



SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

MARCH 2003

Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies



Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies



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Foreword

H . C . S T A C K P O L E

Lieutenant General, U.S. Marine Corps, Retired
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The diversity of the vast and important Asia-Pacific region is apparent not only in its peoples, cultures, traditions and geographies. It is also evident in the region's relations with and responses to the United States. At a time of considerable change in the regional and the international environments and active debates about the United States' relations with the world, the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) undertook an effort to assess the responses of Asia-Pacific countries to U.S. security policies. The product of this labor is the inaugural issue of our Special Assessment series entitled *Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies*. These analyses represent the analytical contributions of our teaching and research faculty who bring a rich combination of experience and expertise to their subjects.

As might be expected, the assessments suggest a range of responses from regional countries. There are, however, some common elements. The United States is acknowledged to be central to the region's peace and prosperity. And every country, with the possible exception of North Korea, desires to have cooperative and productive relations with the United States. Inevitably, there are differences in priorities and approaches that require efforts on the part of both regional countries and the United States to narrow. If security cooperation is to materialize to the benefit of all regional countries, an intensive exchange of ideas, perceptions and information is necessary.

I am pleased to present this publication with the hope that it will advance discussion about Asia-Pacific security issues and thereby contribute to the Center's mission to enhance cooperation, and build relationships for a secure Asia-Pacific.



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Editor's Note

S A T U P . L I M A Y E

Director of Research

This Special Assessment entitled *Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies* reflects two key considerations. First, the perspective of regional countries about U.S. security policies is important to appreciate. A number of useful studies of U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific have recently been published in the United States, and some of these inform the analyses in this volume. However, they tend to approach the topic from a U.S. or thematic perspective. This Special Assessment utilizes the expertise of the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) faculty to assess Asia-Pacific country responses to U.S. security policies. APCSS hopes that, taken together, these various approaches will provide a fuller picture of U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific region. A second reason for this project is that the timing is right. This is an appropriate time to take stock of the United States' relations with the Asia-Pacific given that it is the mid-point of the first George W. Bush administration, a year and a half after September 11 and the release of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), six months following the new National Security Strategy (NSS) and in the midst of intense debates about Iraq, North Korea and U.S. security and foreign policies more broadly.

Deliberately, no detailed template or format for the analyses was established. The most accurate way to depict Asia-Pacific countries' views of U.S. security policies was for each expert to determine what issues are critical from their country's perspective. However, all authors were asked to consider responses to documents such as the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the National Security Strategy (NSS), and other major administration speeches regarding U.S. defense, strategic and military policies in the Asia-Pacific region. The issues on which country responses are assessed include the global war on terrorism, the doctrine of "integration," preemption, weapons of mass destruction, military-to-military relations and deployment of missile defenses.

The focus of each analysis is on the governmental response as evident in official speeches, comments, and publications. However, attention is also given to differences and convergences of opinion between governmental responses and public opinion and civil society, and media commentary — especially if there is a marked dissonance. In essence, the goal of these analyses is to capture the state of debate in a particular Asia-Pacific country regarding U.S. security policies.

This is the first Special Assessment in the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies' research and publications program. The analyses in this publication bring together the insights, expertise and experience of a diverse group of security experts who comprise our teaching and research faculty. We hope this and other APCSS publications inform discussion and debate on Asia-Pacific security.

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Still Great Mates: Australia's Response to U.S. Security Policies

ANTHONY L. SMITH

Executive Summary

- In the Asia-Pacific region, the Australia-U.S. relationship is clearly the closest. This partnership, which dates back to WWII, and has not been seriously disrupted since, can be described as a “special relationship” which is akin to the relationship between the UK and the United States.
- History is not the only tie that binds Australia to the United States. Canberra has made a strategic calculation that it can greatly enhance Australia's national security through an alliance with the United States. This strategic calculus has remained consistent across successive Australian national governments.
- The present Australian government, under Prime Minister John Howard, is in broad agreement with U.S. security policy. Both countries have international terrorism at the top of their security agenda, particularly after the Bali bombings in September 2002 which took 88 Australian lives.
- The Howard administration also supports U.S. action against Iraq. Although Australia was reluctant to commit publicly to the possibility of military action without United Nations' (UN) approval, a break down of the UN process on Iraq has led to Australia's decision to back President Bush's ultimatum. Possible war in Iraq has sparked enormous controversy within Australia about the Howard administration's seemingly unquestioning support for the Bush administration.
- Although Prime Minister Howard faces strong domestic opposition, it will not have any impact on Australia's relationship with the U.S. in the long-run. The opposition Australian Labor Party (ALP), were it to be in office, would maintain the alliance with the United States with only minor differences.
- Important divergences between Australia and the U.S. involve multilateralism and international regimes. As a middle power, Australia is far more enthusiastic than the U.S. generally about the value of multilateralism. Though the Bush administration has been something of a late convert to the utility of multilateralism — primarily as a way of forging cooperation against international terrorism, it has focused more on “coalitions of the willing” to take action against the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Iraq. Australia also strongly supports international non-proliferation regimes and other global treaties about which the Bush administration is more wary.

AUSTRALIA-U.S. RELATIONS: THE OTHER SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

Since the trauma of the Pacific War, Australia has maintained a close alliance relationship with the United States transcending the passage of time and changes of government. Australia, which once looked to the U.S. to fill the void left by Britain's global retreat, now views its "special relationship" with the U.S. as the cornerstone of its foreign relations and position in the world — a relationship that is as close as the "special relationship between" the United States and the United Kingdom. During the Cold War, Australia helped return the provision of U.S. support by keeping the entire South Pacific in the western camp, and by paying its "insurance dues" by going to war in Korea and Vietnam.

Australia assesses that not only is American preeminence a defining factor in international politics and the Asia-Pacific region for the foreseeable future, but that America's hegemony is highly desirable for regional stability. Australia, under Prime Minister John Howard's Liberal-National coalition government, has accepted almost all of America's key policy directions such as the war on terrorism, reining in Iraq, controlling Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) proliferation, and the construction of a missile defense shield (which could be partly based in Australia itself). Despite the objections of many domestic critics about what they see as simply knee-jerk support for the Bush administration's policies, the Australian government has determined a strong overlap between Australia's national interest and U.S. foreign and security policies. Both Australia and the U.S. have placed the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) at the forefront of security considerations, and Australia had invoked the ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand, and the United States) Treaty after September 11 for the first time in the treaty's history. The Bali nightclub bombing of October 12, 2002, in which 88 Australians died, inflicted the same sort of trauma on Australia as the terror attacks of September 11 did on the United States, and reinforced Australia's support to U.S. anti-terrorism efforts.

Nonetheless, Prime Minister Howard faces mounting criticism from parliament and society that his policies, especially on Iraq, are constructed in deference to Washington without due consideration to Australian national interest. Domestic opponents also charge the Howard government with choosing relations with the U.S. over and above relations with "Asia." Domestic opposition will not, however, de-rail the Australia-U.S. alliance.

Though in overwhelming agreement with the U.S. on security policies, there are minor policy differences, notably on Australia's commitment to multilateralism, and specifically Canberra's attempts to get the U.S. to sign up to various agreements that would further control the proliferation of WMD. Australia has also lobbied the U.S. to agree to tighter controls on small arms, a ban on landmines, the establishment of an International Criminal Court (ICC), and adherence to the Kyoto Protocol.

THE U.S. PRESENCE IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC: LONG LIVE THE HEGEMON

Even though Australia is geographically distant from the world's major flashpoints, it still has a strong sense of vulnerability to threats from the north; a hangover from its near occupation by Imperial Japan during WWII. For reasons of geography, history, and cultural familiarity, but most of all out of national interest, Australia has sought protection from the U.S. since the onset of the Pacific War, and formally through the formation of the ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand and the United States) pact in 1951. Australia backed up the U.S. containment policy in Southeast Asia as part of Canberra's "forward defence"

strategy, even sending troops to Vietnam (a war in which erstwhile protector, Britain, refused to involve itself).

Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) major policy document, entitled *Advancing the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper* (2003), is unequivocal in its embrace of the alliance with the United States:

The depth of security, economic and political ties that we have with the United States makes this a vital relationship. No other country can match the United States' global reach in international affairs. Further strengthening Australia's ability to influence and work with the United States is essential for advancing our national interests. Even when US actions do not suit our interests, our strong ties mean that we are better placed to put our views to Washington and that the United States will listen to them.

Australian policy makers, at least as reflected in the official documents, anticipate that the United States will be the sole superpower for the foreseeable future, despite describing China's growing power as the "single most important trend in the region." Yet it is clear that the continuance of U.S. preeminence is precisely what Canberra would prefer. There is no question that Australia wants the U.S. to remain strategically committed and present in the Asia-Pacific region.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Despite the congruence of interests and policies between Australia and the U.S., geography necessarily generates some different threat perceptions. For example, the Department of Defence white paper, *Australia's National Security: A Defence Update 2003*, makes the apposite point that Indonesia will remain of enduring strategic significance to Australia. Australian officials view their country's geographic location in the Asia-Pacific region as well as its political and economic integration with the region as an asset in relations with both Europe and the United States.

The Howard administration has been criticized heavily by domestic opponents for choosing relations with the U.S. over and above relations with Asia — although such critics make the erroneous judgement that the two are mutually exclusive. (Stronger relations with the U.S. will, for example, go down well in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore and other regional states.) Rather than any real shift in Australian policy *vis-à-vis* Asia with the emergence of the Howard government, as alleged by many Australian pundits, there is little discernible difference between the current government and the previous Keating administration — except in the realm of political rhetoric. Where former prime minister Paul Keating once described himself as the leader of an Asian nation, the Howard government stresses that Australia is a western society that seeks "engagement" with Asia. Yet it is Howard's rhetoric on relations with the region and the United States that has sometimes harmed Australia. A press report (erroneous as it turns out) that Howard had said that Australia was America's deputy-sheriff in the Asian region — with all the imagery of the Wild West that such a statement conveyed — was reported throughout Asia and is still widely quoted to this day. Howard's own announcement of a preemption doctrine similar to that of the U.S. also got him into

hot water in various Asian capitals. However, ultimately Australia will be able to maintain a close relationship with the United States while being integrated with much of Asia. Moving away from the United States is hardly going to assist in the recovery of the one relationship with Asia that has suffered since 1999, that of Indonesia.

One case in which Australia has taken extreme care not to allow its alliance with the U.S. to interfere with its integration with Asia is in its relationship with China. Australia has sought to remain equidistant from problems in U.S.-PRC relations such as the Cross-Straits issue or the Bush administration's early description of China as a "strategic competitor." While there can be little doubt that in the event of serious crisis in U.S.-PRC relations Australia would side with the U.S., in a period of relative peace Australia sees it in its interest to retain consistently cordial relations with China.

RESPONDING TO TERRORISM

Australia's defense and foreign affairs white papers make clear that perceptions of a conventional military threat against Australia have declined, while the threat of terrorism, combined with the potential proliferation of WMD, constitutes the leading security threat. Minister of Defence Senator Robert Hill stated: "We believe that this terrorism is strategically focussed with the objective of rolling back Western values, engagement and influence and to weaken and ultimately supplant moderate Islamic governments." Like the position of the United States and Great Britain, the official Australian position is that Islam is essentially a tolerant faith and that the struggle against terrorists is not against Muslims.

Australia's decision to invoke the ANZUS Treaty after September 11 was tantamount to saying that the attack was also against Australia. Australia was virtually alone in the world when it endorsed the Bush administration's so-called "Axis of Evil" speech in January 2002, in which President Bush cited Iraq, Iran and North Korea as the three principal countries of threat to the global order. As further recent demonstration of the Australian government's close support for U.S. strategies and tactics in the war on terrorism, Prime Minister Howard even took the step of praising the President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf, during question time in the Australian parliament: "I do not think there is a world leader who has put more on the line ... than General Musharraf. I regard his personal courage and leadership on this issue as having been quite outstanding." This statement was quite controversial in Australia given the manner in which General Musharraf took and has retained power in Pakistan. In addition to rhetorical and diplomatic support, the Australian government made a major contribution to the campaign in Afghanistan, sending 1500 Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel, including a Special Air Service detachment, sea and air lift capability, two frigates, four F/A-18 fighter aircraft and Orion maritime patrol aircraft.

The subsequent Bali blast in September 2002, aimed primarily at Australian tourists, has brought home to Australia that it too is a target for terrorism. For Australia, given its geographical proximity, Southeast Asia is not the "second front" in the GWOT, but the region of overriding concern. The *Defence Update 2003* notes that Australia and Southeast Asian governments have discovered "that regional extremist networks are larger, more capable and more active than we had believed", while *Advancing the National Interest* expresses concern that "[i]n several areas militant Islam has become entwined with separatist ambitions." The Howard government rejects any notion that the blast in Bali was

a response to Australian support for U.S. foreign policy, claiming instead that Australians are target because of the values they represent. (In fact, evidence now indicates that the bombers were angry with Australia largely because of its perceived involvement in events in East Timor.)

Like the U.S., Australia is now facing the reality that its prime security threat is to the physical well-being of its citizens either at home or abroad. The recent white papers make clear that the large number of Australians overseas (with 45,000 in Southeast Asia alone) creates vulnerabilities. The Australian response to these threats has been two-fold: military contributions to U.S. and other anti-terrorism efforts combined with attempts to establish “capacity building assistance” to the wider region. Australia has also sought to build closer diplomatic and intelligence ties with countries, especially in Southeast Asia.

PREEMPTION AND THE ‘SON OF PREEMPTION’

The Howard administration had spoken of the need to obtain UN approval for any military action against Iraq, but the break down of the UN process means that Australia will ultimately back the United States in a “unilateral” intervention in Iraq. Australia has stationed in the Middle East, *inter alia*, a squadron of 14 F/A-18s, 3 C130 Hercules transport aircraft, two frigates, and an SAS squadron. Evidence emerged in February 2003 in the form of a leaked conversation between Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and the New Zealand High Commissioner in Canberra, Kate Lackey, that the Australian government would not draw down its forces if the UN process to gain approval for military action collapsed. Australia will now fight alongside the U.S. without UN backing.

Australia has talked tough on the subject of Iraq, and maintains that the international community has been “too trusting” in its dealings with Saddam Hussein. The main justification that Prime Minister Howard has given the Australian people for action against Iraq is the likely link, present or future, between Saddam and international terrorism. His opening line in a February 4, 2003 statement on Iraq to the House of Representatives was as follows: “The ultimate nightmare for us all must be that weapons of mass destruction fall into the hands of terrorists.” Prime Minister Howard has failed to convince the majority of his public, however, that Iraq constitutes a real danger to the global order. The government was also seriously embarrassed when a senior intelligence analyst resigned his post, calling the government’s policy on Iraq “dumb.” and revealing that Australia’s Office of National Assessments (ONA) did not have any evidence linking Saddam to international terrorism. The official also charged that the United States was withholding critical information on Iraq from Australia; a particularly damaging allegations for an Australian Prime Minister under criticism for excessive agreement with the Bush administration’s security policies. Opinion polls show that while only a minority of Australians think that war against Iraq is warranted, a Hawker Britton poll in March showed that 47% of Australians viewed North Korea as Australia’s main security threat (as opposed to 26% who thought Iraq posed the greater menace). Former Australian ALP Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, summed up the opposition view that war against Iraq will be counterproductive: “Osama bin Laden must be down on his knees praying to Allah that Bush goes ahead [and invades Iraq] with Blair and with Howard.” A wide array of church and civic leaders have added their voices to the criticism, while Prime Minister Howard also faces a minor revolt within his own coalition government.

The Australian government not only stands by America's right to preemptively strike at potential security threats, but has announced its own version of the doctrine. In the aftermath of the Bali blast, Prime Minister Howard stated that Australia reserved the right to act preemptively against other countries to root out terrorism and proposed that the UN Charter be amended to allow for this right. These statements vexed leaders in Southeast Asia, including those in Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand, who assumed that the Australian government had Southeast Asia in mind. The Australian government later tried to defuse tensions by consulting with each of the 10 ASEAN ambassadors and high commissioners to explain that no action would be taken without consultation.

MULTILATERALISM AND INTERNATIONAL REGIMES: POINTS OF DIVERGENCE

Australia and the U.S. differ on the importance of multilateralism. As a middle power, Australia places great hopes in international organizations, law and regimes — though not at the expense of a special relationship with the United States. Hence, Australia will support U.S. military action against Iraq absent UN approval, though UN support is strongly preferred. Similarly, Australia has urged Washington to reconsider its objection to the International Criminal Court and the Kyoto Protocol on carbon emissions.

The divergence in emphasis on regimes, treaties and international cooperative efforts may be most pronounced on mechanisms to address the proliferation of WMD. Australia would like to strengthen international non-proliferation regimes even further. For example, Canberra wants Washington to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), help strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and create better controls on the trade in small arms and approve a ban on landmines. The *Defence Update 2003* suggests a “layered response” to the emerging WMD threat, starting with diplomacy (“at the forefront”), multilateral agreements, intelligence sharing, law enforcement cooperation, and financial and border controls. WMD is listed as a high priority for intelligence agencies and intelligence cooperation. Australia has also spearheaded “the Australia Group” which urges members to control the export of chemical and biological agents, and Australia is active in the Missile Technology Control Regime. Australia has also lobbied the U.S. to resume multilateral arms control talks. However, if such efforts do not succeed, the Australian government would consider multilateral military operations “to prevent the proliferation of WMD.”

In the end, however, Australia will not permit discrepancies on these issues to undermine the fundamental importance it accords to the bilateral alliance with the U.S.

TRADITIONAL DEFENSE COOPERATION AND NOW MISSILE DEFENSE

Defense cooperation is a major component of the bilateral alliance. Australia and the U.S. conduct many joint exercises and the bulk of Australian military *matériel* is purchased from the United States (often at extremely favorable rates). U.S.-Australia defense cooperation also benefits from Australia's own extensive defense relationships with Asia-Pacific countries, including training of training for regional military officers aimed at professionalizing Asia-Pacific militaries.

Beyond traditional defense cooperation, Australia has backed U.S. plans to develop a missile defense shield, and gone further to consider adding this system to its own defense in light of reports that North Korea's Taepodong 2 missile can reach Australia's Northern Territory. The ALP opposition has criticized the plan, saying that it could provoke an arms race in East Asia and South Asia because China may seek to build up its nuclear arsenal in response. Ultimately, Australia's response to U.S. missile defense plans are likely to be shaped by alliance considerations, though threat perceptions will be an important variable.

EXPANDING THE DEMOCRATIC CAMP

A*dvancing the National Interest* argues for global economic and political freedoms as important for Australia's ultimate security. In this sense, Australia is on the same page as the United States – perhaps even more forthright. Australia considers itself a vital partner in spreading liberal democracy and liberalism throughout the Asia-Pacific, even claiming that strengthening good governance is now the largest sectoral focus of the Australian official aid program.

PROSPECTS FOR THE AUSTRALIA-U.S. RELATIONSHIP

Before World War II, Australia's most fundamental relationship was with the United Kingdom. This was not just because of ties of kinship, empire, and sentiment, but was based on the strategic calculation that Britain was the preeminent global sea power which could afford the island-continent of Australia protection from the north. After the calamity of WWII, Australia switched its primary alliance to the United States. While both countries continue to share close cultural, political, ideological and strategic affinity, Australia's close alignment to the United States, like the pre-war relationship with Britain, is based on the rational calculation of proximity to the remaining superpower, which helps shape a world order fundamentally conducive to Australia's interests.

In the current security environment, the Howard administration has proven to be a great friend, ally, and supporter of the United States. However, the support of Australian public opinion cannot be taken for granted, and this could place some constraints on the Howard and even future administrations. This would especially be the case if an issue became a subject of government-public opinion divide at election time. The possibility of war in Iraq could be such an issue.

While differences between Australia and the U.S. remain on issues, particularly with regards to multilateralism, Prime Minister Howard recently stated that "no nation is more important to our long-term security than the United States." Public opinion will not fundamentally change this.



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A Late Honeymoon: China's Response to U.S. Security Policies

D E N N Y R O Y

Executive Summary

- The currently favorable state of U.S.-China relations should not obscure China's basically negative view of some important Bush administration policies.
- In general, China considers the Bush government prone to unilateralism and determined to further increase America's military superiority over the rest of the world. Beijing is deeply disturbed by both of these perceived tendencies.
- Despite its unhappiness with many U.S. policies, China places a high priority on stable relations with the United States and is reluctant to directly challenge America except on issues of vital Chinese interest.
- Although the war against terrorism has in some respects strengthened America's strategic position at China's expense, Chinese support for the antiterror campaign has helped accelerate the recovery of U.S.-China relations after the EP-3 collision in April 2001.
- Among the downsides of the war against terrorism for China are the Bush administration's pronouncements on preemptive action and nuclear strategy, which the Chinese believe are dangerously aggressive.
- China opposes both national missile defense and theater missile defense. Beijing argues these are destabilizing and warns that China may respond by deploying a larger number of ballistic missiles.
- China's publication of regulations limiting Chinese export of missile technology was a success for the Bush administration's nonproliferation policy. How strictly China adheres to its commitments, however, remains to be seen.
- Although cross-Strait relations are presently stable, China remains displeased with the Bush administration's increased support for Taiwan.

After a turbulent beginning, U.S.-China relations during the Bush II era have reached a state both sides describe as satisfactory. The war against terrorism and bilateral trade provide a foundation for cooperation, which both Beijing and Washington choose to emphasize at present. Some U.S. policies, nevertheless, rankle the Chinese (even if their complaints are currently subdued), and point to long-term challenges that America and China have yet to resolve.

CHINESE PERCEPTIONS OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

U.S. China policy has two broad features. The first is a consensus on “engagement” and a continuation of a robust bilateral economic relationship. Under the Bush administration, the U.S. government maintained support for Chinese entry into the World Trade Organization, in December 2001. The second feature is concern over rising Chinese power and influence, manifested for example in the Pentagon’s annual report on the PRC military and in the U.S.-China Security Review Commission’s 2002 report to Congress.

From China’s standpoint, America’s posture toward China is ambiguous at best. China views the United States similar to how many in the Asia-Pacific region see China: as both a threat and an opportunity. Although America is perceived as China’s chief potential adversary, Beijing also believes it is crucial to maintain good relations with the United States in the interest of sustaining Chinese economic development. As a large, developing country, China requires economic and political space for expansion in terms of market access and political influence. A long-standing Chinese concern is what they see as American reluctance to grant China such space.

Like many other countries, China perceives a greater American inclination toward unilateralism since the Bush administration took office. In China’s view the United States, not satisfied with being the world’s strongest military power, aims to achieve absolute global military superiority by the elimination of any potential threat to its security and any challenge to or constraint upon its freedom to maneuver. Chinese commentators conjecture the Bush team decided that with its unparalleled relative strength, the United States could worry less about securing international cooperation or approbation. The Chinese contend this unilateralism is threatening to other countries, (who find they have decreasing influence over U.S. policies they may believe are harmful), and is ultimately a counterproductive stance because America will alienate the allies whose cooperation Americans need.

Early in the Bush administration, the Chinese openly decried American “hegemonism”: using unmatched U.S. power to force the rest of the world to conform to narrowly self-interested arrangements that privilege America’s opportunities for security and prosperity. A traditional aphorism captures Chinese sentiments: “provincial officials are allowed to light fires, but the common people are not even permitted to light lamps.”

Among Beijing’s policy-making elite, the prevailing view is that China should approach this situation with patience. Chinese strategists have reached consensus on two points. First, the stronger China becomes, the more accommodating the United States will be toward China. Enhanced “comprehensive” Chinese power — not only military capability, but also economic development and sociopolitical cohesion — will result in a U.S.-China relationship that is more favorable for China. Second, it is unwise for China to directly challenge the United States during America’s “unipolar moment” of

unparalleled power except where absolutely necessary (for example, over the Taiwan issue, which China views as an important national sovereignty question).

Enter the Bush administration, which took office expressing a desire to downgrade the importance of U.S.-China relations by redirecting emphasis away from China and toward U.S. allies in the region, such as South Korea and Japan. This seemed to indicate that Washington was willing to risk a certain degree of deterioration in U.S.-China relations. This deterioration came with unexpected depth and swiftness after the EP-3 collision incident of April 2001. Following this nadir, however, U.S.-China relations have steadily improved. In particular, the Chinese have made a conscious effort to appear less hostile and more accommodating toward the United States. In recent months, for example, the Chinese have complained less about U.S. military bases in the region or about perceived American hegemonism.

Unfortunately, the grounding for this upturn in relations appears none too solid. Some Bush administration policies are at odds with Chinese interests, and even in the campaign against terrorists Beijing and the United States have clearly differing aims.

THE WAR AGAINST TERRORISM

China has consistently expressed official support for the war against terrorism. Beijing felt compelled to align itself with all the other major states after Sept. 11 both to preclude international opprobrium and to avoid offending the United States at a time when Americans were motivated and mobilized to take strong counteraction.

Not surprisingly, China has sought to leverage its public support for America's war on terrorism as a means of gaining concessions. In particular, the Chinese have demanded that Washington return the favor by recognizing Uighur separatists in the Chinese province of Xinjiang as "terrorists." The United States complied by designating the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) a terrorist organization with links to al Qaeda, freezing the group's U.S. assets and co-sponsoring (along with China, Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan) a request that the UN add ETIM to its list of terrorist groups. This American concession to Beijing may have cleared the way for the Chinese to issue their regulations on missile technology export, which followed shortly thereafter.

