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14. ABSTRACT The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 have placed the United States and the People's Republic of China at an interesting crossroad in Sino-American military relations. Recognizing the profound affect of trans-national terrorism on each of their nations, both countries are positioned to potentially embark on a cooperative military relationship in the global war on terrorism. Although Sino-American military relations have remained largely strained over the last decade, military cooperation in the global war on terrorism can provide the means to achieve the end state of a healthy military exchange between the two world powers. China's military will continue to grow and improve, the United States is at a point in time where it must make the choice to be an active participant in the direction that China's military develops.					
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Mutual Security Through Cooperation:
Sino-American Military-to-Military Relations in the Global War on Terrorism

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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Introduction

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union the United States has been in the enviable position of being the world's only undisputed superpower. Having emerged victorious from the Cold War, the global regional crises that arose during the decade of the 1990s never truly posed a concern of national proportion to our nation. But even as the first Cold War came to an end, indications of a possible second Cold War loomed on the horizon; this new potential adversary was, and still is, the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Through most of the U.S.-Soviet Union Cold War, we maintained a tenuous relationship with the PRC, but the obvious and primary adversary remained the Soviet Union. However, relations with China began to improve in the early 1970s as China recognized the threat posed to her own national security by the Soviet Union. The outlook was positive and we cultivated a mutually beneficial relationship that helped contain the Soviet threat, often implementing workarounds on contentious issues like the delicate China-Taiwan relationship and PRC weapons proliferations. Through the remainder of the 1970s and until 1989 the relationship between the U.S. and the PRC developed.

Unfortunately the end of the Cold War coincided with the much-publicized 1989 Tiananmen Square incident. To the U.S. public this signaled that we would soon be dealing with another repressive government after the fall of the Soviet Union. The improving public and political image of the PRC stalled, practically leaving U.S. policymakers with no choice but to acknowledge and more critically condemn the dark side of the PRC. Although we continued to maintain cordial relations with China through the 1990s, Sino-American cooperation was largely limited to the economic sphere.

Military interactions with China have remained fragile since the cooling of relations in 1989. Almost reminiscent of our Cold War confrontations with the Soviet Union, the subsequent

years witnessed numerous military incidents that hampered our ability to improve ties with China. The 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, the accidental bombing of the Chinese embassy in 1999, and the 2001 EP-3 incident are noteworthy examples of military episodes with the PRC. Nonetheless, it remains a key goal of the U.S. military to improve relations with the People's Liberation Army (PLA).¹ The predicament: how does the U.S. develop military-to-military relations with China? Presenting an appropriate and convenient solution to this difficult military cooperation quandary is the global war on terrorism.

The attacks of September 11, 2001 clearly illustrated the evolution of terrorist organizations, particularly Al Qaeda, into complex and far-reaching trans-national networks. At the heart of Al Qaeda's effort is their campaign of terror against the United States. To suppose, however, that the United States is the only target of trans-national terrorism would be a serious miscalculation. In the case of Al Qaeda, they have webbed a terrorist network that spreads from North Africa through the Middle East and South Asia all the way to the extremes of Southeast Asia. Some have even speculated that with the success of U.S. counter-terrorism efforts in Afghanistan, which has been the base of the Al Qaeda network since 1996, the group may shift their center of operations to some location in Southeast Asia.² Though speculative, one fact remains true; China is a country that borders numerous states and regions that have a significant terrorist presence. Consequently, China has suffered the influence of international terrorism within its own borders.

An important consequence of the September 11 attacks is the nearly total unification of the international community against the forces of terrorism. With the objective of establishing military-to-military relations, and by capitalizing on international opinion, execution of the war on terrorism represents a significant means to Sino-American military engagement. By establishing operational level cooperation the U.S. can cultivate military relations with China, as well as other

members of the Western Pacific community, while supporting the common interests of the Asian community as a whole. However, we should not lose sight of the overarching principle: the end state is a healthy military-to-military exchange with the PRC and the war on terrorism is simply a means to this end.

Global terrorism is our most noteworthy contemporary challenge and although it presents an opportunity to establish closer relations with a world power that might otherwise become a much more significant global competitor, the possible benefits go beyond the war on terrorism. Our recent success in Iraq has eliminated one member of the Axis of Evil yet two other equally, if not more, threatening members remain. In certainly one case, North Korea, the PRC could prove to be our best chance of reaching a non-violent solution to a fifty-year standoff.³ The Korean Peninsula remains a regional hot spot and the defiant rhetoric continues to flow from Pyonyang. However, it is certainly worth contemplating the potential change in Pyonyang's tone if the U.S. and China were to embark on an era of close military-to-military cooperation. Certainly from the Asia Pacific Rim perspective it is hard to deny the possible stabilizing effect that closer Sino-American military-to-military relations would have in the region.

