

**Containment by Stealth:
Chinese Views of and Policies
toward America's Alliances
with Japan and Korea
after the Cold War**

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Introduction

At the height of the Cold War, the dominant Western theories of alliance building in interstate relations argued that alliances tend to be motivated more by an external need to confront a clearly defined common adversary than by the domestic attributes of alliance partners.¹ The newly reinvigorated U.S.-Japan alliance,² however, together with the newly expanded NATO, seems to depart from the conventional pattern by emphasizing shared democratic values and by maintaining a high degree of ambiguity regarding the goals and targets of the alliance. Although these new features of American-led military alliances provide an anchor in an otherwise highly fluid situation in the post-Cold War world, many Chinese foreign- and defense-policy analysts believe that U.S. alliances with Asian countries, particularly with Japan, pose a serious, long-term challenge, if not a threat, to China's national security, national unification, and modernization. The ambiguity of the revised U.S.-Japan security alliance means that it is at best searching for targets and at worst aiming at China.³

China's concerns about the intention, scope, and capability of the alliances are set against a backdrop of several major changes in the region: the end of the Cold War, the simultaneous rise of China and Japan, the post-revolution reforms of Asian communist regimes, and the United States as the sole superpower. China's uneasiness about the U.S.-led alliances goes far beyond the systemic change in the post-Cold War world, however. Its roots lie in China's inherent weakness in the games of major powers in East Asia and in relations with other major powers in the first half of the twentieth century.

This paper begins with an overview of the interactions between China and the U.S.-led alliances in East Asia during the Cold War. This is followed by an examination of the post-Cold War period and China's policies toward the alliances. Finally, policy options are discussed.

The study will review select policy-relevant scholarly publications⁴ of the 1990s, when the U.S.-led alliances were perceived to have made significant adaptations to the post-Cold War environment and when China's perceptions of and policies toward these alliances also changed significantly. The survey also includes some interviews with Chinese analysts.

The Cold War Revisited

The signing of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty on 8 September 1951 was the result of a series of developments that sowed the seeds of mistrust and even hostility between China and Japan. It began with the 1947 reversal of the occupation policy in Japan. Prior to this, General MacArthur, supreme commander of the Allied powers (SCAP), pursued a policy of demilitarization, democratization, and decentralization in favor of the anti-war movement, trade unions, and leftist groups in Japan. A peace clause was imposed onto the Japanese constitution as a legal check against the revival of militarism. When the Cold War started to unfold in Europe in 1947,⁵ however, SCAP shifted the occupation policy from "reform" to "recovery." As a result, most of the purged officials and members of the business elite returned to their original posts, the shipping of reparations and dismantling of plants stopped, and left-wing anti-war movements were suppressed. The United States was preoccupied with building up Japan's economy as fast as possible so that Japan would serve the U.S. effort against the perceived spread of communism. The present and future needs of the United States were to be met at the expense of settling past issues.

On one hand, the occupation itself was an overwhelmingly American affair.⁶ Unlike the shared occupation of Germany, SCAP was similar to the unilateral occupation of Eastern European countries by the Red Army. Partially because of this, the American occupation enjoyed the luxury of negligible international complications as much of the prewar and wartime Japanese mechanism was restored, despite the strong objections of the Chinese, Russians, and other victims of Japanese militarism. On the other hand, the "occupation" was incomplete in that SCAP was responsible only for policy making, while the implementation was carried out primarily by Japanese bureaucrats and the emperor, whose role remained largely intact. The seven-year "American interlude" (1945–1951), therefore, turned out to be, at best, a partial break with the past. By the time the American occupation ended, Japan had changed much—and yet little.

In a similar fashion to the U.S. monopolization of Japan's surrender, the partial peace treaty with Japan signed on 8 September 1951 in San Francisco excluded many wartime allies of the United States, including the Soviet Union and both the Chinese Communist and Nationalist governments.⁷ The same day the peace treaty was signed also witnessed the birth of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, which granted to the United States the sole right to maintain forces in and about Japan. Such a security arrangement was to continue indefinitely until other arrangements were made.

The urgency of this partial peace treaty was due to the ongoing Korean War, a war in which the Chinese and American militaries fully engaged despite its "limited" appearance.⁸ During

the next twenty years, the U.S.-Japan alliance became the mainstay of the U.S.-led effort to contain China. Although the treaty prevented Japan from taking any direct military actions against China, numerous U.S. bases in Japan were indispensable for the U.S. military. For the next twenty years Japan was an “unsinkable aircraft carrier” for the armed forces of the United States, particularly during the Taiwan Strait crisis in 1958 and the Vietnam War.⁹

The hostile relations between Beijing and Tokyo during this time reflected an inherent feature of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. That is, Tokyo did not have a real foreign policy of its own but had to subordinate itself to that of the United States. Japan’s dependence on the United States in foreign policy was seriously undermined in the early 1970s, however, following the Nixon shock. Japan played “catch-up” diplomacy in response by establishing diplomatic relations with China six years before the United States did. This move was nonetheless perhaps more an overcorrection of Japan’s overdependence on the United States than a genuine reconciliation with China.

On the Chinese side, relations with Japan during the last years of Mao’s life were secondary to China’s relations with the superpowers and to its domestic priorities. China’s preoccupation with the Soviet threat was the main reason for a speedy rapprochement with Japan. For strategic reasons (such as China being a much weaker player between two superpowers), Mao and Zhou even renounced China’s demand for war indemnities from Japan. In October 1978, twenty-seven years after Japan signed the peace treaty with almost all of the belligerent countries of World War II, and following four years of hard negotiation, China and Japan signed a treaty of peace and friendship. The most controversial element of the negotiations was China’s request for an anti-hegemony clause, with which an evasive and reluctant Tokyo eventually agreed. In the midst of this geostrategic realignment between the major powers in the 1970s, neither side wanted to see the troubled past become a bottleneck in dealing with strategic imperatives.

The 1980s witnessed the most mutually beneficial intercourse between China and Japan in a century. Nonetheless, the past was never completely gone. For example, attempts by the Japanese government to rewrite textbooks addressing Japanese atrocities in Asia during World War II drew strong reactions from Asian countries. What some Japanese call the “emotional”¹⁰ component to bilateral relations frequently surfaced and often defied rational calculations of more tangible interests. From time to time high-ranking officials of both countries became victims of this “emotional” yet highly politicized polemic stemming from past enmity.¹¹

In retrospect, Beijing never fully supported the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. Its “softest” policy toward the treaty was its move from total opposition (1951–71) to reserved tolerance (1972–late 1980s). Beijing endorsed the treaty for a few years during the late 1970s and early 1980s because it was deemed useful in checking Soviet influence. These also happened to be the “innocent” years in Sino-U.S. relations, which were soon to be complicated by the eventful years of the late 1980s and early 1990s, when both China and the world underwent sea changes.

After the Cold War: Back to the Future

If anything, the post–Cold War era means a fluid and not necessarily friendly external environment for Chinese foreign and defense policy makers. In the Asia Pacific, a brief U.S.-Japan competition, notably in the economic arena during the first half of the 1990s,¹² quickly gave

way to a U.S.-Japan collaboration against the perceived threat from China. The newly revised guidelines for the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty are a logical development for that purpose. Beijing's perceptions of the U.S.-Japan alliance, therefore, have evolved from a perception of U.S.-Japan competition for regional leadership to collaboration for regional domination; from Japan as protégé to equal partnership; from "defense for one country" to "a regional offensive"; from cautious optimism to genuine alarm; and from tolerant to resistant.¹³ In specific terms, Beijing views the newly secured U.S.-Japan alliance with grave concerns and deep anxiety in four broadly defined areas: its scope, target, capability, and Taiwan.

Scope: For nearly half a century, the primary goal of the U.S.-Japan alliance was seen by China as warding off the Soviet military threat in the region. This was accomplished by rebuilding Japan's economic infrastructure, by allowing Japan to acquire limited but growing defense capabilities, and by providing Japan with U.S. military, particularly nuclear, protection. Although the end of the Cold War somewhat disoriented the alliance, it was soon redefined, expanded, consolidated, and retargeted, with both continuities and changes. While Japan's defense posture continues to be part of the U.S. overall strategy in the Asia Pacific, the new security guidelines have redesignated the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (JDSF) from defending Japan's archipelago to supporting U.S. military actions throughout the region, for peaceful or military purposes. In other words, the new guidelines have redefined the scope of the U.S.-Japan security treaty from "home defense" to "external oriented," a major departure and a "qualitative change" (*zhibian*) from the earlier version, which would be activated only when Japan itself was attacked. By both definition and nature, the new guidelines have gone far beyond the need for Japanese home defense. The JDSF would conduct military operations even if Japan itself is not attacked. With an open-ended goal and a broader geographic area such as "Japan's periphery," the treaty now is seen as repositioning the alliance for the next century.¹⁴

Target: Perhaps most disturbing for the Chinese analysts is the implicit, but unambiguous, indication that China has replaced the former Soviet Union in the revised guidelines as the main, though still somewhat hidden, target of the alliance. This is the result of two factors: a short-term one, the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, and a long-term one, the rise of China. The timing of the revision—following the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis—suggests that the China issue in general, and Taiwan in particular, were the main concerns for the alliance. The search for a new security framework for the troubled alliance was therefore expedited. But even before that, how to deal with a continental communist power was a main concern for both America and Japan. Not only did China not collapse, it is steadily turning itself into a major regional economic player with the potential to become a major military power. The 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis only highlighted Washington and Tokyo's apprehension. Partially because of this, the fifteenth U.S.-Japan naval exercise, which took place in early 1997 and was the largest of its kind, was believed to simulate anti-submarine activities in shallow waters (200 meters), which strongly resembles China's coastline.¹⁵

Despite these concerns, many in China believe that a publicly articulated containment policy against China will be a hard sell for domestic audiences of the two countries and for most of China's neighbors. Unlike the former Soviet Union, China lacks both the capability of a superpower and a crusading ideology of orthodox Marxism. A policy of containment against China is not only premature but would also lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy. An open-ended treaty with an unspecified target, therefore, will provide a constraining environment for such a case should it become a reality or be interpreted as a reality. Many in China, therefore, believe that the new treaty is the beginning of "soft containment" or "containment by stealth," to act as a

“preventive shield” or deterrent against the rising Chinese power.¹⁶ Despite repeated official “clarifications” and assurances from both the United States and Japan that the new version of the treaty is not directed at China,¹⁷ Beijing remains unconvinced.

To be sure, the potential of the U.S.-Japan alliance is yet to be fully tapped by both sides, as the wording of the revised security guidelines is seen as deliberately vague. Nonetheless, this vagueness is interpreted as an attempt to remain adaptable to any contingency. Nonetheless, this vagueness is interpreted as attempts to remain flexible for any contingencies.¹⁸ This deliberate lack of transparency contrasts sharply with the U.S. and Japanese demand that Chinese defense policy become more transparent. Some Chinese therefore believe that the U.S. demand for Chinese defense policy transparency is a double standard. A weaker power like China cannot and should not give up a certain ambiguity, as a form of deterrence, in its strategy.¹⁹

Capability: For Washington and Tokyo, the revised security guidelines do not change the nature of their bilateral relations. They are simply the continuation of a good piece of statecraft that utilizes the comparative advantages of both.²⁰ For many Chinese analysts, however, the pacifist image of Japan is not wholly accurate. Japan plays a vital supporting role for the U.S. military in Asia, not only acting as an “unsinkable aircraft carrier” but also providing abundant financial support for U.S. bases in Japan.

Beijing, therefore, perceives the newly revised security guidelines as having the potential to project, throughout the Asia Pacific, the military forces of the United States and Japan, the two most powerful states, economically and militarily, in the world.²¹ Throughout most of the twentieth century, the Asia Pacific was dominated by one major power at a time.²² During the Cold War, the Chinese were used to, though they did not necessarily like, the presence of the U.S. military in Asia, either as China’s friend or foe.²³ The JSDF, as the name suggests, would be activated only when Japan itself was attacked. There is no question that the JSDF will still play a secondary role under the revised guidelines. Nonetheless, some in China have become quite concerned that, perhaps for the first time in this century, China faces the real possibility that it may have to deal with two, and certainly the most developed and most powerful, major powers in the region.²⁴ Perhaps because of this concern, China rejects Japan’s argument that the main target of the theater missile defense (TMD) shield is North Korea,²⁵ and has warned the alliance about the serious consequences of researching and deploying TMD systems in the Far East.²⁶

Taiwan: Lastly, China views the new guidelines of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty as a significant factor in, if not a threat to, unification with Taiwan.²⁷ In the past one hundred years, both Japan and the United States have played a crucial role in separating Taiwan from the mainland, either through colonization or by making the island a de facto protégé. Such a prolonged separation from the mainland has led to the current situation in which the Chinese in Taiwan increasingly demand, with or without open or tacit support from Washington and/or Tokyo, an independent identity from the mainland. The new guidelines are viewed as prolonging the status quo (de facto separation) at best, and as encouraging Taiwan to move further from the mainland at worst.