The most important result of China's generally supportive posture has been an acceleration of the improvement of U.S.-China relations that followed the aircraft collision crisis of April 2001. High-level bilateral consultations and military-to-military contact have increased, and the general tone of U.S.-China diplomacy has softened, with more emphasis on the cooperative rather than the competitive aspects of the relationship. Despite the Bush administration's initial inclination to downgrade U.S. China relations, the war on terrorism has elevated China's standing with Washington in two ways. First, America desires Chinese cooperation in the antiterror campaign — not only logistical help in tracking al Qaeda affiliates in Central Asia, but more importantly diplomatic support for controversial U.S. proposals. Second, in the minds of many U.S. strategists, global terrorism replaced China as the primary potential threat to American interests after 9/11. China changed overnight from latent adversary to campaign partner. As one Chinese scholar wrote in *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi (Contemporary International Relations)* in November 2002, "Sept. 11 enabled the relationship to avoid the possibility of a new cold war."

Notwithstanding, the Chinese are clearly disturbed by the aggressiveness Washington is displaying in some aspects of the war against terrorism. The campaign has several

downsides for China. Chinese observers believe the United States has greatly enhanced its global strategic and political influence at China's expense, including establishing a U.S. military presence in central Asia; improving U.S. relations with Pakistan, Russia, and India; and rendering irrelevant the Chinese-backed Shanghai Cooperative Organization. One view not uncommon in China is that the United States hoped to place military bases in central Asia long before 9/11 to help "contain" China and Russia and to control the flow of the region's oil and natural gas, but lacked a palatable justification until after the terrorist attacks. A mitigating view, offered by some Chinese analysts, is that the U.S. military bases in central Asia may not be permanent, and that it is not clear whether a small number of U.S. forces in Eurasia is a strategic asset or a liability for the United States. Some Chinese strategists argue that U.S. unilateralism has increased since Sept. 11, but most seem to believe that the need for international cooperation in a global antiterror campaign has forced Washington to accommodate the sentiments of other countries, reversing a previous trend.

The Chinese do not accept the Bush administration's contention that the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq poses a compelling danger to U.S. security. Some Chinese analysts assert that a desire to capture control of Iraq's oil fields or a personal vendetta against Saddam is at the core of Washington's pressure on the Iraqi leadership. China traditionally disapproves of both U.S. and UN intervention, even against allegedly outlaw states. At the same time, China is loathe to distinguish itself as an outlier defying international consensus. In late 2002, therefore, China took the same position as France and Russia: the initial UN resolution should demand that Saddam Hussein demonstrate he holds no weapons of mass destruction, but should not authorize the United States to take military action against Iraq for noncompliance. Rather, in the event of noncompliance, the United States should seek a second resolution from the UN authorizing the use of force. During the weeks following the return of inspectors to Iraq, Chinese officials and media expressed hope for a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

Chinese analysts believe the current level of American focus on terrorism is not sustainable and that U.S. Asia policy will eventually gravitate back toward its pre-Sept. 11 orientation. Where this will leave China is uncertain. If the perceived threat of terror subsides, Americans might return to contemplating the potential challenges posed by a stronger China. On the other hand, the improvement in U.S.-China relations might persist, reflective of a mid-term adjustment in China policy by the Bush administration that would fit the pattern of past presidencies.

Since Sept. 11, Washington has promulgated policies that could be interpreted to indicate a willingness to launch preemptive attacks and to use nuclear weapons against states the United States deems threatening. Beijing reacted negatively, of course, when news reports in March 2002 revealed that the *U.S. Nuclear Posture Review* named China as one of seven countries that "could be involved in an immediate or potential contingency" in which the United States might use nuclear weapons. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi said his government was "deeply shocked," and Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing warned against the practice of "nuclear blackmail." Chinese commentators saw the White House's *National Security Strategy*, released in September 2002, as a shift from deterrence to preemptive military action against either terrorist organizations or states America considered hostile. The official Chinese media, nevertheless, reacted cautiously, typified by a *Xinhua* report that read, "The consequences of such a strategy have yet to unfold."

On balance, most Chinese strategists see the U.S. war on terrorism as a positive development thus far. America's global influence and military activity have increased, but the focus of U.S. effort is directed away from containing China.

ANTIMISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEMS

Beijing opposes the Bush administration's missile defense programs, both national missile defense and theater missile defense. The Chinese argue that American missile defense systems would undermine international stability and undercut the basis of cooperation among the major powers. An anti-missile shield would further increase American military superiority over its would-be rivals, accentuating an imbalance that already frightens countries such as China. The United States, the Chinese say, could then behave as it wished with no fear of retaliation even from the other nuclear-armed countries. The Chinese have warned that U.S. deployment of an antimissile system could trigger a new arms race, including an expansion of the PRC's nuclear arsenal.

The U.S. government's announcement in December 2002 of its intention to deploy an anti-missile system by 2004 brought renewed official Chinese condemnation. China's representative at the United Nations office in Geneva, arms control expert Sha Zukang, warned that the U.S. system "will disrupt global strategic balance and stability."

Japan's involvement in a U.S.-sponsored missile defense system troubles China. The Chinese argue that Japan has no legitimate need for a shield against ballistic missiles. Despite the launch of a Taepo Dong missile into the atmosphere over Japan in 1998, Beijing dismisses concerns about a North Korean missile capability as baseless, since Pyongyang is a weak country obsessed with self-defense. The real target of the antimissile system, the Chinese argue, is China, and the real motivation for building it comes from militarists who exaggerate the "China threat" as a pretext for strengthening Japan's armed forces. Even absent such nefarious designs, an effective missile defense could potentially negate China's nuclear edge over Japan. From China's standpoint, it is important that the PRC have an effective nuclear deterrent to balance what the Chinese view as strong Japanese conventional forces and the possibility of a revival of Japanese militarism. Furthermore, China particularly worries about the prospect that a mobile U.S.-Japan missile defense might someday protect Taiwan.

NONPROLIFERATION

The Bush administration has maintained a long-standing American policy of discouraging China from exporting missile and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) technology. Official Chinese views on nonproliferation have converged somewhat in recent years with those of Washington. With Chinese adopting an increasingly global outlook as their country gains power and influence, some Chinese strategic planners have warmed to the view that proliferation can be harmful to China's global interests. China is also clearly concerned about burnishing its international reputation as a responsible country in step with global norms, and desires to smooth relations with the United States where possible without sacrificing vital Chinese interests. China is a signatory to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention and claims to adhere to these agreements. Beijing also says it is committed to the principle of nonproliferation of missiles and WMD.

The most notable payoff of the Bush administration's nonproliferation pressure on China is Beijing's publication of a document on "Regulations on Export Control of Missiles and Missile-related Items and Technologies." In November 2000, Chinese officials agreed to stop selling missiles and to promulgate regulations governing the export of Chinese missile technology based on guidelines in the Missile Technology Control

Regime. The U.S. government had prohibited American companies from launching U.S. commercial satellites on Chinese rockets; the Chinese said they would publish their regulations after the United States lifted this prohibition. When Washington levied sanctions against Chinese firms in September 2001 for selling missile components to Pakistan, Beijing countered that its pledges did not apply to deals signed before November 2000. Nevertheless, even without Washington meeting their demands, in August 2002 the Chinese published their self-restrictions on missile technology transfer.

While Beijing's official commitments are welcome, Chinese adherence to these commitments remains problematic. Through late 2002, the Bush administration had levied sanctions against Chinese firms four times over objectionable exports. In each case the Chinese argued that the allegations and punishments were unjustified. A recent report by the CIA labels China a "key supplier" of WMD and delivery system technology. In June 2002, shortly before Beijing issued its written regulations, Assistant Secretary of State for Nonproliferation John Wolf testified to Congress that China was transferring "missile-related items, raw materials, and/or assistance" to several countries, including Libya and alleged "axis of evil" members North Korea and Iran.

The efficacy of Beijing's new commitments will become clearer through 2003. In the short term, the fallout from the past, particularly Chinese assistance to the Pakistani nuclear and North Korean missile programs (which led to the India-Pakistan nuclear crisis of 1998 and the current crisis over North Korea's nuclear program), is likely to overshadow the political benefits China might have gained from its seemingly more cooperative attitude toward non-proliferation. High-ranking American officials have made clear that they consider progress in Chinese nonproliferation a high priority.

FORWARD DEPLOYMENT AND INTEGRATION

The Chinese have been historically ambivalent toward the U.S. military presence in the Western Pacific, and on balance more negative since the 1990s. Some Chinese accept that U.S. bases in Japan and Korea and the movement of U.S. warships through Asian seas help keep the region peaceful. Others maintain that these forces are designed to "contain" China and must eventually leave. The center of gravity within this range of views shifts according to the general state of U.S.-China relations. Most Chinese, nevertheless, would tend to view the increased deployment of U.S. forces to Guam as a reaction to China's growing power.

Under the concept of "integration," the Bush administration has asserted America's responsibility and interest in promoting democracy, civil liberties and the rule of law throughout the world. China has tended to characterize similar policies by past U.S. governments as an American strategy to overthrow the rule of the Chinese Communist Party in an effort to promote political chaos and thereby weaken China. For decades, the Chinese have reacted to U.S. criticism of China's human rights record as a part of this alleged strategy. Official U.S. condemnation of human rights problems in China has continued under the Bush administration, even during the war against terrorism. The results, however, have been better than in the past. In December 2002, China and the United States resumed a human rights dialogue that had been suspended since U.S. aircraft mistakenly bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999. Beijing recently agreed to give the United Nations unconditional access to investigate alleged human rights violations in China. This was a marked shift from Beijing's previous objections to foreign criticism of China's human rights record.

TAIWAN

Beijing argues that Bush's Taiwan policy constitutes interference in China's domestic affairs (because in Beijing's view Taiwan is part of China) and therefore violates China's sovereignty. The United States, says Beijing, is contravening the "one-China" principle and the American commitment in the 1982 U.S.-China Joint Communiqué to "gradually reduce its sales of arms to Taiwan." These charges are not new, but the Chinese believe U.S. support for Taiwan has grown appreciably since Bush took office. Bush's public commitment to do "whatever it takes" to help Taiwan defend itself from possible Chinese aggression was the strongest and clearest verbal statement of its kind from a U.S. president since the establishment of normal Sino-U.S. relations. The arms sales package for Taiwan approved by the Bush administration in 2001 was unusually large (\$5 billion, the largest since the sale of 150 F-16s in 1992). The U.S. government allowed Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian to visit New York City and to meet with members of the U.S. Congress. Chinese observers have been disappointed at the unwillingness of high-ranking Bush administration officials to publicly express U.S. opposition to Taiwan independence, which would go a step beyond saying that Washington has a one-China policy. Finally, under the Bush administration, contact and cooperation between the militaries of the United States and Taiwan have improved, leading to Beijing's accusations that Washington and Taipei are moving closer to a military alliance.

There has been little to balance these developments, which from the Chinese standpoint are alarming. Beijing nonetheless took some comfort from Washington's reaffirmation of the one-China principle immediately after Chen's "one country on either side of the Taiwan Strait" statement in August 2002.

CONCLUSION

During periods of recovery from a downturn in bilateral relations, the United States and China typically focus on common interests and areas of agreement rather than on unresolved disputes. The latter half of the Bush II administration (first term) is such a period. The war on terrorism provides scope for limited U.S.-China cooperation, although China and the United States have not had identical views on dealing with Iraq. There are tentative signs of positive Chinese reaction to U.S. policies related to democratic integration and non-proliferation. Beijing sees value in maintaining a stable working relationship with Washington and will choose its battles carefully rather than denounce the entire range of U.S. policies. Nevertheless, China is deeply apprehensive about America's military strength and American global activism in support of what the Chinese believe are often narrow U.S. interests. China continues to openly oppose Bush administration policies on missile defense systems, forward basing of U.S. forces, and Taiwan. The atmospherics in the U.S.-China relationship may have changed, probably temporarily, but not the fundamentals.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of APCSS, U.S. Pacific Command, the U.S. Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

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SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

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Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies

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High Hopes: India's Response to U.S. Security Policies

M O H A N M A L I K

Executive Summary

- Compared with America's traditional allies, India has been much more supportive and understanding of the Bush administration's policy initiatives on missile defense, arms control, the International Criminal Court, and the UN role in the management of international security challenges.
- India welcomes the Bush administration's plans for a greater Indian role in a wider Asian security system so as to create a strategically stable Asia.
- As a non-status-quo power, India appears more sympathetic than France or China to the American effort to rework the rules of the global game. India wants to work with the U.S. in shaping a new world order that must be constructed amidst the dissolution of the old.
- On controversial issues such as missile defense and the war against Iraq, the Vajpayee government's stance is dictated primarily by the pragmatic consideration of sustaining improvement in U.S.-Indian ties and avoiding alignment with anti-U.S. forces.
- The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 proved to be a catalyst in improving U.S.-Indian ties, but also complicated them. For example, the war on terrorism has highlighted differences of definitions, sources, and approaches to fighting terrorism.
- Indian officials increasingly speak of the disconnect between India's expectations of the U.S. and what Washington is able and willing to deliver with regard to terrorist infiltration into Kashmir from Pakistan. Indians believe Washington will have to rethink its strategy if the global campaigns against terrorism and WMD proliferation are to be won decisively.
- Even as "the China factor" increasingly draws the U.S. and India closer, "the Pakistan factor" pulls them apart.

The Bush administration took office with the objective of “transforming relations with India” to face new security challenges (such as China’s rise, Islamist extremism, terrorism and nuclear proliferation). When President Bush unveiled his missile defense plan on May 1, 2001, New Delhi responded far more positively than did most U.S. allies. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 proved to be a catalyst in bilateral ties and resulted in a significant increase in the number of high-level visits, military-to-military engagements, and cooperative initiatives. The Bush administration’s perception of India’s role was clearly spelled out in the new U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) released in September 2002:

U.S. interests require a strong relationship with India. We are the two largest democracies, committed to political freedoms protected by representative Government. India is moving toward greater economic freedom as well. We have a common interest in the free flow of commerce, including through the vital sea-lanes of the Indian Ocean. Finally, we share an interest in fighting terrorism and in creating a strategically stable Asia.

The NSS acknowledged that differences remain on India’s nuclear and missile programs and pace of economic reform. The Bush administration’s plans for India, as laid out in the NSS and other official statements, were very well received by the Indian government and security policy community. The Indians particularly see the suspension of sanctions on technology transfer as a sign of U.S. confidence and trust in the relationship that confirms American understanding of India’s strategic importance in Asia.

Nonetheless, the path of what India’s Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee calls “natural allies” is still littered with several obstacles, especially the revived post-9/11 U.S.-Pakistan relationship, differences on the Kashmir issue, expectations about the war on terrorism, nuclear/missile issues, policies toward Iran, energy security, and the pace of India’s economic reforms. Some of the tensions can be attributed to the fact that this is very much a relationship of unequals: the United States is a global power with global interests and responsibilities whereas India is a regional power with regional interests. More than anything else, “the Pakistan factor” continues to cast a dark shadow on the future of U.S.-India ties.

MISSILE DEFENSES

India’s careful receptivity to President Bush’s Missile Defense (MD) initiative of May 2001, even as long-time U.S. allies — Japan and South Korea — dithered, came as yet another reminder of the distance New Delhi had travelled since the collapse of its Cold War ally, the Soviet Union. However, India’s initial nuanced but generally favorable response became somewhat muted in subsequent statements following public criticism of pro-U.S. tilt. India hoped an MD shield would obviate the necessity of spending huge amounts of money into building offensive missile capability and neutralize the “offensive nuclear/missile strategies” of China and Pakistan. The Indian government views the missile defense technology transfer as a test case in the evolving U.S.-Indian defense relationship. U.S. and Indian officials have been holding regular MD-related discussions on possible Indian participation in missile defense programs.

However, the very first initiative to forge closer U.S.-India security cooperation via missile defense soon got bogged down in India-Pakistan balance-of-power considerations and U.S. bureaucratic wrangling when India indicated an interest in purchasing the U.S.-aided Israeli Arrow anti-ballistic missile system. As the Arrow is a jointly developed U.S.-Israeli system, U.S. permission is needed before the sale can proceed. Pakistan opposes the sale to India on the grounds that a missile defense system would shift the power balance in India's favor. While the Pentagon supports the sale, the Department of State has not granted clearance fearing it would destabilize India-Pakistan relations and possibly contravene the 1987 Missile Technology Control Regime. Similar episodes will strengthen the argument of those in India who are skeptical about the prospects of significant U.S. defense sales to India.

GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM (GWOT)

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks served to highlight common security interests and added further impetus to U.S.-India ties. India's swift and prompt offer of its full support to the U.S.-led war on terror — including intelligence on the al-Qaeda network, overflight rights, refueling and repair of U.S. military aircraft, port facilities in Bombay and Cochin for U.S. naval vessels, and search-and-rescue missions — surprised both American officials and long-time India-watchers. New Delhi obviously hoped the terrorist attacks would make the U.S. more understanding of India's own two-decade-long fight against terrorism. Washington responded by suspending sanctions that were imposed in response to India's 1998 nuclear tests and military-to-military links were restored. However, Pakistan's geo-strategic location and the fact that Operation "Enduring Freedom" was to be prosecuted by the U.S. Central Command meant that the U.S. could not make full use of the facilities and capabilities that India (which comes under U.S. Pacific Command) offered. India's most important contribution to the war effort was sharing escort duty for high-value shipping through the Strait of Malacca and the Indian Ocean.

The Indian government was disappointed when the U.S. rejected its demand for extending such patrolling to the Strait of Hormuz apparently under pressure from Islamabad. India feels slighted and uneasy over Pakistan's new relationship with the U.S. because in many ways what happens on the Indian subcontinent is unavoidably a zero-sum game. Furthermore, New Delhi soon found out that its initial optimism about gaining Washington's sympathy and support for anti-terrorist operations against Pakistan-based extremist organizations was misplaced. As tensions flared sharply between India and Pakistan first after the December 13, 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament and then after the May 14, 2002 attack on a military base in Jammu, New Delhi responded by massing troops on the India-Pakistan border and warned of retaliatory, punitive military strikes against terrorist camps inside Pakistani-controlled Kashmir. High-level U.S. diplomatic efforts led to the banning of three Pakistan-based jihadi organizations, and more importantly, yielded a promise from General Musharraf in June 2002 to stop permanently terrorist incursions into Indian-held Kashmir. However, the continuing infiltration and acts of terror dashed India's hopes and eroded the U.S. credibility to deliver on its assurances with regard to Pakistan. Senior Indian ministers publicly complain that the GWOT is neither global nor a war on terror but an American offensive against anti-American forces that has been defined purely in terms of U.S. geo-strategic and energy security interests. As recently as March 3, 2003, Prime Minister Vajpayee talked about the

disconnect between India's expectations of the U.S. and what Washington is able and willing to deliver with regard to terrorist infiltration across the Line of Control in Kashmir: "If the United States can't make Pakistan keep its promise [to halt cross-border terrorism], it shows its weakness...If assurances given to us are not honored, we will factor this in while formulating our policy in the future."

Despite these disappointments, India knows it stands to gain a great deal from the loss of Pakistan's "strategic depth" in Afghanistan with the collapse of the Taliban. India's policy establishment sees Central Asia and the Persian Gulf as a region for bilateral cooperation with the U.S. in the areas of energy security, democratic transformation in the Islamic world, and counter-terrorism. Interestingly, the only thing that arch-rivals India and Pakistan now agree on is that the United States should remain strategically engaged in the region. Both India and U.S. agree that a moderate and modern Pakistan is in the best interest of South Asia and the world. Yet, while the U.S. believes that Pakistan is moving in that direction, India remains skeptical. India also worries that a stronger Pakistan, aided by the United States, Europe, Japan and international financial institutions, would not only be better able to contain India but also continue its hostile policies.

In short, despite shared security concerns regarding terrorism, GWOT has highlighted differences on definitions (regional versus international), sources (e.g., India is adamant that Pakistan is part of the problem, not part of the solution), and approaches to fighting terrorism. For its part, Washington was none too pleased when India appropriated the Bush administration's doctrine of preemption. The public airing of disenchantment with the U.S. notwithstanding, no one expects a major backward slide in bilateral ties. The Indians argue that Bush's confidence in Musharraf's "unstinted support" in the GWOT is misplaced, and that Washington will eventually turn to New Delhi for the simple reason that "Pakistan remains the epicenter of both terrorism and WMD proliferation." Moreover, New Delhi expects Islamabad's military alliance with China to cause additional frictions and tensions in U.S.-Pakistan ties in the event of deterioration in Sino-U.S. relations.

"AXIS OF EVIL" AND THE WAR AGAINST IRAQ

India did not react favorably to President Bush's characterization of North Korea, Iran and Iraq as the "Axis of Evil" in his State of the Union address in January 2002. India's Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha argued that going by the "Axis of Evil" criteria (militarist regimes, track record in promoting extremism, terrorism and proliferation, hostility to the U.S. and its allies), Pakistan, not Iran, should have been included in the axis. New Delhi has commercial ties with Iran and has recently stepped up its security cooperation with Teheran both to secure access to energy resources and to establish alternative railroad links to Afghanistan via Iran's Chah Bahar port.

As for Iraq, Indian leaders initially voiced their opposition to any unilateral operation against Baghdad, stating their preference for a UN-backed action. New Delhi, however, quickly tempered its stand by merely emphasizing the negative economic consequences of the U.S. war against Iraq and potential destabilization of the Middle East for its own 150 million-strong Muslim population, oil prices and millions of Indian expatriate workers in the region, without resorting to the moralizing tone and hectoring that characterized India's opposition in the past. At the Non-Aligned Summit in Malaysia in February 2003, Prime Minister Vajpayee insisted on taking a "middle path" and refused to toe the "no-war" line. Faced with a NATO split and UN Security Council deadlock over

Iraq, Bush phoned Vajpayee in early March and called on India to join the “coalition of the willing” and provide logistical support. Given its desire to sustain the improvement in U.S.-Indian relations, the Vajpayee government believes that since India cannot do anything to oppose the U.S. on Iraq, it may as well stay out of its way — a pragmatic stance similar to the one India had earlier taken on the MD issue. Consequently, India’s response to the war against Iraq has gradually shifted from “no” to a regime-change in Iraq, to “yes” to a UN-backed war, and finally to a quiet “yes” to the U.S. while publicly voicing opposition to the war largely for domestic political reasons. Some Indian strategic analysts even see India benefiting from the U.S. push for political modernization so as to defeat extremism and its ideological sources.

TOWARD POST-UN MULTILATERALISM?

Unlike the Chinese, French and Russians, Indians do not seem to mind a world where America is the sole superpower. Nor is India too nervous about Washington’s growing unilateralism in world affairs. Influential opinionmakers argue that if India plays its card well, it might benefit from the tectonic changes underway in geopolitics and enhance its standing on the international stage. Some Indian strategic analysts see the war against Iraq as “a defining moment that will set the stage for a reordering of the international security system,” and “alter the nature of global institutions as well as reconstitute the hierarchy of great powers.” They argue that India has no reason to mourn the passage of the old world order as it was kept out of its decision-making structures and denied a place at the high table (read, UN Security Council). As a rising, non-status-quo power, India certainly appears more sympathetic to the American effort to redefine the rules of the global game than France or China which have emerged as defenders of the present world order. A noted strategic affairs analyst, C. Raja Mohan, explained in *The Hindu*, September 26, 2002:

The current European criticisms of the American approach to international relations today echo many of the arguments that India used to employ in the past. That should have drawn India and Europe closer on global political issues. But it has not. At precisely the moment the Europeans are emboldened to criticise the U.S., India believes that it cannot jeopardise the budding strategic partnership with America. As a result, India has been far less critical than Europe of the U.S. policy on Iraq and less insistent on a multilateral route. At a moment when Europe proclaims that power politics is passé, India is beginning to de-emphasise the notion of collective security and stressing the importance of comprehensive national strength and balance of power ... As the biggest victim of international terrorism, India is more enthusiastic than Europe about the American war since September 11.

It is in this context that India’s support for the Bush administration’s stance on a range of controversial issues — missile defense, rejection of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, limitations on the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, and the UN role in the management of international security challenges — needs to be understood.

DOCTRINE OF INTEGRATION

The Bush administration has asserted America's responsibility in promoting democracy, civil liberties, equal justice, religious tolerance, and the rule of law throughout the world under the "doctrine of integration." The Administration explicitly named India among those countries slated for new partnership with the United States as both share fundamental democratic values. Though official India has not reacted to the "integration" doctrine, most Indians acknowledge that democracy provides a solid foundation for a strong Indo-U.S. strategic partnership and extol the virtue of spreading democratic values. Alliances based on interests are more transient, they say, whereas partnerships based on shared values and ideals can be more durable. The American integration project for the reformation of the Islamic world is of great interest to India because it could eventually contribute toward the internal transformation of Pakistan. Nonetheless, the U.S. rhetoric about democratic values also engenders cynicism and skepticism among the Indians, who see Washington as not practicing what it preaches in Pakistan. In the GWOT, the Bush administration is viewed by many Indians as having already subordinated "integration" or democracy promotion to immediate concerns like military base access from unsavory governments.

PROLIFERATION AND INTERVENTION

A long-time critic of the United States' attitude toward Chinese nuclear and missile proliferation, India saw the release of National Strategy to Combat WMD in December 2002 as an attempt to lock the stable-door after the horses have bolted. When Pakistan came in the firing line about the "missiles-for-nukes" barter deal with North Korea, an Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman said that blame should also be put on China for making Pakistan a nuclear weapons state. For, Pakistan's nuclear weapons exports to North Korea not only endanger U.S. security interests in East Asia, but also raise the likelihood of nuclear weapons/materials/know-how being passed on to the al-Qaeda terrorists. Reacting to Richard Haas' admonition in his January 14, 2003 speech to the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service that "[w]hen regimes with a history of aggression and support for terrorism seek WMD...they jeopardize their immunity from intervention, including anticipatory action to destroy this developing capability," one Indian analyst remarked that it ought to apply more to Pakistan than to Iraq or North Korea.