Nonetheless, China will continue to grow. While the PRC represents the second largest economy in the world the level of economic means spent on military modernization will determine her future course. One can make the case that China is keenly aware of the Soviet empire's demise, not wanting to repeat the Soviet's self-destructive military spending habits. Accordingly, by promoting closer military-to-military relations with China the U.S. can ease PRC concerns over American regional intentions and foster China's development into a responsible and positive contributor to global stability.

The Way Ahead: Counter-terrorism

With the exception of the World Trade Center bombing in 1993 and prior to the devastating attacks of September 11, 2001 the United States managed to keep trans-national terrorism at arm's length from American soil. Although international bad actors managed to strike us at home, we fortunately have been able to concentrate the force of our military counter-terrorism efforts outside our borders. Our homeland defense efforts aside, the advantage of keeping the counter-terrorism front outside of our borders cannot be overstated. Just as we have never had to fight an international war on our native soil, we should persevere to keep the battles against terrorism outside of our borders. Except for heightened awareness and vigilance on the part of citizens, our efforts to keep the forces of terror outside our homeland and focused in regions far away should continue. However, an attempt to go it alone would be futile. Any effort outside U.S. borders will require a fair measure of international cooperation. The more partners we have in this global war on terrorism the more advantageous our position will be. In regions so ethnically and culturally diverse as Asia and the Middle East, coalitions in the global war on terrorism are our primary means of assuring access and gathering intelligence on this very elusive enemy.

Of course, in any discussion of the regional impact of terrorism, it is hard to overlook the potential impact of international terrorism on China. Simply review a map of what are arguably the focal points of the war on terrorism, the Middle East and South Asia, and it becomes apparent that China is nestled conspicuously on the periphery of these critical regions. Take this view and expand your aperture a little further, particularly to the regions of Asia where terrorism has an established foothold, and China now is prominently positioned closer to center stage. Arguably, this central position is the reason that China did not escape the tentacles of trans-national terrorism from its ethnic Uighur population in Xinjiang during the 1990s.⁴

Even though China claimed trans-border involvement in this period, China's world image was tainted by visions of the Tiananmen Square incident. Although the Chinese government faced a clear and present terrorist danger in its western province, the situation was often clouded by claims of unjust and heavy-handed suppression of religious freedom from the ethnic Muslims of Xinjiang. In the face of human rights abuse, China was hard pressed to find an ally in its internal unrest problem. However, in the immediate aftermath of the September 11 attacks reports began to flow from China linking Al Qaeda to the East Turkistan movement. Ever sensitive to the political implications surrounding China's Xinjiang problem, the U.S. cautiously kept the East Turkistan subject at a distance while opening dialogue with Beijing on the global war on terrorism.⁵ Fortunately the situation has evolved. In August 2002, the Uighur separatist movement was officially placed on the Bush administration's terrorist organization list after having determined that its past record warranted the dubious honor.⁶ Soon after this recognition, and with urging from the United States, Afghanistan, and Kyrgyzstan, China's plea for UN Security Council inclusion of the East Turkistan Islamic Movement on its terrorist organization list was finally achieved.

White House support of China's counter-terrorism efforts in Xinjiang province is a momentous first step in bi-lateral relations between the two world powers. After the 9/11 attacks, China immediately moved to cooperate with the U.S. in its war on terrorism. By providing intelligence to the U.S. and tightening its Afghan border controls, China displayed explicit support of our war on terrorism and conveyed Beijing's condemnation of trans-national terrorist organizations.⁷ This spirit of cooperation was offered in advance of U.S. official recognition of China's Xinjiang problem. Now that the U.S. has formally recognized the East Turkistan movement as a legitimate terrorist organization, the U.S. has in turn sent Beijing several clear signals. Reversing skepticism previously voiced during the General Taylor mission to Beijing, we

no longer view Xinjiang as an internal matter and an issue of human rights.⁸ Moreover, another message should be clear to Beijing; when it comes to matters of separatist independence movements, the U.S. is not quick to jump on the side against Beijing and will opt for a more pragmatic approach to the situation. Arguably, we are at a high point of Sino-American cooperation in the global war on terrorism. The next logical step is establishment of military-to-military cooperation with China in this global campaign.