Whatever the case, Chinese analysts believe that Taiwan can be the most useful instrument for the U.S.-led alliance to deter and contain a rising China should such a need become necessary. In addition to this geostrategic value of the island, Taiwan’s separateness also serves a whole range of U.S. interests including commercial, high-tech, and military export. Last but not least, the island’s dynamic democratization bears a strong symbol of American values.²⁸ Given these vital interests of the United States with regard to relations with Taiwan, it is

almost impossible for the U.S.-led alliance to ignore Taiwan. Indeed, some go so far as to argue that it will be a surprise if the new guidelines do not cover Taiwan and its surrounding areas.²⁹

Taiwan's strategic value for the United States, however, does not necessarily mean the latter now actively seeks a confrontation with China over Taiwan. Washington's long-term interest, according to some in Beijing, is to maintain its pivotal position among various Asian powers and, at the same time, to consolidate and prolong its dominance in the Asia Pacific. This long-term interest of the United States requires the status quo across the Taiwan Strait so that neither Beijing or Taipei would be tempted to change it. Washington, therefore, neither desires nor is preparing for an all-out military confrontation with Beijing over the Taiwan issue in the not-so-distant future. This, however, does not rule out the possibility of a limited military intervention by the United States with the help of Japan if the mainland initiates military action against Taiwan for national unification. To discourage and deter both sides from unilaterally altering the status quo, ambiguity is necessary so that neither side would be sure of Washington's likely reaction. Such an ambiguity is also designed to silence domestic critics, particularly the powerful pro-Taiwan lobby and its supporters in Congress.³⁰ Nonetheless, Taiwan's domestic political dynamics may, as they have in the past few years, compel Washington and Beijing to face a highly volatile and potentially very dangerous situation from which no one would benefit.

Should such a situation occur, China would face a far more formidable foe. The binding mechanism of the U.S.-Japan alliance would, for the first time, lead inevitably to joint actions of the two most powerful military-economic powers of the region and the world. In other words, Beijing may have to deal with both the United States and Japan in any major policy issues regarding its relations with Taiwan. Already, the United States has reintroduced the Seventh Fleet into the Taiwan Strait, with many of its large surface ships coming from bases in Japan. The revised guidelines simply define, in specific terms, what Japan would do logistically and operationally for the U.S. military if Taiwan becomes a hot spot again. Chinese foreign and defense policy makers are particularly concerned with the prospect of a more active and growing role for Japan in the Taiwan issue. In geo-economic and historical terms, Japan is seen as having a stronger interest in keeping Taiwan under Japanese influence.³¹

The U.S.–South Korea Alliance

Compared with its deep concern with the U.S.-Japan alliance, China's current views of the U.S.–South Korean alliance are markedly moderate. This can be explained by at least three factors: China's pragmatic policies in the past two decades, its relatively favorable posture on the peninsula, and the treaty's mechanism and intra-alliance cohesion.

Since the 1980s, China's policy toward issues concerning the Korean peninsula has largely been based on a single criterion: maintaining stability and working toward a peaceful solution of the issue. Although Mao was also extremely concerned about the stability of the peninsula,³² it was during Deng's reform decades that China started to actively pursue such a policy by developing working relations with all parties concerned, particularly the two Koreas. Ever since the early 1980s, China has made clear, publicly and privately, that it supports only "peaceful" and "reasonable" means of Korean reunification.³³ Beijing continues to support the North publicly, but this support is not unconditional. For example, China chose not to condemn North Korea publicly after the 1983 Rangoon explosion and the 1987 bombing of a South Korean airliner, which drew an international outcry and destabilized the sensitive Ko-

rean peninsula. But neither did China defend the North's behavior. Meanwhile, China also tries to create an environment in which the North will eventually find its own way to have normal relations with the outside world. For these purposes, North Korean leaders have been carefully provided with opportunities to get acquainted with China's economic reforms and other domestic changes. China even brokered a series of U.S.–North Korean diplomatic meetings at the councilor level in Beijing during the late 1980s. In the 1990s, Beijing has normalized relations with Seoul, supports “dual entry” of the two Koreas into the United Nations, is cooperating in the resolution of the North Korean nuclear-weapons issue, publicly opposes disturbances of the stability of the peninsula from any direction, and is participating in the Four-Party Talks for a peace treaty in Korea. In order to avoid military accidents, Beijing believes that all the concerned parties should realize the potentially disastrous consequences of conflict and therefore restrain their own rhetoric and behavior. Rather than military threat, economic cooperation and dialogue should be the means to build up trust.³⁴ These policies stabilize the peninsula and parallel the interests of all the major powers in the region.

One outcome of these Chinese policies is Beijing's favorable position on the Korean peninsula, at least for the time being. China is perhaps the only major power that has had normal working relations with both North and South Korea for quite some time. Its relatively recent but rapidly growing relations with Seoul benefit Beijing enormously, not only in terms of economic exchange but also as a means to engage Washington and Tokyo by fostering identical and parallel interests with these powers. Except in the case of a sudden and total collapse of North Korea and the possibility of a U.S. military presence throughout the peninsula, Beijing is willing to work with the existing security arrangement on the peninsula toward a more stable and more peaceful orientation. Not only does this enhance China's immediate security, it also contributes to its gradual rise as a key and responsible player in Northeast Asia. Perhaps the most important but unspoken calculus of China's policies toward Korea is that Korea as a whole serves as a buffer zone between it and an increasingly powerful and proactive Japan. A stable and friendly working relationship with both Koreas, therefore, serves China's long-term interests.

The mechanism and the state of the U.S.–South Korean security treaty itself also contributes to China's relatively benign perception of the treaty. The treaty does have a clearly defined target—North Korea. It does not pose a direct and immediate threat to China's security and long-term reunification with Taiwan. More recently, the U.S.–South Korean alliance, which remained sturdy throughout the Cold War decades, has begun to diverge with respect to the U.S. and South Korea's respective policies of “nordpolitik,” particularly since the October 1994 Geneva Agreed Framework between the United States and North Korea to curb the North's nuclear program and its implementation.³⁵ Whatever the case, Seoul's more independent posture within the alliance and its demand for equal partnership are not seen by Beijing as wholly detrimental to stability. The more recent currency crisis and pressure by the United States and the IMF on South Korea to implement reform and open its market also strain the cohesion of the alliance. These intra-alliance divergences are seen as providing some balancing mechanism in the region.³⁶

To summarize, Beijing's perspectives of and policies toward the U.S.-led military alliances in Asia are not necessarily negative or hostile. They depend on whether any specific alliance has the potential to undermine China's primary, long-term, and fundamental national interests, particularly China's sovereignty and national unification. They are also influenced by bilateral relations between Beijing and the members of the military alliances. Specifically, better bilateral relations with alliance members means less concern by Beijing with regard to the role of

these countries within the context of the alliances. In the past few years, Beijing has stabilized and redefined strategic relations with Washington and rapidly improved relations with Seoul. Relations with Tokyo, however, are moving in a less certain and more confrontational direction, despite Beijing's all-out effort to engage a new generation of Japanese leaders in the uncertain post-Cold War era. Beijing's perceptions of and policies toward the U.S.-led military alliances, therefore, also reflect the state of these bilateral relations. The following analysis will try to explain why Beijing is more concerned with the U.S.-Japan security alliance than the U.S.-Korea partnership and why Japan is more a "problem" for China than the United States is.

Toward an Explanation

Several factors are behind Beijing's genuine concern with the U.S.-Japan alliance, particularly Japan's specified and potential role within the new guidelines. The United States is seen as the dominant player in reinvigorating the alliances for the post-Cold War era. The historical legacies between China and Japan just won't go away. These issues are also set against a backdrop of a long cycle of major-power relations in East Asia—the simultaneous rise of China and Japan at century's end as both Asian powers try to expand their influence regionally and globally. Domestic politics and nationalistic sentiment in the two countries further fuel mutual distrust. These developments have led to a significant cooling of Sino-Japanese relations.

Facing the Only Superpower

There is no question that Beijing views Washington as the chief architect of the new security framework in northeast Asia. The consensus among analysts in Beijing is that the new guidelines for the U.S.-Japan alliance are part of the U.S. global strategy, with NATO in Europe and American alliances in the Asia Pacific. The U.S. goal, according to some analysts, is to engage peacefully and/or militarily the emerging power in the region with the following mechanism: forward military deployment as a shield, alliance with Japan as the axle, military deterrence as the baseline, and dialogue/contact as the engaging mechanism. Such a deterrent posture based on the U.S.-led alliances does not necessarily mean that the United States now regards China as a threat. Rather, it is based on the anticipation that in the next twenty years China will become a threat when its military strength increases. Some preventive measures, therefore, must be taken now in order to meet the needs of the future. This includes building up Japanese power and, if necessary, paving the way for its legal use outside Japan.³⁷

This U.S. strategic posture in the Asia Pacific is seen as based on two basic and constraining factors. One is the rise of China and the other is China's political system, which differs from that of the United States. They determine the basics of the U.S. policy paradigm in the Asia Pacific; that is, China is, and will continue to be, a target of U.S. defense posture. Such a policy of the United States can also be understood by U.S. relations with China relative to U.S. relations with other major powers. Compared with economic frictions in U.S.-Japan relations, peacekeeping disputes (Bosnia) with Europe, and not-so-stable U.S.-Russian relations (due to legacies of the Cold War, a still fairly strong Russian military, and Russia's internal instability), Washington and Beijing dispute in almost every area of their bilateral relations ranging from

political systems and human rights to trade, intellectual property rights, arms proliferation, Taiwan, and Tibet. It would be a surprise, then, if the United States did not perceive China as a “problem” or “threat.”³⁸ The 1997 and 1998 Sino-U.S. summit meetings at best eliminated some unnecessary “misunderstanding and enmity” outside this basic paradigm of bilateral relations. They nonetheless did not change the paradigm itself. The new U.S.-Japan security framework, according to some, is not just part of the “Cold War thinking” (*lengzhan siwei*), as most Chinese official rhetoric insists,³⁹ but perhaps also a natural outcome of U.S. perceptions of China and the current state of bilateral relations.⁴⁰

The Burden of History

One of the most salient factors in China’s perception of the U.S.-Japan alliance is China’s relations with Japan in modern history. In the past 150 years, the way China and Japan have related to one another has fundamentally shaped both their respective domestic politics and regional politics. The historical rise, fall, and rebirth of Japan in the twentieth century have always been linked to Japan’s policies toward continental Asia, particularly to China. Of the fourteen wars Japan waged between its 1868 Meiji Restoration and the end of World War II, ten were directed at China. Its conquest of China’s northeastern provinces (Manchuria, 1931–45) was the longest colonization of World War II.⁴¹ According to a Chinese account, Japanese military activities directly caused 35 million casualties in China and economic losses of \$100 billion (in 1937 Chinese currency). China’s indirect economic losses were about \$500 billion.⁴²

Curiously, the impact and consequences of this last, and certainly the longest and most devastating, war against China have never been fully acknowledged by Japan. Instead, it is referred to in Japan as a mere “incident.” China’s bitterness over this legacy is described today by some in Japan as being based upon “emotions” or a “victim mentality.” Behind this effort to minimize the consequences of Japan’s invasion is perhaps a deep-seated attitude of condescension toward Asians in general and Chinese in particular. For many generations of Japanese since the Meiji era, modernization means Westernization, which requires de-Asianization. Therefore, even as losers of World War II, many in Japan dismiss Asians’ claims about Japanese behavior during the war. As a result, many in China believe that China’s unilateral drop of its demand for war indemnities from Japan in exchange for future peace only made Japan more arrogant toward China. Meanwhile, Japan respects the West in general and America in particular, despite the tremendous damage inflicted by the latter during the war. This, according to some Chinese analysts, reflects a part of Japan’s national character that bullies the weak and fears the strong. According to this logic, the historical record can be set right only when China becomes genuinely strong. Otherwise, Japan will never truly repent its past behavior toward Asia.⁴³

Japan’s China wars seriously delayed and jeopardized China’s modernization. In two crucial periods (the 1890s and 1930s), China’s initial recovery from both Western challenges and internal instability was crushed by massive Japanese invasions.⁴⁴ The rise of Chinese nationalism and eventually communism was largely the result of China’s reaction to these Japanese onslaughts.⁴⁵ Largely because of this, the Sino-Soviet alliance of 1950 had a declared goal of offsetting the revival of Japanese militarism, which had cost both China and Russia dearly⁴⁶ during the rise of Japan as a major power. China’s fear of Japan, therefore, goes far beyond the Cold War setting, communist ideology, cultural traits, and certain leaders’ idiosyncrasies, but

is based primarily on China's historical experience with Japan and the major-power balance in the region.

At the end of World War II, a defeated Japan—as a result of the joint effort of all three major powers, the United States, China, and Russia—embarked upon a completely different path of national development by becoming a “trading state.” This “abnormal” state of Japan⁴⁷ actually paved the way for the rise of Japan as an economic superpower, to the delight of consumers around the world. Curiously, Japan's fundamental change from a militarist power to a moneymaking, peace-oriented state has not led to a Franco-German-style reconciliation between Japan and Asia. Despite the consistent efforts by the post-World War II statesmen of China and Japan to construct a more amicable relationship and despite the broadening and deepening of bilateral relations since the 1979 peace treaty, Beijing and Tokyo are yet to fully develop an environment of mutual trust and sufficient understanding in their interactions.

Given China's deep-seated distrust of Japan, it is unrealistic to expect that China would view with favor any security arrangement that involves and enlarges Japan's participation, let alone a U.S.-Japan alliance that implicitly targets China. Even though the U.S. military presence in Japan does, to a certain degree, cap the rise of Japanese military power, most Chinese analysts also see that Washington has historically tolerated, appeased, and even encouraged Japan's military buildup and expansion.⁴⁸ For geopolitical reasons after World War II, the United States pardoned Japan. The rise of China and rise of the “China threat” view at the century's end, according to some, will serve as another excuse for the United States to let Japan escape its responsibility for history.⁴⁹ Indeed, some analysts believe that the United States, and in particular President Clinton's trip to Japan a few days before Jiang's historic visit in 1998, played a role in Japan's toughened stance during Jiang's visit.⁵⁰ The worst-case scenario, according to China's calculus, is to face a dominant U.S. power with an expanding Japanese power. The current version of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty seems to confirm, at least to some Chinese analysts, that the worst is happening now.