THE CHINA CHALLENGE AND ASIAN SECURITY

Both U.S. and India have similar geo-strategic concerns about China's growing power and influence. For India, which has long regarded China as a strategic adversary, the Bush administration's characterization of China as a "strategic competitor" rather than as a strategic partner was a welcome development. However, both the U.S and India try to play down "the China factor" claiming their new relationship is based on a wide range of factors, including economics, trade, maritime security, anti-terrorism, nonproliferation and shared democratic values.

The geographical concept of an “East Asian littoral,” defined “as the region stretching from south of Japan to through Australia and into the Bay of Bengal” articulated first in the Pentagon’s Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), released on September 30, 2001, gives importance to Asian friends such as India beyond traditional allies Japan and South Korea and dovetails nicely with India’s own “Look East” policy. The QDR characterizes Asia as “emerging as a region susceptible to large-scale military competition” with a “volatile mix of rising and declining regional powers.” Avoiding naming the obvious challenger, China, the Pentagon warns of the possibility that “a military competitor with a formidable resource base will emerge in the region,” adding that the lower “density of U.S. basing” in this “critical region places a premium on securing additional access and infrastructure agreements.” In this context, it is significant that U.S.-India strategic engagement has scaled new heights with the announcement of a series of measures usually reserved for close U.S. allies and friends: joint military exercises in Alaska that would boost India’s high-altitude warfare capabilities in the Himalayan glaciers of northern Kashmir; sale of military hardware including radars, aircraft engines and surveillance equipment to India; joint naval exercises and the training of India’s special forces; and intelligence sharing and naval patrols in the Straits of Malacca.

Some in the U.S. see a strong India serving Washington’s long-term interests by ensuring that there be countervailing powers in Asia that prevent the domination of the region by any one power and ensure a stable balance of power by avoiding too much concentration of power in one Asian power. Unlike Japan, India avoids any formal alliance with the United States partly because of concern that a pro-U.S. tilt will prompt the Chinese to tighten their embrace of India’s neighbours and partly because there remains a very strong undercurrent of suspicion and fear that Washington is a fickle and not-so-reliable partner and that American priorities and policies vis-à-vis China might change in the future to the detriment of India’s strategic interests. Notwithstanding India’s desire to remain an independent power, which sometimes results in India’s taking policy positions contrary to the U.S., India has made it clear that it intends to challenge China’s dominance in Asia via its “Look East” strategy which seeks to enhance military and economic cooperation with “China-wary nations” in the Asia-Pacific (the United States, Japan, Taiwan, Vietnam, Indonesia and Iran). Should Russia and China (with the backing of France or Germany) formalize an alliance to counter the U.S.-led bloc, the logic of geopolitics would pull the United States toward a strong alliance with India so as to offset Sino-Russian power and influence in Eurasia. As old relationships cool, new ones will be formed. In the meantime, India welcomes the Bush administration’s plans for a greater India’s involvement in a wider Asian security system to balance an economically booming China and stagnant Japan.

On balance, U.S.-Indian relations have witnessed a dramatic upswing under the Bush administration, but they are still at an embryonic stage. Compared with America’s traditional allies, India has been much more supportive and understanding of the Bush administration’s policy initiatives. While strategic ties are flourishing, economic links remain weak. Ambassador Robert Blackwill recently described U.S. exports to India and investment flows as being “flat as chapatti [flatbread].” Washington’s preoccupations with the war on terror and Iraq have tended to push into the background the effort to fashion an overall strategic framework for advancing U.S.-Indian interests in Asia. India’s enthusiasm has dimmed after Pakistan returned to the affections of the U.S. post-9/11. While “the China factor” draws the U.S. and India closer, “the Pakistan factor” pulls them

apart. There is a great deal of skepticism, suspicion and wariness on the Indian side. Also, much of the improvement has taken place under the aegis of a pro-U.S. Bharatiya Janata Party-led government and doubts remain about the future should Congress Party or a left-wing coalition come to power in New Delhi. Their common long-term strategic interests and shared values notwithstanding, both sides need to work hard to ensure that the U.S. and India remain “engaged democracies” and do not revert to being “estranged democracies” again.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of APCSS, U.S. Pacific Command, the U.S. Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

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Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies



SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

MARCH 2003

Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies

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Reluctant Partner: Indonesia's Response to U.S. Security Policies

ANTHONY L. SMITH

Executive Summary

- Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Indonesia — and Southeast Asia more generally — has featured more prominently for Washington. The terrorist attack in Bali, on October 12, 2002, serves to confirm that the problem of terrorism has become serious within Indonesia. Unfortunately, just as Washington's interest in Indonesia increases, U.S.-Indonesia relations grow more difficult, fuelled by negative perceptions within Indonesia of U.S. foreign policy.
- While the Indonesian government has become more cooperative with the United States in the war against terrorism, the Indonesian population is not generally supportive. These differences are also found in the political elite. Indonesia's vice president and several cabinet ministers have taken a more negative attitude towards U.S. foreign policy than President Megawati and the majority of the executive.
- Intra-cabinet dissent and public opposition constrain President Megawati's support of U.S. policy. The upshot of this is that the Megawati government has been unwilling to go further in supporting U.S. policy, most notably refusing to back the U.S. campaign in Afghanistan, or possible action in Iraq. Given the proximity of the Soeharto government to the United States (at best a marriage of convenience for both partners), post-reform Indonesia has resumed, to some degree, the early independence *bebas aktif* (free and active) policy, resulting in a greater degree of distance from the United States. On many important current issues Indonesia is a critic of U.S. policy, including Iraq and preemption.
- Jakarta's main objection to U.S. policy is that Washington will classify groups as "terrorist" only if they directly threaten U.S. interests. The Indonesian government, after September 11, has maintained that al Qaeda is worthy of condemnation, yet officials perceive Washington's refusal to list separatists in Aceh as terrorists as a double standard in U.S. foreign policy.
- At present, Indonesia is quietly content with the general U.S. presence in the Asia/Pacific region. Rhetoric about global disarmament and a more equitable international order aside, and despite a vocal section of the Indonesian public that is distrustful of U.S. intentions, the government of Indonesia fundamentally sees the United States as a benign power, and a restraining hand on powers situated to the north.

INTRODUCTION

U.S. interests in Indonesia have altered since the beginning of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), given Indonesia's status within the Muslim world and the Bali blast in October 2002 — the latter marking the clear emergence of a terrorist problem, related to Islamist terror groups within Indonesia. Previously, Indonesia was an important partner in containing communism during the cold war. Today, apart from terrorism concerns, Indonesia has remained important as it sits aside critical sea-lanes, and its fate will have a dramatic impact on the resilience of Southeast Asia as a whole.

In the last decade or so the U.S.-Indonesia relationship, while largely cordial, has experienced some serious fluctuations, and this forms an important backdrop to the current issues. Due to human rights concerns in East Timor, military-to-military relations were completely cut in 1991, partially restored afterwards, and severed again during the 1999 violence in East Timor. The eventual loss of the territory of East Timor in 1999 was a national trauma — principally blamed on Australia and the United States — from which the Indonesian populace has yet to recover. Nationalist concerns of western interference have converged, to some extent, with co-religionist fears about the nature of the U.S. war against terrorism. Many Indonesians fear that the war on terrorism is a pretext to weaken Islam. While President Megawati condemned the September 11 terror attacks against the United States, her government refused to support the counterattack in Afghanistan. There is general opposition by her government to U.S. policy in the GWOT and the Middle East (including Iraq), yet this must be tempered with the obvious point that America is still largely regarded as a benign military presence in the wider Asia-Pacific region — especially vis-à-vis the power rivalries in Northeast Asia. Indonesian officials seem unfazed by talk of an emerging U.S. policy of preemption. This is recognized as a rhetorical tool rather than a dramatic challenge to international rules and norms.

Assessing Indonesian foreign policy is not always an easy task given the paucity of primary source information and the Indonesian government's current lack of interest in broader global trends as Indonesia continues to concentrate on domestic vulnerabilities and regional issues. However, the public record, supplemented by statements by ministers of the Republic, gives a general sense of Indonesia's responses to U.S. foreign policy. The commentary below is largely based on media reports and discussion with Indonesian officials. Primary source documents, where available, also form part of this analysis.

INCREASED U.S. INTEREST / COMMITMENT

Although Southeast Asia has often taken a back seat in U.S. policy making circles, which tend to concentrate on events in Northeast and South Asia, Indonesia's stability has always been seen as the key to a regional resilience in Southeast Asia. Clearly the terrorist attacks on the U.S. mainland on September 11, 2001, have added a new dimension to the U.S.-Indonesia relationship. Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim country and member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), has an important role to play in shaping Muslim opinion. The Bali blast in October 2002, in which 200 tourists — mostly Australian — were killed, also dramatically demonstrates that Indonesia, and Southeast Asia more widely, is threatened by the presence of terrorist cells linked to the al Qaeda network. Yet even prior to the Bali blast, fears of terrorist infiltration into Southeast Asia — especially the maritime countries of the region — had given rise to revived military-to-military contact with the region. While U.S. troops were stationed in

the Southern Philippines as advisors in the war against Abu Sayyaf and as builders of infrastructure, the Bush administration pushed forward plans to restore some level of military-to-military relationship with Indonesia. Western media characterizations of Southeast Asia as the potential “second front” caused some alarm with the pundits in Indonesia in the immediate aftermath of 9/11.

GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM (GWOT)

Surveys confirm that the Indonesian public actually opposes America's war on global terrorism. (See Pew Global Attitudes Projects, “What the World Thinks in 2002,” December 4, 2002 — this report shows that two-thirds are opposed to the U.S. response.) But since the Bali blast in 2002 it is evident that Indonesia has been targeted by al Qaeda linked terrorists. Despite a surprising level of reluctance to accept the nature of this problem internationally, there is some evidence that the Indonesian public may now be more persuaded about the existence of terrorist cells within Indonesia.

Although most Indonesians were as horrified by the September 11 attacks, there has been hesitation to support U.S. attempts to deal with the problem on the international level. Many reportedly have trouble accepting that Osama bin Laden is guilty of the attack. Furthermore, a predominant view within Indonesia — home to a famously moderate version of the Islamic faith — is that the United States may use the GWOT as a pretext to flex its muscles in the Muslim world. Other issues raised by the political elite include objections to the use of military force in Afghanistan instead of an international court, and that the U.S. counterattack did not address the key root causes that continue to motivate Islamist terrorists (cited as poverty and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict). Immediately after the attacks, Indonesia's Vice President Hamzah Haz blamed the attack on America's “sins.” He, and others in the political elite, refused to acknowledge that radical groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and Laskar Jihad (LJ) might be a threat to Indonesian security despite their record of violence. President Megawati therefore found herself in a situation where her government was unable to act decisively against radical suspects for fear of being broadsided by her opponents making political capital out of her secular background.

America's counterattack after September 11 revealed a disconnect between the United States and Indonesia. In the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, President Megawati undertook an already scheduled visit to Washington. The Bush administration was keen to receive the leader of the largest Muslim nation, not least of all for the symbolic message it delivered. Megawati roundly condemned the acts of terrorism against the United States, but once she had returned to Indonesia, found it politic to condemn equally the anticipated counterattack against Afghanistan. Megawati, whose political position is somewhat delicate, has had to be careful not to be seen as a mere U.S. puppet.

The Megawati government, the wider Indonesian political elite, and the general masses, while questioning whether al Qaeda was responsible for the September 11 attacks, held the view that bin Laden should be given a fair hearing at an international court and that the stand-off with Afghanistan should be resolved through negotiation rather than an armed intervention. Anticipation of the U.S. war in Afghanistan sparked a series of fierce demonstrations throughout Jakarta, which at times involved actual or implied physical threats to the U.S. Embassy. The debate over the U.S. counterattack against Afghanistan cooled when television images of the Northern Alliance liberating Afghanistan on the ground and Afghans celebrating the end of the Taliban's Deobani-style government were broadcast throughout Indonesia (and the rest of the world).

On the domestic front, in the aftermath of the Bali bombing, the Indonesian government has been able to convince a hitherto skeptical parliament about the need for anti-terrorist legislation (although there is the broader point that tighter laws were not exactly needed to arrest prominent LJ members). The Indonesian government has now arrested more than 40 individuals connected with the Bali blast, an effort described by the U.S. Ambassador as evidence of Indonesian cooperation on the issue, including the ongoing Indonesian-U.S. Security Dialogue.

While there is now a greater will to act against “international terrorism” (read: Islamist terrorist groups linked to al Qaeda) inside Indonesia itself, there is still a mismatch between Washington and Jakarta about definitions of what constitutes terrorism. It is obvious that Jakarta would dearly have liked to see the separatist Free Aceh Movement make the State Department’s list of international terrorist groups. Washington’s steadfast refusal to do this demonstrates that the Bush administration views the struggle in Aceh as being the product of local conditions. It would not augur well if Jakarta used “anti-terrorism” as the pretext for a new round of indiscriminate military operations that might ruin a very fragile peace deal. Washington would also risk alienating a population that is not linked to the al Qaeda “jihad” against western interests. Jakarta’s main objection relates precisely to this point — that the United States will only classify a group as “terrorist” if it directly threatens U.S. interests. The Indonesian government continues to maintain that while al Qaeda is worthy of condemnation, there is a double standard in the U.S. policy — one that Indonesia cannot whole heartedly support.

PRE-EMPTION AND INTERVENTIONISM

Responding to Jakarta’s deep concern over support for the unity of the Republic of Indonesia, the United States has reaffirmed its support for Indonesian territorial integrity on numerous occasions. Fears linger in Indonesia, following the departure of East Timor from the Indonesian fold under enormous international (including the United States) pressure, that humanitarian crises elsewhere in the archipelago could result in unwanted intervention from outside powers. In light of this Indonesia is opposed to interference in its affairs, and officials have expressed concern over reports that the United States reserves the right of preemption. That said, the Indonesian government itself does not appear to be alarmed by any potential incursion from U.S. forces. When Australian Prime Minister John Howard announced in the wake of the Bali bombing that Australia would adopt the right to strike outside its territory to defend Australia, both the Indonesian Vice President, Hamzah Haz and Foreign Minister Nur Hassan Wirajuda stated in a press conference in early December 2002 that Australia’s “plan to attack neighboring countries” was rhetoric — albeit somewhat alarmist. This reaction to Howard’s statement, which was most likely made with Indonesia directly in mind, is indicative that Indonesia probably reads the Bush administration’s more general preemption doctrine in the same light — in addition it is a doctrine more focused on central Asia (Afghanistan) and the Middle East (Iraq), and now, perhaps, North Korea.

Indonesia has been a long-term critic of the manner in which the United States and its allies have handled Iraq. Indonesia has opposed sanctions for more than a decade now, arguing that sanctions have not worked and have a largely adverse affect on the people they are supposed to help. The plans for war against Iraq have drawn more criticism, both from the government and the Indonesian people, who are overwhelmingly against any attempt to invade Iraq. In December 2002, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Indonesia’s

Coordinating Minister for Security and widely respected moderate within the Megawati government, urged that a peaceful solution be found for the Iraq crisis. He warned that the public counter reaction to an invasion, both in Indonesia and throughout the world, could be severe. Bambang, reiterating the official Indonesian position, advised the United States to act only in accordance with the direction of the United Nations. A unilateral action by the United States would be regarded with alarm in Jakarta, and harsh criticism would certainly emanate from the Megawati government. Why would approval for any future action from the UN make the difference? A course of action undertaken by a broad cross section of the international community would be more palatable to the Indonesian public. A unilateral action would be simply impossible to support.

There is a wider context for all of this. U.S. policy in the Middle East has been a sore point in Indonesian politics. Western involvement in the Middle East has not been viewed as a benign presence in influential quarters of Indonesian opinion. In particular, the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the source for anti-Americanism within Indonesia. Even the moderate Abdurrahman Wahid, while president, attempted to use his office to mediate the conflict and create a Palestinian state. Although the official U.S. government position favors the creation of a Palestinian state, Indonesians would still view the United States as pro-Israel in the final analysis. Officially, the Government of Indonesia does not recognize Israel and has condemned U.S. foreign policy with regards to that state since its inception.

UNILATERALISM / MULTILATERALISM

As noted above, Indonesia has urged the United States to consider multilateral channels over and above unilateral actions — notably in reference to the crisis in Iraq. Indonesia has made it clear that actions that receive the UN stamp of approval are to be considered more legitimate. Indonesia's impression that the Bush administration is more unilateralist than its predecessor administration has led to Indonesian officials expressing their concern. Yet, as argued above, this is not necessarily because Indonesia itself fears preemptive attack by the United States (nobody sees the United States posing a threat to Indonesian sovereignty) but because of the way in which U.S. global actions will play out with the wider masses — whose power, when exercised, still causes considerable angst for Jakarta's political elite.

MILITARY-TO-MILITARY ENGAGEMENT

Military-to-military relations between the United States and Indonesia have been problematic since the Dili massacre in 1991, when Indonesian troops opened fire and killed more than 200 demonstrators during a protest rally. U.S. military assistance was cut as a protest against the military's flagrant abuse of human rights. Having been only partially restored in the subsequent years, the military-to-military relationship was again severed over the violence in East Timor in 1999. U.S. State Department and Defense officials have, subsequently, made the restoration of the military relationship dependent on the following: (a) peaceful resolution of the East Timor situation, including trials for key Indonesian military officers implicated in the 1999 violence; (b) prosecution of the militia elements responsible for the death of three UN workers at Atambua (one a U.S. citizen) in 2000; and (c) greater respect for human rights in the outer provinces, especially the simmering conflict of Aceh.

The Bush administration had already decided to revisit the severed military relationship even prior to the altered strategic environment post-September 11 on the grounds that isolation of the Indonesian military was unlikely to have the desired effect of moving this body towards greater professionalism. September 11 gave greater impetus to begin a series of steps to restore the relationship, albeit in a slow and cautious manner. The Bush administration has asked Congress to approve an IMET (International Military Education and Training) program, while non-lethal military sales have resumed. In August 2002, during a state visit to Indonesia, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell announced a U.S.\$50 million assistance package, half of which is to be channeled to the Indonesian police. The U.S. sees assistance to the Indonesian police as essential to addressing the rundown of the state's capacity to enforce law and order — which is essential to eliminating a fertile ground for radical terrorist groups. Even a small number of dedicated cadre, whose actions were unchecked leading up to the Bali blast, have been able to cause havoc.

U.S. FORWARD PRESENCE

Indonesia's importance to the concept of an East Asian littoral, raised in the 2001 U.S. Quarterly Defense Review (QDR), is obvious from its geographical spread and location. Passage through Indonesia's waters allows access between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The Indonesian position on the U.S. military presence in the Pacific Rim is basically supportive but not without a degree of ambivalence. While Indonesia is often described as a U.S. "ally" during the Soeharto era, Indonesia remained rhetorically committed to a policy of non-alignment (defined as a policy of equidistance from both superpowers during the cold war). Indonesia, for reasons of pragmatism, has supported the stabilizing influence of the United States on the Pacific Rim, yet made it clear that extra-regional players in Southeast Asia were to be discouraged in the long term (long-standing criticisms of the Five Power Defence Arrangements, which tie Singapore and Malaysia into an alliance with Australia, New Zealand and the UK, are a case in point). Indonesia is widely regarded as having pretensions of regional leadership and global influence, but has never managed to achieve significant state capacity to realize these desires. The reconfiguration of the U.S. Forward Presence, characterized by the phrase "places not bases," (a phrase first employed during the winding down of the U.S. bases in the Philippines), does not impact on this view of a U.S. presence in the region. In spite of the absence of permanent bases, the U.S. naval presence in Southeast Asia is still quite formidable, with about 300 port visits a year, regular exercises, and other cooperative arrangements. The stationing of troops in the Southern Philippines did not draw a negative response from the Indonesian government, with the matter being viewed as the domestic concern of the government of the Philippines.

Throughout the cold war, Soeharto's Indonesia found common cause with the United States in the containment of communism, and U.S. military projection is still viewed as a relatively benign factor in the Asia-Pacific region. Concern about the exercise of western power, expressed by important sectors of the political elite, and often directed at Australia rather than the United States, centers around possible attempts to split up Indonesia. Yet the challenge is not seen as a military threat, but one of "soft power" influences from non-governmental organization (NGO) groups in the West (in some more far fetched scenarios, with the assistance of various western governments). In this light, Indonesia's prime security concern revolves around the separatist movements in Aceh and Papua, with communal violence in Ambon having the potential for international interference. Indonesia will continue to seek assurance that the United States respects the sovereign territory of the Republic of Indonesia.

NONPROLIFERATION / WMD

A consistent theme in Indonesia's foreign relations since the Soeharto era has been advocacy for reductions of both vertical and horizontal WMD proliferation. Within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Indonesia was a successful advocate for the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ) to supplement the earlier Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN), which urged ASEAN members and extra-regional powers to limit great power competition in Southeast Asia. Nuclear weapons tests in India and Pakistan drew immediate, but quite short-lived criticism from ASEAN. While Indonesia recognizes the goals of limiting WMD proliferation, including the cases of Iraq and North Korea, rhetorically Indonesia has tended to follow this up with wider calls for a more "just" world order. This involves WMD disarmament of the P-5 (5 Permanent Members of the UN Security Council), as well as a revamp of the composition of the Security Council (preferably with Indonesia picking up a permanent seat).

INTEGRATION DOCTRINE

Indonesia's dramatic shift towards democratization after May 1998 (with the departure of Soeharto) has been supported by successive U.S. administrations. Under the Clinton administration, Indonesia was listed by the State Department as one of four countries considered to be critical cases for democratic development (the others being scattered throughout the developing world). While the process of democratization in Indonesia has been largely domestically driven, U.S. policy has been to continue to nudge Indonesia in the "right" direction. U.S. Ambassador to Jakarta, Ralph Boyce, has publicly declared improvements in the human rights situation in Aceh as a step that can be taken in improving liberal democracy. Military-to-military relations have been held up in part because of this particular problem. Backsliding from the current democratic (or semi-democratic) arrangements would have negative consequences for Indonesia and make it more problematic to receive foreign aid from the international community. It is understood that a military coup, for example, would not sit well with Washington — in direct contrast to a number of military coups in Southeast Asia during the cold war. In this sense, the maintenance of democratic norms is necessary for the health of the relationship. America's pressure for liberal democracy (however subtle in this case) has not always been well received. Some members of the political and military elite complain that Washington puts pressure on Indonesia to simultaneously respect human rights while at the same time disrespecting the rights of suspected terrorist operatives in the aftermath of September 11.

SUMMARY

While Indonesia and the United States remain important to each other in a number of ways, it is the war on terrorism that has come to dominate the relationship — especially from the point of view of Washington. This has two distinct dimensions. First, the United States has sought Indonesia's support for its global counter offensive against terrorism, yet the Indonesian government, with overwhelming support from its public, refuses to countenance this action beyond condemning the September 11 terrorist attacks. The second factor involves the threat that terrorist groups pose to Indonesia itself. Since

the Bali blast, there has been much more cooperation and common ground between Indonesia and the United States.

While Indonesia views the U.S. presence in the Pacific as benign, and a useful check on power rivalries to the northeast, it is unrealistic to expect that the Indonesian government will be able to publicly support U.S. policy in the wider world — especially in the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq. Indonesia has demanded that multilateral solutions be found in these cases, and preferably a negotiated settlement to the problem. In the emerging crisis with Iraq, Indonesia has clearly stated that it will only support attempts to remove Iraq's WMD if done through the United Nations. The sheen of UN support would provide, for Indonesia, is an easier way to sell the U.S. action to the extremely skeptical Indonesian public.

The United States will need to live with these differences of opinion while continuing to bolster Indonesia's cohesion. While reestablishing military-to-military relations (within the tram lines set by the U.S. Congress) is seen in Washington as a means to shore up security, in Indonesia the removal of what they view as "partial sanctions" would have important practical and symbolic implications.

In the final analysis, Indonesia remains a critic of aspects of U.S. foreign policy. The relationship between Indonesia and the United States has had its difficulties, but there has been enough of a convergence of interests to ensure that the two countries remain partners — partners who sometimes cannot look each other in the eye, but partners nonetheless.



Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies



SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

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Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies

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The Glacier Moves: Japan's Response to U.S. Security Policies

J O H N M I L L E R

Executive Summary

- The Bush administration's efforts to forge a stronger political-military partnership with Japan have enjoyed some success, thanks largely to a positive response by Prime Minister Koizumi.
- The greatest progress has been in the war on terrorism, the most notable accomplishment is of which Japan's unprecedented Indian Ocean naval deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.
- While this move signals an important shift in Japanese attitudes toward acceptance of collective defense and military force, Japan's metamorphosis into the "Britain of East Asia" is at best a distant prospect.
- Japan is in no hurry to accept the legitimacy of collective defense, preferring incremental steps in this direction camouflaged by formal adherence to its long-standing "self-defense only" position.
- As suggested by Tokyo's waffling on missile defense, moreover, Japan is divided over how best to ensure its national security and there is no consensus in favor of a closer strategic embrace with the United States.
- None of this necessarily precludes Japan's continued evolution over time into a "normal country" in political-military terms and a stronger, more self-confident American ally.
- The process of strengthening the political-military partnership between the United States and Japan is likely to remain frustratingly slow and equivocal; U.S. policymakers would be well advised to discard expectations of rapid change.
- The danger lies in overestimating Japan's current ability and willingness to "step up to the plate" on collective defense in the event of a full-blown military crisis in northeast Asia.

