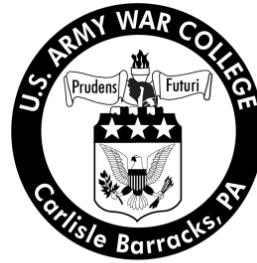


The Rise of China: Redefining War in the 21st Century

by

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United States Army War College
Class of 2012

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**THE RISE OF CHINA:
REDEFINING WAR IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

by

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ABSTRACT

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THE RISE OF CHINA: REDEFINING WAR IN THE 21ST CENTURY

For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.

—Sun Tzu¹

Nothing in human history is more storied than armed conflict. War has defined world order, nations, and culture since the time of Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War more than 2400 year ago.² The way we define war has changed little since that time, neither has what we believe to be the “spoils” of such conflict. The proverb, “to the victor go the spoils” originated in the United States by a New York Senator named William L. Marcy. He believed it totally appropriate that each time there was a change in administration that thousands of public workers were essentially fired for not belonging to the right party.³ This idea that winning allows you to set the rules is a basic tenant of war. The irony of the proverb about spoils going to the victor originating in the United States is that China is poised to redefine conflict or “war” in the twenty-first century and reap the spoils of war without firing a single shot.

The Prussian chancellor Otto von Bismarck once commented sagely that “...a statesman is a politician who thinks of his grandchildren.” This brilliant nineteenth century architect of German unification was hardly an unblemished character, but he was an extraordinary strategic thinker and on this point he was right: True national leadership is more than a tactical exercise; it requires a long-term plan. In the West today we have no plan as to how to secure or develop the resources that are the lifeblood of our prosperity, whereas in the East (and particularly China) they do have such a plan...the first salvo of a potentially civilization altering war between China and the United States was recently fired by China—and passed by almost unnoticed. It failed to inspire the galvanizing call to arms needed to unite politicians and the American people and drive us into action. Absent an early morning raid on Pearl Harbor, an attack such as we experienced on 9/11, or the sinking of the Lusitania, we carry on as if we have business as usual.⁴

This forward written by Thomas Kaplan, Chairman of the Tigris Financial Group for the book *Red Alert*, reflects a belief that China is fighting a war with the United States and the “West” on an axis and in a way that we have in the past not prescribed to the term war. This paper will take a critical look at how we define war in the post-Cold War era. Are we at war with China and have simply not acknowledged it? I would argue that China is certainly at war with the West and the United States specifically. China is waging a war for world dominance on economic, diplomatic, and geopolitical fronts while we are otherwise occupied by conflict in Afghanistan, a deep economic recession, and a divided political electorate. If the goal of war is dominance, either through land dominance or through geo-political influence, we may find after we wake from our “terrorism stupor” that there is a new world order, and the United States is not the hegemonic power that it once was. I hope to explore this through a redefinition of war itself and why Western historical framework surrounding war may well be moving towards extinction.

“War is not an independent phenomenon, but the continuation of politics by different means.”⁵ This is probably the most quoted portion of Carl von Clausewitz book *On War* first published in 1832.⁶ Clausewitz, like Sun Tzu, has had an enormous impact on our view of war and how we define it. Clausewitz defined the object of war: “The object of war is to impose your will on the enemy—it is an ‘act of force to compel our enemy to do our will.’”⁷ This is a concept that has changed little since 431 B.C. and the Peloponnesian War, but does not offer a framework for the complexities of the twenty-first century and what is ultimately achieved post-conflict.

Descriptions of the Cuban missile crisis shows, then Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, as famously admonishing a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who believed he didn't understand how to employ a naval blockade. McNamara told the seasoned sailor that the blockade had nothing to do with warfare, that it was instead language, political language between President Kennedy and the Soviet Union's leader Nikita Khrushchev.⁸ Perhaps this is what Clausewitz meant by war simply being a continuation of politics. The rise of China in the twenty-first century illustrates a new form of warfare. It illustrates how a country can achieve economic, diplomatic and geopolitical influence in a way the United States did in the twentieth century, but achieving this hegemonic dominance through fundamentally re-defining the use of force as offered by Clausewitz and others. In the twenty-first century, the use of military power to achieve political ends will become more and more a function of the margins for the world's Super Powers. While conventional war will continue throughout the world, it will primarily be exercised to maintain the current world order, or be geographically isolated; conducted by second and third world countries.