Masked in this newly found spirit of cooperation, however, remain a few potentially thorny issues that may impair Sino-American military cooperation. As previously cited, Beijing was quick to offer cooperation to the U.S. in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. But, is there an underlying Chinese motive to this seemingly open spirit of cooperation? Beijing has been wrestling with its Uighur dilemma for most of the last century. The post-9/11 environment may have provided China the opportunity to gain international recognition and support in its separatist dilemma. Whether or not this was the intention, support is exactly what they got. Further complicating this perception are allegations that U.S. recognition of the separatist movement was the price for Beijing's tightening of missile defense technology proliferation.⁹

Of course, we also have to ask ourselves the question "does China want U.S. involvement in its Xinjiang affair?" The likely answer is "no," but perhaps this answer best serves U.S. interests. Even though we have offered recognition of China's predicament in Xinjiang, it may be wise for us to remain involved only with information sharing and exchange of tactics rather than actual soldiers on the ground in this region. Having only recently recognized the Uighurs as more than a nationalist separatist movement, we can best appease critics that insinuate our willingness to exploit the post-9/11 anti-Al Qaeda environment in order to serve other national interests even when it implies involving our military in another nation's messy affairs.

Another point to consider is the impact of Sino-American relations in the Asia Pacific Rim region. The U.S. maintains, and has moved to initiate, bi-lateral relations throughout Asia, most notably with India and Japan; relations seemingly designed to ensure American containment of Beijing.¹⁰ Of course these bi-lateral relationships are mutually beneficial to both the U.S. and its respective partners. Concern would understandably arise if the U.S. appeared to be softening its stance and if it were to strengthen military relations with China. Valid as this concern may be, however, the U.S. has already publicly acknowledged the need for international cooperation in the global war on terrorism. Given the scope of the problem, the benefit to all participants of a cooperative China cannot be overlooked, even against the background of national paranoia.

The last issue to contend with is whether or not it is in China's best interest to participate in the U.S. led military counter-terrorism war. Conversely we need to also consider whether it is in the U.S.'s best interest to participate in combined military counter-terrorism operations with China. Some members of our government have argued that such military cooperation would expose too much of our military capabilities to the Chinese, further arguing that such exchanges serve no U.S. national security interest.¹¹ The answer to both concerns lies in the desired future world order envisioned by the two potential partners. If both nations envision a future of mutually beneficial cooperation and international stability, which I contend they do, then military cooperation against an enemy that has had profound effect on both nations is the way ahead.

Recommendations: Matters of Operational Art

To suppose that a complete framework for Sino-American military cooperation can be accomplished in five pages would be overly optimistic and do the matter little justice. However, there are critical details that must be addressed to ensure success of this proposed military cooperation plan. They are not all encompassing aspects of coalition task force planning, but are

basic issues that should form the starting point from where to embark on the establishment of a multi-national counter-terrorism cooperation effort.

The U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) should be designated the lead agent for establishing the coalition counter-terrorism organization. PACOM should seek sponsorship from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF), but be prepared to take on the responsibility if the ARF declines the proposal. The organization should be modeled after the Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) structure, but we must remain flexible and maintain proximity of staffs in the event that parallel commands result. Bases of operations should be established which maintain clear lines of communication to participating nations, yet present safe and efficient lines of communication to participating forces in the field. Staff interactions should be based on a gradual approach that ensures the use of sound planning principles and the development of a solid organization that will be valuable to all participants. Lastly, as we move along this path of cooperation, we must recognize that the size, training, and experience of each nation's counter-terrorism force may differ greatly and will determine the actual level of force participation. By carefully managing these operational facets of counter-terrorism cooperation we will ensure the development of a strong relationship that will eventually lead to greater military cooperation with the PRC.

Command and Control

Because of its worldwide nature, the theater geometry of the global war on terrorism presents an interesting dilemma. The terrorism battlefield has no conventional boundaries and our current effort crosses the dividing lines of several unified commands. China's specific area of concern is Xianjiang, but because of the predicted shift of the Al Qaeda terrorist network to Southeast Asia and because of our desire to draw cooperation from other potential Southeast Asian partners, it may be a more pre-emptive measure to concentrate the multi-national counter-

terrorism effort in PACOM's area of responsibility. Accordingly, PACOM should be given the responsibility of establishing and executing coalition military counter-terrorism operations with China, but it should be apparent and understood that the global war on terrorism will likely cross the boundaries of different Combatant Commanders. Negotiated at the Combatant Commander level, execution of joint cooperation with the Chinese should reside at a subordinate level. However, this clearly established U.S. military doctrine should not necessarily imply that the U.S. be the primary sponsor of this historic arrangement.

