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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES

JCSP 34 / PCEMI 34

EXERCISE / EXERCICE

NEW HORIZONS

**SHADOWS OF CHINA –
WHAT DOES CHINA REALLY WANT?**

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La présente étude a été rédigée par un stagiaire du Collège des Forces canadiennes pour satisfaire l'une des exigences du cours. L'étude est un document qui se rapporte au cours et contient donc des faits et des opinions que seul l'auteur considère appropriés et convenables au sujet. Elle ne reflète pas nécessairement la politique ou l'opinion d'un organisme quelconque, y compris le gouvernement du Canada et le Ministère de la Défense nationale du Canada. Il est défendu de diffuser, de citer ou de reproduire cette étude sans la permission expresse du Ministère de la Défense nationale.

ABSTRACT

The 21st century will be shaped by China's economic rise. This work attempts to address the following question: Will China rise peacefully within the current world order or is China's rise a future threat that should be contained?

This paper studied how China is using and projecting its power and influence in the world. Also specifically considered were its human rights record, its military growth and its repression of Taiwan's pro-independence movement since China's actions appear at odds with its rhetoric of a peaceful rise.

It was concluded that a pragmatic, opportunistic China is focused on economic development. China intends to take advantage of its present favorable position to rise peacefully within a global economic system that rewards cooperation and multilateralism. While China is increasingly using soft power on the international scene, it is still learning how to address internal issues in the same fashion.

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

Over the last 25 years, China has benefited from an unprecedented economic growth averaging close to a 10% increase of its GDP per annum.² Furthermore, Columbia University economist Dr Jeffrey D. Sachs has estimated that, by the year 2050, China's GNP will exceed the United-States' (US) GNP by 75%.³ This "peaceful rise" has divided opinions as to what effects a nascent China will have on world order and stability.

International relation theorist and proponent of offensive realism John J. Mearsheimer warns that China's rise will lead to world tensions akin to a return to the Cold War. Mearsheimer states in his 2001 book *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* that "... China and the United States are destined to be adversaries as China's power grows."⁴ He suggests that nations are not satisfied with a given amount of power and will seek security through regional hegemony. He advocates that the US should prevent the emergence of a power peer by containing China's rise. If not, there will likely be a conflict between the US and China for the possession of the lion's share of world power.

Mearsheimer's stance is challenged by former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski as being too retrospective in nature and not enough grounded in

¹Sun Tzu. *The Art of War*. Translated by Samuel B. Griffith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 77.

²James A. Boutilier. *Canada and the New Pacific Paradigm*. Presented at the 23rd Annual CDAI Seminar. (Ottawa: the Château Laurier, 15 February 2007), 2.

³Jeffrey D. Sachs. "Welcome to the Asian Century." *Fortune*. Vol. 149, issue 1 (12 January 2004): 53-54.

⁴John J. Mearsheimer. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001), 4.

political realities.⁵ Brzezinski argues that China will cautiously work within the international system to secure its potential global preeminence.⁶

This work will attempt to answer the following question: Is a conflict between the US and China inevitable or is China truly committed to its proclaimed goals of peace, security and prosperity?

To do so, this paper will study the concrete actions taken by China in order to determine the path it has elected to follow in its search for power and influence. First, both China's official political and military strategies will be reviewed. Second, how China is actually projecting its power and influence in the world will be considered. Last, three areas where China's actions appear to deviate from its professed non-aggressive stance will be studied. They include its civil rights record, its military build-up and its aggressive stance against Taiwan pro-independence movement. From these elements, a clearer picture should emerge of what it is that China truly wants.

From the balance of the findings, it was concluded that China's rhetoric does indeed match its actions: a pragmatic and opportunistic China intends to take full advantage of its present favorable position within the global economy to rise peacefully within a system that rewards cooperation and multilateralism.

⁵ "But theory – at least in international relations – is essentially retrospective. When something happens that does not fit the theory, it gets revised." Zbigniew Brzezinski & John J. Mearsheimer. "Clash of the Titans." *Foreign Policy*. Issue 146 (January/February 2005): 48.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 47.

CHINA'S POLICIES AND DOCTRINES

For most of its 5,000 year history, China was the center of civilization. During the communist revolution, Mao Zedong attempted to erase from the country's consciousness all traces of the past glory of an elitist culture that clashed with the classless society he wanted to create.⁷ Today, years after his death, there is a resurgence of nationalism within China aimed at returning the nation to its perceived rightful place of power and influence in the world.⁸ Understanding that altering the power equilibrium was bound to be seen as threatening, Hu Jintao, leader of the People's Republic of China (PRC), articulated the concept of "China's peaceful rise."⁹ The essence of this message is aimed at reassuring its neighbors that China will not pursue expansion or seek confrontation to secure its ascension.