The United States Rise to Power

The United States bestrides the globe like a colossus. It dominates business, commerce and communications; its economy quite simply put, is the world's most successful. Dr. Derek Scissors, a research fellow at the Heritage Foundation writes, "...the United States by itself has over one-fourth of the world economy. We have held near that level for 35 years despite our economic problems. That's about the same as China, India, Japan and the rest of Asia combined."⁹ Some could argue that since the end of the Cold War, the United States has been the world's lone superpower. The end of the Cold War issued in a new world order with the United States at the top. The

United States supremacy today extends to the economy, currency, military areas, lifestyle, language and the products of mass culture that inundate the world.¹⁰

The United States has created the world economic system in which the world operates. Central bankers all over the world continue to hold United States dollars in their reserves and use it on the world market to trade commodities.¹¹ While countries all over the world, and certainly in the Middle East and Russia, all produce oil, it is traded on the world market in dollars, largely through United States trading companies who all make money and pay United States taxes from those trades. This is true for the world market of grain, cocoa, coffee, copper, and gold, just to name a few.¹² In an article in *International Statesman*, entitled *US Influence and the Global Economy*, M. Osman Ghani writes, “For decades, dollars have lubricated global prosperity. Countries such as Thailand and South Korea deal in dollars for more than 80 percent of their exports.”¹³ Clearly the United States has dominated the world economy in a way that gives it a clear advantage; not simply by becoming a dominant economy, but by creating a world economic environment that sustains its dominance. The dollars serves as the major currency for cross-border investments by governments and the private sector. As of 2011 foreign governments held almost two-thirds of their nearly \$7 trillion in foreign exchange reserves in dollars.¹⁴

It is not just economic power that defines the United States on the world stage, investment in military power that won the Cold War continues to pay huge dividends for the United States today. The recent history of military spending favors the United States by a large margin as shown in Table 1 below. To put this table in context, from 2000-2010 the United States increased its military expenditures by more than 83%, while

China increased its military expenditures by more than 256%, and still sits at less than 17% of total United States expenditures on defense.¹⁵

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Spending (\$B)</i>	<i>% of GDP</i>	<i>Share (%)</i>
--	World Total	1,630	2.6	100
1	United States	698	4.8	43
2	China	119	2.1	7.3
3	United Kingdom	59.6	2.7	3.7
4	France	59.3	2.3	3.6
5	Russia	58.7	4.0	3.5
6	Japan	54.5	1.0	3.3

Table 1. World Military Spending 2010¹⁶

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute compiled the numbers in Table 1 in 2011 using 2010 data. The table clearly shows the dominance the United States has achieved since the end of the Cold War in terms of military spending. It is interesting to note that China is the number two economy in the world and spends nearly five times less than the United States on its military.¹⁷ The reasons for this may be varied but underlines the long-term strategy of China discussed later in the paper. The table also shows that the United States accounts for more than 43% of the world's military spending; that is more than the next fourteen countries combined. In an article in Harvard magazine entitled, *The Future of War and the American Military*, Stephen Peter Rosen writes, "The United States has no rival. We are militarily dominant around the world. Our military spending exceeds that of the next six or seven powers combined,

and we have a monopoly on many advanced and not so advanced military technologies.”¹⁸

The Cold War and its subsequent end provided the backdrop for strong economic growth in the United States and the distinction of being the world’s lone military superpower. The Cold War arguably began with the strategy laid out by President Truman and his secretary of state in the National Security Council report of April 7, 1950 known as NSC-68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security.¹⁹ This report essentially defined Communism as the greatest threat to the United States after the end of World War II and issued in the Cold War. The term “Cold War” was coined by Bernard Baruch, a multimillionaire financier and advisor to Presidents from Woodrow Wilson to Harry S. Truman.²⁰ The term was used to describe the chilly relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union, and more poignantly to illustrate a circumstance where there is not direct military engagement, but more of an ideological, psychological, technological, and industrial conflict.

