2000.

¹⁵ Zhang, Ming, "The Shifting Public Image of the United States," National Defense University. <<http://www.ndu.edu/inss/strforum>>.

Xiangsui, two Peoples Liberation Army Colonels. This book is an articulation of what could be future Chinese military doctrine of how a weak country could defeat a much stronger foe. The obvious reference is how China could defeat the United States in a conflict. According to the authors, this could be done by instituting a variety of means both military and non-military. According to Qiao Liang, the cause of the book was the 1996 military exercise in the Taiwan Strait. Military successes by the U.S. in the Gulf War and later actions in Kosovo led them to think about the future of warfare on how best to defeat the United States. Qiao theorizes that military force alone will no longer be enough to force the other party in a crisis to accept ones will. Instead, every expedient will be resorted to in order to achieve an end. By expedient he means developing a new theory of war where different types of warfare are used, both military and non-military: diplomatic warfare, network warfare, intelligence warfare, psychological warfare, smuggling warfare, financial, trade and resource. He also writes that the United States already uses many of these methods to exert its will around the world. Qiao states, in a future war the rules of victory will make harsh demands on the victor. Not only will they as in the past demand that one know thoroughly all the ingenious ways to contest for victory on the battlefield, the future war will be fought and won in a war beyond the battlefield. The struggle for victory will take place on a battlefield beyond the battlefield. In order for a country such as China to defeat the United States, it must be attacked at all levels and by all means available.¹⁶

Articulation of Unrestricted Warfare : A Plan to Take Taiwan

More evidence of possible Chinese hostility to the bill's passage is and an article published in March 2000 in the PLA controlled weekly magazine, Hoiowaingio. The authors appear to lay out a plan to defeat Taiwan and the U.S. using the concepts described in Unrestricted Warfare.

¹⁶ Ta Kung Pao(PRC Newspaper), "Interview with : Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, Authors, Unrestricted Warfare," Hong Kong.

The Chinese authors describe the plan in three phases. Initially, would be to unilaterally declare a deadline for reunification talks. Once Taiwan procrastinates, China would use military force decisively. The first phase isolates the Theater. Then, China overwhelms defenders with a multitude of light roving forces, operating under a sustained barrage of aerial and missile strikes as well as electronic and informational warfare attacks. The PLA forces arrive on Taiwan on 200,000 fishing boats carrying 2 million soldiers, committing heavy amphibious assaults.

Phase 2 outlines a complex campaign to deter U.S. response. China would install economic concessions and step up arms purchase from Russia as well as organize anti-war public demonstrations in PRC/U.S./Taiwan/Europe. To further propel the plan, the Chinese authors suggest conducting nationwide civil defense drills to scare the U.S. public concerning possible nuclear war. Specifically, China should abandon no first use policy and fire a warning shot into ocean around Taiwan to demonstrate Chinese resolve. Phase 2 also recommends threatening the U.S. if it does not withdraw.

Phase 3 concentrates on the conventional war against U.S. The authors support this war suggesting counter U.S. attack with "secret" weapons, nationalizing U.S. assets in China, and economic warfare to harm U.S. economy. They also suggest subversive warfare in U.S. homeland and the selling of strategic arms to Iraq, Iran, North Korea and anti-West terrorist groups. And most disturbing to the U.S. reader, the article further outlines Phase 3 with China undertaking a regional nuclear showdown and threatening Los Angeles.¹⁷

¹⁷ Hoiowaingio(PLA Magazine: Author Unknown), March 2000.

The passage of the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act combined with the developing doctrine of “unrestricted warfare” and with articulation of that doctrine in the hypothetical invasion plan outlined above all pose significant challenges to the Theater Commander. How will he best face this challenge and continue to shape the Asian theater? One way is to develop and use a comprehensive Theater Engagement Plan.