A nation with a long memory for past slights, this rise in preeminence would as well erase the perceived century of humiliation that the country has suffered at the hand of Western invading powers. China's grand strategy is aimed at these twin goals of restoring the country to its rightful place on the world stage and rectifying the wrongs of the past.¹⁰

In this section, China's official stance and policies will be gleaned from open source literature and studied. First, the Chinese overarching political goals and plans will be considered. Second, how the military is reshaping itself to meet its role within the

⁷ Keith Windschuttle. "Mao & the Maoists." *The New Criterion*. (October 2005): 9.

⁸ Kevin Platt. "Ancient Roots of China Diaspora Tapped in Push for Unity." *Christian Science Monitor*. Vol. 89, no. 31 (9 January 1997): 1.

⁹ Jianwei Wang. "Hu Jintao's 'New Thinking' on Cross-Strait Relations." *American Foreign Policy Interests*. Vol. 29 (2007): 24.

¹⁰ David M. Lampton. "The Faces of Chinese Power." *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 86, issue 1 (January/February 2007): 117.

greater government strategies will be studied. The last portion of this section will deal with how China's political and military stance could be interpreted.

The Peaceful Rise

China's decision makers, scholars and news media have decreed that, for the next two decades, the country will be within a "window of strategic opportunity," a period of peace and stability in the world.¹¹ This opportunity was made possible by the foresight of Deng Xiaoping who, in 1976, elected to set China on a path of "...pragmatism and economic growth in which foreign policy became less confrontational."¹² As stated earlier, the results were spectacular. Having embraced globalization, China's economy is now the second largest in the world and enjoys a \$233 billion trade surplus with the US as well as sitting on a financial reserve of \$1 trillion-plus in foreign exchange.¹³ But economic power is not China's goal, it is only a component of the country's ultimate aspiration: to have a place of power and influence commensurate with the status it believes it should enjoy in the world. To achieve this goal, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has conceived the following three-stage plan:¹⁴

- a. Stage 1 - From 2000 to 2010, the total GDP is to be doubled;
- b. Stage 2 - From 2010 to 2020, the total GDP is to be doubled again, with the expectation of reaching a per capita GDP of \$3,000; and

¹¹ "It is a window of strategic opportunity for China, which must make the most of it, continuing its fast-paced economic developments and social transformation while limiting any external threats to peace and stability." Susan L. Craig. *Chinese Perceptions of Traditional and Nontraditional Security Threats*. (March 2007): 7. <http://www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil/>; Internet; accessed 25 January 2008.

¹² Lake Wang. "The Good Neighbor – Why China Cooperates." *Harvard International Review*. (Fall 2007): 38.

¹³ Victor D. Cha. "Winning Asia – Washington's Untold Success Story." *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 86, issue 6 (November/December 2007): 111.

¹⁴ Zheng Bijian. "China's 'Peaceful Rise' to Great-Power Status." *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 84, issue 5 (September/October 2005): 23.

c. Stage 3 - From 2020 to 2050, China is to become a prosperous, democratic and civilized socialist country at a medium level of development. During this stage the four modernizations will be completed: agriculture, industry, science and technology.¹⁵

Of note, the objectives of this 50-year plan are couched in terms of economic achievements. The overall plan summarizes the direction China has chosen to follow: through modernization, industrialization and peaceful relations with trading partners, China's economy will be at the centre of its ascension in the world. At its core, it is a plan focused on peace, stability and prosperity.¹⁶

This is a plan that fits the Chinese character: it is ambitious and methodical as well as taking advantage of Chinese's people intrinsic patience and blossoming nationalistic pride. It mirrors the United-States ascension to great power status but with Chinese characteristics. The US Annual Threat Assessment confirms that, from its perspective, China's strategic priorities remain economic growth, political stability and upholding territorial integrity.¹⁷

China's goal is to be recognized internationally as an economic and political superpower. But to reach this stage more than economic power is required. An element of military power is integral to achieving great power status. The following paragraphs

¹⁵ Anatoliy F. Klimenko. "The Evolution of China's Military Policy and Military Doctrine." *Military Thought*. (April-June 2005) [journal on-line]; available from <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-135818480.html>; Internet; accessed 5 February 2008.