The Bush administration came into office with high hopes for strengthening the U.S.-Japan alliance. As was adumbrated in the October 2000 “Armitage Report” — a bipartisan road map of the future of the relationship assembled by a group of Japan experts, including several tapped for senior positions in the new administration — the goal was a closer and more equal partnership on the model of that between America and Britain. (The emphasis on Japan is also reflected in the Administration’s National Security Strategy and Quadrennial Defense Review.) From Washington’s perspective, there were several key markers of progress toward this partnership. One was Tokyo’s participation in the joint development of a missile defense shield designed to protect both Japan and the United States. Another priority was Japan’s willingness to allow its Self Defense Forces (SDF) to stand shoulder to shoulder with U.S. forces in regional military conflicts, including those geographically remote from Japan. A third was the revival of Japan’s moribund economy, which was assumed to require a more determined approach to reform.

Few Americans knowledgeable about Japan had any illusions that its evolution into the “Britain of East Asia” would be easy. The most obvious impediments included the continued appeal of pacifism as manifest in a widespread aversion to military force, support for Japan’s “self-defense only” posture, and acceptance of its constitutional ban on collective defense. (Article 9 of Japan’s 1947 “Peace Constitution,” which renounces the use of military force to settle international disputes, is interpreted to permit self-defense but prohibit collective defense.) Although the collective defense taboo had not blocked U.S.-Japan military cooperation related to Japan’s defense, it loomed as a major obstacle to the broader collaboration envisioned by the Bush administration. The Armitage Report had consequently urged Japan to revise its constitution to eliminate this obstacle. From Washington’s standpoint, however, the central issue was less constitutional than political and psychological — namely, Japan’s willingness to share the military burdens of upholding international peace and security. Tokyo had, in the American view, signally failed to rise to this challenge in the 1991 Gulf War and 1994 North Korean nuclear crisis when the SDF, in effect, sat on its hands. The question now was whether or not Japanese attitudes had “matured” to the point where, if similar crises arose, the SDF would be deployed in the common defense.

SIGNS OF CHANGE

There were, to be sure, encouraging signs that Japan was moving in the desired direction. Beginning in 1992, Tokyo relaxed its collective defense ban to allow SDF participation in UN peacekeeping operations, albeit under highly restrictive conditions. (SDF personnel were forbidden, for example, to use weapons except in individual self-defense, transport munitions, submit to UN operational command, or participate in operations in which a cease-fire was not in effect.) In 1997, Japan revised its defense cooperation guidelines with the United States to enable the SDF to provide logistical support to U.S. forces in the event of military contingencies “near” Japan. In 1998, Tokyo agreed to participate in joint research with the United States on a theater missile defense system intended to protect Japan and U.S. bases located in Japan. Another milestone was reached in 1999 when the SDF “fired its first shot in anger” — with broad public approval in Japan — in an encounter with a North Korean “spy boat.” And in 2000, the Diet established bodies to look into constitutional revision with a view to eventually legitimizing Japan’s participation in collective defense activities.

Underlying these developments was a gradual shift in Japanese thinking about their national security. During the cold war, a consensus had formed around the idea that Japan’s security should be sought through economics and “peace diplomacy.” (The economics-first

emphasis of this approach was formalized around 1980 in the doctrine of “comprehensive security.”) Sheltered beneath the American nuclear umbrella with no perceived serious external military threat until the Soviet naval buildup in the Pacific in the 1980s, most Japanese assumed they could safely abstain from international power politics and devote their energies to the pursuit of material prosperity and economic superpower status. With the waning of the Cold War, this consensus began to erode and those who advocated shouldering “normal” international political and military responsibilities acquired increasing influence over Japanese policymaking. Contributing to this development were the decline of the Left, generational change, and rising nationalism. Perhaps more important, however, were heightened Japanese sensitivity to international criticism of Japan’s “bystander” posture on military security matters; their alarm over Chinese and North Korean bellicosity and unpredictability; and their concern over the long-term reliability of the U.S. security guarantee if the SDF continued to be held back from supporting American forces in military crises. Also playing into this development was Japan’s fear of abandonment by the United States, which was stimulated by talk of drawing down U.S. forces in the region and signs that Washington might prefer China as a partner.

OBSTACLES TO CHANGE

Given these attitudinal changes, one might expect that Japan’s political-military “normalization” would have proceeded apace. But in fact, this process has been gradual, hesitant, and contested. Pacifism, while on the defensive, is far from a spent force. Japanese pacifists, moreover, can count on foreign, particularly Chinese and Korean, support for their dubious contention that moves toward assuming greater international military responsibilities feed (and are fed by) the revival of militarism and ultra-nationalism. Other influential groups with different foreign policy agendas also oppose movement toward defense normalcy and closer strategic cooperation with the United States. “Mercantilists” fret over the possible impairment of Japan’s access to vital overseas markets and sources of raw materials. “Multilateralists” prefer to focus on the United Nations and regional multilateral initiatives. “Asianists” are worried about the impact of defense normalization on Japan’s efforts to forge cooperative relations with China and the rest of Asia. And “Gaullists,” while by no means averse to a larger and more active Japanese military role, criticize any move that smacks of subordination to the United States. Perhaps the most fundamental obstacle to change other than the continuing appeal of pacifism, however, is the complacency of the Japanese people as reflected in their attachment to a relatively comfortable status quo and their reluctance to assume the burdens of engagement in international power politics.

The reorientation of Japan’s national security priorities has been complicated by its prolonged economic slump and soaring government debt, which have limited defense spending and focused attention inward on domestic reform. (By the same token, these developments have also generated pressure to cut Official Development Assistance — a mainstay of “comprehensive security” — which many critics see as an increasingly unreliable instrument to maintain the goodwill of key countries such as China. The declining efficacy of Japan’s economics-first approach to national security has arguably boosted the appeal of political-military normalization.) Contrary to earlier expectations, moreover, the breakdown of the cold war-era hegemony of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the left-right axis of Japanese party politics has not given rise to bolder and more effective political leadership. Indeed, the exigencies of building and maintaining coalition governments have, if anything, reinforced pressures for compromise and consensus.

“CHANGE-WITHIN-CONTINUITY”

These constraints have imposed a distinctive pattern on the process of defense policy change. This process tends, for example, to be excruciatingly slow: controversial initiatives sometimes languish for years before a consensus can be mustered to implement them. One example is the protracted debate over cooperating with the United States in the research and development of a theater missile defense system. The process of defense policy change also tends to be reactive in that the impetus for consensus often comes from public alarm over external events such as North Korea’s August 1998 firing of a missile over Japan. (U.S. pressure is also widely assumed to be an important stimulus to change, but this kind of assertion is counterproductive insofar as it raises Japanese nationalist hackles.) Perhaps more curious is the tendency to seek consensus by portraying moves toward collective defense as representing no change in Japan’s self-defense only posture. This contradictory approach frequently lends an Alice-in-Wonderland quality to domestic policy debates. Argumentation is highly legalistic, prone to hairsplitting, and leads to the placing of cumbersome and — to foreign eyes — bizarre restrictions on the SDF. A case in point is the 1991-92 debate over the UN Peacekeeping Operations Cooperation Bill. Its proponents argued that the SDF could constitutionally participate in UN peacekeeping missions as long as military force was avoided. Selling this idea required months of debate in the national DIET over how to insulate the SDF from the slightest risk or “taint” of combat. The legal implications of actions such as transporting ammunition were exhaustively explored, resulting in the restrictive rules of engagement noted above. The collective defense barrier was thus breached in fact if not theory — Japanese troops were able to participate in UN missions to uphold international peace and order, but in a way that seemed to involve no departure from Japan’s force-in-self-defense-only orthodoxy.

Considered from the standpoint of Japanese domestic politics, this “change-within-continuity” approach offers a relatively noncontroversial way of edging Japan toward larger international military responsibilities. One downside, however, is that it leaves the Japanese people unprepared to deal with the risks of military action, particularly the possibility of casualties. (The public consternation and hand wringing evoked by the killing of a Japanese peacekeeper by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia in 1993 are symptomatic of this situation.) Another shortcoming of this approach is that it breeds uncertainty and suspicion regarding Japan’s intentions. Those expecting a more forthright embrace of collective defense are usually disappointed and inclined to dismiss the half-measures offered as mere tokenism. Conversely, those demanding more rigorous adherence to Japan’s self-defense only posture are equally dissatisfied, seeing these measures as steps toward “covert remilitarization.” It might be supposed that it would be in Japan’s interest to clarify its position by grasping the nettle of constitutional revision (or reinterpretation.) This, for example, is the view taken by the Bush administration. Japan’s political elite has, however, so far shrunk from confronting this challenge, largely because it is divided over the desirability or necessity of doing so. Some are deterred by the risk of stirring up a divisive national debate. Others fear adverse Chinese and Korean reactions. Still others are sincerely committed to pacifist ideals or see these ideals as adding a moral dimension to the pursuit of economic objectives. Perhaps most important, few regard constitutional change as an urgent national priority, as is reflected in the leisurely pace of the Diet’s consideration of constitutional revision — it is expected to take five to ten years.

ENTER KOIZUMI

Given the unpromising prospects for anything more than gradual and equivocal change, the Bush administration's hopes for speeding the development of a more "mature partnership" with Japan depended heavily on the emergence of a strong leader willing and able to pull it in this direction. As previously noted, however, Japan's political system is not geared to producing such leaders. Certainly Yoshiro Mori, the hapless lame duck prime minister in the spring of 2001, was not up to the task, and Washington could only hope that the vagaries of LDP factional politics might result in the selection of a more satisfactory successor. As it happened, Japan's perennially dominant party was on the electoral ropes at this time and, as is its wont in such circumstances, turned to a charismatic maverick in the person of Junichiro Koizumi with a view to enhancing its flagging appeal to Japanese voters. Koizumi's election as LDP leader and Japan's prime minister in April 2001 was greeted with enthusiasm by many American observers. They were impressed not only by his extraordinary popularity with the Japanese public, but by his talk of dispensing with politics as usual, implementing bold economic reforms, and revitalizing the American alliance. He also won plaudits for his advocacy of constitutional revision and reconsideration of the ban on collective defense, as well as for his personal rapport with President Bush, which was compared to the "Ron-Yasu" (Reagan-Nakasone) relationships of the 1980s. Indeed, to some observers, a restoration of that relatively halcyon era of bilateral security cooperation seemed to be in the offing.

Skeptics, however, cautioned against expecting too much of Koizumi. They noted, for example, that he lacked an independent power base within the LDP and was consequently forced to rely on the uncertain cooperation of his party's conservative "Old Guard." They also called attention to the fact that Koizumi seemed not to have a clear vision of where he wished to lead Japan, much less a coherent game plan for realizing it. There were, moreover, signs that he might not be fully in synch with proponents of a closer strategic partnership with the United States. Particularly disconcerting was his noncommittal response to the Bush administration's urging that he sign on to its missile defense plan. (Unlike the earlier proposal for theater defense, this plan called for the integration of theater and U.S. missile defense systems, posing for Japan the sticky constitutional issue of collective defense.) Also disquieting was Koizumi's controversial August 13, 2001 visit to Yasukuni Shrine, a major focus of pre-1945 militarism and ultranationalism, which critics lambasted as a gratuitous provocation of Chinese and Korean sensitivities. Although Washington adopted a posture of studied neutrality, it could hardly have been pleased by a move that heightened domestic and foreign resistance to high-profile initiatives by Japan to expand its international military role.

THE WAR ON TERRORISM

The September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon abruptly transformed Japan's domestic and international environment, providing Koizumi with an unprecedented opportunity to launch just such an initiative. In Japan, as elsewhere, the graphic horror of these attacks — repeatedly played on national television — inspired a wave of solidarity with the United States and its "war on terrorism," including international military action against al Qaeda perpetrators and their Taliban protectors in Afghanistan. After some initial hesitation and quiet prodding by Washington to "show the flag," Koizumi came forward with a seven-point military support package, the centerpiece of which was the dispatch of a Maritime Self Defense Force (MSDF) flotilla to the Indian

Ocean to provide logistical support to U.S. and other coalition forces engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Since the MSDF deployment clearly made Japan an active participant in a collective defense enterprise, one might have expected strong voices of disapproval from Japanese pacifists and constitutional “strict constructionists.” In fact, however, domestic opposition was relatively muted and the Diet — acting with unusual speed — passed enabling legislation for a watered down version of Koizumi’s original package in October 2001.

One factor facilitating Japanese acceptance of this package was the persuasiveness of the warning put forward by its proponents that doing less would invite a repeat of the international derision evoked by Japan’s unwillingness to commit the SDF to the support of Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Another was Koizumi’s success in winning Chinese and ROK acquiescence, which he accomplished by visiting Beijing and Seoul and extending unusually profuse apologies for Japan’s historical misdeeds. Most important, however, was his mollification of domestic critics with the argument that Japan’s support of Operation Enduring Freedom was not an exercise in collective defense, but rather an independent initiative undertaken in response to the UN’s call for forceful action by its members to meet the threat of global terrorism. Koizumi further appeased potential opponents by promising not to violate Japan’s constitutional stricture against the use of military force for reasons other than self-defense. (The MSDF ships were, for example, to be kept well out of harm’s way and limited to relatively innocuous activities such as refueling.) On the basis of these assurances, Diet debate centered on defining the range of legally permissible activities in which the SDF might engage. To Washington’s disappointment, some of the bolder elements of Koizumi’s package fell by the wayside. The most prominent of these was the inclusion of Aegis destroyers, which was nixed on the grounds that their advanced surveillance capabilities might be used to support U.S. combat operation — as if conventional Japanese destroyers lack surveillance capabilities and do not share information with American forces.

TOKENISM OR BREAKTHROUGH?

The equivocal nature of Japan’s military contribution to Operation Enduring Freedom naturally gave rise to divergent interpretations of its significance. Critics pointed out — correctly — that it was largely symbolic and involved no abandonment of Japan’s formal constitutional rejection of collective defense. Indeed, some went so far as to suggest that it was a smoke-and-mirrors exercise designed to placate American opinion while preserving Japan’s long-standing pacifist and mercantilist priorities. Other observers detected a sea change in Japanese attitudes toward acceptance of collective defense and the use of military force beyond self-defense. The latter interpretation comes closer to capturing the significance of Japan’s “change-within-continuity” approach that Koizumi clearly was pursuing. As previously noted, the essence of this approach is the cloaking of moves toward collective defense with the trappings of constitutional orthodoxy. The resulting appearance of non-change can be deceiving. Whatever the rationale offered or the restrictions imposed, a Japanese naval task force is supporting the United States in an overseas military conflict — a turn of events unimaginable ten or even five years ago. Furthermore, whether or not most Japanese recognize such support as an exercise in collective defense and alliance solidarity, they accept it as legitimate and are therefore more inclined to accept similar or even bolder initiatives in the future. This being said, Japan is still a long way from explicitly embracing collective defense, and its military backing of Operation Enduring Freedom is probably best seen as an incremental step in a process likely to require many more years.

DEEPENING BILATERAL COOPERATION

Given earlier American doubts about Koizumi, Washington had reason to be surprised and pleased by his success in delivering an unexpectedly robust Japanese contribution to Operation Enduring Freedom. For some, an opportunity seemed to be at hand for accelerating Japan's evolution into a stronger and more self-confident ally. The Bush administration's game plan for nudging Japan in this direction wisely eschewed heavy-handed "gaiatsu" (external pressure) in favor of quiet diplomacy and positive reinforcement — an approach that enabled Koizumi to stress the independent character of his initiatives and parry charges of his subservience to Washington. (This approach also dampened Japanese criticism of American "unilateralism.") Bilateral cooperation in the war on terrorism consequently deepened. With Washington's encouragement, for example, Japan hosted an international conference on Afghan reconstruction in January 2002. The Diet meanwhile twice extended the October 2001 antiterrorism legislation providing for the stationing of MSDF ships in the Indian Ocean. In December 2002, moreover, Tokyo finally overcame its qualms about the dispatch of Aegis destroyers and the first departed for the Indian Ocean, reportedly to take over surveillance duties from similarly equipped U. S. ships. Also, the looming prospect of American military action against Iraq inspired active discussion within the Koizumi government of ways that Japan might support the United States. Like many other American allies and friends, Japan has not bought off on the idea that the Iraqi regime constitutes a sufficiently serious threat to justify war. Direct SDF logistical support in the manner of Operation Enduring Freedom is therefore unlikely, particularly if the UN does not endorse military action. Nevertheless, at the beginning of 2003 Tokyo was canvassing other means of "showing the flag" and providing at least indirect support for American forces, such as the dispatch of MSDF warships to protect Japanese shipping in the Gulf.

THE LIMITS TO COOPERATION

If Washington could take satisfaction in the development of U.S.-Japan cooperation in the war on terrorism, progress on other fronts deemed important to the reinvigoration of the Alliance was more disappointing. Koizumi's economic reforms are largely stalled, for example, the victim of resistance by vested interests, including the LDP's Old Guard, as well as the Japanese public's unwillingness to bear the socioeconomic pain entailed by many of his proposed reforms. (One by-product of Koizumi's meager accomplishments in this area was a decline in his public approval ratings in early 2002, a trend accelerated by his firing in January 2002 of his popular but eccentric and obstreperous foreign minister, Makiko Tanaka.) Having foresworn "gaiatsu," Washington seemed at loss as to how it might help put Koizumi's economic reforms on track other than merely voicing continued support for them and for Koizumi himself.

The Bush administration was also discomfited by Koizumi's continued reluctance to commit to its missile defense plan. Tokyo's misgivings about the plan's cost and technical feasibility interacted with other concerns. Many saw the linking of Japan's defense to that of the United States as a violation of its constitutional prohibition of collective defense. Others worried about the impact of this move on Japan's relations with China, its arms control priorities, and its independence, real and perceived, vis-à-vis the United States. By the end of 2002, however, the plan's advocates were gaining ground. For one thing, Washington seemed determined to proceed with or without Japan's participation. For

another, Japanese fears of the North Korean threat were reawakened by Pyongyang's October 2002 revelation that it was clandestinely pursuing a nuclear weapons program, and by its ominous hints that it might not extend its missile testing moratorium.

North Korea's nuclear defiance wrote an embarrassing finis to Koizumi's attempt to jump-start Japan-DPRK normalization by meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong II in September 2002. Although Washington refrained from publicly voicing its disapproval, it can hardly have welcomed Koizumi's venture in summitry with East Asia's member of the "Axis of Evil," particularly since he played down American nuclear and missile proliferation concerns in his eagerness to cut a deal with Kim. Even if Pyongyang had not resorted to nuclear saber rattling, this deal might have unraveled as a result of friction over the status of Japanese abductees. Tokyo has, in any case, returned to the fold and is currently supporting U.S. efforts to pressure North Korea into abandoning its nuclear ambitions. The summit episode nevertheless underscores a certain disconnect between Japanese and American foreign policy priorities as well as Koizumi's propensity for unpredictable and — from an American point of view — ill-considered initiatives.

CONCLUSIONS

The Bush administration's efforts to forge a stronger political-military partnership with Japan have enjoyed some success, largely due to a positive response from Prime Minister Koizumi. The greatest progress has been made in the context of the war on terrorism, the most notable accomplishment of which is Japan's unprecedented naval deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. While this move reflects an important shift in Japanese attitudes toward acceptance of collective defense and military force, its significance should not be exaggerated. Japan's metamorphosis into the "Britain of East Asia" is still at best a distant prospect and perhaps even a mirage. Japan has not yet accepted the legitimacy of collective defense and is in no hurry to do so, preferring incremental steps in this direction camouflaged by the appearance of continuity with its "self-defense only" position.

As is suggested by Tokyo's waffling on missile defense, moreover, there is no consensus on the desirability of a closer strategic embrace with the United States. Japan is divided over the course it should follow to assure its national security and, indeed, over the larger question of its proper role and "place" in the world. None of this precludes Japan's continued evolution into a "normal country" and a stronger, more self-confident ally, but it points to the necessity of guarding against unrealistic expectations. The danger lies in misreading Japan's willingness to shoulder the risks of collective defense in the event of a full-blown military crisis on the Korean peninsula or in the Taiwan Strait. It is currently unprepared — both psychologically and politically — to offer the level of military support to the United States that the American public and Congress would consider minimally acceptable. One can only hope that such a crisis does not put the U.S. Japan partnership to the test.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of APCSS, U.S. Pacific Command, the U.S. Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

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Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies



SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

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Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies

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Let's Just Be Friends: New Zealand's Response to U.S. Security Policies

J I M R O L F E

Executive Summary

- New Zealand and the United States had an extremely close security relationship until the mid-1980s, at which point New Zealand was classified by the United States as a friend rather than an ally.
- New Zealand and the United States hold very similar views on values such as the need for democracy within states, the effectiveness of open markets and the international trading regime and the importance of human rights. The two countries also take a similar stance on issues such as the relationship between Taiwan and China, the Korean Peninsula and the India-Pakistan dispute.
- New Zealand supports the United States in the war on terrorism.
- New Zealand is discouraged by the United States' cavalier approach to multilateral institutions.
- New Zealand holds more firmly than does the United States to the need for the United Nations to authorize military action against Iraq.
- Despite the similarity of their international outlooks, New Zealand is content to remain a friend rather than an ally of the United States.

BACKGROUND

In June 1940 the British Government told New Zealand that, in the event of war in the Pacific, British (and thus New Zealand) interests there would have to be safeguarded by the United States. For the next 45 years New Zealand considered, with greater or lesser emphasis, that the country's defense and security would be underpinned by a strong U.S. presence in the Pacific region combined with a close military relationship between the two countries.

Formal security treaty arrangements were made between the two countries (and others) through the Anzus Treaty (1951) and the Southeast Asian Collective Defense Treaty (1954). In support of regional security, New Zealand troops fought as allies with the United States in Korea in the 1950s and in Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s. By the early 1970s, Anzus was being described officially as the "keystone of New Zealand's security." From then until the early 1980s, the consensus within New Zealand (in official circles at least) was that the alliance relationship with the United States was indeed the foundation of national security.

The consensus began to erode in the early 1980s with the rise of a middle-class peace movement in New Zealand coinciding with the election in 1984 of a government in which many members had been active in the anti-Vietnam war movement. Activists within the peace movement focused on a long-held antipathy to nuclear weapons within New Zealand and a residual anti-American sentiment. (Antinuclear sentiments had been present since at least the mid 1960s when a proposal to promote a Southern Hemisphere Nuclear Free Zone had attracted 80,000 signatures). The activists began a grass-roots campaign to force the government to refuse entry to New Zealand ports of nuclear powered or armed warships, (these being symbolic of the treaty relationship) as they made routine port visits for training and recreation.

Although the government did not completely share the activists' views, in 1985, following a formal request by the United States for a warship to be permitted entry to New Zealand, the government decided that this could only occur if the ship was certified as "not carrying nuclear weapons." This would have breached the long-standing U.S. policy to "neither confirm nor deny" the presence of nuclear weapons and the visit did not take place. Subsequent negotiations did not resolve the issue and, after New Zealand introduced into Parliament the *New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone Disarmament and Arms Control Bill* (which barred the entry into New Zealand of both nuclear propulsion and nuclear weapons) in 1986, the United States declared New Zealand to be "a friend but not an ally" on the grounds that (in effect) banning U.S. warships from New Zealand's waters was not compatible with the spirit of the Anzus Treaty.

The immediate outcome was that the United States cut off all routine military training links with New Zealand for individuals and units, discontinued the flow of military intelligence to New Zealand and refused to participate in multilateral military exercises if New Zealand were also to be a participant. Despite these measures, New Zealand did not change its policy, recognizing that full military cooperation between the United States and New Zealand was unobtainable given the divergence in each country's policies. New Zealand therefore set a course designed to minimize the outcomes for New Zealand, if not for the armed forces. Rather than push for any resumption of routine military links, New Zealand began to work diplomatically to reassure the United States and other friendly states that New Zealand had not suddenly changed its world outlook on fundamental foreign policy issues. To reinforce this, New Zealand continued to cooperate militarily with the United States and other western partners in a range of peacekeeping operations in the Middle East, in Southeast Asia and in the Balkans.

NEW ZEALAND AND THE UNITED STATES TODAY

New Zealand and the United States continue to share the liberal values of freedom and peace, justice and human rights. The countries have a well-developed and mature political relationship, although the military relationship is still limited. The countries work closely towards building a world that shares their values and which is, in the New Zealand government's words, stable, peaceful, prosperous and democratic. The United States is New Zealand's second largest export market, taking some 15 percent of New Zealand's total exports.

The two countries cooperate on a wide range of issues in relation to international trade (such the development of the World Trade Organization and the process of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation), multilateral matters (through the United Nations, other organizations such as the Multinational Force and Observers in the Middle East and for the war on terrorism), and on other key foreign policy issues where the two countries have similar interests. In December 2002, Prime Minister Helen Clark identified these as including human rights, the rule of law, sustainable development, fisheries and whale conservation, climate change, development assistance, disarmament, and protection of the environment, notably in Antarctica.

Defense cooperation remains limited although it is improving. Since the cessation in 1986 of close military links, New Zealand's sustained contribution to peacekeeping (especially in the Middle East, Bosnia and East Timor) and international order more generally has led to some improvement in U.S. relations, although significant restrictions remain in place. Since September 2001, the United States has expressed its strong appreciation for New Zealand's commitment to international antiterrorism efforts, including the contribution of Special Air Service (SAS) troops to operations in Afghanistan and a warship to the Multinational Naval Interception Force in the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman. New Zealand now gets operational military intelligence from the United States, there is some operational exercising in relation to multinational military activities and New Zealand servicemen and women freely attend courses at U.S. military schools.