Tokyo and Beijing: From “Friendship” to Friction

Even before the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, relations between China and Japan had begun to slide toward a problematic or troublesome state (*duo shi zhi qiu*), while relations between China and the United States were slowly recovering from their lowest ebb since 1972. In 1996, a series of developments led to what some in China see as the most serious challenge to bilateral relations since the 1972 normalization of relations.⁵¹ It began with Japan's 1995 decision to link its Official Development Assistance (ODA) to China with China's nuclear tests; this was followed by Japan's “excessive” reaction to China's missile tests in the Taiwan Strait and the ensuing reaffirmation of the security treaty with the United States. Hashimoto's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine in July in his capacity as prime minister was the first since Nakasone's 1985 visit. Some two hundred top officials and Diet members quickly followed suit. Meanwhile, the dispute over the Diaoyu Islands became explosive following the activities there of a right-wing Japanese group which, in the eyes of the Chinese, was tolerated and even tacitly encouraged by the Japanese government.⁵² Top-level meetings between Chinese and Japanese officials in the past few years have not seemed to patch up the growing rift, unlike China's summit diplomacy with other major powers.⁵³ In late 1997, Hashimoto's visit to China and Li Peng's trip to Japan seemed only to highlight the growing differences between the two Asian giants.⁵⁴ Jiang Zemin's historic visit to Japan in late 1998 turned out to be this century's last, failed, attempt to heal the wounds of the past, as Japan refused to offer a written apology for

its past aggression against China, though it apologized to Seoul shortly before Jiang's visit. Between the two Asian giants, history continues with suspicion, competition, and even possible conflict into the next century.

What is more, Beijing sees Tokyo as becoming more eager and moving even faster than Washington to contain China, politically and/or militarily, a major reversal of Japan's policy toward China since the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown. Just a year before the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, a leading Japan specialist in China argued that Japan-U.S. confrontation was more pronounced than their collaboration. Tokyo and Washington, therefore, would not be able to jointly oppose China.⁵⁵ Such a view was also echoed by the U.S. concern that America's heavy-handed and Japan's cautious approach to China might drive the allies apart.⁵⁶ Nowadays, Japan is seen as poking China, in a "measured" way, on one issue after another (Taiwan, the Diaoyu Islands, and historical revisionism), in the hopes that China will divert its limited resources to military buildup and thereby delay its economic modernization.⁵⁷

An immediate concern of Beijing is Tokyo's growing interest and influence in the Taiwan issue. In a major China policy speech in August 1997, Prime Minister Hashimoto made it clear that Japan would firmly maintain that Taiwan was an indivisible part of the People's Republic of China and that Japan desired a peaceful solution to the issue through dialogue between the parties on either side of the Taiwan Strait. Despite this diplomatic rhetoric, however, Tokyo's policies toward Taiwan have, since the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, undergone nuanced but significant changes. One is Japan's praise of Taiwan's 1996 election to president of Lee Teng-hui, who was widely viewed in both Taiwan and the mainland as pro-Japan. In the wake of Lee's "private" but highly politicized trip to the United States in 1995, an "unofficial" visit by Lee Teng-hui to Japan has been on the agenda of the Japanese elite. As a precursor to this eventuality, Tokyo in early 1998 simply ignored Beijing's warning and allowed the Dalai Lama to visit Japan for a religion conference.⁵⁸ Japanese politicians have stated on many occasions, explicitly or implicitly, that Japan will not sit idly by if Beijing uses force against Taiwan, a Japanese colony for some fifty years. Some in the Japanese elite have openly discussed the possibility of the "neutralization of the Taiwan Strait."⁵⁹ In the security arena, Tokyo and Taipei started in early 1996, for the first time since 1972, to exchange ideas regarding the security of Taiwan. This reflects the appointment of Zhuang Mingyao, formerly Taiwan's naval commander and once a cadet in the Japanese naval academy, as Taiwan's official representative in Tokyo, with full ambassadorial capacity. Xu Shuide, general secretary of the Kuomintang, expressed his appreciation for Japan's indirect involvement in the Taiwan security issue.⁶⁰ In his September 1997 visit to Beijing, Prime Minister Hashimoto refused to state categorically that Taiwan did not fall within the scope of the treaty. However, Mr. Yamasizeluka, secretary-general of the Hashimoto cabinet, was more blunt by stating that Taiwan was of course included. More recently, Tokyo moved to recognize the "official status" of Taiwan's passport, despite Beijing's strong protest. Both upper and lower houses of the Japanese Diet unanimously passed the cabinet decision. The legislation restored what had been discontinued in 1972 when Japan switched its diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China, and was hailed by the Taiwan media as the "biggest breakthrough" in bilateral relations between Japan and Taiwan in the past twenty-six years.⁶¹ The timing of the decision was also crucial, coming at a time when Washington was steadily moving toward more realistic policies toward the Taiwan issue⁶² and when both the mainland and Taiwan were probing means to resume cross-strait dialogue. Japan's reluctance to agree with China's Taiwan policy culminated in Jiang Zemin's 1998 visit to Japan when Keizo Obuchi's government categorically refused to follow the U.S. model. As a result of these developments, China, with which

Japan has signed a “peace treaty,” has become the target of the new alliance guidelines. Some Chinese analysts believe that once Tokyo and Washington complete their military posture and related operational plans, a strategic confrontation between China and Japan is inevitable.⁶³

Even the stable economic relations have recently become problematic and politicized. Ever since the end of World War II, Sino-Japan economic relations have been more important than their political/security ties. This is due to the fact that Japan was defeated and has had no genuine foreign policy since then. As a “trading state,” Japan’s economic policy is actually the cornerstone of its foreign policy. This is seen as fast changing, however. Japan’s ODA to China has long been considered part of the “gilt loan” to China that followed Beijing’s dropping of its right to demand war reparations from Japan. In the first half of the 1990s when Tokyo negotiated with China regarding the fourth ODA loan, Japanese aid officials increasingly attached conditions regarding China’s human-rights conditions, nuclear testing, military transparency, etc. To some Japanese officials, to say “no” to China in determining ODA loans is part of the “normalization” and “maturation” of bilateral relations. Some Japanese officials even argue for big cuts in ODA to China, which occurred during President Jiang’s 1998 visit to Japan when the two countries signed the ODA agreement for the following two years (1999–2000).⁶⁴ This “frank” approach to Sino-Japanese economic relations, according to some Chinese scholars, indicates that the communication channel between Beijing and Tokyo has “considerably clogged” and become much narrower than before. It may not be long before Japan finally stops its ODA loans, its “trump card” in relations with China. Should that happen, it would mean the end of Sino-Japanese friendship and the beginning of Sino-Japanese friction and confrontation.⁶⁵

The Rise of Two Asian Powers

Even if the current Sino-Japanese relations are perhaps the most beneficial and least harmful to China of the twentieth century, the approaching twenty-first century may be challenging. Indeed, China and Japan are said to be more profoundly different today than at any time in the past, despite the rhetoric about a common historical legacy.⁶⁶ At the systemic level, the simultaneous rise of China and Japan at the century’s end is unprecedented in major-power relations in the Asia Pacific. While Japan continues to dominate the region economically, China’s recent economic growth has outpaced that of any other country in the region. After a century and a half of internal decay and foreign defeat, China is finally on a steady track toward modernization.

Chinese analysts believe that an economically strong, politically unified, and militarily capable China is perhaps quite uncomfortable for Japan, which is used to a weak and poor continental neighbor. They also notice, from Japanese commentaries and analyses in recent years, that many in Japan are concerned about the emergence of a so-called “greater China” economic “commonwealth” of the mainland, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and overseas Chinese communities around the world. Such a prospect would be conducive to the rise of China as one of the most dynamic economic entities in the early part of the next century.⁶⁷ As a result, China’s historical rise clearly unnerves those Japanese with an “island mentality.” They therefore propagandize the “China threat,” politicize economic relations with China, and use the United States and the Taiwan issue to slow or even obstruct the rise of China.⁶⁸ Internally, the JSDF already views China as the main potential threat to Japan, particularly the PLA’s growing naval, air, and nuclear striking capabilities, which will be capable of controlling the entire South China Sea by 2015.⁶⁹

Japan, too, is seen as being at a historical juncture. It aims to cash in its vast economic power for political influence and military capabilities. Despite Japan's prolonged economic slowdown and financial crisis, most analysts tend to believe that the basics of the Japanese economy—manufacturing capabilities and huge financial reserves—remain strong and competitive. Japan's defense postures and policies in the 1990s exemplify this trend. Analysts also frequently point out that Japan is already the second-largest military spender in the world. And, after years of persistent effort, Japan's naval forces have considerably strengthened and improved, and some of their equipment parallels or even surpasses that of the Americans.⁷⁰

The revised guidelines of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty accelerate this trend of Japanese naval and air buildup. On 17 May 1996, Hashimoto signed a decision to launch Japan's first spy satellite in the near future. Five days later, the Japanese Diet approved setting up a central intelligence agency in early 1997 with 1,650 employees by combining and expanding five existing intelligence institutions. Later in 1997, thirty additional intelligence-gathering posts were set up, to be operational by April 1998. These developments point to a major effort by Japan to acquire independent intelligence-gathering capabilities, a first step toward a more independent defense posture. It also means, according to some in China, a likely increase in the SDF's influence in Japan's foreign and defense policy making.⁷¹ The U.S. reasoning that an expanded U.S.-Japan Security Treaty will contain an otherwise uncontrollable rise of Japanese military power is far from convincing. To the contrary, the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in both its traditional and contemporary forms is considered by China a "shell" for "hatching" the Japanese "chick." The security treaty may have prevented Japan from developing its own nuclear weapons. It nonetheless has contributed significantly to the building up of its conventional capabilities.⁷² Under the new guidelines, the American factor will no longer be counted on for home defense only. It has become a convenient and legitimate outlet for operating JSDF outside Japan.⁷³

If Japan's potential to develop its own nuclear weapons is still a significant "if," Tokyo's acquiescence in and even support of the U.S. nuclear deterrence strategy within the alliance's framework remains a source of puzzlement and concern for Chinese defense specialists. Specifically, they are confused by the numerous nuclear disarmament proposals made by Japan, the only victim of U.S. nuclear weapons, on the one hand; and Japan's support for U.S. nuclear strategy, which does not preclude a preemptive strike, on the other. Meanwhile, Japan continues to oppose China's proposal for no first use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances and non-use of nuclear weapons by nuclear powers against non-nuclear countries. Such double-standard behavior by a pacific country like Japan, according to some, is not conducive to regional peace and security.⁷⁴ Japan's "overreaction" to North Korea's satellite launch in September 1998 and its quick decision to join the U.S. TMD program at the year's end are seen as signs of a potentially more offense-oriented Japanese security posture.⁷⁵

Parallel with the new guidelines for the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, the 1996 Japan Defense White Paper specifies the "multiple functions" of the JSDF, including protecting Japan's "peripheral waters and sea transportation" and "neutralizing enemy approaching ships." This implies that the potential air and naval activities of the JSDF can be extended to the entire Asia Pacific. Meanwhile, the Japanese government has begun to consider how to protect some half a million Japanese living abroad and tens of millions of Japanese tourists around the world in cases like the 1997 Peruvian hostage crisis.⁷⁶ Some proposed types of U.S.-Japan cooperation include joint exercises, joint logistic support, U.S. access to Japanese airports and sea ports, defense-related research and development, and increased Japanese participation in UN peace-keeping activities. It therefore considerably expands the Japanese role from "self-defense" to

that of “joint actions” anywhere in Japan’s “periphery,” thus opening the door to a bigger Japanese role in dealing with future regional conflicts. All this occurred when Japan still has a “peace clause” in its constitution. Some analysts wonder what will happen if Japan eventually escapes from this formal constitutional constraint. That prospect, according to some, is not entirely unlikely now.⁷⁷

A “Pragmatic” Japan

The bigger and more assertive Japanese defense posture is perceived by many in China as part of a consistent tendency toward political conservatism in Japan which has gained further momentum during the post-Cold War years.⁷⁸ The conservative parties, both old and new, have achieved overwhelming control of the Japanese political spectrum.⁷⁹ One of the immediate items on the agenda of the new conservative coalition is to amend domestic laws so that the JSDF can be deployed and operating without the current legal constraints and without UN authorization.⁸⁰ In contrast to the conservative trend in Japan’s domestic politics is the disappearance of pacifism even among most socialists. The new generation of Japan’s political and intellectual elite are said to be “pragmatists,” not pacifists.⁸¹ Indeed, they are so pragmatic that any principle, including Article 9 of the constitution,⁸² can be reinterpreted, bent, bypassed, or even dropped, if necessary, in the interest of political convenience.⁸³