¹⁶ LtCdr Fridtjof Karlstad. "China's Power Ambitions." (Toronto: Canadian Forces College Command and Staff Course National Security Studies Course Paper, 24 April 2006), 66.

¹⁷ J. Michael McConnell. *Annual Threat Assessment of the Director of National Intelligence*. Report presented to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. (Washington (5 February 2008), 31. http://www.dni.gov/testimonies/20080227_testimony.pdf; Internet; accessed 15 February 2008.

will consider the changes undertaken by China's military establishment to complement the grand political strategy.

China's Military Revolution

In the past, China has relied on the size of its population, a massive military force, its position as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and a modest nuclear arsenal to promote its interests in the world. But with its ever growing economic power and a new outlook on foreign policies and diplomacy, there was a need for the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to re-evaluate its doctrine and core capabilities. Despite the need to reassess its priorities, the PLA main functions will remain "... to defend the power position of the CPC [China's Communist Party], as well as the territory of China."¹⁸

Similarly to the grand political plan conceived by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the PLA has a three-step/50-year plan to bring its forces into the 21st century. This plan can be found in China's White Paper – National Defense in 2006:¹⁹

- a. Step 1 – By 2010, to have restructured and streamlined the PLA thus laying a solid foundation for future modernization. The PLA will increase the proportion of advanced weapons and military equipment;
- b. Step 2 – By 2020, to have made significant progress in modernizing and developing a small, modern and professional armed force. The goal is for China to emerge as a leading regional military power; and

¹⁸ Jane's World Armies. "China." http://www4.janes.com/subscribe/jwar/doc_view.jsp?K2DocKey=/content1/janesdata/binder/jwar/jwara13; Internet; accessed 5 February 2008.

¹⁹ People's Republic of China. Information Office of the State Council of The People's Republic of China. *Government White Paper – China's National Defense in 2006*, December 2006; <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/19441.htm>; Internet; accessed 28 September 2007.

c. Step 3 – By 2050 or before, to have built an informationized armed forces able to win informationized wars. China, by this time, is to be a leading power with a military force commensurate with this status.²⁰

This plan has been influenced by the successes of US operations abroad, including its campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan.²¹ Over the past two decades, China's military strategists have extensively studied the US Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). Even with China's dedicating 4.3% of its GDP to its military budget, the PLA's leadership has accepted that the US military has too strong a lead to be challenged at this time.²² Nevertheless, the PLA is putting in place, today, the seeds for tomorrow's success. From a strategy that was initially focused on a war of attrition, the PLA is moving to a smaller yet more capable force. Its intent is to create a force that, after simultaneously surmounting the twin challenges of mechanization and informationization, will be able to undertake and win "local wars under modern high-tech conditions."²³

Even as it goes through its own form of RMA, the PLA does not intend to remain at a marked disadvantage against potential, more technologically advanced adversaries.

²⁰ Klimentko, *The Evolution of China's Military Policy and Military Doctrine*, 8.

²¹ "Drawing upon lessons learned from foreign conflicts, particularly U.S.-led campaigns up to and including Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, Soviet and Russian military theory, and the PLA's own, albeit limited, combat history, Chinese military planners are pursuing transformation across the whole of China's armed forces." United States, Office of the Secretary of Defence. *Annual Report to Congress – Military Power of the People's Republic of China – 2007* (Washington, 2007), 11. <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/070523-China-Military-Power-final.pdf>; Internet; accessed 15 February 2008.

²² Rosemary Foot. "Chinese Strategies in a US-Hegemonic Global Order: Accommodating and Hedging." *International Affairs*. Vol. 82, no.1 (January 2006): 89.

²³ David M. Finklestein. "Thinking About the PLA's 'Revolution in Doctrinal Affairs.'" In *China's Revolution in Doctrinal Affairs: Emerging Trends in the Operational Art of the Chinese People's Liberation Army*. Edited by James Mulvenon and David Finklestein. The CAN Corporation, Virginia (December 2005): 2. <http://www.cna.org/documents/DoctrineBook.pdf>; Internet; accessed 22 February 2008.

In line with the Chinese way of war and its focus on surprise and deception, the PLA doctrinal textbook *Zhanyixue* suggests that parity could be achieved by leapfrogging technological advances to push China to a leading role in specific fields.²⁴ An example of this commitment to modernization and how quickly China has caught up to Western forces is the unveiling in January 2007 of the Chinese designed and built, including both engines and weapons systems, Jian-10 fourth generation fighter jet.²⁵ China is also developing low cost concepts and technologies that will mitigate the advantage of a modern military adversary. China successfully conducted in January 2007 a direct-ascent anti-satellite (ASAT) missile test that could, when combined with relatively low cost ground-based lasers and jammers, mitigate the technological advantages of an opponent relying on GPS guidance systems.