NEW ZEALAND'S REACTION TO U.S. POLICY THEMES

New Zealand does not follow any particular line of support for U.S. policy. Since 1986 New Zealand has become more independent in its policy thought and more prepared to act independently. To the extent that U.S. policy directions align with New Zealand's, they will be supported. Otherwise they will not. There are many specific examples where New Zealand policy on international issues diverges from that of the United States, some of which are discussed below. None of these is significant by itself, but taken together they show how even two countries with very similar world views can diverge on what they consider to be their own national interest.

There is often a divide in New Zealand between the (public) views of the government on U.S. security policy, which is supportive with some specific reservations, and opinions held by the wider public. This is especially pronounced in relation to the "war on terrorism," and its extension to war on Iraq. The divergences may be seen clearly in media editorial pages where security issues generally, and the actions of the United States in Afghanistan and the Middle East, and New Zealand's support for those actions in particular, are given extremely sceptical scrutiny.

New Zealand policy makers take public note of U.S. policies only if they directly affect New Zealand. Few U.S. policy pronouncements are specifically reflected by Wellington in its own policy directions unless there is a clear correlation between the policy held by the United States and New Zealand's own interests. Thus, the U.S. policy on agricultural subsidies is of considerably more interest than U.S. assertions about the "axis of evil," or what are seen as the more or less routine statements of defense and security policy in the Quadrennial Defense Review and the National Security Strategy papers. New Zealand is no longer concerned about its status as "friend" rather than "ally," although many in New Zealand may still consider the United States an ally as well as a friend. The concept of "ally" is likely being used differently from the way it is used by U.S. policy makers.

Broad themes within U.S. security policy as articulated in the U.S. policy documents resonate both positively and negatively with New Zealand policy makers.

THE WAR ON TERRORISM

New Zealand responded almost immediately to the attacks of 11 September 2001 with the offer of political and military support. Prime Minister Clark observed, "In New Zealand, we saw the attacks as attacks on humanity. We resolved to work with the United States and other nations to make a stand against this evil and those responsible for it."

Immediately after the United States announced that it would commence operations against the al Qaeda network based in Afghanistan, New Zealand offered military support both directly to the United States in Operation Enduring Freedom and as part of other international efforts. That support has included a special forces unit, officers and logistic personnel attached to the International Security Assistance Force (New Zealand is the only country outside Europe to provide support to the ISAF) and a liaison team at Central Command headquarters in Florida.

Subsequently, in the Pacific region, New Zealand has joined with the United States and Australia to assist Pacific Island countries increase their capabilities on counterterrorism. In the broader Asia-Pacific region, New Zealand has been active in putting counterterrorism cooperation on the agenda of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). New Zealand has been co-Chair of the ARF in 2002-2003 and it has ensured that terrorism and the means to counter it were and will continue to be the focus of regional dialogue.

The New Zealand government does have reservations about the general concept of a "war on terrorism" but agrees that specific terrorist threats should be attacked and has strongly supported the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan both in word and deed. New Zealand does not openly criticize U.S. prosecution of the war on terror, but New Zealand's media do. For example, an editorial discussing the successful attack by a remotely controlled aircraft on a car apparently carrying al Qaeda members asked rhetorically: "Has the world descended so far towards anarchy that its main superpower can be so heedless of law?" and concluded that "the rest of the world must press the United States to reconsider the morality of its actions."

Support for the war on terrorism is not completely unconditional. New Zealand politicians explicitly link current manifestations of international terrorism to the resolution of Palestine-Israel issues, something they see the United States as being reluctant to address. In the longer term, New Zealand would expect this issue to be addressed as part of the wider war on terrorism.

THE WAR ON IRAQ

Although New Zealand supports the war on terrorism, it is not so sure of the link with Iraq. For many political leaders (and most of public opinion), there is no clear connection between international terrorism and Iraq. Subsequent attempts to identify Iraq as a threat to world peace because of its attempts to develop weapons of mass destruction and as a threat to its own people because of general contempt for human rights are seen by most in New Zealand as self-serving justifications for “Bush’s war.”

Despite that, New Zealand would, grudgingly, support a war against Iraq but only in the context of a United Nations mandated operation and thus within the bounds of international law. In December 2002, Prime Minister Clark argued that “we believe the Security Council, representing the will of the international community, must make that decision. The use of force remains an option available to the Council — if diplomatic, inspection, and disarmament processes do not succeed. Should the Security Council decide on the use of force, New Zealand as a committed member of the UN would endeavor to make a contribution.” Force, clearly, should be used only as a last resort.

Because of New Zealand’s commitments in East Timor since the 1990s and Afghanistan since 2001, which have placed a strain on the country’s limited military resources, combat forces would not likely be sent to Iraq; however, humanitarian, medical and logistic support would be considered.

New Zealand has a frigate operating in the Gulf region with the multinational naval interception force, a C130 transport aircraft for support operations in and around Iraq, and has provided personnel to the UN inspection teams operating within Iraq in search of evidence of prohibited weapons programs. New Zealand has offered aid money, a medical team, engineers and transport aircraft for rebuilding Iraq after any war.

OTHER INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ISSUES

In military terms the fact of U.S. military supremacy in both quantitative and qualitative measures is taken as a given. New Zealand also takes note of what it perceives to be the United States’ desire to remain militarily dominant in the world. Neither fact has much bearing on New Zealand’s defense policy directions. New Zealand recognizes that the United States seeks the certainty rather than probability of security, but concludes that this is probably not achievable, even for the United States. The continued reliance of the United States on nuclear weapons for defensive purposes is deplored, as is the shift to concepts of preemptive defense.

Foreign Affairs Minister Phil Goff argued in May 2001 “the establishment of a missile defense system runs the risk of halting and reversing multilateral progress towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.” He noted though that “it is a positive factor that both the United States and Russia are talking about major downsizing of their nuclear weapons stockpiles.”

New Zealand is a partner with the United States in KEDO, the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization, which provides an alternative to North Korea’s nuclear program. Any resumption of that program would be seen as a threat to regional security. New Zealand therefore firmly supports the United States in its condemnation of North Korea’s approach to nuclear development. New Zealand has declared that no further aid will be given to North Korea until the programme is clearly halted. Furthermore the halt must be verified.

On other international security issues such as the unification of the Korean peninsula, relations between Taiwan and China or the dispute in Kashmir, New Zealand's position is broadly aligned to that of the United States. New Zealand policy makers are probably more strongly in favor of Korean reunification and South Korea's sunshine policy, and more supportive of China's position over Taiwan than their U.S. counterparts. Conversely, New Zealand policy is less supportive of Pakistan than is the United States.

BILATERAL SECURITY ISSUES

The defense relationship between New Zealand and the United States has been curtailed since 1986 except for the particularly close relationship that continues between the two countries in the realm of electronic intelligence gathering and sharing, and in the use by the United States of Christchurch as its port of departure for operations in Antarctica.

New Zealand deplores the limited defense relationship it has with the United States, but sees no point in trying to resolve the status of the Anzus Treaty. For each country the defense relationship is unfinished, probably unfinishable, business. The United States waits for New Zealand to alter its legislation, to the extent at least of allowing nuclear powered warships in to New Zealand waters, while New Zealand waits for the United States to accept that neither nuclear powered nor armed vessels need visit New Zealand. For both political and policy reasons, neither country is likely to change its position in the short term.

However, New Zealand views the defense relationship as important; partially so for general security reasons and especially so if New Zealand is to participate in international coalition operations effectively. New Zealand forces need to be operationally effective and equipped to a level where they can carry out their tasks without being a danger to themselves and their coalition partners. This can be done best, New Zealand officials believe, through a close relationship with the United States. Given the narrow likelihood of this occurring through changes in the non-nuclear policy, New Zealand will continue to "show willing" by participating in military activities the United States considers to be important in hopes that this will bring about a policy change in the medium term. At the base of the New Zealand position is the thought that it is not untenable for New Zealand to be a friend of the United States rather than an ally.

WORLD VIEWS

It is not just the immediate issues of war and peace that have security implications. The world view held by countries can also have a direct effect on national and international security.

The United States is seen as having a preference for democratic values, the application of human rights norms and the rule of law internationally. New Zealand works closely with the United States to uphold these values.

New Zealand agrees with the fundamental tenets held by the United States of international relations occurring ideally in a world based on free, pluralist and democratic states with market economies and open societies. New Zealand departs from the United States however, in that New Zealand believes that the international community is more important than any single state within it, including the United States. For that reason, New

Zealand opposes unilateral actions to resolve disputes, whether in the trade sphere or for national security. There is no constituency in New Zealand for the thought that unilateral action might be morally necessary to ensure security, although some would accept that it could be a pragmatic response to certain limited situations generally defined by the United Nations Charter.

New Zealand notes the contradictions in U.S. policies between for example the calls for free markets and U.S. tariff protection for favored domestic industries and subsidies for others. The U.S. domestic imperatives are understood, but New Zealand politicians will continue to note “the United States commitment to agriculture liberalization through the WTO” and hold the United States to its declaratory policy by working for the “common cause,” as New Zealand’s Prime Minister Helen Clark put it in a December 2002 speech in Washington DC.

New Zealand also notes the contradictions between calls by the United States for democracy and the promotion of human rights internationally and its support for antidemocratic regimes and its acceptance of practices by its allies that draw calumny on its foes. In November 2002, New Zealand’s foreign minister argued that “unless we accept that we should protest and take action when universal rights accepted by the international community are abridged, then we are complicit in allowing those abuses to continue.” Implicit criticism is made of the United States for its acceptance as “allies” in the war on terrorism of regimes that would under other circumstances be vilified. This no doubt reflects a New Zealand view that foreign policy should have a somewhat more moral basis than that shown in current U.S. approaches.

New Zealand is dismayed by the increasing U.S. reluctance to engage with multilateral institutions (in many cases established by or at the urging of the United States) except as a means to achieve unilateral U.S. ends. The U.S. a la carte approach to multilateral processes is deprecated, as is the U.S. reluctance to cede any sovereignty to international institutions. Specifically, New Zealand disagrees with the way the United States has sidelined or renounced (explicitly or implicitly) international organizations and conventions, many established by or with the support of the United States, such as the United Nations itself, the International Criminal Court, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and the Ottawa Convention banning landmines. New Zealand believes that the United States weakens international security by putting itself outside the international system.

New Zealand worries that the United States has an impatience with diplomacy and a preference for force. This may be understood when the target is one of the current members of the “axis of evil” (although that concept does not resonate with New Zealand policy makers), but New Zealand remains worried that the United States can be arbitrary in its choice of demons.

CONCLUSION

The United States is important to New Zealand because of its size and role internationally, because of the shared history of security cooperation which has lasted more than 50 years, because of the fact that the two countries share a very similar world view, and for economic reasons (which for New Zealand are a security issue). For these reasons, New Zealand is usually inclined to follow U.S. leads on international issues. But New Zealand will diverge when the United States acts unilaterally and when the United States attacks core beliefs such as nuclear issues.

New Zealand's Prime Minister made several visits to the United States in 2002 resulting in good exchanges with the Bush administration. New Zealand's nuclear legislation remains an issue for the Washington, but New Zealand's objective is "to move the relationship forward on the basis of the many values and interests we share with the United States, including the need to counter international terrorism."

New Zealand's relations with the United States entail much more than U.S. security policies. In the short to medium term security policies are important for the United States and thus important for New Zealand. For the longer term, New Zealand is more concerned with establishing an international order conducive to the values that each country shares. Few in New Zealand are convinced that current U.S. security policies are the best way to achieve that world.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of APCSS, U.S. Pacific Command, the U.S. Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

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Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies



SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

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Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies

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The Hermit Mouse Roars: North Korea's Response to U.S. Security Policies

ALEXANDRE MANSOUROV

Executive Summary

- Misperceptions matter. Even two rational actors may appear as unpredictable madmen if they refuse to communicate with each other and compromise.
- The DPRK believes that the U.S. ultimate goal is to remain the world's "only superpower." To that end, the United States strives to put the entire Korean Peninsula, a strategic vantage in Northeast Asia, under its total control, in order to contain China, Russia, and Japan and to achieve its ambition of turning the international system into a U.S.-led unipolar world thereby establishing an unchallenged U.S. domination all over the world.
- The North Korea leaders fear war with the United States and are constantly preoccupied with what they perceive as the threat of a U.S. preemptive nuclear attack.
- Pyongyang has lost much interest in genuine negotiations with the Bush administration. They escalate nuclear and missile tensions to the brink to drive their position home, namely "fight us now or leave us alone."
- Pyongyang and Washington talk past each other, find themselves in an exacerbating security dilemma, and continue to undertake "self-defensive" measures resulting in further escalation of nuclear tensions. A mutually aggressive posture of preemptive preemption may lead to accidental outbreak of hostilities.

THE NORTH KOREAN PUZZLE

Misperceptions matter. The United States underestimates North Korea's political will and technological ability in its relentless drive to become a full-fledged nuclear power. In turn, Pyongyang seems to bank on Washington's unwillingness to use force to stop nuclear weapon development program in the North. Kim Jong Il believes that the United States will begin to treat his government with respect and on an equal footing only when he undeniably demonstrates to the world that he is not bluffing and can actually deliver on his threats to resume and step up nuclear and missile development activities. In contrast, the Bush White House is adamant that no peace negotiations shall take place until and unless North Korea verifiably dismantles its nuclear weapons program and disarms its missile arsenal first. Both sides talk past each other, find themselves in an exacerbating security dilemma, and continue to undertake "self-defensive" measures resulting in further escalation of nuclear tensions.

This essay is designed to present the outlines of the worldview and key beliefs espoused by the North Korean leaders and to analyze their perceptions of the U.S. goals on the Korean peninsula and in East Asia. The goal is to figure out what motivates their responses to U.S. policy toward Korea. Why does North Korea continuously challenge the United States in the escalating nuclear standoff? Are its leaders blatantly misinformed, or utterly ignorant, or intellectually incapable of understanding the existing balances of power on and around the Korean peninsula and the overwhelming military superiority of the U.S.-ROK alliance, and, therefore, do they hopelessly miscalculate their chances of winning in any potential outbreak of hostilities? Why do they fail to grasp all the disastrous consequences that may befall them in the event of a direct military confrontation with the West?

KEY NORTH KOREAN BELIEFS ABOUT U.S. SECURITY POLICY

The post-war history of the North Korean state irrefutably proves that it has been a rational actor in the international system. North Korean leaders are not unpredictable madmen with suicidal urges. If ever they display traces of perceived irrationality, the latter are either meant to send well-calibrated signals to the international community and can be viewed either as part and parcel of their bargaining strategy, for instance, brinkmanship, or can be interpreted as unintended consequences of domestic bureaucratic externalities. Sometimes, North Korean leaders misperceive the world around them and consequently miscalculate the international response to their actions. Hence, the latter backfire and put them in a worse situation than where they were before. But, North Korea reveals a propensity to learn from its interaction with the international community and adjust its long-term policies and bargaining strategy accordingly.

What comes out clearly from careful reading of the North Korean official propaganda is that the *juch'e* ideology still plays a dominant role in defining how the North Korean leaders view the United States and its policy on the Korean peninsula. Although the impact of Marxist-Leninist ideas had been less pronounced throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, the anti-imperialist tendencies have regained their prominence in the official *juch'e* thinking on foreign policy issues since the complete breakdown of the DPRK-U.S. relations in October 2002. At the same time, these traditional ideological views are increasingly buttressed by the realpolitik considerations that reflect significant changes in

the North Korean perceptions of their national interests, deteriorating external threat environment, and shifting balances of power in the region and beyond. Here are some of the most representative examples of the North Korean thinking about what the Bush administration intends to do in Korea and why.

First of all, revealing the mixed influence of classic Marxist-Leninist teachings on imperialism and current global balance-of-power assessments, the North Korean leaders believe that in the post-Cold War world, the U.S. ultimate goal is to remain the world's "only superpower" and to establish a new international order that will ensure and support the U.S. global hegemony. To that end, the United States pursues a "policy of strength for hegemony" and tries to "put its strategic rivals in Northeast Asia under its political and military domination."

They believe that although the collapse of the former Soviet Union remarkably weakened Russia's military muscle, while Japan continues to be a "mere puppet of the U.S. colonial master," China still presents a difficult challenge before the United States in "its ambition for hegemony in the region." They assert that only if the United States succeeds in "putting the entire Korean Peninsula, a strategic vantage in Northeast Asia, under its total control through a war of aggression in Korea," then Washington will be able to contain China and other big powers around the Korean peninsula, as well as "to achieve its purpose of turning the international system into a U.S.-led unipolar world and to establish an unchallenged domination all over the world."

In other words, in a traditional Korean manner, the self-centered North Korean state seems to misperceive itself as the center of world politics and to view its external *raison d'être* in apocalyptic terms as the vantage point and savior of the non-American world and collapsing multipolar international system. It is interesting to note that in the similar apocalyptic fashion, following the dissolution of the former Soviet communist bloc, in the early 1990s, the North Korean official propaganda began to depict the Korean revolution as the ultimate embodiment of the world communist civilization, the true repository of Marxist-Leninist values and last indestructible bastion of the world communist movement, and took upon itself the messianic role of the last and most faithful defender of the world communist cause. As long as such a messianic approach continues to play a dominant role in shaping the North Korean official thinking, such self-centered and apocalyptic terms of reference are likely to continue to distort their worldview and perceptions about their "pivotal" place and exaggerated role in the international system, as well as their overblown expectations from the world community.

Second, true to their Marxist-Leninist roots, the North Korean leaders believe in economic determinism as the driving force behind the "U.S. quest for world hegemony." They assert that the U.S. national security strategies are primarily designed to meet the interests of the U.S. military-industrial complex and to satisfy the U.S. thirst for oil as one of the main pillars of the U.S. economic development. In addition, as if they had read a chapter from an old school Keynesian textbook, they consider war spending to be a good economic policy tool designed to stimulate domestic economic growth in times of recession. They say that since the Truman administration, the U.S. involvement in the East-West Cold War, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and other wars has been driven by the desire of the U.S. ruling class "to put its war industry in full-capacity operation in a bid to save the U.S. economy from depression and to drive its strategic rivals to an arms race till their strength is neutralized." Even at present, the Bush administration, "much upset by a serious economic crisis as evidenced by recession, a slowdown in exports and increase in unemployment, is keen to help the munitions monopolies rake up huge profits

through ridiculous military spending and the establishment of missile defense in a bid to consolidate its political foundation, reenergize the economy, and, at the same time, draw its strategic rivals into the arms race.” That is why, they assert, “the U.S. needs new flashpoints for war in oil-rich Iraq and Korea, a strategic vantage in Northeast Asia.” It is curious but the logical conclusion of the above line of thinking should be an underlying general belief that economic crisis tends to lead to external aggression. It is unclear how the North Korean propaganda officials would respond if the same supposition were applied to the current predicament of their country.

Third, the North Korean leaders are well aware that the Bush administration views their government as “a member of the axis of evil,” “a rogue state,” a “lawless regime,” an “oppressive regime,” a “repressive regime,” a “prison for its own people,” and a “terrorist regime.” They are aware of President Bush’s intense personal negative feelings about the North Korean supreme leader. In a propaganda counter-offensive, they allege: “the most lawless regime in the world is none other than Bush’s regime, which is pursuing unilateralism, violating international laws and commitments in disarmament, environment, human rights and other sectors. It is the United States that is the war maniac and empire of evil, as well as the roughest state of all, which gives great fear of nukes to humankind.”

They are convinced that “the U.S. ideologues always believed that the DPRK would collapse sooner or later” and that “since the emergence of the Bush administration, they have been more frenzied in the moves to isolate and stifle the DPRK.” They firmly believe that “the Bush White House seeks to destroy the system in the DPRK one way or another.” They reiterate: “It is the Korea policy of the U.S. imperialist war hawks to stifle the DPRK under the pretext of its nuclear issue and topple its dignified socialist system by force, if containment fails to do so.” But, they put the brave face on and assert that neither “tailored containment” nor “military blockade” nor “economic sanctions” against the DPRK under the pretext of the “nuclear issue” will be able to frighten and stifle the North Korean regime or lead to its collapse.

Fourth, despite their brave rhetoric, the North Korean leaders fear any war with the United States and they are deeply fearful about the threat of a U.S. preemptive nuclear attack. Where do these fears come from? They are rooted in the North Korean original bloody encounter with the U.S. military during the Korean War half a century ago. These fears are also based on the Korean People’s Army (KPA)’s analysis of the Cold War-era U.S.-ROK plans of military operations against the North, including the “Operation Plan 5027-98,” which, they assert, are designed to deliver nuclear strikes against the DPRK. The KPA is certain that “these plans have been steadily supplemented and specified through the U.S. nuclear war exercises targeted against the DPRK such as “Team Spirit,” “Foal Eagle,” “Ulji Focus Lens,” and “RSOI” exercises.”

Moreover, these deeply seated old fears of a U.S. military attack are bolstered by the North Korean reading of the recently announced National Security Strategy of the United States and the fact that the Bush administration designated North Korea as a “rogue state and part of the axis of evil.” They believe that

“The “Bush doctrine” calls for U.S. preemptive nuclear strikes at the “rogue states,” including the DPRK...The Bush administration’s strategy for “preemptive strike,” i.e., a strategy for “preemptive strike-defensive intervention,” calls for containing those countries the U.S. defined as the “enemy” by mounting preemptive nuclear attacks on them anytime without any prior warning.

In addition, they are well aware that since September 11, 2001, the United States has been waging a global war against terrorism. They believe that “since the Bush administration labeled the DPRK as a “terrorist state” and the U.S. secretary of defense listed the DPRK as “a terrorist regime,” the United States has internally designated the DPRK as the next target of its “anti-terrorism war.” The renewed U.S. accusation against the DPRK as being a state sponsor of international terrorism confirms their fear that Washington may use it as a pretext to mount a preemptive military attack on the DPRK.

Furthermore, these fears of war may reflect the North Korean expectations about the possible U.S. reaction to their recent decisions to unfreeze the Yongbyun nuclear facilities and to re-start their nuclear weapons development program, as well as to lift their ballistic missile launch moratorium and to accelerate their missile development program. Also, their paranoia may be exacerbated by the U.S. repeated assertion that in the nuclear standoff Washington will keep “all options open.” Instead of restraining their behavior, such an open-ended U.S. posture strengthens the KPA arguments that the U.S. military threat must be taken seriously and deterred and frustrated at all costs.

There are some people within the North Korean foreign ministry who believe that the war fears do not have to be so pronounced. They argue that “there are no such rich oil fields in North Korea as in Iraq, and, therefore, the U.S. has no reason to fight North Korea for oil.” Also, they bravely state: “Washington can never overlook the potential retaliatory capability of North Korea, which has played its role as a major deterrent to a second Korean War.” Besides, they assume that “neither Seoul nor Tokyo wants war on the Korean Peninsula because they know that they will be the direct victims of such a war, not the U.S.” In particular, they stake their hopes on the fact that “unfavorable (for the U.S.) developments in South Korea, following the election of President Roh Moo-hyun and rising anti-American sentiment, have aroused serious concerns in Washington over its relations with Seoul, baffling George W. Bush’s unilateralist hard-line policy on North Korea.” In other words, if the North Korean regime continues to strengthen its deterrent capabilities, including its nuclear shield and missile sword, and succeeds in driving a deep wedge between Seoul and Washington, then Pyongyang will be able to contain the United States and deter a possible U.S. preemptive strike, let alone an all-out U.S. military invasion.

This notwithstanding, the prevailing wisdom in Pyongyang is that after the Iraqi conflict is over, the U.S. military buildup in Northeast Asia and intensifying war games in the South may become much more destabilizing and threatening. What worries the North Korean military the most is the fact that “nobody can predict when the military exercises will go over to real action,” especially, in light of the perceived intrusions of the U.S. strategic reconnaissance planes into what they believe is the North Korean airspace, which the KPA considers as “premeditated moves to find an opportunity to mount a preemptive attack on the DPRK.” The North Korean top military brass knows very well why they worry about the war games so much: they started the first Korean War on June 25, 1950, by sending spies for strategic reconnaissance and sabotage to the South a few days in advance and rolling their exercising infantry and armored divisions over the 38th parallel overnight in continuation of their pre-war exercises. The KPA-sponsored *Minju Chosun* openly warns the United States: “It is a miscalculation for the U.S. imperialists to try to invade the North with the “Fool Eagle” or any other military exercise as a momentum.”

Fifth, the North Koreans struggle to understand the meaning of the occasional U.S. signals about Washington’s seeming interest in “dialogue” and “diplomatic settlement.” After Assistant Secretary of State Kelly’s visit to Pyongyang in October 2002, they tend to think that these signals constitute “no more than deceptive tricks to relax our spirit and

ensure the surprise of a forestalling (preventive) attack.” In other words, they think, “the U.S. utterances are a camouflaged peace tactic to cover up its attempt to ignite a war of aggression.” They believe that “there is no change in the U.S. conditional stand that it will have dialogue with Pyongyang only after it scraps its “nuclear weapons program,” and, therefore, “the “dialogue” much touted by the U.S. is no more than a farce to lead the world public in its favor.” The DPRK MOFA states that the U.S. talk about the possibility of “peaceful settlement” of the nuclear issue is nothing but “a broad hoax to deceive the world public opinion.”