Theater Engagement Plan

In support of the National Military Strategy, the CINC is responsible to promote stability, prevent and reduce conflicts and threats and peace time deterrence.¹⁸

The Theater Engagement Plan developed in support of the National Military Strategy details the type and scope of peacetime engagement activities to be conducted in support of the CINC’s theater strategy. The Theater Engagement Plan is published annually and covers a five year period. Activities include operational activities, military contacts, combined exercises, training, education, humanitarianism assistance and many other country to country plans.¹⁹

Through the adaptive planning concept, regional threats are identified driving the regional focus and generating a wide range of options for the theater. In dealing with China, the CINC must develop and implement a Theater Engagement Plan fully engaging the Chinese on a military to military basis. Through transparency, levels of misunderstanding can be reduced thereby lessening the potential for conflict. When putting together the Theater Engagement Plan, the

¹⁸ Theater Engagement Plan Manual.

¹⁹ Armed Forces Staff College Slide Presentation of the Joint Planning Capabilities Plan. <http://afsu.mil/jscp/>.

CINC should promote military to military contacts in order to understand Chinese capabilities and intentions. These military contacts can be at many different levels.

After the passage of the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act, the Theater Engagement Plan can help mitigate misunderstanding and reduce tension helping maintain stability. When developing the overall Theater Strategy, the true regional picture needs to be taken into account when planning to meet Chinese threat.

The Pacific Region Theater Engagement Plan should not only emphasize China. In order to ensure and promote stability and be able to shape the security environment within the Asian region, the Theater Engagement plan should include all the countries along the Asian-Pacific Rim. Our partnership with Japan should be further strengthened and expanded. A robust plan for the many countries in Asia must be expanded to include Vietnam. Common national interests should be identified and taken advantage of. But lasting security in the region is not possible without a constructive role played by China. Passage of the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act will make positive relations with China a major challenge, but one the United States, through the leadership of CINCPAC, must undertake.

All countries of the region, of which the United States is a part, share many common interests in China's emergence as a stable secure, open, prosperous and peaceful country. Prospects for stability and economic expansion in Asia heavily depends upon China's role as a responsible member of the Asian community of nations. Common interests that can be exploited are: establishing peace on the Korean Peninsula, prevention of the spread of weapons of mass destruction, fighting drug trafficking (Southeast China has a growing problem with drug abuse), and installing humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, the region should encourage Peoples

Republic of China to be a player in helping other nations, offer disaster relief, install peace keeping operations, and promote transparency in order to lessen misunderstanding.²⁰

Passage of the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act will also be disadvantageous because unfunded requirements contained in the bill will require use of the Commander's limited resources. PACCOM will have to expand considerable resources when working with Taiwan in order to live up to the letter of the law and in developing and executing a now required "Taiwanese" Theater Engagement Plan. Without making a judgment whether it is right or wrong, significant manpower, equipment and resources will go toward the defense of Taiwan. I have seen no indication from Congress that monies will be put aside to do all that the law calls for, so one must assume that the resources will be taken out of hide.

The Chinese threat that is developing goes beyond using military force to exercise its will in the region. As such, the Commander must plan to use all the instruments of national power to mitigate the threat. Since the threat by China transcends military force, true implementation of the spirit of PDD 56 must be implemented in the Asian region. PDD 56 is a Presidential Decision Directive that outlines how various government agencies manage complex contingency operations. Its original intent was for educating and training agencies for peacekeeping operations. Because of the changing nature of the Chinese threat this should be the framework for a comprehensive process to coordinate the cognitive agencies under PACOM to plan to counter the new threat. PDD 56, if integrated into the TEP, can produce a tool where the Commander can utilize all assets military or non-military to mitigate a situation or to plan how to respond to

²⁰Cohen, Richard, Secretary of Defense's Speech: Outlining Policy of Comprehensive Engagement with China. Defense Link 1998, <<http://defenselink.mil/pubs/oas98//>>.

unrestricted actions by hostile nations. It is essential that the necessary resources be provided to ensure that the United States is prepared to respond in a robust and effective manner. To foster a durable peace or stability in potential crisis situations and to maximize the effect of military force, the civilian components of national power must be integrated and coordinated with the military components. Proper coordination and integrated planning can avoid delays in action, reduce pressure on the military, and create unity of effort within an operation that is essential for success of the mission.²¹

The Real Threat

In making a Theater Strategy, the rhetoric surrounding Taiwan needs to be put aside. If a crisis cannot be avoided through engagement and flexible deterrent options do not work, the United States must be prepared to fight the real threat. The reality is that China does not have nor will it have the capability to stage a major amphibious assault on Taiwan in the near future, but China is actively undertaking measures that could, if not planned for, limit American response to an attack on Taiwan or any other area of Chinese national interests in the region.