Strategic Interpretation

One element of Chinese geopolitical strategy that can be extracted from the official and non-official military documentation available to the West is that the PLA's aims and strategy are completely subjugated to the grand political strategy. Political and diplomatic successes are more important than victory on the battlefields.²⁸ As previously described, China wants to take full advantage of the current period of strategic opportunity. It does not foresee, nor does it seek, a conflict with the one nation it considers its main rival: the US. As surmised by political analyst Scott Kastner, even on the sensitive issue of Taiwan, China will attempt to avoid a military conflict that would negatively impact its economic growth.²⁹ Clearly, at the present time, China's leadership has made the strategic decision that economic growth will be fundamental to its foreign affairs policies.

From the above study of the PRC's policies and strategies, it appears that China is focused on economic growth and developing a peaceful modern society. Clearly as well, China is downsizing and modernizing its military forces to complement its pursuit of a place of power and influence in the world.

Despite the constant pressure and requests for greater transparency from the West, and in particular from the US, it was remarked in 2007 by US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates that much is still unknown with regard to China's official grand strategy and military doctrine.³⁰ The information available is from sites or organizations with

²⁸ Andrew Scobell. "Is there a Chinese Way of War?" *Parameters*. Vol. 35, issue 1 (Spring 2005): 118.

²⁹ Scott L. Kastner. "Does Economic Integration Across the Taiwan Strait Make Military Conflict Less Likely?" *Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 6 (2006): 334.

³⁰ Gordon Lubold. "US Seeks More Info on China's Military." *The Christian Science Monitor*. Vol. 99, no. 127 (29 May 2007): 2.

very close ties to the CCP and thus its depth and interpretation must be critically considered in light of possible agenda setting from these organizations. A better assessment of the validity of the stated Chinese policies might be achieved through a study of how China projects its power and influence in the world. The next section will look at China through the lens of its foreign affairs endeavors.

POWER PROJECTION

China will be hosting both the 2008 Summer Olympics and the 2010 Shanghai World Expo. These two events will bring world-wide exposure and are intended to showcase a modern, thriving and open China that is ready to take a more preeminent position in world affairs. It remains that the Olympics and the World's Fair are only the most visible elements of a campaign aimed at enhancing China's image and status. There are a number of other Chinese initiatives that underscore its desire for recognition and influence.

This section will look at selected engagements and how China is trying to promote and protect its economic growth while remaining committed to its policy of peaceful rise. More specifically Chinese involvement in multilateral organizations, commerce and diplomacy will be contemplated, including recent peaceful resolution of territorial disputes.

Multilateral Organizations

China, with the rise of communism, became an ideologically closed society which had limited contact with the outside. But China could not promote a favorable policy of open market and economic growth without changing its image and building tighter

relations with its closest neighbors. From a policy of never taking the lead,³¹ China has increasingly been a key player in bilateral and multilateral agreements. It has now become the regional power in Southeast Asia. By promoting organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), China has encouraged multilateral negotiations based on complementary economic/cultural conditions as well as creating forums to air concerns with regard to regional security and stability.³² As observed by Oded Shenkar, a global business management scholar, China's goal is to build coalitions that will, in time, allow the creation of a web of mutual interests similar to the one enjoyed by the US.³³

These agreements have the further advantage of expanding its economic influence in the region. In addition, they provide some level of reassurance to its neighbors that China's intentions are non-expansionist. China has further enhanced its position as a proponent of regional and international stability through its involvement in UN missions by becoming: "... the largest contributor of military observers, peacekeepers, and police to UN operations around the world."³⁴ A reputation as a peacekeeper does strengthen the image of a non-threatening China.

³¹ In 1989, Deng Xiaoping put forward the following foreign policy principles: "Observe development soberly, maintain our position, meet challenges calmly, hide our capacities and bide our time, remain free of ambitions, never claim leadership." Foot, *Chinese Strategies in a US-Hegemonic Global Order: Accommodating and Hedging*, 84.

³² Wuu-long Lin and Pansy Lin. "Emergence of the Greater China Circle Economies: Cooperation Versus Competition." *Journal of Contemporary China*. Vol. 10, no. 29 (2001): 697.