Sponsorship of the proposed counter-terrorism military cooperation plan will be the cornerstone to success. At the national level both China and the U.S. have already demonstrated the desire to cooperate in the global war on terrorism but this does not eliminate the tricky issue of operational control of this coalition effort. The ultimate goal is to establish military-to-military cooperation with China. However, this does not imply overt willingness to leave our other regional partners behind. As we proceed on track to establishing military ties with China, the U.S. must remain ever sensitive to regional concerns of U.S. hegemony and unilateralism. We are already viewed as the international leader in the global war on terrorism, but it is critical that we foster equal commitment to the global war on terrorism from the international community, particularly China and the regional community. Although a bi-lateral arrangement with China is less than ideal, we should not be deterred from such a relationship if given no other choice. In keeping with this theme of multi-lateral cooperation, it would be much more objective for us to seek sponsorship from an appropriate international body.

The obvious choice is the United Nations. Although the UN is a well-established international governing body, I would propose that it is too big and its membership too diverse to efficiently accomplish this task. After all, the goal is military-to-military cooperation with China. Although we do not want to proceed on a strictly bi-lateral path of cooperation, a regional

organization may present a much more focused and manageable governing body. There are two organizations that stand out as likely sponsorship candidates, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the ARF. The ARF is the better candidate of the two.¹²

The ARF was founded in 1994 to promote peace and stability throughout the Southeast Asia region and has had near-region country involvement, most notably from the U.S., China, Russia, Japan, and South Korea. Having been dubbed the region's most analogous NATO-like organization, the ARF has made noteworthy strides in its intended charter but it has been suggested that the organization has little interest in close military-to-military ties.¹³ In view of the events of 9/11, however, opportunities have emerged in the area of military cooperation among ARF members and cooperative members. In August 2002 Secretary of State Colin Powell presented a U.S. commitment to collaborate with the ARF in its counter-terrorism efforts. With the secretary's signature, our nation's staunch support, and the indications of a terrorist network shift to the Western Pacific Rim region, the situation is opportune to push for a more robust military cooperation commitment from the association.¹⁴ An ARF backed coalition task force should be established to undertake the proposed counter-terrorism mission. However if the ARF is unwilling to assume sponsorship, the responsibility should revert to PACOM. Whether under the auspices of a coalition task force or a purely bi-lateral arrangement military cooperation with China should be pursued.

Task Force Organization

A reasonable approach would be to expand on the current responsibilities of a PACOM subordinate command or initiate a standing task force. During the February 2003 U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) Conference the prime topic of discussion was the restructuring of the current JIATF. In its current form, JIATF-West and JIATF-East are primarily counter-drug enforcement agencies. Under the proposed re-structuring

plan, the JIATF force structure will undergo significant changes, most notably the creation of a JIATF-North and increasing their mission areas of responsibility to include counter-terrorism.¹⁵

Based on the current restructuring proposal, JIATF-West may prove to be a suitable organization for coordinating our coalition counter-terrorism efforts if it becomes necessary for the U.S. to become the prime sponsor.

The current JIATF model may possess hidden benefits and allow our Sino-American military cooperation plan to evolve at a realistic pace. The interagency nature of the JIATF model may provide a more subtle initiation of military-to-military cooperation with China. Although the military is a component of the JIATF structure, it includes participation from other agencies with which the PRC may initially find easier to establish ties. For example, the PRC has already agreed to allow the U.S. to open a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) office in Beijing as a cooperative way to combat terrorism and tackle international criminal activities.¹⁶ FBI participation in the JIATF construct may prove a more appealing cause for PRC participation and eventually lead to military participation. The U.S. Coast Guard emphasis may prove another appealing aspect of the JIATF organization to the Chinese. Not yet the blue water navy they aspire to become, they may find it less threatening to commence naval engagement at this level rather than with the U.S. Navy directly. Furthermore, naval engagement with the U.S. Coast Guard may prove appealing as a more economic centered form of military engagement through cooperation in traditional Coast Guard mission areas. Although a military arm of our nation, the Coast Guard's unique mission of balancing maritime security and safety in order to assure the free flow of maritime commerce may lend itself better to the PRC's overarching desire for economic development. Furthermore, the Coast Guard brings an inherent law enforcement component that the PRC may find more agreeable as evidenced by their willingness to cooperate with the FBI. Once again, cooperation should eventually lead to broader military engagement to include other branches of our military.