In the wake of the Cold War, Americans felt it was their patriot duty to buy consumer goods to help the economy grow. In turn, the United States became the world’s dominant economic power. “This ‘consumer culture’ demonstrated the superiority of the American way of life to communism and virtually redefined the nation’s historic mission to extend freedom to other countries”²¹ The United States used its economic might as a weapon against the Soviet Union, not unlike China using its economic weight against the United States in the twenty-first century. In the 1980’s, President Reagan helped stimulate massive economic growth with tax cuts and deregulation. In the windfall, federal tax revenue increased dramatically as the economy

grew. Serendipitously, however, America's consumer culture required cheap goods to continue to fuel its economy; those good were coming primarily from China. In our quest to fight one Communist country, we were helping another.²²

The United States strategy outlined in National Security Council (NSC) Report - 68 was essentially a strategy of "containment"; the idea was to contain the communist threat, and not allow it to grow or proliferate. This strategy dominated how the United States supported its allies militarily to contain the threat which resulted in the United States setting the establishing the standard for military armament around the world through military aid as well as enormous contracts to the United States defense industry.²³

In response to the military build-up of the United States, the Soviet Union felt obligated to increase their military spending and eventually went bankrupt trying to keep up with the United States. To try to prevent the collapse, Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev attempted to reinvent his country's brand of communism by introducing reforms and openness known as perestroika (reconstruction) and glasnost (openness).²⁴ A domino effect of these policies spread across Eastern Europe. Within six years the Soviet empire had disintegrated and the Cold War was over.²⁵ The Soviet Union fully collapsed when Boris Yeltzen assumed power in 1991. Perestroika and glasnost are credited largely with the collapse of the Soviet Union because it offered more freedoms and reforms to the Communist state. These freedoms and access to democratic reforms led to more nationalism among the Soviet Republics and ultimately to the inability of Yeltzen to keep the empire under control.²⁶

For nearly 40 years, the United States engaged in a coherent strategy to build its economy, increase our geopolitical influence, and defeat our enemy [the Soviet Union] through a game of posturing and economic dominance; it worked. Perhaps the Chinese have learned from our handling of the “Cold War” against the Soviet Union and have decided to push an agenda through similar means, without codifying it in a document or announcing it to the world. The United States, however, is moving into a part of its history that will more likely be defined by political division, economic instability, and military entanglement in a war on terrorism, than a coherent foreign engagement strategy to maintain its dominant hegemonic position in the world. The war on terrorism is not likely to galvanize economic and military power in the same way the Cold War did. The United States political system is the strength of its democracy, but it also demands that we re-visit the direction of our country at least every four years with the election of a new President. The Cold War provided the United States with the underlying strategy that transcended politics and election cycles.²⁷ This is more aligned with the Chinese way of solving problems which takes a much more strategic, long-term approach.

A Growing China

The United States marched loudly through the twentieth century, wielding its military might to save Europe during World War II, then defeating the Soviet Union. China has slowly, methodically, and economically begun to blunt the influence of the West around the world. This influence is growing without armed conflict or large military expenditures.²⁸ Africa is a great example of how Chinese influence is growing. China, unlike the United States, is not picky about who it engages. In a recent article on the European Financial Review website, the influence of China on the African continent is described:

China has close relations with the Islamist government in Sudan, democratic governments in Botswana and Mauritius and authoritarian governments in Togo and Equatorial Guinea. China works hard to develop the government-to-government relationship and in recent years has generally been more successful than Western countries in establishing close ties with most African leaders.²⁹

The “so what” to China’s engagement in Africa is that it carries with it conspicuously strategic goals largely revolved around access to energy and other scarce high-value commodities.³⁰ The President of China and its Communist Party Chief, Hu Jintao, made a famous 2006 trip to the African continent. His trip was described by the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill’s American Diplomacy magazine, “President Hu’s trip through Africa and the broadening and deepening Chinese relationship with Africa that it represents mark a watershed, but not yet a sea change, in China’s international role beyond East Asia.”³¹

China’s quest for natural resources and influence is not limited to the African Continent. In 2008 China went shopping world-wide snatching up energy and rare metals at extremely low prices. China reached a deal with Russia in which the oil giant Rosneft and oil pipeline company Transeft together would be given \$25 billion in loans in exchange for 300,000 barrels of crude oil a day for the next 20 years at about \$20 a barrel.³² As of 12 March 2012 the cost of a barrel of oil was \$107.88; smart business or part of a geo-strategic plan? In March of 2009 a Chinese consortium signed a \$3.2 billion deal with Iran to develop an area beneath the Persian Gulf believed to hold nearly 8 percent of the world’s known gas reserves.³³