³³ Oded Shenkar. "China's Economic Rise and the New Geopolitics." *International Journal*. Vol. 61, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 318.

³⁴ Lampton, *The Faces of Chinese Power*, 119.

Economic Power

Showing unexpected savvy, China has used its sizeable economic powers to share economic benefits with allies, not only to advance its own goals, but to reinforce the multilateral ties it has created within the Southeast Asia region.³⁵ Taiwan, Japan and others have tied themselves to the Chinese economic engine with investment, exports and imports that have created wealth for all involved. Foreign investments in the Chinese economy have promoted the country's continued growth as per its grand strategy. This situation has enhanced China's status and influence to the point that it is now considered a regional hegemon.³⁶

Deng Xiaoping radically altered China's strategic direction in 1979 when he made the statement that the pursuit of capitalistic gains was acceptable.³⁷ But to make money through industrialization in a free market, the manpower, the infrastructure, the energy sources and access to raw materials must be in place. Despite its large territory, access to raw materials and energy (especially oil) is a significant concern to the CCP. Chinese businessmen and senior diplomats have ranged far and wide to secure these critical resources. China has not shied away from supporting governments with spotty human rights records, such as Sudan and Myanmar (formerly known as Burma), to ensure access to critical resources. The 2006 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation is an example of China's international efforts to built relations with resource-rich developing countries.³⁸

³⁵ Evans S. Medeiros. "China's International Behavior – Activism, Opportunism, and Diversification." *JFQ*. Issue 47 (4th Quarter 2007): 36.

³⁶ Karlstad, China's Power Ambitions, 2.

³⁷ Boutilier, *Canada and the New Pacific Paradigm*, 1.

³⁸ Wang, *The Good Neighbor – Why China Cooperates*, 39.

China has shown a surprising sophistication in its dealing with other countries to secure advantageous agreement. In particular, the more aggressive persuasion methods have been forgone for a softer approach. The result is that China has been perceived as a solid commercial partner by many countries as well as being a sound investment opportunity. Even countries that have traditionally been wary of a strong China are trading extensively within the greater China circle economies.³⁹

Territorial Conflicts

This favorable impression of the new China has been enhanced by the number of long standing territorial conflicts that China has resolved peacefully over the last few years. The issue of China's territorial disputes resolution was extensively studied by M. Taylor Fravel who found a Chinese pattern of compromise which resulted in China receiving 50% or less of the contested territories.⁴⁰ An example of the benefits of such arrangement can be found in the resolution of the territorial conflict with Russia over islands on the Rivers Amur and Argun which has helped thaw the diplomatic relations between those two countries.⁴¹ Multilateral trades, good international relations and the promotion of a stable environment have become the hallmarks of the new China.

As can be seen from the preceding paragraphs, China has become increasingly involved in world affairs. Its diplomats have shown a deft touch in promoting China's interests within the context of international agreements. This sophisticated approach in

³⁹ "In 2003, China accounted for 68% of Taiwan's export growth, 36% of South Korea's, 32% of Japan's, 28% of Germany's and 21% of the United States'." Lampton, *The Faces of Chinese Power*, 121-122.

⁴⁰ M. Taylor Fravel. "Regime Insecurity and International Cooperation." *International Security*. Vol. 30, no. 2 (Fall 2005): 46.

⁴¹ Klimenko, *The Evolution of China's Military Policy and Military Doctrine*, 12.

using economic, diplomatic and military persuasion has been well received by the international community.

At times, this image of an ascendant peaceful China has been marred by its aggressive response to pro-independence demonstrations. How can these two aspects be reconciled? This will be discussed in the next section.

SPECIFIC CASE STUDIES

For the most part, China's actions are in accordance with its stated policy of peaceful rise, economic development and learning to become a responsible global citizen. But as some pundits have rightfully pointed out, there are some dissonant notes between China's peaceful search for its rightful place of power and influence in the world and its authoritarian stance on a few significant issues. The perceived lack of freedom and civil liberties, the development of its military force at a rate greater than the US and its unyielding position with regard to the status of Taiwan have been taken as warning signs that China's increased power and influence could and should be viewed with concerns. Are those issues truly at odds with China's professed commitment to a peaceful rise? These will now be considered in turn.

Freedom and Civil Liberties

Maybe the first and most significant issue of concern to the West when considering China's rising influence is that, internally, its government has yet to fully subscribe to the principles of human rights and civil liberties. Despite its economy having benefited greatly from open international commerce, there is a perception that a repressive China still maintains a tight grip on its population and accessibility to

information.⁴² Should China benefit from an open international community when it does not endorse freedom and equality at home?