The joint framework is a logical force structure for a cooperative counter-terrorism task force. Most of the proposed ARF partners have been exposed to our joint doctrine. In all likelihood the Chinese military has already given considerable study to our joint command structure. This supposition is clearly evidenced by Colonel Qio Liang and Colonel Wang Xiangsui in their military theory work.¹⁷ Nonetheless, this assumption should not be the cornerstone upon which to construct our coalition task force. Certainly from the perspective of cooperation the ideal staff arrangement would be an integrated command, but this proved difficult in our past coalition war efforts. It is likely that a parallel command structure will again emerge as it did in Operation Desert Storm. This, however, is merely an issue of efficiency and will not necessarily imply failure of our coalition counter-terrorism initiative.

Even though leadership of the counter-terrorism arrangement will likely prove a delicate and ongoing matter, it should not deter developing a contiguous staff organization. It may seem overly optimistic to expect that the relationship will evolve into one where all responsibilities become fully integrated, but ensuring proximity of the parallel commands may minimize the inefficiencies of such a command arrangement and facilitate the establishment of staff coordination cells if required. Proximity and close contact are essential details in reaching the ultimate goal of close military-to-military cooperation with the PLA. Ultimately there is one factor that almost certainly will contribute to development of the staff organization: time. The war on terrorism is likely to be more protracted than we desire and thereby provide us the time for an agreeable and appropriate command arrangement to evolve.

Basing and Logistics

The choice of a headquarters location and bases of operation will certainly be a decision influenced by issues of politics, logistics, and fiscal constraints. Given the regional focus of the proposed task force, it is logical for the coalition headquarters to reside in the Western Pacific

Rim. Possible host-nations are Singapore, Thailand, or the Philippines and each possesses suitable sights for a headquarters and bases of operation. All are countries in which we already have an existing military exchange program, most notably the Philippines wherein we currently conduct significant counter-terrorism exercises and exchanges. The choice of location, however, will be directly tied to sponsorship and regional buy-in to the proposed military arrangement. Assuming regional partners remain open-minded about PRC participation, the options for headquarters location are numerous. If forced into a bi-lateral agreement, regional choices of headquarters will be certainly minimized but nonetheless possible locations exist. Hong Kong, Guam, and even Honolulu are promising alternatives for a bi-lateral headquarters location.

It should be noted, however, that our proposed headquarters and a base of operations do not need to be co-located. Arguably, they should not be co-located. It would be convenient if we could establish a regionally centered headquarters and base of operations, but the multi-national structure and the non-specific area of operations of the global war on terrorism may render a centrally located base of operations inappropriate. In the proposed relationship and command structure it should be assumed that operational logistics would remain largely a national responsibility. Consequently, each nation will maintain responsibility for the logistic requirements of its participating forces from its national base of operations to pre-determined intermediate base of operations. The intermediate base of operations should be geographically located so as to provide flexibility to participating forces, yet provide clear lines of communication to participating countries. Within the area of operations, maneuver and movement will be a coalition responsibility and tactical logistics will naturally become a matter of efficient utilization of logistics assets.

It is not the intent of this work to prescribe the logistics arrangement of the proposed counter-terrorism task force per se. This is a detail to be discussed in greater depth by staff

members later in the planning process. What is paramount, however, is the need to ensure that lines of communication remain efficient, unobstructed, and as protected as possible. Just as our enemy has developed and come to rely on a network of cells to support his terrorist network, we too must develop a logistic network that can keep our forces sustained in whichever area of operations they may need to confront the adversary.

Staff Planning and Cooperation

The time to embark on this proposed endeavor is now because time is a factor that the global terrorist network will definitely exploit to their advantage. Unfortunately, the most notable characteristic of Sino-American relations is the abundance of events that have proved obstructions to close cooperation. Focusing specifically in the era of Communist Chinese rule rarely has there been a period when our two nation's interests shared any commonality. Although it can be firmly argued that both China and the U.S. had a shared enemy in the USSR, our cooperative effort in defeating the Soviets was relatively short-lived. Once again the Taiwan issue arose and proved to be an unsolvable dilemma early in the Reagan administration.¹⁸ As previously mentioned military affairs have been the hallmark of this tenuous Sino-American relationship, particularly in the last decade. But the rhetoric on cooperation in the global war on terrorism has been unprecedented since 9/11.