One issue not discussed often when talking about China’s pursuit of the worlds resources is the monopoly China enjoys with *rare earth metals*. “China produces 97% of all rare earths, according to the European Union. The materials are used in products

such as flat-screen televisions, smart phones, hybrid car batteries, wind turbines and energy-efficient lighting, electronics, cars and petroleum.”³⁴ Without these rare earths, most of the technological advances needed to fuel the United States economy in the next century would be scarce and extremely expensive. The President of the United States speech on 13 March of this year outlining unfair trade practices from China’s monopoly on these resources illustrates the economic and security challenges it raises.³⁵ He stated, “If China would simply let the market work on its own, we’d have no objection, but their policies currently are preventing that from happening. And they go against the very rules that China agreed to follow.”³⁶

China’s restriction on the export of rare earths has been in part because of the Chinese claim that mining these minerals is extremely destructive to the environment; though China has no desire to reign in other environmentally destructive parts of its economy.³⁷ By restricting the export of rare earths outside of China, it makes them several times more expensive to those outside of China and subsequently less expensive for those firms choosing to manufacture goods in China. This makes it nearly impossible to compete with China on the cost of high-tech manufacturing goods. The largest example of this is the world’s largest technology firm, Apple; an American company that almost exclusively manufactures its goods in China.³⁸ China’s manipulation of rare earths and manufacturing plays into a narrative described by Peter Navarro in an Op Ed written for the Los Angeles Times where he wrote, “The most potent of China’s ‘weapons of job destruction’ are the elaborate web of export subsidies; the blatant piracy of America’s technology and trade secrets...and the forced transfer of

the technology of any American company wishing to operate on Chinese soil or sell into the Chinese market.”³⁹

The Pitfalls on the Rise to Hegemony

It’s not easy being the world’s largest superpower; with great power comes great responsibility. The question for China is whether it is simply trying to dominate the world with economic strength and monopolies on the world’s resources, or whether it truly wants to lead. With China’s growing ability to project economic and military strength, it will invariably have to confront the United States on some level, perhaps not militarily, but no champion goes down without a fight. According to the ancient Chinese philosopher Xunzi, there are three distinct leadership powers: Tyranny, Hegemony, and Humane authority. Tyranny seeks to force submission through military force; Humane powers seek to gain authority by winning the hearts and minds of the people; and Hegemonic powers are somewhere in between. Hegemonic powers require the hearts and minds to be won in order to maintain order without expending much capital, but must back this up with military force.⁴⁰

New York Times contributor Yan Xuetong wrote an OP-ED in November of 2011 where he wrote, “...governments must understand that political leadership, rather than throwing money at problems, will determine who wins the race for global supremacy.”⁴¹ The question of whether China can lead, rather and dominate remains. Yan goes on to write, “Many people wrongly believe that China can improve its foreign relations only by significantly increasing economic aid. But it’s hard to buy affection; such ‘friendship’ does not stand the test of difficult times.”⁴²

The United States continues to enjoy better relations with the world politic in both the number of formal allies, and the quality of those allies; China is still trying to make

those binding ties. In comparison to the United States China needs to develop an enduring public policy based on more than coalescing countries who want a partner who doesn't meddle in their internal affairs. Yiwei Wang writes from Fudan University in China, "The peaceful rise - peaceful developing policy in the Chinese grand strategy has sought to integrate Chinese hard power and soft power to create a soft rise for China."⁴³

In order to fully realize its dominance on the world stage China must not only fully embrace the elements of "Humane power in Hegemony". China's reluctance to embrace the idea of many countries negotiating together (multilateralism) that could potentially serve its interests, especially in the Asia-Pacific could be a major barrier to true hegemony. China has skepticism that multilateralism can ultimately be beneficial because of the potential that such forums could be manipulated by the United States to encourage others to "gang up" against China.⁴⁴ This skepticism may be well founded, but China must become a partner in the peaceful administration of the world's commerce, or the very economic foundation upon which its hegemony rests may be at risk.