For Beijing, such conservatism is right behind the accelerated effort to whitewash Japan’s history of aggression. In June 1996, 116 Diet members formed “Bright Japan—A Diet Members’ Union” and openly demanded the revision of Japan’s textbooks. In October 1996, the LDP even wrote into its election manifesto such stipulations as “officially paying homage to the Yasukuni Shrine.”⁸⁴ Perhaps no other case is more revealing than the contrast between two visits to the Yasukuni Shrine by two Japanese prime ministers. In 1985, Nakasone Yasuhiro’s visit drew strong criticism and protests in Japan, while Hashimoto’s visit in 1995 attracted little attention from the public. It is therefore not a surprise to see the recent release of a Japanese revisionist movie, *Pride: The Fateful Moment*. It portrays General Tojo, Japan’s wartime prime minister, as an innocent and dignified politician. He was executed, according to the film, not because he was a war criminal but because Japan lost the war.⁸⁵ Such a revisionist trend in Japanese politics no longer aims at Asians only, but also at the “white” world so that “justice” can be restored.⁸⁶ This line of thinking even reverberates in intra-alliance relations, when Japanese refer to Japan’s contribution to U.S. military forces in Japan as *omoiyari yosan*—a “sympathy budget” for Americans who are too poor to pay their own way.⁸⁷ Beijing’s concern about an increasingly revisionist Japan also seems confirmed by some Western reports.⁸⁸ About two-thirds of the general public and members of the Diet support revising the peace constitution.⁸⁹ The possibility of Japan’s “nuclearization” in the future is also a subject of discussion.⁹⁰ Most Japanese under the age of 45 do not have much knowledge of their country’s past record of aggression, and an overwhelming majority of right-wing activists are young people.⁹¹ The ubiquitous armored sound trucks and buses of the Japanese right in Tokyo and other Japanese cities—which accompanied the visiting Chinese president everywhere he went—not only beautify and glorify Japan’s imperial heyday but also articulate publicly what many Japanese believe privately.⁹² Chinese analysts believe that such a sense of history and sense of justice among Japan’s post-World War II “boomers” will cast a long shadow over the delicate and fragile Sino-Japan relationship into the twenty-first century.⁹³

Taking these events together, Beijing perceives significant trends in Japanese domestic and foreign policies: from dependence to independence, from pacifism to pragmatism, and from

an economic focus to a political and military focus. The prospect of a more revisionist and assertive Japan is a bleak one for many Chinese foreign policy makers. With a growing gap in their interpretation of history, there are limits on the ability of the two sides to develop a stable relationship based on mutual trust.⁹⁴

V. China's Policies toward the U.S.-led Alliances

As the weakest power of the trio in the Asia Pacific, China can do little to reverse the process of revision and restructuring of the American-led alliances. A tit-for-tat confrontation with the alliances is not only impossible but also would be detrimental to China's modernization. The economic, institutional, and defense ties between Washington and Tokyo are far stronger than those between China and the alliance members. In this regard, China's total rejection of the U.S.-Japan alliance means little in the real world. Yet the alternative, total submission, is equally painful and unacceptable. Whatever the case, achieving a strong and unified China within such a regional security environment will be difficult and prolonged.⁹⁵ Such pessimism is perhaps the result of a perceived progressive worsening of China's external environment in the past few years, due largely to China's deteriorating relations with the United States and Japan. One analysis even predicts that China may have to face a military conflict in five to ten years. If such a trend cannot be reversed, China's long-term modernization may be in jeopardy.⁹⁶

Since neither confrontation with nor submission to the U.S.-led-alliance-dominated regional security structure is desirable or possible, Beijing has pursued its own "engagement" diplomacy with both Washington and Tokyo in the past two years, hoping to prevent the worst from happening. Beijing's policy has focused on two main courses of action. One is to articulate clearly and repeatedly China's basic position that the U.S.-Japan alliance should not target China in general and should not protect Taiwan in particular. Second, Beijing works to stabilize and improve relations with both Washington and Tokyo in order to make less likely the activation of the alliance. The result of Chinese diplomatic efforts, however, is mixed at best.

Verbal Warning

Beijing believes that it is necessary to articulate China's views in explicit language to express China's concern.⁹⁷ If China can do little to influence the alliance's policy, verbal pressure is a way to influence the implementation of its policy. On almost every possible occasion, Chinese officials and media warn Washington and Tokyo, particularly the latter, that the alliance treaty should not target China and should not cover Taiwan.⁹⁸

While China's public criticism of the alliance is relatively recent, Beijing has been publicly critical of Japan for decades. One purpose of this criticism is to maintain moral pressure on Japan so that the past might be forgiven but not forgotten. This reflects China's genuine concern over the revisionist trend and military potential of Japan. Beijing also believes that explicit verbal pressure is necessary to draw the bottom line for Tokyo, which is viewed as having both tangible and intangible interests in keeping Taiwan as a separate entity.⁹⁹

There are, however, limits to China's rhetoric. Indeed, there seems to be a breakdown of communications: no matter what China says, Washington and Tokyo are bound to strengthen their relationship; no matter what assurance is given by American and Japanese officials,

China remains skeptical; moreover, the more vocal the criticism of Japan's interpretation of history, the stronger revisionist attitudes there, even among "moderate Japanese."¹⁰⁰ Such a communications gap became even wider in the joint declaration of Chinese president Jiang Zemin and his Japanese host, Obuchi. Not only did President Jiang refuse to sign the joint declaration,¹⁰¹ which was much more of a statement of principles for each other's uncompromising positions, but he left a trail of highly publicized verbal condemnation of the Japanese attitude toward history wherever he went for the rest of his stay in Japan. Although the host country is not likely to forget Jiang's harsh rhetoric, Japanese media commentaries almost unanimously faulted China for such a historical impasse, which, for most Japanese, indicates that Tokyo was finally able to "say no" to China.

China's articulated views, however, should be taken seriously and not treated as mere propaganda. On several occasions in the PRC's history, China's eventual use of force occurred in part because its publicly expressed concerns or warnings went unheeded.¹⁰² The 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis was the most recent case in which China's verbal warnings and diplomatic efforts either were ignored or failed.

Diplomatic Maneuvering

Sino-U.S. Relations

While Beijing's verbal warnings directed at the alliance and Japan are likely to continue, diplomatic efforts have been redoubled. Beijing chose first to improve relations with the United States, the dominant player in the alliance. It was the United States that led the Western sanctions against China; supplied Taiwan with advanced weaponry, encouraging the island's trend toward independence; and finally countered China's "missile diplomacy" with its own "gunboat diplomacy" once the crisis began in early 1996. A stable external environment for China cannot be achieved if Beijing finds itself in serious conflict with America, the only country that now has the capability to contain China. A stable strategic cooperative relationship with Washington will also be conducive to a better Chinese relationship with Tokyo. China, therefore, should take the initiative to stabilize and improve relations with the United States.¹⁰³

China began by restoring high-level dialogue to defuse the crisis.¹⁰⁴ This was followed by developing parallel interests with Washington, particularly regarding the stability of the Korean peninsula. More recently, the Asian financial crisis and the nuclear crisis in the subcontinent have also provided opportunities for Beijing and Washington to coordinate their policies. Meanwhile, a series of rules of the game are being developed between functionaries of the two countries, particularly in the areas of crisis management and confidence building. The 1997 and 1998 Sino-U.S. summits signaled the opening of top-level consultation and communication.

One fast-track area of Sino-U.S. relations is that between the two militaries. For both national and its own professional interests, the PLA has adopted a more active and pragmatic approach to engaging its U.S. counterpart. Even when political relations had reached an impasse (almost eight years passed—1989 to 1997—before leaders of the two countries officially traveled to each other's country), military-to-military contact appeared to be encouraged by China's top civilian leaders. Some Chinese military analysts also perceive the U.S. military in a more positive light. A recent PLA analysis argued that the U.S. military has always been a "moderate" and "positive" factor in bilateral relations. The U.S. military supports the "en-

agement” policy for stable and healthy bilateral relations because it attaches great importance to relations with China and recognizes China’s role in regional security. In its professional role, the U.S. military tends to objectively assess changes in the international environment and its own limitations. A containment policy is impossible for both political and military reasons. Engaging China and the PLA, therefore, serves many purposes. It is a way to communicate with the other side, to enhance understanding, to seek cooperation, to apply pressure if necessary, and even to change China if possible. Contrary to the view that the PLA is a more nationalist institution, the same analysis defines the PLA, like its U.S. counterpart, as a positive and pragmatic force in bilateral relations.¹⁰⁵ The burgeoning military relations and regular security dialogues in the past few years between the United States and China seem to reflect this thinking of the PLA. Indeed, the PLA deems the current regular contacts with its U.S. counterparts the “third historical stage” following a brief U.S. enthusiasm with the communist-led anti-Japanese forces in Yanan during World War II and a sudden burgeoning of military cooperation in the 1970s. The regular consultations between the two militaries in the past two years are described as on the “right track for steady development” based on “shared strategic purposes,” and are expected to continue and to grow if there are no major changes in U.S. domestic politics and the international situation.¹⁰⁶

The PLA’s desire for more stable and more predictable U.S. domestic politics, however, may be unrealistic.¹⁰⁷ For long-term stability of bilateral relations, some argue that the biggest obstacle in working with the United States is the powerful and largely biased media that shapes the views of many “simpleminded and sentimental” Americans. Such a prevailing bias against China makes China’s efforts to work with U.S. lawmakers extremely difficult, if not impossible. Under such circumstances, it is politically suicidal for any American politician to tell the truth about China and professionally damaging for any China scholar to criticize the prevailing bias against China. Such a situation cannot easily be changed. China, therefore, should be patient and persistent in cultivating U.S. public opinion, while avoiding any policy initiative that will challenge the U.S. hegemonic posture. At the same time, China should also cooperate as well as compromise with Washington, particularly the executive branch, which sometimes needs evidence to persuade and guide public opinion in the United States. Any narrow-minded and extreme nationalist sentiment in China, deriving from either a siege mentality or China’s sense of itself as a newly rich country, would jeopardize China’s long-term interests.¹⁰⁸ This line of thinking was apparently part of China’s strategy for the two recent summit meetings, particularly those televised occasions for the visiting U.S. president. These cases—while demonstrating China’s openness and the elite’s confidence—also appear to be part of the strategy to engage the U.S. media and U.S. public opinion. A friendlier domestic environment in the United States is perhaps the most important factor in the ability of the leader of the U.S. executive branch to create a stable China policy.

For Washington, the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis also provided an unusual opportunity to reassess its China and Taiwan policies. The political elite realized that relations with Beijing should not be hostage to Taiwan and other issues such as human rights and trade. And there are limits to the ability of outside powers to play the “Taiwan card” and for Taiwan to play the “America card.” As a growing major power, China has to be dealt with in a more comprehensive way and at a strategic level. As a result, America’s policies toward the Taiwan issue have since 1996 gradually evolved from “strategic,” or “constructive,” ambiguity to strategic clarity.¹⁰⁹ The two summit meetings in 1997 and 1998 essentially renormalized Sino-U.S. relations.

Sino-Japanese Relations

While working with Washington is inevitable, perhaps the most important change in China's foreign policy is its efforts to deal with Tokyo on its own terms, in a more and more active and direct manner. China's concern was based on a strong belief that relations with Tokyo were becoming more problematic beginning in the mid-1990s, and that a lack of exchange with Japan would lead to what some analysts see as "strategic" misperceptions and misunderstandings between the two rising Asian powers and possibly to a vicious cycle of mutual missteps toward a "strategic confrontation" in the next century. As the older generation of leaders in both countries fades away, there have already been instances of inadequate communication and lack of understanding between the two countries. In order to avoid such occurrences, both sides need to have an objective, comprehensive, and balanced assessment of one another. This will be the basis for more positive interactions in bilateral relations.¹¹⁰

Domestic anti-Japan sentiment has also bothered China's elites. Until Jiang's 1998 visit to Japan, Chinese scholarly and public opinion of Japan was far more critical than that of the government toward Japan. Moreover, as Chinese politics becomes more tolerant and liberal, these opinions about Japan are being increasingly expressed. This negative opinion of Japan in the minds of Chinese scholars and the general public contrasts sharply with the vast pool of goodwill felt by the same group toward the United States, be it realistic or imaginary. Even Chinese dissidents, both in or outside the Chinese mainland, have strong opinions against Japan. Indeed, Japan is perhaps the only factor that unifies an otherwise diverse body of Chinese communities around the world. Such a negative view of Japan among the Chinese general public can be a double-edged sword with strong domestic political implications. For strategic and economic reasons, the Chinese government has in the past twenty years tried to suppress this growing anti-Japan sentiment. A more stable and better-functioning bilateral relationship with Tokyo would be more conducive to a less hostile perception of Japan among Chinese people.

While Beijing felt an urgency to improve relations with Tokyo, Chinese foreign-policy analysts also believed that a similar need was on the Japanese side. Continuous worsening of relations with China was not in Japan's interests, particularly when China had managed to improve relations with almost all the major powers. Meanwhile, an "excessive" pro-U.S. posture would jeopardize Japan's international image and not necessarily be conducive to a healthy relationship with China. Finally, Japan's long-term goal to become a major power with corresponding political influence was also believed to require China's signature. In light of this assessment, China believed that Japan would be more receptive to achieving better relations with China. These optimistic assessments of Japan's China policy were reinforced by three separate developments in 1998: it was the twentieth anniversary of the Sino-Japanese peace treaty; President Jiang's historic trip to Japan would be made after his successful summit meetings with both U.S. and Russian leaders earlier; and Japan had just issued an extraordinary apology (in written form) to South Korea. A Japan more receptive and more willing to compromise with China was therefore expected.¹¹¹ In retrospect, these assessments of Japan were inaccurate at best. President Jiang and his official team, however, encountered a unyielding Japan only on the eve of the summit.