Numerous high-level exchanges on the topic of counter-terrorism cooperation have already taken place between China and the U.S. Most notably were the two state visits by President George W. Bush to China in October 2001 and February 2002 and the visit of President Jiang Zemin to the U.S. in October 2002. During the three summits, the topic of cooperation in the global war on terror and the re-opening of military-to-military exchanges were discussed.¹⁹ Recognizing the enemy's ability to take advantage of time, stalling Sino-American military cooperation will not bring either country closer to defeating trans-national terrorism. Of course,

the fact that our heads of state have met and discussed counter-terrorism cooperation should not imply that we jump into a collaborative effort without thorough planning. A carefully planned sequential approach should be utilized in developing a counter-terrorism program with our coalition partners. By taking a step approach we can ensure the creation of a strong foundation for cooperation, while building on supporting operational functions and sequential blocks of capability.

In keeping with the spirit of carefully planned cooperation, it will be important for planners to identify those building blocks that will lead to successful and mutually beneficial cooperation. Perhaps the logical first step is in the area of intelligence sharing. At first glance it may seem too big of a first step that may expose too many of our secrets. Those political critics earlier cited will likely make this argument. However, given that the Chinese made the first move in this area by sharing intelligence with us in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, it is difficult to argue that the information sharing arrangement has not already been established, albeit informal. Moreover, the mere exchange of intelligence does not necessarily imply the disclosure of technology and capabilities. Because of the severe threat posed by trans-national terrorism, it is hard to believe that the benefits to be gained would outweigh the detrimental aspects of carefully planned intelligence sharing.

Factors Force and Space

Participating forces will largely be a matter of national determination, but we must remain objective to the reality that participating nations may not have military force structures that resemble ours. Counter-terrorism has become a major warfare area in the U.S. The same cannot necessarily be said of our potential partners. Participating countries may not place the counter-terrorism responsibility squarely on the shoulders of its military forces, opting instead to place the responsibility completely within the law enforcement community. A prime illustration of this fact

is China. Responsibility for China's internal security, and presumably its internal terrorism problem, lies with the People's Armed Police (PAP). Though the name connotes law enforcement, the PAP is a paramilitary force that falls under the control of the Central Military Commission and supports major armed forces divisions in wartime.²⁰ If we expect China to extend its counter-terrorism efforts, it will be necessary to give China the latitude to provide those forces they determine appropriate and perhaps give them the space to develop their international counter-terrorism capability. Already we have seen indications from the PRC that they are moving their military forces into the counter-terrorism mission area. However, this transformation is still in its infancy.²¹ This may present some difficulties for the U.S. because the preponderance of our military counter-terrorism force comes from the special operations community. Nonetheless, issues of national military training should not affect the exchange of tactics in combating terrorism.

Another force matter to consider, at least initially, is the ability to initiate counter-terrorism cooperation without the need for additional military forces. A selling point for both U.S. constituents as well as the coalition community is the ability to conduct counter-terrorism cooperation with those forces already committed by respective national policy. Except for instances where specific counter-terrorism forces may need to be deployed for an exercise, like the BALIKATAN exercise series in the Philippines, no additional personnel should be expected. The development of counter-terrorism force structure will be left a matter of national interest. The initial stages of counter-terrorism cooperation with our multi-national partners will be information exchanges and the coordination of efforts. Counter-terrorism techniques and tactics are another form of exchange that would be a reasonable form of military-to-military cooperation for early contact. Eventually, the arrangement should evolve into combined operations, but once more, the

forces already committed by each nation to its own counter-terrorism campaign can accomplish this level of cooperation.

It is easy for the U.S. to overlook the fact that we have taken numerous operations of the global war on terrorism a great distance from our shores. Although we expect our coalition partners in the global war on terrorism to be fully supportive of this effort, it remains a consideration that the battle space may be within the borders of our coalition partners. It will certainly be in their backyard. Initially, the level of involvement we should expect will have to be tempered by political realities. In determining our engagement areas, we should expect a level of cooperation that varies from the Philippines, where we exercise and operate closely with the Philippine Armed Forces to possibly China, where we may not be as welcome to operate forces. The global terrorism battle space may remain illusive but it is real. Whether the mountains of South Asia or the jungles and littorals of Southeast Asia, it will only be through cooperation that we will be able to exploit the battle space to the detriment of our terrorist adversaries.