Methodically, the Peoples Liberation Army is putting into place the building blocks that would allow it to limit U.S. response to Chinese aggression against Taiwan or allow them to seize by force Taiwan, or place Taiwan in such a weak position that it yields to Chinese demands. The Chinese Navy recently undertook the delivery of the first of four Russian Sovremenny Class Destroyers. The destroyers carry the SS-N-22 missile which can be nuclear capable. Also, China is bringing online numerous Sunburn anti-ship Missiles. Purchase of Russian SU-30 aircraft and AWAC's type aircraft from Israel could give the Chinese a superior strategic position in the

²¹ Clinton, William J, "PDD 56 (White Paper)," <<http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd56//>>.

Taiwan Strait.²² This capability plus the ideas articulated in Unrestricted Warfare should be a signal that plans must be made to encompass the entire scope of the threat.

Conclusion

Even before the United States existed, China was the center of world civilization. China has not forgotten that unique distinction. Nor has she forgotten her treatment during the “century of humiliation” or at the hands of the Japanese. China yearns to return to her former glory and she sees the United States as a roadblock to these goals. The question on everyone’s mind in Asia is whether China will revert to force to resolve the “Taiwan issue.”

History has shown that China will use force if certain conditions are present. First, one condition is a Peoples Republic of China assessment that its basic national interests are threatened. A second condition is when China perceives that its sovereignty and internal security are threatened, and a last condition is if its adversaries fail to take its warnings seriously.²³

Against this context, the early years of the Twenty-first century will be a great challenge to America’s security interests. In shaping the security environment in Asia, the Commander’s job will be made much more difficult by passage of the TSEA. To see the effect of this bill passing, consider the scenario painted by William Perry in the 1 May 2000 Washington Post. He asks, what if the United States were to pull out the throttle in supplying advanced weapons to Taiwan and additionally pass the TSEA? It is safe to predict that this would result in an even greater quantity and quality of Chinese arms directed against Taiwan. This also, in turn, would require the

²² Timberlake, Edward and William C. Triplett II, “Poising for Strike at Taiwan,” Washington Times 13 April 2000.

²³ Kim, She Poon, “The South China Sea in China’s Strategic Thinking,” Contemporary Southeast Asia. 19.4 (March 1998): 383.

United States to supply even more advanced weapons to Taiwan. And, this could be the beginning of a regional arms race between China and the United States in Asia. China's buildup would be seen as a threat throughout the region causing other countries to spend precious resources on arms. Such an arms race would mean more defense but less security for all parties.²⁴

With or without passage of the TSEA, China will continue to grow as a regional threat to the United States. United States' policy of presence in Asia has been as a stabilizer. That must continue in order to assure regional stability. If the United States is to remain engaged, which it should, the Commander must be able to call on all the tools of national power to get the job done.

The basis of a framework should be a combination of a Theater Engagement Plan and include coordination of all applicable civilian agencies as mandated by PDD 56. The Commander should be able to call upon all the national tools of power to counter the changing nature of the Chinese threat. Now is the time to take action. America must continue to be a strong presence in Asia. The United States cannot accommodate the Chinese. This would be seen as a sign of weakness to be exploited. The other countries of Asia are watching to gauge American commitment and America's will to lead. Any sign of weakness toward China will cause great concern among the many Asian countries. That test will come soon. 20 May 2000 is the inauguration of Chin Shui-bian as the new leader of a democratic Taiwan. China may take that event as an opportunity to send signals to Taiwan and test the will of the United States. America's reaction to the Chinese challenge will set the course for the future in Asia.

²⁴ Perry, William and Brent Scowcroft, "Merits of the Middle," Washington Post 1 May 2000.

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