China is a country in transition. In the past, China was a nation focused on an ideology incompatible with a free and open society. Today, China is less interested in ideologies and more in its relative power and status in the world. There has been a realization on the part of China's government that its power and status abroad starts with stability and prosperity at home.⁴³

China is well on its way to become a modern society with global transportation and communication systems. Despite attempts to limit or shape access to information, the average Chinese is increasingly aware of what is happening within and outside the country.⁴⁴ As a result, the population is ever more conscious of the disparity in living and social conditions between various regions. With this increased awareness on the part of its citizenry, so must China's government take notice and act on these concerns. Technology has made information more readily available and thus the government has to be more transparent towards its own population.⁴⁵

⁴² "Secrecy, information controls (including internet security), and propaganda remain hallmarks of CCP rule." United States, Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Fact Book - China*. 18. <http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>; Internet; accessed 21 January 2008.

⁴³ McConnell, *Annual Threat Assessment of the Director of National Intelligence*, 32.

⁴⁴ China claims 300 million mobile-phone users and nearly 100 million have access to the Internet. Bijian, China's 'Peaceful Rise' to Great-Power Status, 18.

⁴⁵ "Thousands of Chinese found they were able to access the BBC News website for the first time last week after years of strict censorship." John Chen. "The Western Media are Being Unfair to China." *The Gazette*. 11 April 2008.

When China regained control of Hong Kong and Macao, it instantly gained access to financial institutions, commerce and technology.⁴⁶ What it gained as well was a window on civil liberties and democracy. The population of these special administrative regions has a much higher expectation with regard to freedom of information and independence of the press.

Another force that is reshaping China is the influence of returning Chinese diasporas who bring with them a different view of the world.⁴⁷ Having studied, worked and traveled outside China, their expectation of what China should be is different from their forefathers'. Their brush with Western society is bound to alter their perceptions of individual freedom and liberties.

Even though small individually, these pressures have forced the government to be more open about its intentions and how much freedom the general population should have to voice its expectations. While popular marches were unheard of a few short years ago, they are now becoming more common and 74,000 "mass incidents" occurred in 2004. These protests involving almost 4 million citizens are forcing the country's leaders to take notice of social issues facing China.⁴⁸

Despite all its power over the levers of government, including information, policing, the PLA and commerce, the CCP is still vulnerable to the will of its people. China's leadership greatest fear is not containment, it is not an independent Taiwan or Tibet (or any other province). China's leadership greatest fear is to be removed from power. More specifically, the Communist Party fears to be unseated by a population

⁴⁶ Lin and Lin, *Emergence of the Greater China Circle Economies: Cooperation Versus Competition*, 698.

⁴⁷ Platt, *Ancient Roots of China Diaspora Tapped in Push for Unity*, 1.

⁴⁸ Craig, *Chinese Perceptions of Traditional and Nontraditional Security Threats*, 110.

displeased by its performance.⁴⁹ To stay in power, the CCP and its leaders must keep the population content through improving its standard of living and satisfying its current nationalistic spirit. Standard of living will be improved through the modernization of its industries, international commerce and the redistribution of the resulting wealth across the country. Its nationalistic spirit will be satisfied first, by keeping the country unified and second, by securing its position of influence and power in the world.

An example of how China is attempting to be more transparent in its strategic goals has been the availability, through official government internet sites, of White Papers such as the 2006 White Paper on National Defense.⁵⁰ While it is expected that these White Papers have been sanitized for public consumption, their publication should be seen as proof of a desire for greater transparency.

Social activism, telecommunication and the internet are slowly opening the doors to a better understanding of China's leadership and its motivation. Much more is still hidden than has been revealed, still progress is being made. There is pressure both internally and externally for China to be even more transparent.

Military Power

Former Secretary of State Donald Rumsfelds asked in 2005: "Since no nation threatens China, one must wonder: Why this growing investment? Why these continuing

⁴⁹ "Would another leader beside Hu have made similar populist efforts to attack rural poverty, corruption, pollution and such worker safety issues as deadly coal mines? Probably, because the party has little choice but to be viewed as about caring about these problems." Gady A. Epstein. "Who Rules China?" *Forbes*. 22 October 2007. http://www.forbes.com/2007/10/22/china-congress-rule-oped-cx_gae_1022chinarule.html?boxes=custom; Internet; accessed 5 February 2008.