Future Operations

Because of its overwhelming and contemporary relevance counter-terrorism collaboration is a logical first step to lasting and mutually beneficial cooperation. The military imperative will be to foster future military cooperation. This goal, however, should come as a matter of due course through programs like theater exercises. The theater exercise program is the principal method for furthering military cooperation. It is certainly intriguing to envision a Sino-American counter-terrorism exercise. Although we are several building blocks from this reality, military-to-military cooperation will eventually make it possible. In the immediate future, however, current theater exercises already provide the opportunity for increased contact. During Cobra Gold 2002 the PRC sent personnel to Thailand to observe the exercise. The previously mentioned BALIKATAN is another potential exercise for PRC involvement. Certainly the participation of

military observers like those in Cobra Gold is a reasonable level of participation to foster in BALIKATAN. Perhaps our counter-terrorism cooperation will lead to combating another trans-national regional concern, piracy. To certain members of the ASEAN community, piracy is arguably just as serious a concern as terrorism. There are numerous potential future military exchanges with China. Search and rescue exercises, ship rider exchanges, helicopter flight deck inter-operability demonstrations are among a host of other potential avenues towards closer military-to-military contact with China.

Optimistically, we may eventually reach a level of cooperation with the PRC that will allow for cooperation and exercising of major warfare areas. For the immediate future, however, it would be in the interest of regional sensitivity that we remain aloof towards demonstrating capabilities in such areas like amphibious warfare, anti-submarine warfare, mine warfare, and air warfare. For obvious reasons these are warfare areas that do not foster a spirit of cooperation with the PRC and should be avoided. To pretend that exercising these mission areas in the Asia Pacific Rim region is not fundamentally aimed at countering a Chinese threat would be pointless and patronizing.

Conclusion

The fact remains that we will be the world's only super-power for some time to come, possibly for the majority of the twenty-first century. By one estimate, China's anticipated emergence as a breakout Asian economic power is one of the few highlights in the early part of this century.²² In part, China's own interest in economic growth has forced it to revisit its military force structure and recognize that its national budget is better spent in the development of its domestic economy. Nonetheless, China's regional military capabilities will slowly improve as it continues to ensure its national security and strives for increased global influence.

The global war on terrorism has placed us at a crossroads of Sino-American military relations. Although the U.S. may be tempted by Sino-phobic fears of losing our military competitive edge over China, we must assuage these concerns and give way to the geo-political realities presented by trans-national terrorism. Trans-national terrorism has no borders and is a challenge to the international community. The fact that we are presented with this means to cooperate with a potential foe should be used to our advantage in order to both foster regional security in the Asia-Pacific region and to further our efforts in the global war on terrorism. We will maintain our military technology advantage over the PRC, but they will continue to evolve. The question we must answer is whether or not we want to have an active part in shaping what China's military evolves into and the force posture she assumes in the future. If we decide on active engagement, then military-to-military cooperation is the in-road by which we will accomplish this end.

Our economic ties have survived the test of national cooperation, but our military-to-military efforts have been less successful. Active military contact with China poses numerous potentially appealing outcomes and even though closer military-to-military cooperation may not prevent another EP-3 incident or accidental embassy bombing, it could certainly serve to mitigate the potential backlash of such disasters. Trans-national terrorism is a global and regional threat, but other equally potentially dangerous concerns exist. North Korea's recent public declaration that it possesses weapons of mass destruction is definitely one such threat. In view of this news, it would certainly add an interesting measure of confidence to have Chinese participants in the next FOAL EAGLE exercise.²³

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ENDNOTES

¹ United States Pacific Command Concept Plan 5301, Theater Engagement Plan Strategic Concept, People's Republic of China, p. 6.

² "Asia: The Elusive Enemy; Terror in Southeast Asia," *Economist*, p. 33.

³ GEN Leon J. Laporte, Address to the Faculty and Staff of the Naval War College, May 2002.