The North Koreans are aware that the United States perceives their actions as “brinkmanship tactics,” “blackmail,” “measures seeking concessions and economic benefits,” and “begging for aid.” They reject these accusations by saying that these charges have nothing to do with reality and represent sheer U.S. propaganda. In the past, they used to say: “If the United States acts in reason, the nuclear issue of the Korean Peninsula may be settled smoothly.” In particular, “the DPRK has willingness to clear the U.S. of its security concern if the latter recognizes the DPRK’s sovereignty, assures the DPRK of non-aggression including non-use of nukes by concluding a legally binding non-aggression treaty, and does not stand in the way of the DPRK’s economic development.” But, in the past couple of months, they seem to have lost much interest in genuine negotiations with the United States. Now their position is basically “leave us alone.” These days they often reiterate: “there is no need for the DPRK to threaten or blackmail anyone to “get its system guaranteed” or receive any “economic reward.” Increasingly, they assert that “now that the United States is seeking to attack us by force of arms, we have no choice but to take strong counteraction against it...There is no place for us to step back and we have nothing to make a concession to the United States.”

Moreover, the North Korean leaders bluntly warn: “If the United States continues military pressure as it is now, the present situation will lead to catastrophic explosion.” They stress “the DPRK neither wants a war nor avoids it.” Pyongyang informs Washington “we will increase our self-defensive power in every way to cope with the prevailing situation no matter what others may say.” They further warn: “the army and the people of the DPRK will counter confrontation with confrontation and an all-out war with an all-out war.” They defiantly put the world on notice that “the DPRK will be compelled to take a self-defensive measure when it thinks that the U.S. preemptive attack is imminent.”

PYONGYANG’S REVIVED COLD WAR MENTALITY

The North Korean government perceives the U.S. intentions on the Korean peninsula as extremely hostile. They consider the United States to be the “biggest rogue state,” “an arrogant superpower” that controls international organizations and manipulates international regimes and runs amok in total disregard of international law. They believe that the U.S. ultimate goal is not simply nuclear disarmament of North Korea, but arbitrary “regime change” in Pyongyang. They know that Washington is going after the designated “axis of evil,” with North Korea being Number Two on the hit list. In their judgment, the United States has a stronger and technologically superior military, controls the ROK and Japanese armed forces, maintains an offensive posture on the Korean Peninsula, and poses a clear and present threat of preemptive attack with both conventional and

nuclear weapons. Pyongyang considers Washington to be an untrustworthy and deceitful negotiating counterpart and views President Bush with disdain and no personal credibility.

It is clear that most of the seeds of the “new thinking” in the North Korean foreign policy emphasizing the need for the full normalization of relations and broad constructive engagement with the United States and the West, that began to crop up in the late 1990s–early 2000s, have been mercilessly eradicated since the Kelly visit when the U.S.-DPRK relations took a dramatic turn for the worse in October 2002. The DPRK’s five-year old “peace offensive” was abruptly halted. Pyongyang reverted to its earlier Cold War-style confrontational course vis-à-vis the United States and revived its anti-U.S. propaganda campaign and anti-imperialist Red Flag ideology. It goes without saying that the fear of abandonment prevailing in the period of increasing openness and international engagement faded away, whereas the fear of entrapment by hostile powers came to the forefront to dominate the North Korean strategic thinking.

The fundamental objectives of the North Korean regime appear to remain intact, namely regime survival, international legitimacy, and, if possible, procurement of foreign assistance. It is no longer the peninsular domination and communization of the South. But, because of the deteriorating threat environment, Kim Jong Il seems to have chosen to build a nuclear deterrent to guarantee his regime survival. Kim Jong Il’s nuclear breakout strategy is not a bluff. It is not a bargaining ploy. Nor is it negotiable for him at this stage. Kim Jong Il is not irrational. He will not trade food for nuclear weapons. Like all dictators, he could care less about his starving subjects, even millions of them, when it comes to regime survival. He wants the Bomb and North Korea will do its utmost to become a nuclear state, whether it will officially declare it outright or not.

Moreover, the risk-taking capacity of the North Korean leaders will continue to rise, and they will display greater readiness to resort to force in order to advance their strategic goals. The North Korean deterrent warning that the Korean People’s Army may resort to a “preemptive self-defensive measure,” if the North Korean leaders decide that the threat of the U.S. preemptive attack against their country becomes imminent, is to be taken seriously. Such an aggressive posture of preemptive preemption may lead to unwarranted and uncontrollable escalation of tensions and accidental outbreak of hostilities.



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SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

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Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies

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Precarious Partnership: Pakistan's Response to U.S. Security Policies

R O B E R T G . W I R S I N G

Executive Summary

- The Pakistan government's capacity for adapting its national interests to U.S. strategic imperatives has been put to its severest test ever in the period following the terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001.
- The adherence of Pakistan to the global coalition against terrorism brought a number of substantial benefits to Pakistan, including both a political and economic boost. However, the consequent loss of its Afghanistan ally was a crippling setback, one that has triggered a strong — and politically hazardous — wave of anti-American sentiment in Pakistan.
- Kashmir's lofty status among Pakistan's strategic concerns has ensured Pakistan's leaders' great reluctance either to cave in entirely on the contentious matter of cross-border infiltration or to relax the distinction between legitimate "freedom struggles" and acts of terrorism.
- There are profound differences between American and Pakistani conceptions of the "nuclear danger" in South Asia. Washington tends to understand the threat to be emanating largely from Pakistan's nuclear transgressions, while Islamabad insists that the danger springs from an entirely different source — India primarily — and thus requires a remedy tailored specifically to India.
- Pakistanis generally hold the view that U.S. security policy in Asia, including what they see as Washington's progressive shift towards an Indo-centric strategic design, is neglectful of Pakistan's basic national interests and, thus, a potential impediment to an enduring Pakistani partnership with the United States.
- For U.S. policymakers, heading off deepening Pakistani suspicions of American strategic intentions — ensuring, in other words, that Pakistan does not end up as America's "most distrustful ally" — presents a continuing challenge.

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan was hailed during the 1950s as a frontline bulwark against Communist expansionism. Bound to the United States in multiple security treaties, it won an enviable reputation as “America’s most allied ally.”

Pakistan’s reputation among Americans slipped in the 1960s, rose swiftly during the Afghanistan War (1979-1989), only to fall again in the years following the Soviet Union’s collapse in 1991. The inconstancy of the relationship with the United States has greatly bothered Pakistanis. In fact, nothing has drawn more rueful public commentary in Pakistan in the past decade than what Pakistanis almost universally understand to have been Pakistan’s unceremonious dumping by Washington once its usefulness in bringing down the Soviet Union had expired.

Just how favorably Washington was disposed towards Pakistan at any given time has been shaped by many factors, including the state of Pakistan’s confrontational relationship with its Indian neighbor, the strength of its embrace of political democracy and free market economy, the spirit in which it incorporated Islam into its state identity, and the license it took in the pursuit of nuclear weapons. More than any of these, however, what always impacted most heavily on Pakistan’s standing in Washington was its strategic utility or “fit” — whether and to what extent, in other words, its leaders seemed able and willing to meld Pakistan’s national interests to U.S. policy imperatives of the day. In this transparently dependent relationship, it was always Washington’s perception of strategic necessity, together with Pakistan’s capacity for adapting to it, that drove the U.S.-Pakistan relationship.

Pakistan’s notable capacity for adaptation of this kind has been put to what is probably its severest test in the period following the terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001. Washington’s almost immediate identification of Taliban-ruled Afghanistan as state sponsor of the al Qaeda terrorist network and, thus, as active accomplice to the terrorist attacks and logical first target in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), plunged the Army-ruled government of Pakistan into acute crisis. Pakistan’s geographic proximity to Afghanistan made it a primary candidate for renewed alliance with the United States. Also arguing for alliance with the United States were neighboring India’s prompt offer to Washington of total support in the war on Afghanistan and Pakistan’s dire military and economic weaknesses. By no means least among Pakistani calculations, however, was the possibility of punishment by Washington — conceivably even military punishment — if Islamabad made the wrong choice. Thus, Pakistan’s actual choice, announced on 16 September, to join the global coalition against terrorism and to offer immediate tangible aid, including military bases, in Washington’s impending war on Afghanistan, came as no surprise.

Far from settled, however, were the matters of how much longer and how fully Islamabad would continue to honor that decision, whose policy implications clearly went well beyond the immediate rupture of Pakistan’s ties with Afghanistan. No other Asian country, excepting Afghanistan, has had to make more risk-filled policy decisions — or to make them under greater duress — in the wake of 9/11 than Pakistan. There are already ample signs of pressures building in Pakistan to reverse some of them. No issue in Pakistan’s public debate over the next few years will surpass in magnitude that concerning the wisdom of Pakistan’s compliance with U.S. strategic doctrine and policy — particularly as it relates to the war on terrorism.

Naturally, Pakistan's compliance with U.S. strategic doctrine and policy is most severely tested in relation to those issues — Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan, the Kashmir dispute with neighboring India, and nuclear weapons development — that bear most heavily upon Pakistan's immediate geostrategic interests. It is these issues that are examined most closely here.

THE AFGHANISTAN DEBACLE

On the day following the terrorist attacks on the United States, the President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf, publicly appealed for a “concerted international effort ... to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.” A few days later, Pakistan was formally enlisted in the global coalition against terrorism. Islamabad quickly launched a desperate effort to persuade the Taliban leadership to hand Osama bin Laden over to the West for punishment; but by the time the U.S.-led bombing campaign against Afghanistan began on 7 October, Islamabad had cut its formal diplomatic ties with Kabul (the last nation in the world to do so) and was resigned to the virtually complete abandonment of its former ally.

From the Pakistani point of view, there was a bright side to all of this. For one thing, Pakistan's immediate transformation from pariah to partner on the embattled frontline against terrorism brought a welcome political boost. For another, while Musharraf was careful to describe his decision to support the international campaign against terrorism as one based on principles, the promise of relief for Pakistan's beleaguered economy brought an obvious material boost.

There was also a dark side to Pakistan's choice, however, and it was responsible for the apparent duress that attended Musharraf's decision. On 20 September, President George W. Bush had warned that “every nation in every region now has a decision to make: *Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.* From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.” Musharraf had made plain in a candid address to the nation only one day earlier that taking what he called “wrong decisions” in the country's moment of crisis (by which he implied declining to join the coalition against terrorism) could have threatening consequences for Pakistan's “critical concerns.” These he identified as Pakistan's security against “external threat,” revival of the economy, the country's “strategic nuclear and missile assets,” and “the Kashmir cause.” These had to be safeguarded at all costs. “Any wrong judgment on our part,” he warned, “can damage all our interests.”

Musharraf was, of course, looking for a strategic tradeoff: In return for Pakistan's collaboration with the global coalition, Pakistan's key interests would be safeguarded. Musharraf made clear in due time that this meant (1) that Pakistan's armed forces should not be pressed to engage in military action outside of Pakistan's borders (in Afghanistan and later in Iraq); (2) that the coalition should in the conduct of military operations in Afghanistan seek to minimize “indiscriminate” killings of innocents; (3) that any post-Taliban government in Kabul should be friendly to Pakistan, that the Afghans themselves should choose it, and that Afghanistan's (in Musharraf's phrasing) “demographic contours,” meaning Pashtun-majority, should be factored into its composition; (4) that the Kashmiris' struggle for self-determination should not be defined as terrorism and the Kashmiri guerrillas' “freedom struggle” not be made a target of a broad coalition

crackdown on regional terrorism; and (5) that there should be no international move to disarm Pakistan's nuclear and missile defenses.

Looking back over the past year or so of the war on terrorism, it seems that Pakistan's interests have taken some fairly massive hits. This was undeniably the case when it came to Afghanistan, where neither the coalition's conduct of the war nor the war's outcome were exactly tailored to Islamabad's specifications. Indeed, the war supplied ample grounds for the apprehensions frequently expressed by President Musharraf during this period in regard to the war's negative impact on public opinion in Pakistan. In disturbingly large numbers, Pakistanis were reported to dislike America and to be overwhelmingly unsympathetic with the GWOT. These views surfaced, for instance, in a massive Pew Global Attitudes opinion survey, conducted roughly a year after 9/11, of more than 38,000 people in 44 nations.* According to the survey, only 10 percent of Pakistanis (the second lowest percentage among all the nations surveyed) had a favorable opinion of the United States; only two percent (the lowest figure among all the nations surveyed) had a positive impression of the spread of American ideas and customs; only nine percent (again, the lowest figure among all nations surveyed) preferred American ideas about democracy; and while 45 percent opposed the U.S.-led war on terrorism, only 20 percent favored it.

Additional evidence of anti-American feelings surfaced in the results of the October 2002 elections of Pakistan's national and provincial assemblies. In the National Assembly election, an alliance of religious parties, the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA), won an unprecedented 52 of 272 seats (19 percent), assuring Islamists of a power brokering role in the central government for the first time in Pakistan's history. In the provincial elections, the alliance won outright control of the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and a share in power in a coalition government in Baluchistan — both of them geographically adjacent to the strategically sensitive Afghanistan border. Electoral support for the MMA was largely confined to these two provinces; and even in them there were a number of alternative explanations (e.g. public disgust with the incumbents' corruption and misgovernment) for the MMA's electoral success. Nevertheless, the centrality of anti-American diatribe in the MMA's election campaign implied that anti-Americanism had had more than a minor impact on the electoral outcome.

Especially hazardous for Musharraf, in any event, was the MMA's insistent demand for an end to American military presence in Pakistan — a demand that ran afoul not only of the Pentagon's plans for forward troop deployment in a region of exceptional instability, but of its capacity for tracking down remnant al Qaeda and Taliban fugitives.

KASHMIR—TERRORISM OR FREEDOM STRUGGLE?

President Musharraf raised the issue of Kashmir with Secretary of State Colin Powell on 16 September 2001 during the secretary's hastily arranged post-9/11 visit to Islamabad. Musharraf emphasized to Powell that there could be no normalization of India-Pakistan relations without resolution of the Kashmir dispute and, moreover, that resolution had to be “in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people.” This was a formulation that Musharraf knew would raise India's hackles while also sending a reminder to Washington that Pakistani collaboration with the United States would come with a *political* as well as an economic price.

The political price asked of Washington was bound to be steep. For years, the government of India had been attempting (without much success) to persuade global

* The survey was conducted in Pakistan in August-September 2002. Respondents, mainly urban, numbered 2032.

opinion that the roots of the Kashmiri insurrection, begun in 1989, lay mainly on the Pakistani side of the border. It had increasingly emphasized not only what it claimed was Pakistani society's steady drift towards Islamic extremism and fundamentalism — its "talibanization," in other words — but also what New Delhi claimed was Pakistan's official sponsorship of terrorism in Kashmir. The terrorist assault on the United States in September 2001 thus presented New Delhi with an opportunity to join its hitherto largely ignored concerns over the threat of radical Islam with the now hugely heightened and overlapping concerns of the United States. No less importantly, the assault significantly increased New Delhi's prospects for reframing the world's understanding of the Kashmir dispute in terms better fitted to New Delhi's strategic interests — that it was a dispute having less to do with human rights, in other words, than with the menace of global terrorism.

It quickly became apparent that Washington faced a dilemma: How to balance its immediate requirement for Pakistan's seemingly irreplaceable partnership in the war on terrorism against its longer-term requirement for the goodwill of Pakistan's vastly bigger and more powerful rival. Largely to pacify India, the Department of State at the end of 2001 added to its infamous list of "designated terrorist organizations" two Pakistan-based groups. Washington sent an even stronger message to Islamabad of its growing dissatisfaction with Pakistan's Kashmir policy with the dispatch to Islamabad in June 2002 of Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage. Armitage maintains that in his two-hour meeting with Musharraf he managed to extract from the Pakistani leader the pledge of "a permanent end" to Pakistan's support of terrorist activity in Kashmir. News accounts of the meeting suggested there was room for varied interpretation. In any event, Musharraf's apparent concession was described in the *Washington Post* as "a huge foreign-policy victory for India." This seeming U-turn in Pakistan's Kashmir policy actually produced little more, however, than a suspension — not a permanent cessation — of Pakistan-aided cross-border infiltration.

Pakistan's reluctance to cave in entirely on the matter of infiltration is understandable. In recent years, the ratio of "guest" to "indigenous" militants fighting in Kashmir has grown substantially in favor of the former — most of them Pakistanis. The fact is that the active armed element of the Kashmir insurgency has gradually been not so much talibanized as Pakistanized. Were Pakistan to permanently sideline the Pakistani element, while also putting the militants' Pakistan Army support system out to pasture, there would be no more insurgency, at least not one New Delhi could not easily handle. For Pakistan to help India out in this manner was not in the cards. As Musharraf told *Time* correspondent Lally Weymouth in an interview published shortly after Musharraf's meeting with Armitage, Kashmir — unlike Afghanistan — "is our national interest."

New Delhi's spectacular mobilization from December 2001 to October 2002 of upwards of 700,000 troops on the border with Pakistan did little or nothing to dissuade Pakistan from its "national interest" in Kashmir. On the contrary, India's unilateral decision in October to withdraw its forces was made without there having been any unambiguous change either in the "ground realities" in Kashmir or in the rhetoric Musharraf used in public utterances on the subject of Kashmir — including his insistence that the international community maintain a distinction between what he styled "acts of legitimate resistance and freedom struggles on the one hand and acts of terrorism on the other."

Notwithstanding Musharraf's rhetoric, the danger remained that New Delhi's relentless efforts to bracket Pakistan-supported separatism in Kashmir with the American-led GWOT's arch enemy — "terrorism with a global reach" — might yet succeed in giving international warrant to an Indian preemptive strike on Pakistan.

THE NUCLEAR NIGHTMARE

President Musharraf had included Pakistan's "strategic nuclear and missile assets" on the list of "critical concerns" he identified in his 19 September 2001 address to the nation. He had good reasons for its inclusion. Apart from inevitable lingering suspicions in Washington stemming from Islamabad's previous close ties to the Afghan Taliban, there remained between Pakistan and the United States a host of unsettled issues relating to Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. Pakistan was clearly vulnerable to pressure in regard to these issues; and the possibility existed that their exacerbation could at any time — and notwithstanding Pakistan's cooperation in the war on terrorism — trigger a major upheaval in Islamabad's equation with Washington.

High on Washington's own list of critical concerns about Pakistan's real or potential nuclear transgressions was the threat that Pakistan's nuclear weapons or fissile materials might fall into extremist hands in the event of a radical Islamist takeover of the government. Apart from the fact that Pakistan's nuclear program had been developed with Beijing's illicit, but utterly crucial, assistance, there was now the startling report (denied by Pakistan) of a Chinese-facilitated nuclear barter — advanced missiles in exchange for uranium enrichment technology — underway recently between the Pakistanis and North Korea, the third member of Washington's Axis of Evil.

Seen from Islamabad, the South Asian region's nuclear danger sprang from an entirely different source — India primarily — and thus required a remedy tailored specifically to India. Musharraf outlined the Pakistani point of view in this regard in an address to the U N General Assembly in November 2001 — not long after 9/11. Reassuring his audience that Pakistan was "fully alive to the responsibilities of its nuclear status," Musharraf pointed out that "a stable South Asian security mechanism" could be achieved; but its achievement was dependent on "a peaceful resolution of disputes, preservation of nuclear and conventional balance, confidence building measures and non-use of force prescribed by the UN Charter." The linkage to Kashmir was obvious in the first of these, Pakistanis' anxiety over their country's diminishing ability to keep pace with Indian military acquisitions, whether conventional or nuclear, in the second.

This anxiety showed up in a different context some months later, in June 2002, in Weymouth's above-mentioned interview with Musharraf. Speaking of the "root cause" of Kashmir, the Pakistani president offered a formulation that seemed to depart from the standard interpretation of Kashmir as the single "core issue" between India and Pakistan. "If you want a guarantee of peace," he reportedly told Weymouth, "there are three ways: 1) denuclearize South Asia; 2) ensure a conventional deterrence so that war never takes place in the subcontinent; and 3) find a solution to the Kashmir problem." It was the second of these, implying that Washington should arm Pakistan and thus be a conventional arms "balancer" in the region rather than India's preferred military partner, which hinted at Islamabad's actual strategic priorities: While sending a subtle reminder of Pakistan's unavoidable dependence on nuclear deterrence for its security, it also avowed Islamabad's conviction *that an enduring regional arms balance, conventional or nuclear, could not possibly be achieved irrespective of Washington's own regional arms policy.* It happened that this policy was showing increasing signs, Islamabad's apprehensions notwithstanding, of deepening military cooperation with India.

PAKISTAN IN THE "POST-POST-COLD WAR WORLD"

One is immediately struck when examining Pakistani reactions to American strategic doctrine by the profound lack of correspondence between the way Pakistani and American leaders tend to view the emerging world order. As outlined by Richard N. Haass, Director of Policy Planning Staff at the Department of State, in an address to the Foreign Policy Association in April 2002, what he termed the "post-post-cold war world" would not only be one in which "American primacy was unprecedented and uncontested" but also one in which "increasingly potent transnational challenges intersect with still important traditional concerns." Haass explicitly cited the India-Pakistan conflict as one in which traditional (rival nation) concerns would predominate. But the doctrine of integration, which he advanced to encompass the complexities of the new traditional/transnational era and to capture the ideas and policies of the Bush administration, left hardly any room for a conception of the world compatible with Islamabad's understanding of its national security predicament.

According to Haass, the principal aim of American foreign policy was "to integrate other countries and organizations into arrangements that will sustain a world consistent with U.S. interests and values, and thereby promote peace, prosperity, and justice as widely as possible." Integration, he said, was "about bringing nations together and then building frameworks of cooperation and, where feasible, institutions that reinforce and sustain them even more." Far from being a defensive response, integration, he said, was "a profoundly optimistic approach to international relations.... We can move from a balance of power," he said, "to a pooling of power."

Haass commended Pakistan in the address for having made the proper strategic choice, namely to reorient Pakistan's foreign policy and to "stand with the United States and the rest of the international community against the Taliban and al Qaeda." Simultaneously, however, he explicitly named India among those countries slated for partnership with Washington. "This is an era of new partnerships," he advised.

Haass' comments did not appear to hold out any hope that the United States would bring pressure to bear on India to end "state terrorism" in Kashmir or that the United States would actively mediate the Kashmir dispute. His comments seemed much more likely to endorse intensified military-to-military relationships between Indian and U.S. armed forces than to license the sale of advanced military hardware to Pakistan — an interpretation of integration that would surely be favored in Islamabad. Implicit in Haass' remarks was a steadily widening world of enduring partnerships. Yet, Musharraf was bound to wonder, as he did in an interview with Larry King in October 2001, whether Pakistanis, once the moment of their country's immediate strategic utility had passed, would experience once again the sense of "betrayal and abandonment" that had been their lot in past encounters with the United States. The doctrine of integration, seen from Islamabad, promised not so much a *pooling* of power among the world's countries as short shrift for the American-orchestrated *balancing* of power that Islamabad felt was essential for peace and security to thrive in the South Asian region. Pakistanis had grounds for thinking, in other words, that Haass' comments signaled not Pakistan's enduring partnership with America but rather Pakistan's far from commanding position in Washington's long-term strategic thinking.

FROM "MOST ALLIED" TO "MOST DISTRUSTFUL" ALLY?

President Musharraf presides over a multiethnic and economically weakened country located precariously on the fault line dividing the Islamic and Hindu worlds. The huge stresses and strains of Pakistan's situation are plainly evident in both its domestic and international policies. Once America's "most allied ally," Pakistan is today a frontline state in the West's war on terrorism — a war that has so far identified Muslim states and sub-state groups almost exclusively as the enemy. Whether, how long, and how zealously Muslim Pakistan will choose to remain a frontline state in this war will depend largely on the reckoning Islamabad makes of the potential gains for its national interest — its continuing strategic "fit," in other words, with evolving U.S. security doctrine and policy. For U.S. policymakers, heading off deepening Pakistani suspicions of American strategic intentions — ensuring, in other words, that Pakistan does not end up as America's "most distrustful ally" — presents a continuing challenge.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of APCSS, U.S. Pacific Command, the U.S. Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

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Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies



SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

MARCH 2003

Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies

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A Marriage of Convenience: Russia's Response to U.S. Security Policies

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R O U B E N A Z I Z I A N

Executive Summary

- Russia was one of the first countries to condemn the terrorist attacks on September 11 and pledge support to the U.S. war against al Qaeda and the Taliban. Moscow's support of the U.S.-led military campaign in Afghanistan was fully consistent with Russia's own attempts to contain the rise of Islamic extremism in Afghanistan and Central Asia and its spillover to Russia's Muslim regions, especially Chechnya.
- Even as Washington and Moscow profess to share the same aims in the global fight against terrorism, the two states disagree on the sources of international terrorism and remain competitors for influence in the Caucasus and Central Asia. This dichotomy raises many questions about the future strategic alignment of states in the region and Russia's future relations with the United States.
- The tension between Washington and Moscow also underscores Russian anxiety about America projecting its power at will in the post-September 11 era. Moscow calls for restraint and diplomacy when dealing with Iraq and North Korea, and condemns attempts to use preemptive strikes and bypass the United Nations.
- At the same time, Russia continues to use its influence in the former Soviet states to advance its geopolitical interests and has threatened preemptive strikes against neighboring Georgia, which is accused of harboring Chechen militants.
- Russia is disappointed that the United States continues to criticize its military operations in Chechnya and refuses to treat Chechen separatism as an international terrorist phenomenon.
- Moscow and Washington share a common approach to key aspects of non-proliferation but remain divided on the issue of Russia's assistance to Iran in the construction of nuclear reactors.
- Russia calls for a regional approach for the North Korean nuclear challenge and is promoting a broader regional security dialogue to deal with the Korean peace process.
- U.S.-Russian cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region remains limited. This lack of cooperation along with the continuing Russo-Japanese territorial disagreement, objectively increases Moscow's dependence on China. It would be in the U.S. interests to more fully engage Russia in the Northeast Asian security discussions and thereby assist the full normalization of Russo-Japanese relations.