⁵⁰ Chinese Government's Official Web Portal. "White Papers 1991-2006." <http://english.gov.cn/links/whitepapers.htm>. Internet; accessed 11 April 2008.

large and expanding arms purchases?”⁵¹ Even if this is a disingenuous question from the premier military power in the world, it is still a question that should be contemplated.

The answer to this question can be found in the abundance of security threats in the world today. As proven by the US, a country’s economic power and military might do not ensure the security of its interest either abroad or internally. Terrorism, anarchy and insurgency do not recognize international boundaries. All countries have an interest in maintaining an armed force to ensure its security and integrity. In this instance, China is no different than any other country.

With regard to China’s military growth, it should be kept in perspective. Despite possessing nuclear weapons and a sizeable force, the PLA is much less capable of power projection than other countries such as the US or the Soviet Union. In part, the growth of the PLA must be viewed as a continuing perception within the Chinese’s elite that a “great power” must have an equivalent modern and capable military force.⁵² Considering that China increasingly relies on international trade, commerce and transport for its economic well-being, China’s military spending to become a more modern and mobile force is not unreasonable. The Director of US National Intelligence reported that China’s official military budget grew by 18% to \$45.3 billion in 2007.⁵³ While this might sound impressive, this is only a fraction of the reported \$563 billion the US spent on its military forces.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Dennis J. Blasko. “The 2007 Report on the Chinese Military – The Top 10 List of Missing Topics.” *JFQ*. Issue 47 (4th Quarter 2007): 48.

⁵² McConnell, *Annual Threat Assessment of the Director of National Intelligence*, 33.

⁵³ David R. Francis. “It’s Back: The Global Arms Race.” *The Christian Science Monitor*. Vol. 99, issue 82 (26 March 2007): 16.

⁵⁴ This site estimates that the US spent 4.06% of its \$13.86 trillion GDP to support its military establishment. United States, Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Fact Book*.

The PLA should be considered for the time being a force dedicated to the sovereignty and unity of its own country. The one troubling aspect of the PLA's doctrine and order of battle is how much it seems to be focused on intimidating Taiwan out of pursuing *de jure* independence.⁵⁵

Taiwan

Considered by many to be the most sensitive problem facing China, the Taiwan Strait is the one area where the clash between its peace rhetoric and actions is the most pronounced. The PRC took control of mainland China in 1949 from the nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek who took refuge in Taiwan, 200 kilometers off the coast of China. Having given up hope of ever regaining control of Mainland China from the PRC, the Republic of China (ROC) is now content to guide the destiny of a prosperous Taiwan.⁵⁶ Not so with the PRC which sees Taiwan as an integral part of its territory and which vociferously opposes any steps taken by Taiwan toward secession or independence from the motherland. On a number of occasions, and most recently with its March 2005 "Anti-secession Law,"⁵⁷ China has indicated that it was ready to employ military forces to enforce the primacy of its territorial unity.

More than simply words, China's military actions, such as the deployment of its best and most modern forces opposite Taiwan, the promotion of senior officers involved

⁵⁵ Lowell Dittmer. "Bush, China, Taiwan: A Triangular Analysis." *Journal of Chinese Political Science*. Vol. 10, no. 2 (Fall 2005): 22.

⁵⁶ For greater details, please refer to Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's inaugural address given 20 May 2004. Winberg Chai. "Blueprints for War or Peace in Future China-Taiwan Relations: Two Important Documents." *Asian Affairs: An American Review*. Vol. 31, no. 3 (Fall 2004): 162.

⁵⁷ China used the euphemism "non-peaceful means" as the last resort to maintaining China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Erica Lynn. "Analysis of the Dispute Over Taiwan Using a Game Theory Approach." *Defense & Security Analysis*. Vol. 21, no. 4 (December 2005): 414.

with the Taiwan scenario,⁵⁸ naval military exercises near small islands claimed by Taiwan have provided credence to China's willingness to use force to keep the renegade province of Taiwan in line. Many observers believe that only the likelihood of a US intervention in accordance with the 1979 Taiwan Relation Act⁵⁹ has prevented China's more radical action.