⁴ "East Turkistan Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away With Impunity," *Beijing Review*, 28 January 2002. <<http://proquestreference.com/pqrasia>> [9 April 2003]. Situated in China's western territory is the province of Xinjiang with its indigenous ethnic Muslim Uighur minority. Once the center of ancient trade crossroads between east and west, Xinjiang has been under Chinese control dating back to 60 BC when the Han Dynasty established China's first frontier command headquarters in the province.⁴ The struggle for an independent state by the ethnic Uighars did not become a noteworthy issue until the early twentieth century. By the time the Chinese Communist Party took power in 1949, the Uighars had claimed the western province as the independent state of East Turkistan. The separatists were quickly subdued, however, and Beijing began a state sponsored resettlement program of the region by ethnic Han Chinese. Although the Uighur population is now outnumbered they live in relative peace side by side with the Han Chinese majority. However, the atmosphere of discontent has continued to foment. Fueled by religious extremism imported from China's central and south Asian neighbors, Uighur separatist terrorism littered the 1990s. In spite of claims from Beijing of outside involvement in its western province, the international community largely viewed the Xinjiang problem as an internal Chinese affair.

⁵ Eric Eckholm, "A Nation Challenged: The Global Campaign," *New York Times*, December 7, 2001.

⁶ Eric Eckholm, "American Gives Beijing Good News: Rebels on Terror List," *New York Times*, August 27, 2002.

⁷ "International Cooperation," *Beijing Review*, September 9, 2002.

⁸ Eric Eckholm, "A Nation Challenged: The Global Campaign," *New York Times*, December 7, 2001. After his retirement from the U.S. Air Force, GEN Frank Taylor became the State Department's ambassador at large for counter-terrorism. At a news conference concluding a two-day trip to China in December 2001, he voiced the United States' position of non-support in China's effort to paint the Uighur Muslim nationalists in Xinjiang as a terrorist organization. He presented this U.S. position despite Chinese claims of outside support for the separatist movement.

⁹ Tang Shiping, "Jiang-Bush Summit Sets Tone For Constructive Partnership," *Straights Times* (Singapore), October 29, 2002.

¹⁰ J. Mohan Malik, "Dragon on Terrorism: Assessing China's Tactical Gains and Strategic Losses After 11 September," *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, August 2002, p. 12.

¹¹ James Dao, "Threats and Responses: Diplomacy; Closer Ties With China May Help U.S. on Iraq," *New York Times*, October 4, 2002, p. A 16.

¹² "White Papers," *China Internet Information Center*, 1 December 2002.

<<http://www.china.org.cn/english/2002/Dec/50743.htm>> [9 April 2003]. Founded in June 2001 by China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, the SCO is a cooperative body formed with the goal of curbing regional terrorism, separatism, extremism, and enhancement of security. Since its inception the SCO has made significant strides in military cooperation and the promotion of regional peace and stability. As evidenced by its membership, the SCO is an organization centered in the Central Asian region. Our war on terrorism does share common interests and objectives with the SCO, but the organization's regional focus may ultimately prevent it from being the appropriate sponsor organization. Furthermore, not having been invited to participate in any of its proceedings, the U.S. may find itself an unwelcome interloper in the SCO's regional affairs.

¹³ Frances Omori and Mary A. Sommerville, ed. *Strength Through Cooperation: Military forces in the Asia-Pacific Region*. Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1999, p.4.

¹⁴ "Asia: The Elusive Enemy; Terror in Southeast Asia," *Economist*, p. 33.

¹⁵ USNORTHCOM JIATF Conference Executive Out Brief, February 27, 2003. The proposed restructuring will eventually lead to the integration of JIATF-North, -West, and -East into a single Western Hemisphere JIATF. Although the final plan is still unknown, the inclusion of Western Pacific coalition partners may pose complications to the creation of a JIATF-WHEM and is unclear on whether or not all responsibilities of JIATF-West will be eliminated from PACOM's purview.

¹⁶ Shen Shishun, "2002 a Good Year for Sino-U.S. Relations," *China Internet Information Center News*, February 10, 2003.

¹⁷ Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare: A Concept of Warfare and Strategy in the Era of Globalization*, p. 45-50. The two senior PLA officers present a carefully studied analysis of the command relations during the Gulf War that they proposed was a direct consequence of the Goldwater Nichols act. A fundamentally

historical account, nonetheless it clearly illustrates the PLA's close analysis of the U.S. military joint command structure.

¹⁸ Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress*, p. 68.

¹⁹ Tang Shipin, "Jiang-Bush Summit Sets Tone For Constructive Partnership," *Straight Times* (Singapore), October 29, 2002.

²⁰ Samuel M. Karmel, *China and the People's Liberation Army*, p. 59.

²¹ Jiang Zemin, Speech to the National People's Congress and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, March 13, 2002.

²² National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue About the Future With Non-Government Experts*, December 2000, p. 36.

²³ FOAL EAGLE is the PACOM sponsored exercise for defense of the Korean Peninsula..