U.S.-RUSSIA RELATIONS AFTER SEPTEMBER 11

President Vladimir Putin was the first foreign leader to reach President George W. Bush on September 11 on Air Force One. He called President Bush again the next day to discuss cooperation against terrorism. That same day, in a nationally televised statement to the American people, President Putin said: “The event that occurred in the United States today goes beyond national borders. It is a brazen challenge to the whole of humanity, at least to civilized humanity.... Addressing the people of the United States on behalf of Russia, I would like to say that we are with you, we entirely and fully share and experience your pain. We support you.” Russia responded to the heightened state of U.S. readiness by standing down its troops and canceling strategic bomber and missile exercises scheduled for mid-September. Moscow shared intelligence information about the infrastructure, locations, and training facilities of international terrorists and agreed to overflights by foreign planes and to their use of former Soviet air bases in the Central Asian nations.

In the Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin on Counterterrorism Cooperation signed on May 24, 2002, Washington and Moscow reaffirmed their commitment to fight terrorism in all its forms and commended the efforts of the worldwide coalition against terrorism since the tragic events of September 11, 2001. They urged the member nations of the coalition to continue their concerted action to deny safe haven to terrorists; to destroy their financial, logistical, communications, and other operational networks; and to bring terrorists to justice. They noted with satisfaction that U.S.-Russia counterterrorism cooperation was making an important contribution to the global coalition against terrorism.

The counterterrorism cooperation has improved U.S.-Russia relations, which had cooled after the arrival of the Republican administration. In the Declaration on New Strategic Relationship signed during President Bush’s visit to Russia in May 2002, Moscow and Washington declared that the era in which the United States and Russia saw each other as an enemy or strategic threat had ended.

Vladimir Putin’s support for George W. Bush was consistent with his efforts to draw world attention to the terrorist threat. From the beginning of his presidency in January 2000, Putin pushed the idea of a concerted campaign against terrorism with American and European leaders. He was one of the first to raise the alarm about terrorist training camps in Afghanistan and to warn of linkages between these camps, well-financed terrorist networks, and Islamic militant groups operating in Europe and Eurasia. Russia also actively supported the Northern Alliance in its struggle with the Taliban in Afghanistan. In December 2000, Moscow joined Washington in supporting United Nations’ sanctions against the Taliban and later appealed for sanctions against Pakistan for aiding the Taliban.

In explaining his support for the American-led antiterrorist coalition after September 11, Vladimir Putin said that Russia had also been a victim of terrorism. Specifically, he referred to the apartment building bombings two years earlier in Moscow and two other cities that killed 300 people. Moscow’s support of the U.S.-led military campaign in Afghanistan was therefore fully consistent with its own attempts to contain the rise of Islamic extremism in Afghanistan and Central Asia and its spillover to Russia’s Muslim regions, especially Chechnya. In 1999, certain Russian officials were even suggesting surgical military attacks against Taliban as a preventative measure. The Russian interest was summarized by the Chairman of the Federation Council (Upper Chamber) Foreign Affairs Committee Mikhail Margelov, who said on 22 December 2002 that for the first

time in many decades Russia had enhanced its national security without sacrificing the lives of its soldiers. "I am absolutely certain that if the United States had not come into Afghanistan, then we would have had to do so ourselves in order to defend our security from the Taliban," Margelov said.

LACK OF CONSENSUS ON CHECHNYA

A major concession that Moscow received in exchange for its support for the anti-terrorist campaign was the softening of U.S. criticism of Russian conduct in Chechnya. Before September 11, Russia had faced severe criticism for human rights abuses connected with its campaign against Chechen separatists. In a telephone conversation with President Bush two days after the attack, Putin spoke of acting against "a common foe" in Chechnya. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer called on leaders in Chechnya to "immediately and unconditionally cut all contacts with international terrorist groups such as Osama bin Laden and the al Qaeda organization." Washington, however, came under heavy pressure from Islamic governments as well human rights groups who urged it not to succumb to Moscow's one-dimensional approach to the Chechen problem. With the military campaign in Afghanistan proceeding faster than expected, the Bush administration soon started retreating from its anti-Chechen rhetoric. U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage set out the "new" policy very clearly: "We are trying to disassociate participation in the events in Chechnya of mujahedeen... from participation of the Chechens themselves who operate on the territory that is part of the Russian Federation. As for the former category, we enjoy absolute understanding with the Russian authorities. There is a certain discord when the latter category is concerned. We have always thought that a political resolution offers the only way out and will actually be a blessing for Russia."

Russia views the revival of criticism on Chechnya as a betrayal of the post-September 11 understanding for the Kremlin's fight against terrorism. A Russian Foreign Ministry statement on 25 January 2002 made the point: "It is surprising that the U.S. administration, which says it is necessary to fight any manifestation of terrorism all over the world, is actually encouraging Chechen extremists, whose direct connections with Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda are constantly being proved." Kremlin spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembsky responded to renewed Western criticism of Russia by stating: "It is impossible to successfully fight al Qaeda in Afghanistan and at the same time actually encourage its actions in Chechnya."

U.S. interest in acquiring Russia's support to use force against Iraq has prompted renewed efforts to narrow the gap between the two countries' perspectives on the Chechen problem. After his talks in Moscow on 28 January 2003, the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage told the media that the United States is working "very closely" with Russia "about the process of designating some Chechen terrorist groups as foreign terrorist organizations."

DISAGREEMENTS ON CENTRAL ASIA

The U.S.-led war on terrorism has also seen American troops deployed to areas long seen in Moscow as part of Russia's natural sphere of influence, including Central Asia and Georgia. While Moscow was supportive of the U.S. military buildup in Afghanistan, it was much less enthusiastic about the expansion of U.S. military presence into Central

Asia and the Caucasus. However, it was probably in agreement with a popular Russian comedian who said at the time, “Better the Americans in Uzbekistan than the Taliban in Tatarstan.” After eventually and reluctantly agreeing to the deployment of U.S. troops in three Central Asian republics Moscow has been demanding a U.S. commitment to withdraw them as soon as the campaign in Afghanistan is over.

To accommodate Russian concerns, U.S. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, in an interview to a Russian newspaper on October 15, 2001, stated that the United States was not aiming to push Russia out of Central Asia. The Joint Press Statement by the U.S.-Russia Working Group on Afghanistan of February 12, 2002 contains an assurance by the United States not to establish permanent military bases in Central Asia. However, Russia remains concerned about the U.S. military presence in Central Asia and seeks clarification on the duration of the U.S. military presence in the region.

Russia’s acquiescence to U.S. military presence in Central Asia has provoked criticism in China, not to mention among conservatives at home, and is prompting Moscow to enhance its own military activities in the region as well as energize the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which includes China, Russia and four Central Asian states. In November 2002, Russia established an air base in Kant, Kyrgyzstan, reached new security and military agreements and arrangements with Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. During his December 2002 tour of Asian countries, President Putin promoted the SCO as the only long-term stabilizing factor in Central Asia, implying that the U.S. military presence in the region should be temporary.

DIFFERING INTERPRETATIONS OF THE AXIS OF EVIL

The U.S.-Russia cooperation in the war on terror is limited by still divergent geopolitical and economic interests of the two countries. Beyond the dangers posed by al Qaeda and the Taliban, the United States and Russia see terrorism quite differently. Nor do they agree about the nations that sponsor terrorism. Moscow, for example, refers to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia as the main sponsors of terrorist activity in the world and wants the United States to pressure both countries to curb their support of external extremism. During his visit to India in December 2002 President Putin made very sharp comments about Pakistan’s role in international terrorism, referring in particular to its support of crossborder activities in Kashmir.

Russia sees Iran as a stabilizing force in the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, not as a state sponsor of terrorism. North Korea is viewed as an unstable neighbor, but not a military threat. In other words, Bush’s axis of evil is not Putin’s. U.S. actions against the “axis of evil” countries — Iran, Iraq, and North Korea — affect both Russia’s position as a regional great power and her important economic interests. All three countries are within Russia’s centuries-old sphere of influence, and Moscow wants to play a central role in any development in its geopolitical backyard.

IRAQ

Russia strongly believes that an unjustified use of force against Iraq will lead to disastrous consequences for the entire Middle Eastern region. In Moscow’s conviction, a full-scale settlement of the Iraqi problem is possible only through dialogue, which would take into account the mutual concerns of both the world community and Iraq. Russia warns of regional instability precipitated by regime change.

Speaking to reporters on 3 February 2003, President Putin said that Moscow prefers to transform “the Iraq issue from a political matter into a technical one.” Vladimir Putin insisted that the UN weapons inspections should continue and noted that so far they “have found nothing.” Following the completion of the inspections, the UN Security Council should decide what comes next, Putin said. He added that “he and most Russians” continue to believe that a peaceful solution to the Iraq crisis can be found. He said that military force should be used only “in the most extreme case.”

As Iraq's major trading partner, Russia supplies Baghdad with \$700 million in goods under the UN-mandated oil-for-food program. Iraq owes an estimated \$8 billion to the Soviet Union and Russia, and Moscow wants to ensure that any post-Saddam government honors that debt. And Russia's top oil companies are pressing the Kremlin to protect their extensive and lucrative contracts with Baghdad.

IRAN

Similarly, Iran is Russia's third largest arms customer (after China and India). The arms sales agreement signed in 2001 could bring Moscow \$300 million in annual sales and could reach \$1.5 billion over the next few years — a hefty sum for the military-industrial complex starved by Yeltsin's demilitarization. In addition to conventional weapons, Russia exports missile and civilian-use nuclear technology to Iran.

Russia has long acknowledged aiding Iran's nuclear power program, but it has always denied assisting it with any project that could help Tehran build a nuclear weapon. Russia's Atomic Energy Minister, Aleksandr Rumyantsev, contends that Iran has violated no international rules in building the two nuclear sites that were disclosed through commercial satellite photographs. When President Bush visited Russia in May 2002, he was assured by Putin that Moscow was only aiding Iran in the production of nuclear power plants for peaceful purposes. Putin also noted that the United States had pledged to build a nuclear power plant in North Korea that is very similar in design to the one Russia is building at Bushehr, Iran. Putin also said that Russia is concerned about U.S. contributions to Taiwan's missile program.

However, Moscow has tried to accommodate the U.S. fears about its cooperation with Iran. In the Russo-Iranian accord on accelerated cooperation in the construction of the nuclear power plant in Bushehr, signed in December 2002, the two countries agreed that Moscow will supply uranium for Iran's nuclear reactors for the next 10 years and that the spent nuclear fuel will be returned to Russia for reprocessing. The return of the fuel to Russia should help ease U.S. concerns about Iran's nuclear program.

NORTH KOREA

Russia under Vladimir Putin has been energetically trying to revitalize its relations with North Korea, which were severely damaged by domestic political change in Russia after the dissolution of the USSR. Moscow is interested in economic projects in North Korea, and particularly in connecting the TransKorean and TransSiberian railroads. Kim Jong II visited Russia twice in the last two years and has shown interest in Russia's model of economic reform. Russian leadership suggests that North Korea should be encouraged to engage in domestic reforms. However, Moscow's influence on North Korea remains problematic, which became evident in Russia's irritation over North Korea's threat to resume its nuclear program.

Moscow reacted “with deep concern” to the statement by the DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesman about the country’s decision to “unfreeze its nuclear program” following the termination of supplies of compensatory heavy oil to Pyongyang that had been made under the 1994 Agreed Framework between the DPRK and the United States. Moscow also voiced serious concern over North Korea’s announcement of withdrawal from the NPT. Russia has called for the strict observance of the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, implementation of the IAEA safeguards agreements, and the denuclearized status of the Korean Peninsula. At the same time, Russia is calling upon the parties concerned to solve the existing problems through dialogue on the basis of the earlier reached accords, including the 1994 Agreed Framework.

Russia has proposed a so-called package solution of the Korean problem, which consists of three basic provisions: first, confirmation of a nuclear-free status for the Korean Peninsula. Second, formation of a constructive bilateral and multilateral dialogue, which should result in an extension of security guarantees for the DPRK. Third, resumption of humanitarian and economic programs that had previously been implemented in the Korean Peninsula.

After conferring on 20 January 2003 with the North Korean leader for six hours Russian President’s Special Envoy Alexander Losyukov explained that the DPRK was of the view that the United States firmly intends to do away with the North Korean regime and to seek changes by the use of force. Pyongyang thinks that the United States is now “sorting things out” with Iraq, and then will take up North Korea. According to Losyukov, “these are most sincere fears; and this is the motivation for Pyongyang’s action.” Even though the envoy refused to clarify if Russia shared and sympathized with the North Korean fears, there is enough evidence to suggest that Moscow is very worried about the U.S. projection of force at will.

MIXED REACTION TO THE CONCEPT OF PREEMPTIVE STRIKES

Russia’s response to the U.S. National Security Strategy demonstrates Moscow’s attempt to interpret and apply the strategy using its own national security interests. On the one hand, there is a clear opposition to ensuring security by replacing the traditional containment policy with a concept of the preventive use of force. According to Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, “the threats and challenges arising for security and stability at this complex stretch of world development should be countered by a coordinated position of the international community, whether it is about the combating of international terrorism, the nonproliferation of WMDs or comprehensive settlement of the Iraqi problem. The most important thing is that an endeavor be made to work out effective political solutions based on the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which would take into account the lawful interests of all members of the world community. In the era of globalization, to put stakes on unilateral steps is not very promising.”

At the same time, Russia has toughened its policy toward neighboring Georgia, who is accused by Moscow of harboring Chechen terrorists in the Pankisi Gorge. Georgia has been warned of the possibility of Moscow’s preventive attacks on Georgian territory if it continues to be used by the Chechen militants and if Georgia refuses to cooperate with Moscow in stopping the militants’ incursions into Chechnya. While the Bush administration recognizes that Moscow has a legitimate security concern in Georgia, it has called for negotiations. Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov reacted to the U.S. position by suggesting that Moscow would strike preemptively “if our citizens are killed and if our

homes, buses, and helicopters are blown up.” He also denied that there were any parallels between Pankisi and Iraq, saying that Russia has “clear evidence of a terrorist threat [from Pankisi], while the United States only shows historical data when talking about a threat from Iraq.”

WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Russia shares the spirit and main thrust of the U.S. National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The Russian Foreign Ministry's statement notes that “competent American agencies have done a serious analysis and outlined very far-reaching tasks in countering one of the main global threats of today — the proliferation of WMDs. In so doing they correctly point out that today a flare of international terrorist activity has aggravated this danger.” The statement also emphasized that in the last few years, primarily due to the important agreements reached in the course of the Russian-American summit meetings, it has been possible to noticeably advance cooperation between the two countries on counter proliferation.

At the same time, Moscow is of the opinion that in order to advance the Russian-American partnership in the field of nonproliferation and prevent the acquisition of WMDs by international terrorists, the two sides should rely on traditional instruments of diplomacy, arms control, multilateral agreements, threat reduction assistance and export controls. Moscow also agrees that it is necessary to ensure the strict observance of fundamental international agreements such as the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention.

Russia acknowledges that differences remain between the two countries on nonproliferation issues. Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov suggested, for example, that if the United States is worried that technologies may leak out of Russia and be used to develop WMDs, the two governments should together take decisions to cut the possible channels of illegal leakage of information. At the same time, according to Ivanov, “there should be no unsubstantiated accusation.”

Moscow welcomed the signing of a waiver on January 14, 2003 by President Bush that permits Congress to release funds under the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (known as the “Nunn-Lugar Program”) for 2003. This program is directed to lending Russia assistance in the destruction of weapons of mass destruction and strategic delivery vehicles to be dismantled in accordance with Russia's obligations under international treaties. The Russian Foreign Ministry has expressed hope that the decision will give “positive impetus to solving other old problems hampering the full-scope Russian-American cooperation on nonproliferation issues.”

Russia believes that the U.S. unilateralist approach to arms control is more dangerous in terms of nuclear proliferation. It called the U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty a mistake, and remains suspicious of the U.S. National Missile Defense Program (NMD). At the same time, Moscow realizes the U.S. determination to go ahead with the program and has been attempting to limit its scope and get involved in its development.

President Putin stated on 23 January 2003 that Russia might cooperate with the United States in the development of a missile-defense shield. Putin stressed, however, that such cooperation must be carefully coordinated in order to prevent information leaks. The latter statement could lead to the creation of a joint coordination center that will track data about missile launches for transmission to command centers in the United States and

Russia. Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov also said it is possible Moscow will cooperate with the United States in the development of its program, but that such cooperation will only be possible if the systems are not directed against one another and if a legal framework for such cooperation is created. He said U.S. plans for the program do not threaten Russia at present or in the foreseeable future, but that some elements of the proposed system “raise questions.”

CONCLUSION

The impact of September 11 on the U.S.-Russia relations is twofold. The two countries have reached new levels of cooperation in dealing with the situation in Afghanistan and the related terrorist threat. Vladimir Putin’s domestic agenda is the other driving force of Moscow’s interest in closer relations with the United States. At the same time, America’s proactive stance after September 11 and its determination to use force against potential terrorist threats makes Moscow very uncomfortable as it fears further increase in the power gap between itself and the United States. The most important shift in Putin’s foreign policy is the decision not to challenge the U.S. preeminence and objectionable (from Moscow’s point of view) policies. Instead, Putin has chosen to accommodate U.S. initiatives in hopes of deriving economic and political gains in the short term and Great Power status in the long run.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of APCSS, U.S. Pacific Command, the U.S. Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

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Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies



SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

MARCH 2003

Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies

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Grudging Partner: South Korea's Response to U.S. Security Policies

S E O N G H O S H E E N

Executive Summary

- As one of the U.S.' strongest allies in the Asia-Pacific region, South Korea has strategic and economic interests in maintaining close relations with the United States, and welcomes increased U.S. commitment to the region. South Korea supports the U.S. policy of forward military presence as a critical deterrent against North Korea's continuing military threat, and may accept U.S. military presence on the unified Korean Peninsula, though on a smaller scale, because it sees the U.S. role as a stabilizer against other regional powers such as China and Japan.
- Since President Bush took office, differences over North Korea policy have strained the relations between the United States and South Korea. Seoul's tendency to focus on North Korean "intention" with its nuclear program as a deterrent and "bargaining tool" creates a rift with Washington which focuses on Pyongyang's nuclear "capabilities" as a direct, immediate threat.
- South Korea's position toward the U.S. missile defense initiative is ambivalent at best as it tries not to offend either China or North Korea. The U.S. policy of preemption and the perceived unilateralist tendencies of Washington worry Seoul as it fears that those policies could lead to a disastrous war with North Korea at the expense of South Korean security and prosperity.
- Differences between the United States and South Korea over North Korea policy exacerbates anti-American sentiment in the mainstream South Korean public, which views the United States as an obstacle to inter-Korean reconciliation and unification. The election of a new president in the ROK, who publicly disagreed with U.S. policies during his campaign, has complicated both alliance management and coordination of North Korea policy.
- To meet the challenge of anti-Americanism and maintain a strong alliance, the two allies should make a concerted effort to convince the Korean public that U.S. presence and policies are best geared for the security and a peaceful unification of the Korean peninsula. While emphasizing common interest and a unified front in dealing with North Korea, the two governments should prepare for a future alliance in a changing environment by developing a new rationale and force structure for continuing the U.S. presence in a possibly unified Korea.

SOUTH KOREA'S SUPPORT FOR U.S. POLICY

South Korea welcomes increased U.S. interest and commitment in East Asia. South Korea, like many other countries in Asia, has a vital interest in keeping close economic and security relations with the United States. The United States has been the largest market for the export-oriented South Korean economy. The United States has provided South Korea with security, a critical contribution to South Korea's stable economic development. South Korea recognizes the importance of U.S. power and leadership in world politics, and regards maintaining friendly relations with the United States as the backbone of its foreign and defense policies.

U.S. forward military presence is well accepted by South Korea for its own security interests. Both the U.S. and South Korean governments favor an American military presence on the Korean Peninsula as a critical deterrent against the communist North. Under the armistice agreement from the Korean War, the two Koreas still remain technically at war without a peace treaty despite recent rapprochement efforts between the two archenemies. Whether a scenario of internal collapse or desperate act of aggression, a failing North Korean regime armed with weapons of mass destruction poses a potent threat to the peninsula a decade after the cold war. South Korea hosts about 37,000 U.S. soldiers, the second largest number after Japan in Asia.

South Korea has worked closely with U.S. military forces in maintaining a strong alliance with the United States. Under the Combined Forces Command in Yongsan, South Korea's military forces are effectively integrated into the U.S. war strategy which maintains readiness to meet any threat from North Korea. The extensive military cooperation with the United States includes combined defense planning, joint training exercises, intelligence integration and sharing, a sophisticated logistical interface, educational exchanges, and defense industry cooperation.

South Korea has also moved to strengthen its traditional ties with U.S. military forces by selecting U.S. weapons systems for its ambitious military upgrade projects. After years of deliberation surrounded by controversy, in May 2002 the Korean government finally announced the selection of America's Boeing Corporation as the main contractor for the ROK Air Force's next generation fighter project, called FX. The deal, worth more than \$4 billion, includes Boeing's provision of 40 F-15K advanced fighter jets to the Korean Air Force by 2008.

The decision generated heated public and diplomatic controversies because the French competitor, Dassault Aviation, submitted a lower bid promising more technology transfers. Public opinion tended to prefer a newly developed French model to a more than two-decade-old American aircraft. Later, the ROK Defense Ministry acknowledged that interoperability with U.S. forces and alliance considerations were the critical factors in its final decision. South Korea will most likely adopt U.S. systems in other military projects as well, including the selection of the U.S. Aegis system for the radar system on its next-generation Navy destroyers.

Despite a dim memory of the Korean War and the rise of new, independent-minded generations within society, most South Koreans still believe that the U.S. military presence is critical for South Korea's national security as a key deterrent against North Korea's military threat. South Korea may accept a continued U.S. presence even after the North Korean threat disappears with the unification of the Korean Peninsula. Although there will be less demand for immediate U.S. protection, a unified Korea may find a U.S.

presence still useful and necessary as a stabilizer in Northeast Asia against regional powers such as Japan and China.

South Korea expressed its full support for U.S. efforts to fight terrorism after the September 11 terrorist attacks. Seoul announced that it would provide all necessary assistance to the United States. The government has sent a military hospital unit and transportation aircraft to assist the U.S. war effort in Afghanistan. To the U.S. request for combat troops, however, the Korean government was less enthusiastic. The government was wary of public concern about Korean casualties abroad. This was disappointing for Washington, especially given more active support by Japan—including the dispatch of Japan's Self Defense Navy. In the end, responding to continued U.S. requests for combat unit support, the ROK government dispatched an engineer battalion to help reconstruction in Afghanistan.

NORTH KOREA'S WMD: CAPABILITY VS INTENTION

Since President Bush took office, differences over North Korea policy have strained relations between the two allies, and shaped Seoul's view on America's Asia-Pacific policy. Washington's increased attention and new focus on North Korea as a main threat to its national security has not always been welcome in Seoul as it tries to develop more friendly relations with Pyongyang under President Kim Dae Jung's vision for engagement. South Korea found that its security interest vis-à-vis North Korea is not always in concert with that of the United States, which in turn made Seoul's position ambivalent toward new U.S. security policies.

South Korea's ambivalence about U.S. policy starts from a different perception of North Korea's threat. For the United States, North Korea poses a more immediate and direct threat to national security because of its active programs on nuclear, long-range missiles, and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD). North Korea is indeed the only country among other rogue states that has "capabilities" for producing both WMD and their delivery systems. Ending North Korea's WMD capabilities and thwarting its proliferation efforts occupy a top priority in U.S. nonproliferation policy, and have become a primary objective for Washington's North Korea policy.

Although South Korea understands American concerns, Seoul seems less concerned with the additional threat of North Korea's WMD to its own national security, given the formidable threat already posed by North Korea's conventional forces along the demilitarized zone (DMZ). North Korea's nuclear and other WMDs are perceived as deterrence measures against the United States rather than offensive weapons aimed at South Korea. South Korea increasingly regards an unprovoked attack by North Korea as unlikely and tends to emphasize North Korean "intention" as opposed to "capability" with regard to its WMD and missiles. Many South Koreans think that it is impossible for North Korea to use WMD on fellow Koreans.

South Korea's major concern regarding the North Korean threat is a possibility of crisis on the peninsula either through military confrontation or a regime collapse rather than Pyongyang's WMD capabilities. For South Korea, easing the tension between the two Koreas and preventing any crisis that could threaten South Korean prosperity has become the first priority. The recent revelation of Pyongyang's secret nuclear program created little panic amongst South Korea's public. South Korea and its political leaders

have been more worried about President Bush than Kim Jong II, fearing that President Bush would not have the patience to engage in dialogue with North Korea, and that a tough U.S. reaction would cause a crisis on the peninsula.

Recently, the South Korean government has begun to put more emphasis on North Korea's missiles and WMD in an effort to lessen the possibility of crisis between Pyongyang and Washington. While the different emphases in U.S. and South Korean policies remain, South Korea has elevated the nuclear and missile issues to the top of its diplomatic agenda with North Korea. South Korean president Kim Dae Jung strongly condemned Pyongyang's nuclear weapons as unacceptable for South Korea. However, the comment reflected Seoul's deep fear that without resolution of the nuclear issue, the Bush administration will not moderate its tougher stance toward Pyongyang and the nuclear crisis of 1994 will reoccur.

BROADEN DIVERGENCES IN U.S.-ROK SECURITY POLICIES

The different perception of North Korean threats leads South Korea to diverging views on other U.S. national security policies including missile defense, preemption, and unilateralism. The South Korean government worries that its participation in missile defense could provoke its two most important neighbors, North Korea and China. South Korea worries that missile defense antagonizes Pyongyang whose missiles are among the main targets of the program. Pyongyang has denounced the U.S. missile defense initiative as an active policy of aggression and a direct threat to North Korean security. South Korea's participation in U.S. missile defense could obviously harm its relations with North Korea, and jeopardize the reconciliation process.