As a result of this line of thinking, China stepped up its diplomatic activities to engage Japan. Premier Li Peng visited Japan in November 1997. Vice President Hu Jintao, who is widely believed to be the successor to Jiang Zemin, toured Japan in April 1998. Beijing even took major steps to improve relations with the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), a critic of Beijing since the 1960s.¹¹² In early 1998, Tang Jiaxuan, a prominent Japan hand in Beijing's

foreign service, succeeded Qian Qichen, a longtime specialist on China's relations with "superpowers," to become foreign minister. Such a personnel change reflects the shift in priorities away from dealing with "distant powers" to focusing on Japan as a mature, independent player close to China. Tang was also believed to be more able to bargain with Japan for Jiang's historic visit in 1998.¹¹³ In the midst of these diplomatic moves, China also began to extend to Japan its burgeoning military exchanges.¹¹⁴ In February, Defense Minister Chi Haotian conducted a historic six-day visit to Japan.¹¹⁵ For two decades after its normalizing relations with Japan, China's Japan policy has focused on economic and diplomatic areas. The issue of dealing with the JSDF was either bypassed or treated in a low-key manner. This time, the two sides worked out a series of exchanges of top officers, lower-level functionaries, and reciprocal ship visits. Chi's trip was the beginning of a string of exchange between the two militaries.¹¹⁶ Beijing even went out of its way to engage Tokyo when the PLA's top general, Zhang Wannian, chose, in September 1998, to stop over in Japan on his way back from the United States in order to brief his Japanese counterpart about his American tour,¹¹⁷ an unusual move contrasting sharply with Clinton's bypassing Japan after his highly publicized China trip in June.¹¹⁸

Implicit in these actions is a significant change in China's perception of and approach to Japan, from that of a junior partner of the United States to a full-fledged major power. These frequent and direct contacts between Japanese and Chinese defense and foreign-affairs personnel, however, have failed to reverse the downward trend in bilateral relations. Despite China's effort to engage Japan and some last-minute hard bargaining,¹¹⁹ President Jiang's 1998 visit, the first by a Chinese head of state, was simply unable to make Japan compromise on major issues (the wartime atrocities apology, Taiwan, and the U.S.-Japan security arrangement). Indeed, the summitry marked a step backward in bilateral relations, in sharp contrast with China's recent relations with other major powers. President Jiang played up his dissatisfaction with Tokyo's stance on World War II by making "questions of history" the focus of his speeches almost everywhere he traveled in Japan. With no breakthroughs in historical, strategic, and political areas, Chinese leaders and analysts are in a process of reconsidering policies toward Japan.¹²⁰

The Korean Peninsula

Despite the fact that China occupies a pivotal position on the peninsula, the legacy of the Cold War is strong and deep in Northeast Asia, a region with the most explosive potential on China's periphery. Any large-scale military clash on the peninsula will have an enormous impact not only on the entire Asia-Pacific region but also the entire world.¹²¹ Beijing has, therefore, tried to maintain the delicate equilibrium and stability on the peninsula. To this end, China has pursued a dual approach by maintaining traditional ties with the North while exploring normal, including economic, relations with the South.¹²² China's equidistant diplomacy toward the two Koreas since the 1980s is now complicated by at least three developments, however. One is the North's domestic development, the second is the ongoing currency crisis in the South, and the third is a more active and assertive U.S. role.

It is in China's interests to maintain amicable relations with a stable and friendly North Korea in order to counterbalance the security alliances between the United States, Japan, and South Korea. A stable, moderate North Korea would also lead to a more relaxed atmosphere in the region. North Korea's nuclear program, however, has placed China in a difficult situation. As a neighbor, China does not like such a provocative and unstable factor in Northeast Asia. Indeed, there should be limits to how much North Korea uses the nuclear issue as an

instrument to engage Washington, which may attempt to resort to the use of force if deemed necessary. Aside from the prospect of a unified, nuclear-capable Korean state, Pyongyang's nuclearization would also push Tokyo to counteract, just like the North's satellite launch in August 1998 prompted Japan to jump to the United States' TMD program and to plan to deploy its spy satellites by 2002.¹²³

China's reform and more pragmatic policies toward the Korean peninsula, however, led to a cooling trend in relations with Pyongyang. The death of Kim Il Sung in 1994 and the younger Kim's three-year mourning ritual apparently resulted in a considerable communication gap between the Chinese and North Koreans. Although Pyongyang has sought to improve relations with Washington and Tokyo since the nuclear crisis, no noticeable effort has been made with regard to relations with Beijing. Indeed, the "comrade-in-arms" relationship between Beijing and Pyongyang dropped to its lowest point in 1997 when the latter reportedly issued warnings of terrorism against both Beijing and Seoul after a top North Korean official defected to Seoul through Beijing in February.¹²⁴ Meanwhile, China is also bothered by North Korea's attempts to develop relations with Taiwan, as both isolated capitals appear eager to reach out. Whatever the reason, Beijing increasingly feels the need to keep Pyongyang on its side.

Despite these obvious difficulties in maintaining a "traditional friendship" with North Korea, Beijing believes that it is "absolutely necessary" to "maintain and strengthen" relations with Pyongyang for at least four related reasons. One is the need to keep the North regime alive; this serves the second reason of balancing power on the Korean peninsula and in North-east Asia so that no major power would dominate the area; third, such a delicate balance among various powers would be conducive to keeping the peninsula nuclear-free; and finally, a more stable and peaceful framework is to be constructed through the Four-Party Talks, which ensures China's role and interest in the security framework.¹²⁵ For these reasons, Chinese analysts do not share the North-collapse scenario. Instead, they believe that Kim Jong Il's regime will survive the current economic difficulties and become more stable in the long term. Meanwhile, Pyongyang has been engaging in an impressive, flexible diplomacy with almost all the major powers to the point that it has not only turned the nuclear issue into an economic plus but also has successfully obtained more grain from the United States than from China.¹²⁶ Finally, China believes that North Korea is not inclined to initiate an all-out strike against South, despite its more militant rhetoric from time to time. This is because the military balance has tilted in favor of the South and therefore such a war does not necessarily serve its long-term interest. If a "hard landing" of the Korean problem (collapse of the North and an all-out war) can be ruled out, Beijing believes that a "soft landing" is both possible and desirable. This line of thinking has guided, and will continue to guide, Beijing's policies toward Pyongyang, though maintaining such a "traditional friendship" will not be an easy task for Beijing leaders.

Beijing's relations with Seoul, too, face considerable challenges. Its burgeoning ties with Seoul¹²⁷ serve several purposes. In addition to the obvious economic need from South Korea, China believes that a "special" relationship with Seoul serves several purposes. One is to reduce the South's hostility toward the North, and therefore lessen the former's security concerns. This might reduce the South's need for an arms race with the North and encourage its economic intercourse with Pyongyang. Right now, a "soft landing" of the Korean issue is certainly in the long-term interest of the South, particularly given the current economic downturn. While a sudden collapse of the North regime would place an unbearable burden on the South, the outbreak of a major conflict would also destroy much of the South's economic

infrastructure, which is heavily centered around Seoul. At a broader strategic level, more harmonious relations with South Korea would also balance U.S. relations with the latter, and therefore is conducive to peaceful reunification on the peninsula.¹²⁸ Finally, Seoul can be, and has been, a “natural ally” in China’s effort to offset the expansion of Japan’s economic power and political influence in Asia. Korean corporations have aggressively and effectively challenged Japan’s economic dominance in the region. Its strong nationalism has been an effective counterbalance to the rise of Japanese power. Korea’s massive and rapid investment in China has put strong pressure on Japan’s economic policy toward China. The recent economic recession in South Korea has nonetheless considerably weakened this “shield” in China’s relations with Japan.¹²⁹ If the South’s economy collapses, China’s economy may have to face the direct onslaught of the Japanese corporations.¹³⁰ Beijing’s concern about a prolonged recession in South Korea is behind the recent declaration by both sides to formulate a “cooperative partnership” for the twenty-first century. Such a major upgrading from the earlier “good-neighborly cooperative relationship” with Seoul will be based on political trust, economic cooperation, and even expanded military-to-military contacts in the near future.¹³¹

In both articulated and actual policies, Beijing has in the past decade tried to foster a more relaxed bilateral atmosphere between Washington and Pyongyang. This is based on the belief that a “soft landing” is also desirable for the United States. Although the U.S.-led alliance enjoys superiority on the peninsula and might be able to help the South win the next war, this superiority would not protect it from the devastation of a conflict which might cause unacceptable losses for both South Korea and the United States. The goal of the U.S. strategy on the peninsula, according to some analysts, is therefore to maintain a powerful deterrent force while gradually engaging and transforming the North.¹³² Beijing has, therefore, persuaded the United States not to use too many of its “sticks” in dealing with Pyongyang. And Washington’s active diplomatic mediation in the peninsula has been generally welcomed. China, however, has recently begun to feel the impact of less patient and more assertive U.S. policies toward North Korea. The North’s economic difficulty in the past few years certainly makes many in the United States, in and out of government, expect its collapse in the not-so-distant future. Although it does not share the basic assumptions of the “collapse school,” Beijing seems genuinely concerned with some increasingly popular views/expectations in the United States: that Korean unification will occur sooner rather than later; that such unification will and should be on the South’s terms; that the U.S. military presence on the peninsula will and should continue, and not necessarily be restricted to the South;¹³³ that the United States could take military action against the North if the latter is deemed unwilling to fulfill the terms of the agreement to freeze its nuclear program;¹³⁴ and that American and South Korean troops would overrun North Korea if it attacks the South (previously, the joint U.S.–South Korean war plan was merely to repel an invasion).¹³⁵ This rhetoric has not been comforting for Beijing, which has so far enjoyed a strong and favorable posture in the area. For top PLA commanders—many of whom are veterans of the Korean War some fifty years ago—such a prospect is hardly welcomed. In the final analysis, a unified Korea with a medium-level military power will have an uncertain impact upon China’s northeast. It may not necessarily be a friend of China but will continue to be bound by a security treaty with Washington, at least in the medium term. Should unification start to unfold, Beijing has every reason to believe that Washington will be able to emerge as the dominant player in the peninsula, not only because of its overwhelming power but also because of the established security frameworks with both South Korea and Japan.

This assessment of U.S. intentions has recently led Beijing to emphasize the role of the two Koreas as more important players in the peace mechanism. Such a peace process can be extremely long and even tortuous. Any use of force or one side swallowing the other will only lead to chaos and disaster. Only peaceful reconciliation is in the interests of all the Koreans.¹³⁶ During the Sino-Korean summit meeting in November 1998, Chinese leaders seemed to have convinced the South Koreans that China's "one country–two systems" approach is a more pragmatic and evolutionary solution to the issue of Korean unification.¹³⁷

VI. Conclusion: Some Modest Proposals

From any perspective, the indefinite perpetuation of the U.S.-led alliances in East Asia since their inception some fifty years ago is unprecedented in regional international relations. The U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, which constitutes the core of what is collectively called the San Francisco system,¹³⁸ has been the anchor of the U.S. hegemonic posture in Asia. Such a security "paradigm" has been so encompassing and convenient that few see that the system itself can be part of the problem rather than the solution to regional issues.

One inevitable consequence of the military alliances is their preoccupation with anything relating to military and security matters, while the region as a whole has been transformed significantly in the decades after the system's inception. While security issues remain paramount, they are no longer the only, or even most important, areas of concern for most of the countries in the region.

However, the U.S.-Japan alliance, a Cold War monument in East Asia, has been reshaped in order to be preserved into the next century. Such a policy trend can be seen from the stability, and even increase, of U.S. military facilities and personnel in Japan at the same time that hundreds of U.S. military bases around the world have been closed since the early 1990s.¹³⁹ In a broader context, the relatively high level of U.S. military spending (\$267 billion in 1997) in the post-Cold War decades (1989–1998) and the decision in 1999 to increase military spending by \$100 billion in the next six years contrasts sharply with the progressive decline of its non-military instruments such as diplomacy and foreign assistance. Already some thirty overseas diplomatic posts have been closed in the past four years and the budgets for the U.S. Foreign Service and foreign assistance are projected to decline even further in the next five years.¹⁴⁰ Such a preoccupation with military means may have led the United States to perceive, and react to, complex international developments in a narrower and simpler militaristic fashion. During the 1997–98 UN debate regarding the arms inspections in Iraq, for example, Washington insisted on using military force against Iraq while most other powers preferred a diplomatic solution. Curiously and yet understandably, Japan, a country that frequently portrays itself as pacifist, was among the few that supported the U.S. policy. Washington's hard-line approach during the crisis was deemed excessive even by a considerable number of Americans in early 1998 when Clinton's cabinet members found themselves mocked by an unreceptive crowd in Columbus, Ohio. Sensing the possible strong disapproval of both domestic and international opinion in mid-November, Washington simply "led a much quieter march to the military brink" with Iraq,¹⁴¹ which was finally executed at the year's end in the midst of strong disapproval from other powers.

Similarly, in the Asia Pacific the ubiquitous U.S. military presence is referred to as vital as oxygen for all living creatures. Such an argument became more acceptable in the region after

the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis. Many in the United States sincerely believed that the show of U.S. forces during the crisis was necessary, timely, and effective.¹⁴² Few, however, would see or admit that cross-strait relations were in a promising state in 1994–95 as both sides expressed hopes for high-level exchanges, and that it was the failure or mismanagement of U.S. diplomacy toward China and Taiwan (issuing a visa for President Lee to visit the United States) that led to the Chinese missile tests in 1995–96. President Clinton’s June 1998 statement in Shanghai regarding the Taiwan issue simply took U.S. policy back to the starting line. Such a cycle seemed to repeat itself in late 1998 when President Clinton and Vice President Gore met with Tibetan religious leader the Dalai Lama in the White House while sending Energy Secretary Richardson to Taiwan. Both events occurred only a few weeks after the resumption of cross-strait talks in October 1998 after three and half years of suspension. At the beginning of 1999, Washington seemed determined to bring Taiwan into its TMD program, together with Japan and South Korea. If this is done, there will no longer be any ambiguity regarding the Taiwan issue for the alliances, which will become a “three plus one” system in Asia. Whatever the motivation for these U.S. policies, the U.S. China policy is seen as lacking consistency and credibility at best and deliberate at worst.¹⁴³ In the words of a leading Chinese scholar, the United States is a country that is more likely than others to “make mistakes” in the post–Cold War era, largely because of its dominant military power, political arrogance, and general ignorance of the outside world. Although China hopes the United States will make no major mistake that would bring dire consequences to the world, this is nonetheless beyond China’s ability to manage.¹⁴⁴ One should not forget, however, that military means should be the continuation, or extension, of political/diplomatic means, according to political realists such as Clausewitz. To forgo non-military means in dealing with complex international issues is both irresponsible and dangerous. Regional security, stability, and prosperity, therefore, require much more than exclusive militaristic alliances. These alliances at best are necessary, but not sufficient, conditions for the region’s future stability and prosperity.