China's Economy Grows as the United States Falts

China is moving diplomatically to secure support in places like Africa, Russia, and the Middle East to support its appetite for natural resources by leading economically in a time where the United States is not in a position to respond in kind. "As the British discovered and as the Chinese discovered, once you lose economic primacy, strategic primacy follows pretty quickly."⁴⁵ The aggressive nature of China's manufacturing, trade, and move to control more natural resources has helped develop China into an economic juggernaut while the United States suffers under crippling debt

and a debilitated economy. America's domination of the world economy may soon come to an end.

Figure 1 taken from the Economist Magazine in September of 2011 shows the history of economic dominance or "hegemony" over the last 150 years or so. The decline of the British after World War II, and the rise and fall of the Japanese as an economy force also shows the cyclic nature of economic dominance. There is no way to give justice to the myriad of issues that led to these economic crises, but the last decade has clearly seen China and the United States take disparate paths to realities shown in Figure 1.⁴⁶

In fairness to the United States, no one could have foreseen the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001 that led to a drop in the stock market of more than 687 points and a halt to trading for more than four days; the result was a 14.6% decrease in market capitalization in five days. The United States economy literally lost trillions of dollars in value in less than a week. The S&P [Standards and Poor's] 500 Stock Index dropped more than 55% from its peak in late 2007 to its bottom in early 2009—the biggest decline since the 1930's.⁴⁷

The attacks of September 2001 were followed by a banking crisis that cost the United States economy nearly \$647 billion in bailouts to more than 926 financial institutions. It is widely agreed that the financial collapse resulting from the housing market crash and the corresponding recession were the worst to hit the United States since the Great Depression of 1920.⁴⁸ To compound these financial calamities, the United States has been financing its military infrastructure largely by running budget deficits which have resulted in more than \$15 trillion in debt.⁴⁹ The debt levels of the

United States as a percentage of its economy will, if unchecked, reach the catastrophic levels of Greece in the next decade. The United States debt level has already nearly reached the size of what its entire economy produces in one year threatening economic growth and signaling potential dire interest rates and potential debt default.⁵⁰