Missile defense cooperation with the United States would complicate South Korea's relations with China because Beijing regards the real target of the U.S. initiative is its own ballistic missile capability. Once missile defense is completed, it may put China in a critical strategic imbalance in favor of the United States and cripple China's power projection capabilities in the region. South Korea cannot ignore Chinese concerns, as the political and the economic ties between the two countries have grown rapidly in recent years. Debates in South Korea have surfaced about whether a unified Korea should become more neutral or even lean toward China and away from the United States in its future alliance strategy. One way for the South Korean government to finesse the missile defense issue has been to claim that it does not have the financial resources to participate in the program. However, this is not very convincing given South Korea's financial dedication to many other military projects deemed important for its national security.

South Korea is also deeply troubled by the U.S. declared policy of preemption. Recognizing the aggressive nature of North Korean military strategy with over 10,000 artillery pieces aimed at more than 10 million people in Seoul, South Korea fears that any military confrontation on the peninsula would be a disaster that should be avoided at all costs. Seoul believes that any U.S. attempt of preemption against North Korea would lead to war. The U.S. preemption policy adds to South Korean anxiety as North Korean defiance on its nuclear program continues. Although South Korea has not publicly denounced the preemption policy, it is highly unlikely that it will support any U.S. preemptive attack on North Korea's nuclear capabilities.

South Korea is also concerned about the unilateral tendency of U.S. policy after the September 11 terrorist attacks. Despite continuing U.S. pledges not to invade North Korea and its commitment to peaceful and multilateral approaches involving United Nations and neighboring countries, Seoul worries that the unilateralist tendency may lead Washington to brandish hard-line policies toward Pyongyang without consulting Seoul. The worst scenario would be a U.S. unilateral decision to punish North Korea with a military campaign against its nuclear facilities. There is a widespread concern that North Korea could be the next target of U.S. attack after Iraq. Recently, the United States did not concur with South Korea and Japan's plea for continuing heavy oil shipments to North Korea not to escalate the nuclear confrontation, and punished Pyongyang by cutting the fuel supply. South Korea worries that North Korea's continuing brinkmanship may well trigger other U.S. unilateral decisions, including military action.

GROWING ANTI-AMERICANISM

Differences between the United States and South Korea over North Korea policy have exacerbated anti-American sentiment in South Korea. Many South Koreans have come to view the United States as a spoiler of the inter-Korean reconciliation process. To South Koreans, Washington's policies appear to create crises on the Korean Peninsula by provoking North Korea into desperate moves. More of the South Korean public is beginning to question South Korea's support of U.S. policies, which is causing grave concern for the future of the U.S.-ROK alliance.

The Bush administration's uncompromising policies toward North Korea, as perceived by many Koreans, tend to conflict with South Korea's engagement efforts with Pyongyang. As relations between the United States and North Korea have soured, inter-Korean dialogues have also suffered setbacks. President Bush's harsh views of the North Korean regime, manifested in the "axis of evil" comment and his alleged "loathe" Kim Jong II statement, deeply worry many Koreans, including those in the government. Bush's statements have raised anti-Americanism in the public mind because the United States appeared to be willing to take any unilateral measure, including attacking North Korea, at the cost of South Korean security.

Anti-American sentiments make many South Koreans question the need for U.S. military presence on the peninsula. The younger generations, including those in their 30s and 40s who are assuming prominent positions in Korean society, do not have a first hand memory of the Korean War. They see North Korea as less threatening and the possibility of another war as less likely. Instead, they ask why the United States is bullying the North and causing an unnecessary crisis on the peninsula. South Korea's younger generations increasingly see U.S. troops not as guarantors of security but as obstacles to reunification.

In an effort to exploit those sentiments, North Korea recently made an unusual appeal to South Korea to join in pressing the United States to sign a nonaggression treaty. The statement, in which Pyongyang repeatedly spoke of the North and South as a single nation, was apparently intended to appeal to the strong and growing public sympathy toward North Korea based on mounting tensions between South Korea and the United States.

Domestic issues involving U.S. forces have also heightened anti-American sentiment and public skepticism on the rationale of having U.S. troops in South Korea. As Korean

society becomes more prosperous and self-confident, it has become less tolerant of inconvenience and unfortunate incidents caused by the U.S. military presence—such as infringement of private rights by training exercises and crimes committed by soldiers. The issue of moving the main U.S. military base in Seoul, Yongsan military garrison, became the focus of an intense public debate. Last year, the announcement of U.S. plans to construct a new apartment complex at Yongsan base, a prime real estate in downtown Seoul, ignited public protests over the permanence of a U.S. military presence in the center of the capital.

Other issues, such as pollution involving U.S.F.K bases and complaints about training exercises, all contribute to severe public criticisms of the United States, and are making cooperation between the two governments more difficult. Even South Korea's decision to purchase U.S. military aircraft and warship systems was seriously criticized by the public, who questioned the alleged "imperialistic" U.S. pressure for a contract involving billions of dollars for South Korea's national defense.

The anti-American movement had a direct impact on South Korea's December 2002 presidential election. The accidental death of two schoolgirls during a U.S. training exercise and the acquittal by a U.S. military court of the soldiers involved caused huge public anger against the United States. As the election day approached, tens of thousands of people, mostly average citizens with their children, joined anti-American demonstrations in downtown Seoul, calling for the revision of Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) and a public apology by President Bush.

The surprising victory of Roh Moo Hyun, a former labor lawyer from the governing Millennium Democratic Party (MDP), over more conservative candidate with close ties with the United States, was largely attributed to the surge of anti-American sentiment. During his campaign, Roh vowed to seek more independent relations with the United States, and to continue engagement with North Korea despite the U.S. call for tougher action against North Korea's nuclear defiance. Although later president-elect Roh pledged to promote a more mature relationship with the United States, the two governments will have a difficult period of adjustment once Roh takes office, especially because the change comes amidst an escalating nuclear crisis on the peninsula.

CHALLENGES FOR THE U.S.-ROK ALLIANCE

The growing mistrust in South Korea about U.S. North Korea policy and other grievances against America make it increasingly hard for the two allies to achieve mutual policy goals in other areas. South Korea's successful economic and political development has brought a more independent and self-confident public attitude towards the United States in recent years. The current crisis resulting from Pyongyang's brinkmanship drives a wedge between Washington and Seoul, causing an even wider and deeper anti-American sentiment. The problem is two-fold; increasing public discontent with U.S. forces in Korea and policy differences towards North Korea, both of which tend to reinforce each other and create an even bigger rift between the two countries.

To meet the challenge of anti-Americanism and thus maintain strong alliance, the two allies should make a concerted effort to convince the Korean public that U.S. military

presence and policies do not preclude inter-Korean reconciliation, and are best geared for the security and a peaceful unification of the Korean peninsula. President Bush has already made clear on several occasions that the United States will not launch a military attack on North Korea. The Bush administration's emphasis on a peaceful and diplomatic solution to North Korea's nuclear program was well accepted by South Korea. Washington and Seoul would be wise to emphasize their common interest in preventing Pyongyang from developing nuclear weapons, and come up with a unified front in North Korea policy through close consultation.

To develop a more mature alliance, the two governments need to make a conscious effort to promote an equal partnership based on mutual respect. Careful approach by the United States in showing respect for South Korean national pride and public opinion will be helpful in ameliorating negative perceptions. The United States could deal with local complaints and demands regarding its bases and personnel with more sensible responses, such as paying more attention to public sentiment and local demands for environmental protection and sensitive training exercises around U.S. bases. The South Korean government needs to clearly state its commitment to the alliance for its national security interest, working closely with the U.S. government to ease the public tension between the two countries.

In an effort to quell public anger over basing issues, the South Korean government and U.S.F.K had decided to go ahead formally with the relocation process of Yongsan Base. South Korea agreed to pay most of the expenses, although it will take as long as 10 years to complete. In March 2002, the U.S. military forces in Korea announced plans to consolidate the 41 military bases scattered around South Korea into 20 locations, in accordance with the new U.S. military strategy. According to the Land Partnership Plan (LPP), the U.S.F.K. would return more than 50 percent of real estate currently occupied by the U.S. bases (potentially about 32,000 acres of commercial and agricultural land) to South Korea. This will help the South Korean government in alleviating public criticism towards U.S. military presence on Korean soil.

Indeed, the new U.S. military strategy focusing on forward deployment with small, lighter, and mobile forces may prove to be a win-win strategy for both governments. Such a strategy would help to meet the growing public uneasiness with U.S. military forces by reducing the burden of maintaining a heavy military presence. The U.S.F.K. may take a bold initiative to resolve controversial basing issues by moving Yongsan Garrison out of Seoul, along with base consolidations in other areas with help from the South Korean government. Such a move, however, should not be regarded as a weakening U.S. commitment to the alliance or the region.

Instead, the restructuring and the relocation of the U.S. military posture in South Korea should be designed to meet current challenges of the alliance while serving as a stepping-stone for preparing the U.S.-ROK alliance for a changing security environment, including the prospect of a unified Korea. The new Korea will likely seek greater independence in its relationship with the United States, and demand a new rationale for continuing U.S. military presence in the absence of an immediate threat posed by North Korea. Both governments should develop and clearly spell out a new objective for continuing the alliance beyond the current confrontation. This objective should be accompanied by a concrete and timely plan for appropriate changes in force structures and alliance strategy geared to a new environment and mission.

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Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies



SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

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Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies

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Almost Quiet on the Asia-Pacific Front: An Assessment of Asia-Pacific Responses to U.S. Security Policies

S A T U P . L I M A Y E

Executive Summary

- U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific region are mostly cooperative. Many of the policy and perceptual gaps between the U.S. and the region during the early months of the Bush administration have narrowed. New gaps between the U.S. and the region are likely to prove either ephemeral or bridgeable. Bilateral relations between the U.S. and regional countries have improved. Regional fundamentals such as the balance of power continue to favor the United States.
- U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific region are stable primarily because conditions there make the U.S. a vital partner. The U.S. is regarded as key to both ensuring regional security and facilitating nation and state-building efforts. Rather than only resist U.S. initiatives, therefore, Asia-Pacific countries have accommodated the policy recalibrations outlined in the QDR and NSS, even at times borrowing elements for their own ends. Certain close friends have nonetheless sought to nudge the U.S. towards modifying its policies.
- The general effect of the war on terrorism on U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific has been to ease difficulties in key bilateral relationships, create more robust relations with certain countries, and consolidate ties with long-standing friends and allies. Despite differences, opportunism and pragmatism have outweighed rhetoric in shaping Asia-Pacific reactions to and participation in the war on terrorism.
- Ultimately, U.S. policy towards Iraq is not a “tipping point” for U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific though there are near-term fallout in the form of anti-American protests. The North Korea situation poses a more serious challenge, but Asia-Pacific countries appreciate that North Korea’s behavior is the source of tensions, rely on the U.S. to take the lead (and therefore argue for bilateral U.S.-DPRK talks), and are generally willing to be supportive of the United States. All countries surrounding the Korean peninsula wish to avoid war.
- U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific are imperfect. The gap between popular anti-Americanism and generally pro-U.S. governments could undermine support for the U.S. and destabilize domestic politics. On all sides, rhetoric merits more restraint. Asia’s interest in multilateralism, now in check, may yet revive, and Washington should not ignore such initiatives lest other countries use them to increase their influence at the expense of the United States. Heightened U.S. engagement with regional countries has engendered high mutual expectations which will be difficult to meet. And the war on terrorism will have to be carefully calibrated to “local conditions.”

AS GOOD AS IT GETS?

This is a timely juncture at which to assess the United States' relations with the Asia-Pacific region. It is two years into the George W. Bush administration, a year and a half after September 11, the ensuing "global war on terrorism" (GWOT) and the release of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), six months following the new National Security Strategy (NSS) and in the midst of ongoing, intense policy debates about Iraq, North Korea and U.S. security and foreign policies more broadly.

U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific today have a number of positive features. Taken as a whole, relations with the region are broader, deeper and more cooperative than during any decade since the end of World War II. Unlike in the preceding five plus decades, the U.S. has diplomatic relations with every country in the region except North Korea — and even that troubling country is one with which the U.S. has had an on-and-off dialogue, though for unwelcome reasons, during the past several years. The U.S. is involved in neither a hot nor cold war with any country in the region. Popular anti-Americanism, naturally disquieting for Americans, is arguably not more intense or widespread than during the 1960s and 1970s. No revolutionary ideologies pose a serious challenge to America's espousal of open markets and democracy though extremism of various types is troubling. The scope and number of societal contacts ranging from tourism to education exchanges not to mention trade and investment have never been higher.

Other measures of positive relations are available too. First, many of the policy and perceptual "gaps" between the U.S. and the Asia-Pacific during the first nine months of the new administration have closed or lost relevance. Certain new gaps have opened, but they are not unbridgeable and may ultimately prove to be more fleeting than the present media maelstrom suggests. The most immediate of these gaps is the confrontation with Iraq. Second, U.S. bilateral relations with a number of Asian countries have improved over the past two years. Third, and most importantly, the fundamentals of the Asia-Pacific security environment continue to favor the United States. Complacency and hubris of course are unwarranted; but so too are over-reaction and exaggeration which would obscure the real challenges that do face U.S. relations with the region.

The gap between American and Asia-Pacific anxieties during much of 2001 was worrying but not unprecedented given the transition of administrations in the U.S. While the region was still grappling with the effects of the 1997-1998 financial crisis, including political crises, social tensions, and the weakening of multilateral institutions, the U.S. was perceived as unhelpfully focused on "go-it-alone" strategies against military threats from rogue states or newly risen powers and on military transformation, including the deployment of missile defenses. From the regional perspective Indonesia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) were receiving inadequate attention. Apprehension also was rife that U.S.-China relations, especially in the wake of the EP3 incident in April 2001, would deteriorate to a point where regional countries would have to "choose" between the U.S. and their close neighbor.

Even before September 11 these gaps were narrowing, though September 11 certainly pushed the trend further and faster. A massive post-9/11 U.S. "re-engagement" with the region in the form of political attention, economic assistance and security-related cooperation both on a bilateral and multilateral basis blunted earlier concerns about U.S. diffidence. Southeast Asia, and in particular Indonesia, which the U.S. was criticized for not paying enough attention to, have since become a hub of U.S. engagement. Asian interest in multilateralism, eroding prior to the Bush administration taking office, received a boost as the U.S. utilized various forums to garner cooperation in the war on terrorism.

The war on terrorism overshadowed but did not immediately derail debates over missile defense. However, eventual Russian and Chinese accommodation to U.S. plans to go forward with national missile defense (theater missile defenses having yet to be decided) has taken the edge off a contentious issue among the three big countries. All in all, as a result of calamity as well as design, the U.S. has minded the earlier gaps between itself and the Asia-Pacific.

A parallel part of this process has been the notable improvement in a number of bilateral relationships between the U.S. and Asia-Pacific countries. U.S.-China relations have witnessed three presidential summits, frequent and pragmatic consultations on international security issues such as North Korea and South Asia, newly issued export control regulations by Beijing and the first talks on human rights in over a year. Measured by relations in 2001, U.S.-China relations are less tense though not problem-free. Similarly, U.S.-Russia relations have been boosted by a Bush-Putin summit, Moscow's accommodation of the war on terrorism including the facilitation of a U.S. presence in Central Asia, and U.S. acknowledgment of terrorism in Chechnya. However, a United Nations veto regarding military action against Iraq by either country would seriously complicate relations in the near-term. U.S.-Japan relations avoided lingering trouble due to the deft handling of the *Ehime Maru* tragedy well before September 11. Tokyo's active support for the war on terrorism, through the dispatch of an Aegis-equipped destroyer to the Indian Ocean, has consolidated gains to the alliance. The U.S. relationship with the Republic of Korea (ROK) remains complicated primarily due to the problems posed by North Korea.

In South Asia, the U.S. continues to pursue "transformed" relations with India — seeking to make it a closer military and economic partner. U.S. relations with Pakistan received a dramatic fillip only after September 11. When India and Pakistan mobilized hundreds of thousands of troops on their border during the December 2001-May 2002 Kashmir crisis, the administration's shuttle diplomacy effectively alleviated tensions. Sitting on the India-Pakistan hyphen, however, is neither easy nor painless as subsequent Indian and Pakistani complaints about U.S. policies demonstrate. Southeast Asian countries, with the possible exception of Indonesia, became early, important partners in the war on terrorism. High profile visits to the U.S. by President Megawati of Indonesia and Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammed of Malaysia were indicative of the importance accorded to the region. The October 12, 2002 terrorist attacks in Bali, Indonesia have consolidated Southeast Asian (and importantly Indonesian) interest in cooperation with the United States. This contemporary trend of improved bilateral relations cannot overturn the reality that relations between countries may be simultaneously cooperative and competitive, subject to ups and downs, and differentiated across issues. Hence, these relationships might well change in the future. But, for the foreseeable future, the real challenge to U.S. bilateral relations with Asia-Pacific is not fixing tattered or broken bilateral relations, but sustaining recent improvements in them and managing unusually high mutual expectations.

Finally, regional fundamentals continue to favor the United States. The region shows no signs of developing either the multilateral institutions or common political culture that would undermine the preeminence of the United States or offer an alternative to it. No other individual country or even group or alliance of countries possesses the comprehensive power to challenge American preeminence. Trade and investment ties with the region as a whole continue to increase. Attitudes towards American culture, ideology and influence are certainly mixed, perhaps best reflected in the phrase "Yankee go home, but take me with you."

THINK ASIA

Why are U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific generally sound? The starting point for any explanation is the interplay between regional conditions and the importance of the United States. And this can best be appreciated by drawing comparisons with Europe where criticisms of the U.S. have been shriller. First, the Asia-Pacific's security environment after the end of the Cold War is still haunted by unresolved historical, territorial and to a lesser extent ideological disputes. Europe's is not. The Soviet threat to Europe during the Cold War was direct and adjacent. In Asia it was indirect and distant. Given Europe's comparatively benign security environment, the disappearance of the countervailing power of the Soviet Union allows it more room to maneuver vis-à-vis the United States. Unlike earlier, contention with the U.S. has fewer costs or perils. For the Asia-Pacific, however, the disappearance of the USSR, because it had less fundamental effects on the regional security order in the first instance, provides no such luxury. Finally, developments in Europe's institutions and political culture, and significant rapprochements between former antagonists, along with a U.S. presence, have created a mostly unthreatening security environment. In Asia on the other hand, the lack of institutions, community-building and troubled dyadic relationships plague the security environment. Hence the United States' presence in the Asia-Pacific, unlike in Europe, provides not just bolsters security.

Second, Asia-Pacific power potentials as well as nation and state-building needs and capacities are such that the U.S. is essential to fulfilling national interests — both foreign and domestic. Unipolarity inevitably breeds some resentment, but it also argues for accommodation — especially when concrete interests ranging from market access to security cooperation are available. The U.S. is important to Europe's future too, but not so fundamentally.

Third, in the Asia-Pacific, relations with the United States are an effective means of leverage amongst neighbors. In Europe, relations with the U.S. are not a currency that can be used in the commerce of intra-European relations — at least not to substantive effect. Not that states do not try. The countries of the “new” Europe (mainly the smaller countries of central and Eastern Europe) have recently demonstrated an appreciation for the importance of relations with the U.S. as a tool for ensuring their position in an expanded Europe. New Europe thus behaves much like “old” Asia — and for much the same reasons — relative weakness and insecurity. Good (or bad) ties with the United States profoundly shape intra-Asian international relations whereas they merely affect intra-European relations.

A fourth reason why U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific are mostly cooperative is because U.S. security policies as outlined in the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) and National Security Strategy (NSS) reflect recalibration rather than a transformation in U.S. approaches towards the Asia-Pacific. Asia-Pacific countries, for the most part, can accommodate these recalibrations because they do not mark a fundamental or threatening break in U.S. policy. For example, despite the din about U.S. unilateralism, the Bush administration's call for a “distinctly American internationalism” is not a departure from former Secretary of State Madelaine Albright's characterization of the U.S. as the “indispensable nation” or Joseph Nye's assertion that the U.S. is “bound to lead.” The arrival, by default and design, at this sole superpower status will not be purposely reversed by any administration to make possible a multipolar world for the purpose of establishing a balance of power. This would be an unnatural act. American preponderance is not new

to the Asia-Pacific. Far more worrisome to the region would be a substantial U.S. retrenchment.

The Clinton Administration's emphasis on "enlargement" of the community of democratic states has segued into the Bush administration's doctrine of "integration." The Bush administration's call for "freedom, democracy and free enterprise" reflects both American values and the pragmatic end of eradicating weak states susceptible to terrorists. The Clinton Administration sought a community of democracies to avoid war and build better partnerships. The Asia-Pacific region has encountered this aspect of American policy before and understands the American principles and impulses from which it springs. Moreover, as Asia-Pacific countries increasingly embody these values and characteristics, the gaps with the U.S. on this issue are likely to narrow though management of overall relations might become more complicated.

America's commitment to multilateralism too should not be misunderstood. If the previous administration spoke of "assertive multilateralism," this administration speaks of "a la carte" multilateralism and acts to create "accountable multilateralism." These are distinctions with a difference, but they are far from the break with international cooperation that many assert. At least insofar as the Asia-Pacific is concerned, the Bush administration has to some extent revived flagging interest in multilateralism. Almost no one in Asia views multilateralism as a substitute for a U.S. role. The U.S. doctrine of preemption has attracted much debate, but it should be noted that it is added to deterrence, not substituted for it. And a number of Asia-Pacific countries, rather than rejecting the doctrine outright, have sought to claim it for themselves. The take-away about U.S. security policies is that they are not fundamental changes in the U.S. approach to the Asia-Pacific or entirely inconsistent with policies pursued by Asia-Pacific countries. Hence, accommodation is possible.

Finally, most Asia-Pacific countries have supported the war on terrorism for a mix of pragmatic reasons. To be sure there are difficulties and differences on this score (discussed below), but most Asia-Pacific countries, aside from being horrified by the terrorist attacks on the United States, appreciate the dangers posed to themselves, need U.S. assistance to combat terrorism and derive a number of tangible benefits from cooperation with Washington.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific are not perfect. First and easiest to fix are rhetoric and tone. On all sides they merit more restraint. More serious challenges exist too. Narrowing the divide between popular anti-Americanism and largely pro-U.S. governments is a priority. Particularly unpopular governments or those in less representative political systems might try to "get out in front" or harness anti-American sentiments to oppose American policies to maintain power or ensure domestic stability. Pro-U.S. democratically elected leaders will also need to be responsive to their constituents lest they lose office. In either case, the effects would be the same: a diminution of government support for U.S. policies and deterioration in relations.

Another danger is failure to meet high mutual expectations. From the Asia-Pacific side, U.S. support for national anti-terrorism efforts and long-term political, economic and security assistance may be regarded as a "test" of relations with the U.S. Using the adjective "global" for the war on terrorism has permitted Asia-Pacific countries to argue

that terrorism in their countries is encompassed too. Efforts to reconcile expectations are proving delicate. India, for example, is increasingly doubtful that the U.S. will prevail upon Pakistan to “permanently end infiltration” of what it deems terrorists into Kashmir. Russia is ever watchful of distinctions in American statements about the character of the conflict in Chechnya. As for meeting long-term commitments, Pakistan is one country that fears any future diminution in the war on terrorism (as determined by the United States) could cost Pakistan U.S. support. The U.S. too must be wary of excessive expectations of regional partners. In the war on terrorism, for example, there are differences regarding the priority to be given to military solutions, an asymmetry of resources and capabilities, and divergent and delicate domestic balances required to maintain support for the war on terrorism.

Iraq is not likely to be a “tipping point” in U.S. relations with the region. But the way in which the U.S. handles the issue, including the nature and outcome of possible military action, will certainly shape Asia-Pacific attitudes regarding the United States. And on this issue the interplay between Asia-Pacific public attitudes and government policy could be especially important in shaping responses to the United States. Still, Iraq is not a strategic reset issue for the Asia-Pacific as it might be for the Middle East. Iraq is not an Asia-Pacific flashpoint, though responses of co-religionists in the region will be a serious factor. For the Asia-Pacific region, a war in Iraq, should it occur, will not be like the war in Vietnam—and even that conflict did not fundamentally change U.S. relations with Asia.

The North Korea situation poses a more serious challenge, but most Asia-Pacific countries appreciate that North Korea’s behavior, not America’s, is the source of tensions. Moreover, countries surrounding North Korea rely on the U.S. to take the lead on the North Korean issue and are willing to be supportive of the U.S. The overlap between American, Chinese, Russian, Japanese and South Korean interests is considerable, and there are grounds to expect that a negotiated accommodation as in the 1994 crisis can be reached. Only miscalculation and inflexibility on relatively minor matters such as the mechanism for dialogue stand in the way of positive outcomes.

CONCLUSION: PICTURE THIS

The past two years have been an especially dynamic and even dramatic phase in U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific region. However, barring any strategic surprise, the generally cooperative character of U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific will persist. The closing of certain gaps in policies and perspectives during the past two years, the improvement of key bilateral relationships, and sound regional fundamentals from the U.S. perspective outweigh new differences, the din of dissonance regarding Iraq and the Korean peninsula, and the recalibrations in U.S. security policies. Structural factors in the Asia-Pacific such as relatively weak security, economic and political conditions, combined with the importance of the United States, rather than any specific policy initiatives are primarily responsible for this current state of affairs. One can picture an even brighter future if divergences in U.S. and Asia-Pacific policies and perspectives are minimized. This is a goal worth working towards.

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