While the U.S.-led alliances may be well prepared for any military conflict in the region, they may be ill-prepared for political changes there. The alliances have to explain why they are still needed when their targets, then and now, are either democratized or are being rapidly liberalized. If the external environment of the two continental powers (Russia and China) deteriorates in spite of their internal liberalization and democratization,¹⁴⁵ one may have to raise the issue of the real intention of these alliances. What is the utility of these alliances if China substantially democratizes in the future while Taiwan still refuses to unify with the mainland?

Conversely, but naturally, one should also question whether these alliances are formed and consolidated to preserve democracies, or for other reasons. If Japan’s “collective amnesia” continues and if Japan further builds up its already powerful military, who can guarantee regional peace and prosperity, no matter how democratic Japan’s domestic politics? Even with a peace constitution¹⁴⁶ and the U.S. forces still in Japan, General Tojo’s name is being restored; former officers who come forward to expose Japanese war atrocities are being sued and are even receiving death threats from right-wing groups; former practitioners of biological warfare still openly state their loyalty to imperial Japan;¹⁴⁷ and Japan still refuses to provide the United States with any information about suspected war criminals.¹⁴⁸ For many victims of Japanese war atrocities, justice delayed is justice denied. If these are the results of Japan’s peace constitution, other countries have to ask how liberal such a democracy is. Indeed, both Fascist Germany and militaristic Japan emerged out of parliamentary democracies (the Weimar Republic and Taisho). Yet such “illiberal” democracies are perhaps more dangerous than non-

democracies for peace and stability. If the task of the twentieth century has been to make the world safe for democracy, the task for the next century is to make democracy safe for the world.¹⁴⁹

Despite these more “abstract” discussions, the American-led military alliances have been in place for almost half a century and are poised to remain for an indefinite period, because of either new imperatives or inertia or both. Their past record of maintaining the stability of the region, as claimed by some, may not necessarily be a guarantee of future peace. They cannot and should not replace or exclude other alternatives for a more consistent and more reliable framework for security cooperation in the Asia Pacific. Nor should they be a blanket policy that will govern the respective foreign policies of the United States, Japan, and South Korea.

To the contrary, an enduring, and ultimately much safer, security arrangement for the region should be open, fair, transparent, and trust-enhancing. It should reward states’ responsible behavior and punish the irresponsible, regardless of their relations with the leading state and regardless of their domestic political system. A biased leadership will not be able to acquire the necessary authority and respect. Instead of the ubiquitous military presence in the region, trust and trust-enhancing measures between individual countries should be the oxygen of regional security. In this regard, a collective security system based on equality and fairness is a viable alternative to the current system of exclusive alliances.¹⁵⁰

Notes

¹ George Liska and William Riker argue that alliances or coalitions are formed essentially “against, and only derivatively for, someone or something.” Nations join alliances for security, stability, and status. Although a sense of community may reinforce alliances or coalitions, it seldom brings them into existence. See George Liska, *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), 12, 61, and 175; William Riker, *The Theory of Political Coalitions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), 32–76. See also Bruce Russett, “Components of an Operational Theory of International Alliance Formation,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 12 (September 1968), 285–301; Julian Friedman, Christopher Bladen, and Steven Rosen, eds., *Alliance in International Politics* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1970); Joanne Gowa, *Ballots and Bullets: The Elusive Democratic Peace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

The statement “the enemy of our enemy is our friend” best exemplifies this. Some typical cases of this were the World War II alliances between the USSR, the U.S., and the UK as well as the Sino-U.S. strategic partnership against the former Soviet Union during the Cold War.

² See Japan-U.S. *Joint Declaration on Security Alliance for the Twenty-first Century*, issued on 17 April 1996 after a summit meeting in Tokyo between Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and President Bill Clinton; Associated Press, 24 September 1997.

³ Liu Jianguo, “Xin ‘Rimei Fangwei Hezuo Zhizhen’ Yu Zhongri Guanxi” [New ‘guideline for Japan-U.S. cooperative defense’ and Sino-Japan relations], in *Zhongguo Zhanlue Yu Guanli Yanjiuhui* [China society for strategy and management research, CSSMR hereafter], ed., 1997–1998 Guoji Xingshi Fenxi Baogao [1997–1998 study reports on international situation] (1998), 20–21.

⁴ I will focus on two influential journals on international affairs and foreign policy. One is *Zhanlue yu Guanli* [Strategy and management, *SM* hereafter], which has carried some of the most penetrating analyses in the 1990s. Its quasi-military background also provides a glimpse into the strategic thinking of China’s defense planners. The other journal is *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi* [Contemporary international relations, *CIR* hereafter]. It is published by China’s Institute of Contemporary International Relations, which provides information and assessment to top leaders. Many contributors to the two journals are themselves policy analysts who influence policy-making at different levels.

⁵ This includes the Berlin airlift, Czechoslovakia’s entrance into the Soviet orbit, and the Marshall Plan. Also, in continental Asia, the tide started to turn against the U.S.-backed Chinese Nationalists.

⁶ The term SCAP implied involvement of other concerned parties in the occupation of Japan. There was some initial and limited participation by the British Commonwealth. In Tokyo, the Allied Council for Japan (ACJ) consisted of Soviet, Chinese, and British representatives; it never posed any serious constraints on MacArthur’s decision making. Milton Meyer, *Japan: A Concise History*, 3rd ed. (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1993), 180–202.

⁷ Neither Beijing nor Taipei was invited to the 1951 San Francisco meeting in which Japan signed a peace treaty with fifty-one countries, including major Western powers. The reason for this absence of Chinese representation was the disagreement between the United States and Britain over which “China” should be invited. The U.S. preferred Taiwan, Britain the PRC. The compromise was no China representation at all, even if China had suffered the most

from Japanese aggression. Lin Daizhao, *Zhanhou Zhongri Guanxi Shi, 1945–1992* [Post-World War II Sino-Japanese relations, 1945–1992] (Beijing Daxue Chubanshe [Beijing University Press], 1992), 27–29.

⁸ Bin Yu, “What China Learned From Its ‘Forgotten War’ in Korea,” *Strategic Review* (Summer 1998): 4–16.

⁹ For details of China’s perceptions of and policies toward the U.S.-Japan alliance during the 1950s and 1960s, see Jianwei Wang and Xinbo Wu, “Against Us or with Us? The Chinese Perspective of America’s Alliances with Japan and Korea,” (Stanford University: Asia/Pacific Research Center, May 1998).

¹⁰ Many in Japan regard Asian demands for Japanese apology for war atrocities as a sign of “emotion,” while Asians’ acquiescence and forgiveness is an indication of “maturity.”

¹¹ Time and again members of the Japanese cabinet the elite have lost their jobs over remarks about Japan’s wartime behavior that are offensive to Asian countries. Chinese leaders, too, are vulnerable to accusations of a perceived “excessive friendship” with Japan. The downfall of the late Chinese Communist Party general secretary Hu Yaobang in 1987 was a case in point.

¹² The United States’ high-handed approach to trade issues with Japan during the first half of the 1990s led many in Japan to question Tokyo’s “special,” junior status in relations with Washington, hence the “say-no” trend among some of the Japanese political and intellectual elite. Frustrated by aggressive U.S. pressures, some Japanese seriously consider “Asianism” a means to offset Western/U.S. dominance. See Yong Deng, “Chinese Relations with Japan: Implications for Asia-Pacific Regionalism,” *Pacific Affairs* 70, no. 3 (Fall 1997): 373–91.

¹³ China’s views of U.S.-Japan relations up to 1996 can be divided into three main types: growing economic rivalry; competition for regional leadership; and Japan as an independent pole in a U.S.-Japan-China triangle. A common denominator of these views was that rivalry between a more independent Japan and the United States was more pronounced than their collaboration. Ren Donglai, “Xingchengzhong de Mei Ri Zhouxin Jiqi Dui Dongya de Yingxiang [The developing U.S.-Japan axis and its influence in east Asia], *SM*, no. 5 (1996): 51–53.

A policy analyst in the State Council expressed the same view. He argues that conflicts between Tokyo and Washington are more serious than those between Beijing and Washington and Beijing and Tokyo. Gao E, “Zhong Mei Ri Sanbian Guanxi de Xianzhuang yu Wenti” [Current situation and problems within Sino-U.S.-Japan trilateral relations], *SM*, no. 4 (1994): 73–76.

In an article apparently written shortly before the April 1996 Japan-U.S. communiqué, a Chinese defense analyst argues that one of the main purposes of the Washington-Tokyo security alliance in the post-Cold War era was to keep Japan in a subordinate position. See Jiang Lingfei, “Meiguo Duihua Ezhi Zhanlue de Zhiyue Yinsu he Keneng Zouxiang” [Factors behind U.S. containment strategy against China and its possible orientation], *SM*, no. 5 (1996): 46–50.

Chinese analysts do not argue that the Japan-U.S. conflict has simply disappeared or is nonexistent. Rather, they tend to argue now that Japan cannot remain under the U.S. shadow forever and *eventually* [emphasis mine] will challenge the United States. Tang Yongsheng, “Zhong Mei Ri Sanjiao Guanxi yu Zhongguo Zitai de Xuanze” [Sino-U.S.-Japan triangular relations and China’s alternative], *SM*, no. 1 (1997): 32–35; Zhang Ji and Shi Zehua, “Dongbeiya Diqu Daguo Guanxi ji Zhengzhi Geju Zouxiang” [Major power relations in northeast Asia and political trends], *CIR*, no. 1 (1998): 14–18.

- ¹⁴ Liu Jianguyong (1998), op. cit., 19–20; Ren Donglai (1996), op. cit., 51–53.
- ¹⁵ Xu Yong, “Zhongguoren de Haiyang Shidai: Taipingyang Re yu Bianyan Laijing Lue” [Ocean era for the Chinese: Pacific heat and coastal strategy], *SM*, no. 1 (1997): 56–64.
- ¹⁶ See Xin Qi, “Guoji Zhanlue Huanjing de Bianhua yu Taiwan Wenti” [Changes in the international environment and the Taiwan issue], *SM*, no. 4 (1996): 18–27; Liu Jinsong, “Zhongmei Junshi Guanxi de Lishi Yanbian, Wenti he Qianjing: [The historical evolution, issues, and prospects for Sino-U.S. military relations], *SM*, no. 5 (1997): 105–13; Liu Jianguyong (1998), op. cit., 20–21.
- ¹⁷ The most recent clarification was made by President Clinton in 30 June 1998 in Shanghai during his trip to China.
- ¹⁸ Liu Jianguyong (1998), op. cit., 21.
- ¹⁹ Liu Jinsong (1997), op. cit., 110.
- ²⁰ The U.S.-Japan Security Treaty is described as the “most successful alliance in 20th century history.” Daniel I. Okimoto, “The Japan-America Security Alliance: Prospects for the Twenty-First Century” (Stanford University: Asia/Pacific Research Center, January 1998), 3.
- ²¹ Interviews with Chinese defense specialists, May 1998.
- ²² This means Japan’s brief but extensive dominance of Asia during World War II and the U.S. role during the Cold War.
- ²³ Liu Jianguyong, “1996–1997 Nian Riben Xingshi Baogao” [1996–1997 study report on Japan], in CSSMR, ed., 1996–1997 *Guoji Xingshi Fenxi Baogao* [1996–1997 study reports on the international situation] (1997), 38–39.
- ²⁴ Interviews with Chinese defense specialists, May 1998. Only the 1960s, when China pursued its own “splendid isolation” by opposing the two superpowers simultaneously, resembled this state of affairs. Moscow and Washington, however, were in opposing military-ideological camps. And the East-West confrontation eventually offered China opportunities to improve its strategic posture during the second half of the Cold War.
- ²⁵ Michael Laris, “An Apology Rooted in Fear,” *Washington Post*, 25 November 1998.
- ²⁶ Remarks by Sha Zukang, director of the Arms Control Bureau of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, at the Annual Nonproliferation Conference sponsored by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 12 January 1999, Associated Press.
- ²⁷ State Council Press Office, “Zhongguo de Guofang” [China’s national defense], *Renmin Ribao* (*People’s Daily*, hereafter *RMRB*), 29 July 1998, 2–4; Liu Jianguyong (1998), op. cit., 20–25.
- ²⁸ Wang Xiaodong, “Yingxiang Zhongmei Guanxi de Zhongchangqi Yinsu” [Medium- and long-term factors affecting Sino-U.S. relations], in CSSMR, ed., 1997–1998 *Guoji Xingshi Renxi Baogao* [Study reports on international situation, 1997–1998] (1998), 18.
- ²⁹ Interview with Chinese analysts, December 1998.
- ³⁰ Liu Jianguyong (1998), op. cit., 21.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 25. Xin Qi, “‘Zhongguo Qun’: Yige Lilu yu Xianshi de Chuxing” [The ‘China circle’: An emerging framework in theory and reality], *SM*, no. 3 (1996): 1–7.
- ³² At the welcoming dinner of his 1975 visit to China, North Korean leader Kim Il Sung stated that he was ready to use force to unify the country, as North Vietnam had just done. “If revolution takes place in South Korea, we, as one and the same nation, will not just look at it

with folded arms but will strongly support the South Korean people. If the enemy ignites war recklessly, we shall resolutely answer it with war and completely destroy the aggressors. In this war we will only lose the Military Demarcation Line and will gain the country's reunification."