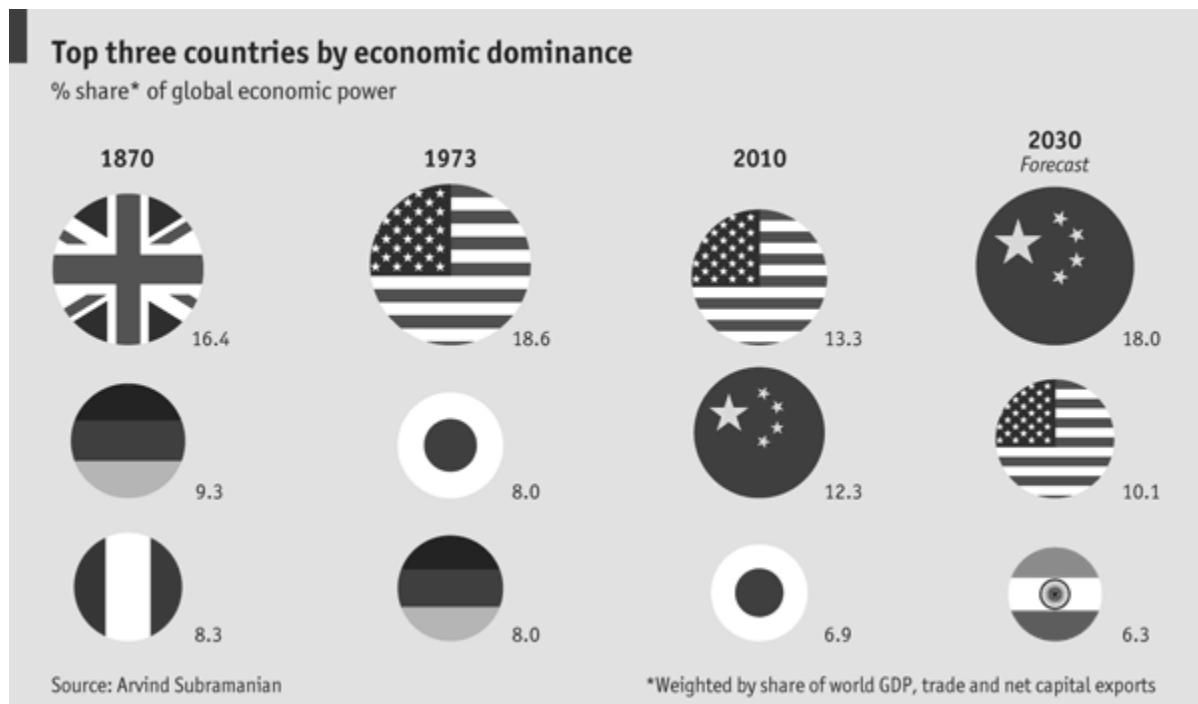


Figure 1. Top 3 Countries by Economic Dominance⁵¹

To place the debt and deficit picture in context, the percentage of the \$3.6 trillion budget proposal the President presented to congress on 13 February of this year that is discretionary amounts to less than \$1.2 trillion, or roughly 31%; the rest of the federal budget, nearly \$2.4 trillion is non-discretionary (Figure 2). The reason this is important, and why it matters in the context of a declining America vis-à-vis China, is that discretionary spending is the only part of the Federal budget where the United States can make decisions about how and where to spend revenue. This is also the part of the Federal budget that aid to other countries both military and economic has to be carved

out, the fewer dollars available, the smaller the economic impact the United States vis-à-vis China. Non-discretionary spending is spending that must be paid, by law, to meet United States obligations, such as interest on United States debt and social security payments.⁵² Of the 31% that is discretionary, more than half is spent on the United States military, or \$858 billion of \$1.2 trillion.⁵³ The President's budget submission for 2013 shows that nearly 100% of the non-discretionary spending (including defense) will be financed through deficit spending; the national debt is projected to continue to increase for the next decade.⁵⁴