More recently, China has been leaning towards a more measured response to the Taiwan dilemma. Even though a military response is still an option, Taiwan's increasingly integrated economy⁶⁰ with mainland China is providing an opportunity to promote reunification from within. Also significant in China's calculations, as pointed out by military affair specialist Richard Russell, is the concern that any military action on its part would bring condemnation and economic sanctions from the international community.⁶¹

Using such tools as preferential tariffs for Taiwan produces, incentives for establishing production facilities on the Mainland and emphasizing the three link policy (direct mail, transportation and commerce),⁶² China has strengthened its relations with Taiwan without resorting to force. China has also elegantly pulled on the heart strings of the Chinese diasporas to enhance the similarities between the two nations while

⁵⁸ General Chen Bingde, an officer with experience in planning for war over Taiwan, was promoted to the position of Chief of the General Staff. David Lague. "China Promotes Military Officers Experienced in Taiwan Affairs." *International Herald Tribune*. 10 October 2007. <http://www.iht.com/articles/2007/10/10/news/china.php>; Internet, accessed 05 February 2008

⁵⁹ Richard Halloran. "Taiwan." *Parameters*. Vol. 33, issue 1 (Spring 2003): 22.

⁶⁰ Masahiro Matsumura. "Hidden in Plain View: A China Strategy for Taipei." *The China Post*. 23 April 2007.

⁶¹ Richard L. Russell. "What if ... 'China Attacks Taiwan!'" *Parameters*. Vol. 31, issue 3 (Autumn 2001): 86.

⁶² Chai, Blueprints for War or Peace in Future China-Taiwan Relations: Two Important Documents, 164.

minimizing their differences. In return, Taiwanese investors have invested significantly into China's industry.⁶³

A number of sinologists and business leaders have reached the conclusion, when considering the restraint shown lately by China on the Taiwan Strait issue, that the PRC has put economics above the issue of national sovereignty.⁶⁴

China has not achieved the reunification with Taiwan that it desires, but neither has Taiwan drifted further away from the Mainland. What China has learned is that soft power, diplomacy and economic gravity have brought Taiwan closer to China. China may achieve with conciliatory exchanges and a sophisticated all of government approach what military coercion could not. This is similar to the conclusion reached by Nan Li, Erick McVadon and Qinghong Wang in their paper *China's Evolving Military Doctrine: "Soft power simply worked better and in more ways."*⁶⁵

Unfortunately China has not learned to apply this soft power policy internally as well as externally. In recent weeks, China's intransigent response to pro-Tibet demonstrations has tarnished its image of a peaceful power. If China can step back from its harsh rhetoric and follow a more conciliatory approach to resolve this issue, it may prove to the world that it is indeed truly committed to a peaceful rise within the current world order. As this paper is being submitted, news organizations have announced that

⁶³ "Taiwanese investors are thought to account for a major share of China's \$500 billion stock of inward FDI." Wendy Dobson. "China's Economic Transformation: Global and Canadian Implications." *International Journal*. Vol. 61, no.2 (Spring 2006): 304.

⁶⁴ Robert Ross. "For China, How to Manage Taiwan?" *Forbes*. 22 October 2007. http://www.forbes.com/2007/10/20/china-congress-taiwan-oped-cx_rro_1022taiwan.html; Internet; accessed 5 February 2008.

⁶⁵ Lan Li, Erick McVadon, and Qinghong Wang. "China's Evolving Military Doctrine." *Issues and Insights – Pacific Forum Centre for Strategic and International Studies*. Vol. 6, no. 20 (December 2006): 17.

China may have accepted to meet with representatives of the Dalai Lama. This gives hope that China may indeed be truly committed to soft power politics.

CONCLUSIONS

This century is being shaped by China's economic rise. Elements of this work provide supports to Brzezinski's prediction that China is using its growing economic power and influence to rise peacefully within the current world order. Indications are that, for the most part, a pragmatic and opportunist China has chosen to take advantage of an environment that rewards multilateralism and engagement at the international level to further its economic and strategic interests. It intends to ride this wave of economic growth to maximize its status in the world. China has shaken off its isolationism tendencies and is building with growing confidence a web of bilateral and multinational agreements that have solidified its power and influence in Southeast Asia and other parts of the world.

Still, there are issues such as human rights, military expansion and repression of secessionist movements that have raised apprehension with regard to China's true intentions.

This study offers that a global view of China's actions should be taken and consideration should be given as to how much progress China has achieved on issues of concern to the West. China is now a more open society and greater information is available as to what is happening inside the country. Yes, the PLA is modernizing and becoming a more capable organization, but not unreasonably so for a large country that rely so much on trade and exports for its wealth. While the soft power persuasion is

slowly pulling Taiwan towards closer ties with Mainland China, its response to the Tibet issue has lacked finesse.

If China is increasingly using soft power on the international scene, it has yet to learn to apply the same level of sophistication when dealing with internal issues. Still, this internal struggle should not completely erase China's increasingly positive involvement in world affairs.

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