Mao apparently persuaded the North Korean leader not to do so. Kim's militant rhetoric was gone in his farewell speech; toward the end of his visit to China he instead stressed "peaceful" efforts to unify the country. See *Peking Review*, 25 April and 2 May 1975.

³³ For a recent example, see *RMRB*, 12 July 1996.

³⁴ Yan Xuetong, "1996–1997 Nian Guoji Xingshi yu Zhongguo Duiwai Guanxi Baogao" [1996–1997 international situation and China's foreign relations], in *CSSMR*, ed., 1996–1997 *Guoji Xingshi Fenxi Baogao* [1996–1997 study reports on the international situation] (1997), 15; Liu Jiayang (1998), *op. cit.*, 43–51.

³⁵ While the U.S. policies toward North Korea have varied from rigidity to flexibility (direct contact with Pyongyang since the early 1990s) and back to a more hard-line approach in 1998 following the North's missile test in August, Seoul has traveled from skepticism to greater accommodation (the "sunshine" policy) under President Kim Dae Jung since late 1997.

³⁶ Zhang Ji and Shi Zehua (1998), *op. cit.*, 17–18.

³⁷ Liu Jiayang (1998), *op. cit.*, 19. Interviews with Chinese analysts, December 1998.

³⁸ Wang Xiaodong (1998), *op. cit.*, 10–11; Wang Jisi, "1996–1997 Meiguo Xingshi Baogao" [1996–1997 Study report on the U.S.A.], in *CSSMR*, ed., 1996–1997 *Guoji Xingshi Fenxi Gaogao* [1996–1997 study reports on the international situation] (1997), 28–29.

³⁹ Wang Xiaodong (1998), *op. cit.*, 10–11.

⁴⁰ Interviews with Chinese analysts, December 1998.

⁴¹ This was eight years before World War II started in Europe in 1939 when Poland was attacked and ten years before the United States joined the Pacific War in 1941 after Pearl Harbor.

⁴² *RMRB*, 7 July 1997.

⁴³ See Yang Xuejun and Li Hanmei, "Yingxiang Weilai Riben Duiwai Zhanglue he Xingwei de Zhongyao Yinsu" [Key factors in future Japanese strategy and behavior toward the outside world], *SM*, no. 1 (1998): 17–23.

A recent case seems to exemplify this point. In January 1998, Prime Minister Hashimoto chose, before the Japanese emperor's trip to the UK, to publicly apologize in the British tabloid the *Sun* for Japan's brutal treatment of British POWs during the war. He also offered \$1.5 million in scholarship funds for descendants of those British POWs. While the POWs deserve this, their suffering paled in comparison with what the Chinese and other Asian people went through during the Japanese occupation. Yet nothing similar has been offered to Asian victims.

⁴⁴ Yang Xuejun and Li Hanmei (1998), *op. cit.*, 17–23.

⁴⁵ See Yu Bin, "The China Syndrome: Rising Nationalism and Conflict with the West," *Asia Pacific Issues*, no. 27 (May 1996), East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii.

⁴⁶ Japan's defeat of Russia during the 1904–5 Russo-Japanese War was the first time an Asian power defeated a European one. After the 1917 Bolshevik revolution, Japan sent the largest foreign contingent, totaling some 72,000, to Siberia, to intervene in the Russian civil war.

⁴⁷ This means a Japan without the right to have its own military, without right to the use of force, and even without its own foreign policy, at least for the first decade after World War II.

⁴⁸ Agreements in 1905 between Secretary of War William Taft and Prime Minister Katsura in Tokyo and in 1908 between Secretary of State Elihu Root and the Japanese ambassador Baron Takahira in Washington confirmed Japan's paramount position in Korea, while Japan recognized the U.S. presence in the Philippines. During the 1919 Peace conference at Versailles, President Wilson took a middle stand on the issue of China's Shandong Province, which was eventually awarded to Japan. The 1922 Washington Naval Conference also confirmed Japanese interests and control of part of the Shandong Province. It is also widely known that the American economic embargo against Japan after the Japanese all-out attack against China in 1937 and before Pearl Harbor was neither sincere nor effective. Indeed, between 1937 and 1939, U.S. trade policies directly and indirectly facilitated Japanese war activities in Asia. Milton W. Meyer (1993), *op. cit.*, 168, 177, 180–81, and 201–202.

Perhaps the most telling case has been the official U.S. silence and cover-up, until today, of Japanese biological warfare activities during World War II. All the doctors and officers of the notorious Japanese Unit 731 were exempted from trial as war criminals after they transferred all their data to the U.S. occupation forces. See LTC George W. Christopher, USAF, MC; LTC Theodore J. Cieslak, MC, USA; MAJ Julie A. Pavlin, MC, USA; COL Edward M. Eitzen, Jr., MC, USA, "Biological Warfare: A Historical Perspective," *Journal of American Military Affairs* 278, no. 5 (6 August 1997): 412–17; William Triplett, "The Legacy of War Crimes: Meanwhile, Japan's War Criminals Are All but Ignored," *Washington Post*, 23 March 1997; Ken McLaughlin, "U.S. Shielded Hirohito and War Criminals, Cables Say," *San Jose Mercury News*, 30 September 1995.

More recently, the U.S. Justice Department refused to let two former Japanese officers—one of whom served in Unit 731—enter the United States, although they were invited by some human-rights groups to tour the United States in order to expose Japanese atrocities during the war. Japanese right-wing groups have threatened to assassinate them for their "disloyalty." See James Dao, "U.S. Bars Japanese Who Admits War Crime," *New York Times*, 27 June 1998. Some human-rights and Asian American groups believe that the U.S. decision shows that it continues to cover up the Japanese biological war crimes. Interview with organizers of the conference and exhibition *Forgotten Holocaust: Japan's Germ Warfare in World War II, 1931–1945*, San Francisco, 15 July 1998.

⁴⁹ Interview with former Australian prime minister Robert Hawke, "Meiguo Zai Yatai de Zhanlue Xuanze yu Zhong Mei Ri Ao Guanxi" [U.S. strategic choices in the Asia-Pacific and Sino-U.S.-Japan-Australian relations], *SM*, no. 6 (1996): 14–20.

⁵⁰ *South China Morning Post* (SCMP hereafter), 28 November 1998.

⁵¹ Fudan Institute of Development, ed., *Chengong Tiaokong, Wenjian Kaiju: 1996 Zhongguo Fazhan Baogao* [Successful adjustment and stable inauguration: Report of China's development in 1996] (Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe [Shanghai people's press], 1996), 230–48.

⁵² On 14 July 1996, members of the Japanese Youth Federation landed on Diaoyu Island. This set off a series of protests by Chinese around the world. While Tokyo did little to restrict the Japanese right-wingers, it took pains to block protestors' ships from approaching the islands.

⁵³ For example, the "American factor" in the Taiwan issue has become more manageable, in the eyes of some in China, due to the two summit meetings in 1997 and 1998.

⁵⁴ For the first time, the Japanese prime minister encountered protests in most Chinese cities he

traveled to. In return, the Chinese premier was practically ignored by many in Japan.

⁵⁵ He Fang, “Xia Shiji Chu Zhongguo Guoji Huanjing de Ruogan Sikao” [Some thoughts about China’s international environment of early next century], *SM*, no. 3 (1995): 86–93.

⁵⁶ Michel Oksenberg, “China and the Japanese-American Alliance,” in Gerald Curties, ed., *The United States, Japan, and Asia: Challengers for U.S. Policy* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1994), 96–121.

⁵⁷ Zhang Ji and Shi Zehua (1998), op. cit., 16. Recent Western accounts reinforce Chinese concerns. Japanese “hawks,” according to a Western observer, hope “to see a U.S.-Chinese confrontation, ideally over Taiwan and possibly over Tibet, leading ultimately to the breakup of China as other ethnic regions seek autonomy or independence.” Gregory Clark, “Anti-China Sentiment Tips the Balance in Tokyo,” *International Herald Tribune*, 30 November 1998.

⁵⁸ *Shijie Ribao*, 3 April 1998. The Dalai’s visit to Japan was his seventh trip there. China reacted moderately to the Dalai’s previous six because the Tibet issue was not yet subject to what Beijing sees as the “internationalization” of the Tibet independent movement.

⁵⁹ *Shijie Ribao*, 4 May 1996.

⁶⁰ Liu Jianguyong (1997), op. cit., 39–40.

⁶¹ *Shijie Ribao*, 26 March, 12 April, and 1 May 1998.

⁶² Beginning in late 1997, some former U.S. governmental officials, notably former defense secretary William Perry, started the so-called track-two diplomacy to make clear the U.S. position for a one-China policy based on a peaceful solution of the Taiwan issue.

⁶³ Liu Jianguyong (1998), op. cit., 25.

⁶⁴ ODA was cut 10 percent compared with previous loan amounts to China.

⁶⁵ Sun Luoqin and Sun Hongjian, eds. (1996), op. cit., 482 and 502–05.

⁶⁶ Robert A. Scalapino, “China’s Relations with Its Neighbors,” in Frank J. MacChiarola and Robert B. Oxnam, eds., *The China Challenge: American Policies in East Asia* (The Academy of Political Science, 1991), 61–74.

⁶⁷ Yang Xuejun and Li Hanmei (1998), op. cit., 21.

⁶⁸ Fudan report, op. cit., 249.

⁶⁹ 1996 Japan’s Defense Bureau report, “Long-term Forecasting of Security Environment and the Necessary Status of Japanese Defense,” cited in Liu Jianguyong (1997), op. cit., 39–40.

⁷⁰ Chinese analysts seem more concerned over the growing Japanese navy, which has the potential to project Japanese power around the region. They maintain that the Japanese navy ranks fourth in terms of tonnage after that of the United States, Russia, and Britain. Moreover, most Japanese naval ships are more recently designed and built. Recently commissioned naval vessels include a new submarine that can dive some 400 meters, an 8,900-ton cargo ship which is really a disguised “aircraft carrier,” and one hundred P3C anti-submarine patrol planes, capable of anti-ship missions, the second largest fleet of such planes after that of the United States. The naval and air power of Japan is supported by the JSDF’s \$50 billion in annual defense spending, which is almost equal to that of the U.S. military for its Asia-Pacific operation and four times more than Japan’s ODA to other countries. An official defense-policy think tank in Japan even recommended recently that Japan should, by 2015, possess its own nuclear-powered submarines and other power delivering and projecting capabilities. See

Zhu Wenhui and Wang Yuqing (1998), op. cit., 68; Liu Jianguyong (1997), op. cit., 40; *RMRB*, 1 January 1997. Also see Liu Xiaojun, “Riben Junshi de Weixie” [The Japanese military threat], *Guangjiao Jing* [Wide-angle lens] (Hong Kong), July 1998, 49–5.

⁷¹ Liu Jianguyong (1997), op. cit., 48.

⁷² Yang Xuejun and Li Hanmei (1998), op. cit., 18–19; Liu Jianguyong (1997), op. cit., 40.

⁷³ Liu Jianguyong (1998), op. cit., 19.

⁷⁴ Exclusive interview with Sha Zukang, Director of Arms Control Bureau, Chinese Foreign Ministry, *Wen Wei Po* (Hong Kong), 17 November 1998, D1.

⁷⁵ Ibid. Sha argues that there is no insurmountable barrier between defensive and offensive capabilities. Once deployed, the TMD system will provide a “false sense of security” which will make countries more offense-prone in their military strategy.

⁷⁶ Some in China argue that the Japanese government should exercise extreme caution in dealing with overseas Japanese. In the past Japan used overseas Japanese as an excuse for invading both China and the former Soviet Union. Liu Jianguyong (1997), op. cit., 48.

⁷⁷ Liu Jianguyong (1997), op. cit., 34–35 and 38–40.

⁷⁸ Shi Ren, “Shiji Zhijiao de Mei O Ri Zhengzhi Zouxiang” [Domestic trends in the U.S., Europe, and Japan at the turn of the century], *CIR*, no. 2 (1998), 2–5; Yang Xuejun and Li Hanmei (1998), op. cit., 17–23.

⁷⁹ The LDP-Liberal Party coalition in early 1999, no matter how shaky it is, has secured a center-right dominance in the Diet which would opt for stronger defense ties with Washington.

⁸⁰ The LDP and the Liberal Party reached a tentative understanding with regard to amending several domestic laws so that the JSDF would be able to assist the U.S. military without delay in times of both peace and war. *Sing Tao Daily* (Hong Kong), 18 January 1999.

⁸¹ Masao Kunihiro, “The Decline and Fall of Pacifism,” *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (January/February 1997), 36.

⁸² Article 9 says that Japan “forever” renounces war as the sovereign right of the nation, and that armies, navies, and air forces as well as “other war potential” will never be maintained.

⁸³ Liu Jianguyong (1997), op. cit., 35.

⁸⁴ Liu Jianguyong (1997), op. cit., 34; *RMRB*, 14 May 1998, 4; *Liaowang*, 22 May 1998.

⁸⁵ The Japanese government stated that the movie does not reflect an official position. Saito Kunihiko, Japan’s ambassador to Washington, however, insisted that the book *The Rape of Nanjing* was “very inaccurate” and even “erroneous.” *Shijie Ribao*, 13 May 1998; *RMRB*, 11 May 1998.