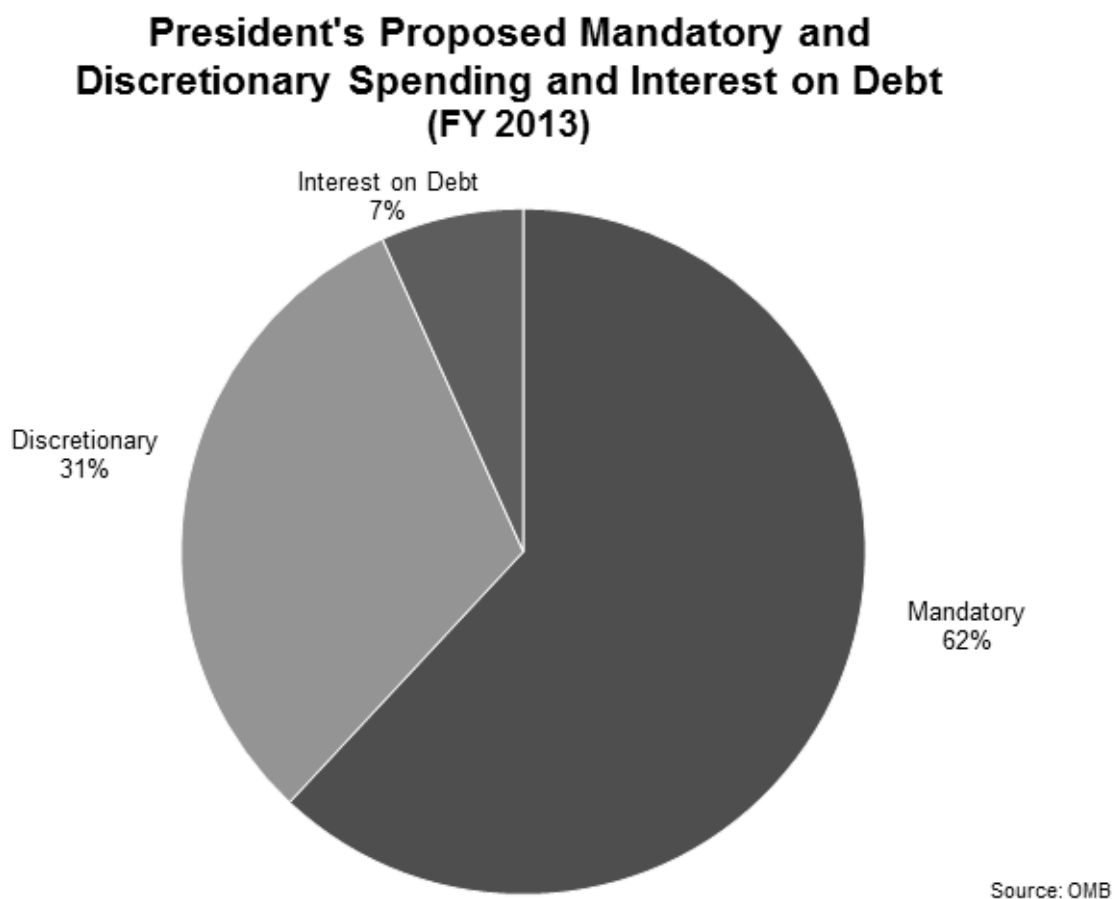


Figure 2. 2013 Budget Categories ⁵⁵

China's has largely benefited from the economic problems the United States faces, not simply through the reduced ability of the United States to wield economic hegemony, but through financing much of the very military build-up that has occurred over the last decade. China owns more than \$1.2 trillion in United States bonds [debt]; which is more than American households. United States citizens own nearly \$1 trillion in this debt through the purchase of bonds, according to the Federal Reserve.⁵⁶ Other countries also hold United States debt as it has historically been seen as a safe investment. The problem, however, is that while the United States continues to increase its debt, the ability to wield economic power becomes increasingly diminished; the Chinese have positioned themselves to take full advantage of this looming reality.

If the object of war is hegemonic influence and the spread of ideological "values", the United States is quickly losing ground to China. In an article printed by the Foreign Policy Association, Nasos Mihalakas noted:

China as we all know is a major trade and investment player internationally, an important source of aid and development assistance, and an increasingly attractive model of economic development for other countries. The recent global financial crisis has made China even bolder in its dealings within international organizations. Beijing's economic development model shielded China from the global financial crisis, and has now supplanted that of the United States in the eyes of many developing nations. The ESI [Economic Strategy Institute] study argues that America's economic weakness and China's post financial crisis recovery means that in the years and decades to come international organizations will evolve differently, and in some respects, away from the U.S. influenced philosophical foundations upon which they were built.⁵⁷

In a world where the economy is growing as the dominate force, China has methodically moved to remove the United States as the world leader.

The Conventional Argument for War

Our economic capacity has an enormous impact on our ability to shape world events. Having nuclear weapons is no longer the only way to become a world “super-power.” The United States has spent trillions of dollars on our national defense in the last decade resulting in an overwhelming military advantage over potential adversaries. With more ships, planes, tanks, missiles, and cyber capability than any other nation on earth, any nation would be foolish to launch a conventional attack against the United States.⁵⁸

China’s military prowess is described as being at least 20 years behind the United States technologically, and while a recent launching of a Chinese aircraft carrier and new stealth fighter has been hailed in some quarters as the Chinese military’s “*coming of age*”, the technology is relatively old when compared to United States capability in the twenty-first century.⁵⁹ China clearly has not made this an urgent budgetary priority (see Table 1), even with a 256% increase in military spending over the last ten years, their spending as a percentage of GDP remains nearly half of the United States and only seven percent of the world’s spending on defense.⁶⁰ Chinese General Liang Guanglie is quoted at the Shangri-La Asian security summit in 2010 as saying, “...main battle equipment of our services...is mainly second-generation weapons. China does not have a large arsenal of third generation weapons, systems or platforms. For example, the army is still being motorized, not mechanized.”⁶¹ This is amazing for a country whose Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and economic growth will eclipse the United States in the next two decades (see Figure 1).

The scope of warfare is expanding beyond conventional warfare, if the United States does not adapt it will leave itself incapable of responding. The specter of

hundreds of Russian or Chinese nuclear missiles coming over the horizon in an era of assured mutual destruction is simply not a practical outcome. It has been argued that the United States could skip a generation of military weaponry and still remain the world's dominant military power. The continued investment in military a huge military industrial complex may have worked well to fuel the United States economy in the 1980's during the Cold War, but it does little to "increase" security".⁶²

Enormous stockpiles of nuclear and conventional weapons make conventional war against an indomitable military an unlikely scenario. This is the central concept behind this paper; conventional war between superpowers is not a practical means to an "end"; China has found a better way. Russell Adrich writes in National Defense Magazine, "They [nuclear weapons] are unlikely to be use offensively, as a conventional attack on a powerful adversary risks igniting a full-fledged war. In contrast, non-military strategies can be used incrementally and surreptitiously..."⁶³ An incremental approach would likely decrease the possibility of conventional conflict; especially if your enemy's attention is focused elsewhere; such as the United States growing economic problems, and an expensive war on terrorism.