⁸⁶ Nakasone Yasuhiro argued recently that the current Constitution was not created by the Japanese people but drafted by the U.S. occupation forces. “It is something like cut flowers, which look beautiful, but are fragile because they do not draw sustenance from the soil.” The policy of the occupation forces was to “render Japan incapable of thinking on its own and to be completely dependent upon others.” It is therefore a “nationless” law without any sort of recognizable cultural face. Nakasone, “Rethinking the Constitution? Make It a Japanese Document,” *Japan Quarterly* (July–September 1997), 4–9.

⁸⁷ Edward Olsen, “A Northeast Asian Peace Dividend,” *Strategic Review* (Summer 1998): 17–23.

⁸⁸ Some Chinese commentaries and analyses tend not use sources. But the following developments in Japan were mentioned by Liu Jianguo (1997), op. cit., 34 and 45; *RMRB*, 14 May 1998, 4; *Liaowang* (Outlook), 22 May 1998.

⁸⁹ Agence France-Presse, 1 May 1997.

⁹⁰ *New York Times*, 28 May 1996.

⁹¹ *SCMP*, 27 November 1998; *Ming Pao* (Hong Kong), 30 November 1998.

⁹² Kevin Sullivan, “Japan’s Ultra-nationalists Make Themselves Heard: Militia Blast Tokyo With Violent Rhetoric,” *Washington Post*, 7 April 1997, A01.

⁹³ Yan Xuetong (1997), report, op. cit., 11.

⁹⁴ Liu Jianguo (1997), op. cit., 47.

⁹⁵ Ren Donglai (1996), op. cit., 51–53.

⁹⁶ Yan Xuetong, “Zhongguo Fazhan Miandui de Guoji Anquan Huanjing” [The international security environment for China’s rise], in *CSSMR*, ed., 1997–1998 Guoji Xingshi Fenxi Baogao [1997–1998 study reports on the international situation] (1998), 4–9; “Zhongguo Jueqi de Guoji Huanjing Pinggu” [An appraisal of the international environment for the rise of China], *SM*, no. 1 (1997), 17–25; Tang Yongsheng (1997), op. cit., 32–35.

⁹⁷ Yan Xuetong (1997), report, op. cit., 16.

⁹⁸ State Council Press Office, “Zhongguo de Guofang” (1998), op. cit.

⁹⁹ Xing Qi (1996), op. cit., 4.

¹⁰⁰ Gregory Clark (1998), op. cit. Some Chinese analysts also believed that Jiang’s visit, although it may have contributed to some progress in official relations, actually widened the gap between the Chinese and Japanese people. Interview with Chinese analysts, December 1998.

¹⁰¹ The Chinese foreign minister denied that there was such an intention or preparation for joint signature by the two leaders. Various sources both inside and outside China, however, believed that Jiang decided not to sign the document only hours before the scheduled occasion.

¹⁰² These include China’s entrance into the Korean War (1950–53), the Sino-Indian border war (1962), and China’s brief incursion into Vietnam (1979).

¹⁰³ Shi Ren, “Shiji Zhijiao Mei O Ri de Duiwai Zhanlue yu Duihua Zhengce Zouxiang” [The external strategies of the U.S., Europe, and Japan at the turn of the century: Implications for their China policies], *CIR*, no. 3 (1998), 2–5; Yan Xuetong (1997), report, op. cit., 14–15. Liu Jianguo (1997), op. cit., 47–49.

¹⁰⁴ Top-level exchanges began with the two visits by George Bush to Beijing in January and April 1996. This was followed by Henry Kissinger (April), National Security Advisor Anthony Lake (July), CIA director Doyle (August), Chinese National Science Commission director Song Jian (October), Finance Minister Liu Zhongli (November), Secretary of State Warren Christopher (November), and Chinese defense minister Chi Haotian (December). Meanwhile, Chinese foreign minister Qian Qichen and Secretary of State Christopher met twice on multilateral occasions (April and July), and Clinton and Jiang met during APEC meetings (November). These high-level exchanges paved the way for more contact between U.S. and Chinese leaders in 1997 when Vice President Gore visited Beijing in March and Jiang Zemin officially visited the United States in November.

- ¹⁰⁵ Liu Jinsong (1997), op. cit., 105–13.
- ¹⁰⁶ Xinhua, interview with analysts in the Chinese Military Academy, 20 October 1998.
- ¹⁰⁷ For implications of U.S. domestic politics for relations with China, see Johanna McGeary, “How Bad Is China?” *Time*, 29 June 1998, 22–38.
- ¹⁰⁸ Shi Yinhong, “Meiguo Duihua Zhengce de Jiben Guonei Beijing” [The basic domestic environment of the U.S. China policy], *SM*, no. 6 (1996): 33–36; Wang Jiaodong (1998), op. cit., 10 and 15.
- ¹⁰⁹ U.S. ambiguity toward Taiwan culminated in Li Teng-hui’s 1995 trip. Clinton’s “three nos” statement in Shanghai on 30 June 1998—no support for Taiwan’s independence, no support for “two Chinas” or “one Taiwan, one China,” and no membership for Taiwan in international organizations that require statehood—essentially clarified this ambiguity.
- ¹¹⁰ Liu Jiangyong (1997), op. cit., 48.
- ¹¹¹ Shi Ren, no. 3 (1998), op. cit., 4–5; Liu Jiangyong (1998), op. cit., 24–26.
- ¹¹² The normalization of the party-to-party relations in June 1998 was accomplished after China “corrected” past policies toward the JCP. *RMRB*, 12 June 1998.
- ¹¹³ *SCMP*, 28 November 1998.
- ¹¹⁴ In the past few years, the PLA has been very active in military-to-military exchanges. In 1996, PLA officers visited some 50 countries, while receiving more than 60 foreign military groups. In 1997, 150 foreign military groups visited China and the PLA sent more than 100 delegations abroad. Fudan report (1997), op. cit., 105–06; Chi Haotian, “Chinese PLA Active in Developing Diplomatic Relations,” *Beijing Review*, 26 January–1 February, 6.
- ¹¹⁵ The 1984 visit by Chinese defense minister Zhang Aiping was not official and Zhang was only a deputy chairman of the powerful Military Commission of the CCP.
- ¹¹⁶ Visits by Japanese defense officials to China include the ground JSDF chief Yuji Fjinawa in March 1998 and JSDF’s director-general Fumio Kyuma in May.
- ¹¹⁷ *RMRB*, 25 September 1998.
- ¹¹⁸ For the Japanese reaction to Clinton’s move, see Yoshihide Sonya, “A Presidential Overflight Rattles Japan,” *Wall Street Journal*, 7 July 1998.
- ¹¹⁹ For detailed Sino-Japanese bargaining, see Jiang Feng, “Pengji Riben Junguo Zhuyi Zi Lu” [A trip to criticize Japanese militarism], *Ta Kung Pao* (Hong Kong), 1 December 1998, A2.
- ¹²⁰ *SCMP*, 28 November 1998.
- ¹²¹ Zhang Ji and Shi Zehua (1998), op. cit., 14–18; Li Fuxing and Qin Shishen, “Chaoxian Bandao Wenti Sifang Huitan Jiqi Yingxiang” [Quadrilateral talks for the Korean peninsula issue and its implications], *CIR*, no. 2 (1998), 10–11; Liu Jinghua, “Chaoxian Bandao Anquan Wenti” [Security on the Korean peninsula], in *CSSMR*, ed., 1997–1998 *Guoji Xingshi Fenxi Baogao* (1998), op. cit., 43–51.
- ¹²² *Ibid.*
- ¹²³ For recent developments, see the *Washington Post*, 19 November 1998. Chinese analysts also saw North Korea’s satellite launch in September 1998 as a “destabilizing move” in the peninsula and therefore urge all parties concerned to adopt “self-restraint.” Sha Zukang, op. cit.
- ¹²⁴ Hwang Jang-yop is an associate of the late Kim Il Sung, principal architect of the North’s

juche ideology of self-reliance, former president of Kim Il Sung University, chair of the Supreme People's Assembly's Foreign Affairs Committee, one-time mentor to Kim Jong Il, and the twenty-fourth ranking member of the Korean Workers' Party.

¹²⁵ Liu Jinghua (1998), op. cit., 50.

¹²⁶ According to a Chinese account, the United States by mid-1997 had become the biggest grain supplier to North Korea by providing a total of 33.5 million tons of grain. Meanwhile, a "five-year agreement" between Beijing and Pyongyang in 1996 stipulated that China's annual grain supply is half a million tons, with half to be sold to North Korea at a "friendly price" and the rest a donation. Liu Jinghua (1998), op. cit., 47.

¹²⁷ By 1998, South Korea had become the sixth largest trading partner for China, which in turn was the third largest for Korea. Total bilateral trade was \$20 million in 1997. Ibid., 50.

¹²⁸ Liu Jinghua (1998), op. cit., 46 and 50.

¹²⁹ China faces a growing trade deficit with South Korea as the latter's economic recession deepens. Meanwhile, some major investment projects by Korean companies in China—high-definition TV, automobiles, and nuclear power—are either slowing or have stopped due to lack of funding for the Korean firms. Interview with Han Zhenshe, director, Center for Korean Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing. *Wen Wei Po*, 11 November 1998.

¹³⁰ Zhu Wenhui and Wang Yuqing, "Dongya Jinrong Weiji yu Shijie Jingji Xin Geju" [The East Asian currency crisis and the new world economic framework], *Zhanlue yu Guanli* [SM], no. 1 (1998), 69, Xin Qi (1996), op. cit., 5.

¹³¹ *RMRB*, 13 November 1998; *Ming Pao* (Hong Kong), 21 November 1998.

¹³² Liu Jinghua (1998), op. cit., 46–48.

¹³³ General Gary Luck, commander of U.S. forces in Korea, told the Congress in 1996 that "the question is not will this country disintegrate, but how will it disintegrate: by implosion or explosion." In late 1996, CIA director John Deutch said that war, collapse, or reunification would occur within three years. Robert Manning, "The United States and the End Game in Korea: Assessment, Scenarios, and Implications," *Asian Survey* 37, no. 7 (July 1997), 601. Commenting on the Pentagon's review of the U.S. military commitment in Asia in late 1998, Franklin Kramer, assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, indicated that the U.S. military would stay in Asia even after a change in Korea and for "the long, long term." Quoted in David Briscoe, "Pentagon Wants U.S. Forces in Asia," *Associated Press*, 23 November 1998.

¹³⁴ South Korean officials believed that the Pentagon's November 1998 review of U.S. strategy in East Asia hinted at the possibility that "North Korea could be treated as a second Iraq." *Far Eastern Economic Review*, cited in *Hong Kong Standard*, 26 November 1998.

¹³⁵ *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3 December 1998.

¹³⁶ Li Fuxing and Qin Shishen (1998), op. cit., 11.

¹³⁷ During his stopover in Hong Kong after his China visit, South Korean president Kim Dae Jung stated that as a divided country, Korea was "deeply interested in the 'one-country and two systems' experiment." *Ming Pao* (Hong Kong), 21 November 1998.

¹³⁸ This includes defense agreements reached between the United States, Japan, the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand. The system was expanded in 1953 to include South Korea and in 1954 to include Taiwan. America's departure from the Philippines in 1992 shifted the center of gravity of the San Francisco system to Northeast Asia.

¹³⁹ *Military Balance* (1997), cited in *Shijie Ribao*, 17 July 1997. According to this report, U.S. military personnel in Japan increased in 1997 from 45,666 to 46,131.

¹⁴⁰ *Financing America's Leadership* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1997).

¹⁴¹ John F. Harris and John M. Goshko, "Diplomatic Efforts Stall on Iraq Crisis"; Bradley Graham and Howard Schneider, "U.S. Launches, Then Aborts Air Strikes," *Washington Post*, 14 November 1998, A2 and 15 November 1998, A01.

¹⁴² Remarks of William Perry, at the conference "America's Alliances with Japan and Korea in a Changing Northeast Asia," Asia/Pacific Research Center, Stanford University, August 1997.

¹⁴³ According to the *International Herald Tribune*, the CIA is funding a project at a Hawaii academic institution to consider the chances of China breaking up as a result of Taiwan, Tibet, and other ethnic regions' autonomy or independence from China. Gregory Clark (1998), *op.cit.*

¹⁴⁴ Liu Ji, interview with former Australian prime minister Hawke. Liu also states that China, too, is likely to make mistakes in the post-Cold War era, for three reasons. One is a socialist ideology which can resurge under extreme external pressure; the other is China's culturally based self-esteem which can become xenophobia; still another is China's growing economic power and elevated international status, which can become arrogance. *SM*, no. 6 (1997): 18-19.

¹⁴⁵ Despite some recent arrests of dissidents in China, there has increasingly been debate among Chinese elites calling for an accelerated liberalization and democratization process in China. An influential scholar argued recently that it will be relatively desirable and feasible for the political elite to initiate a democratic transition when it still controls the situation and when the economy is in relatively good shape. It would be undesirable and even disastrous if such a transition occurs in times of social crisis. Shi Zhong, "Zhengzhi Jiegou Yu Jingji Jiegou de Xianghu Zhiyue" [Checks and balance between the political and economic institutions], *SM*, no. 5 (1998): 44-46. Also see the first four articles in the same issue.

¹⁴⁶ Former prime minister Nakasone Yasuhiro argues that many things can be done even without revising Article 9 of the Constitution. Nakasone (1997), *op.cit.*, 4-9.

¹⁴⁷ *New York Times*, 27 June 1998; *Washington Post*, 23 March 1997; *San Jose Mercury News*, 30 September 1995.

¹⁴⁸ Teresa Watanabe, "U.S. and Japan at Odds Over Old War Crimes Cases," *Los Angeles Times*, 10 December 1998.

¹⁴⁹ Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* (November /December 1997), 43.

¹⁵⁰ It is beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate the mechanism of a collective security system for the region.

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