Cyber warfare is quickly becoming the catchphrase for the twenty-first century and the "terrorism" of non-conventional conflict. The number of cyber attacks on the United States systems from China is growing.⁶⁴ China has recognized the effect of spending very little money with a high payoff and the importance of this tool in modern warfare. The United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission says in its annual report to Congress released November 20 2008 that, "China is targeting U.S. government and commercial computers for espionage, and has developed cyber

espionage capability so advanced that the U.S. may be unable to counter act or even detect the efforts.”⁶⁵ This capability makes the highly technologically reliant United States extremely vulnerable. The report went on to describe the nations reliance on the internet through electric grids, banking systems, electric grid, fuel and water distribution systems, traffic control and sewage treatment plants. A successful attack on these internet-connected networks could paralyze the United States.⁶⁶

Conclusion

The question surrounding China’s aggressive and increasing influence in Africa, Southwest Asia, and Russia (all resource rich areas of the world) is whether this influence is incidental to China’s growing economy, or whether it is calculated. Carl von Clausewitz wrote in his book *On War* that, “The political objective is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and the means can never be considered in isolation from their purposes.”⁶⁷ If the political objective is met without using the means of conventional war, doesn’t that fundamentally change how we view war?

Looking at what China has been able to achieve through both proactive policy and through a calamity of events that have befallen the United States and its economy, one could make the argument that the goals of war are being systematically achieved without armed conflict. In a lot of ways the United States began the concept of a fundamental redefinition of war by the way it pursued the Cold War. As has been discussed in this paper, the Cold War was a war of posturing and economic dueling more than armed conflict. The United States and the Soviet Union took opposite sides in wars around the world throughout the 60’s, 70’s, and 80’s. It is a fair statement to make that most of the worlds armaments in the hands of the world’s military are either Soviet made or made by the United States; such a surplus of this equipment is left over

from the Cold War that it is easily affordable by second and third world countries. China has learned from the model illustrated through the Cold War and has begun its own push to align countries based on hand-outs and economic bullying.

In sports it's common to question whether a team won, or the opposing team lost. As the United States struggles with crippling debt—a large percentage held by China—the second worst economy since the great depression, and its military mired into a costly war in Afghanistan and potentially Iran, it can hardly continue to carry the world on its shoulders as it did in the post-Cold War era. The lack of a unifying strategy like the Cold War against the Soviet Union and communism, has left the United States playing defense and in a weakened position.

China's strategy may well redefine war, but it has its pitfalls and is not destined for success. The world-wide shopping spree for natural resources, monopoly on rare earths and cheap manufacturing advantage come with a price. Along with economic dominance comes leadership if China ultimately wants to exert true hegemony and become the world's greatest superpower. The goal of war, however, is to create conditions where your enemy must submit to the conditions you impose. By 2030 China will have replaced the United States on the world economic stage, and unless the United States makes a course correction, its increasing debt and decreasing discretionary spending ability will leave it economically impotent to shape world affairs.

The world order is changing. Regardless of the course the United States sets in the future, it is in no position to stop the inevitable economic rise of China. It remains to be seen whether China will embrace its rise and become the world's largest superpower, or simply be content with the economic power it gains, however, China is

poised to gain the throne without a shot fired, or a significant investment in its military. The historical view of war must change for the future. If we are to see war as a means, then it must be weighed with other potential means that may produce the same outcome. Since the first known written account of war— the Peloponnesian wars— man has almost exclusively relied on armed conflict to gain dominance, China has changed this paradigm using a blueprint, ironically, provided by the United States during the Cold War. Henry Kissinger once noted, “Who controls the food supply, controls the people; who controls the energy can control whole continents; who controls money can control the world.”⁶⁸

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