

Constructive

Timothy R. **Heath**, 06/13/20**24**, Timothy R. Heath is a senior international defense researcher at the RAND Corporation, with expertise in China's military and political strategies. His testimony before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission outlines reasons why China is unlikely to engage in war, emphasizing economic risks, lack of military superiority, and Xi Jinping's preference for long-term strategic positioning. "Is China Prepared for War? Indications and Warning of a Potential Chinese Conflict," RAND Corporation, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CTA3381-1.html> // keshav

Little Evidence of National War Preparation To determine whether China actually expects war, it is far more important to observe what the leadership is

saying and doing in the nonmilitary policy domains. **There is no evidence that China is carrying out any type of mobilization for**

war and little evidence of national war preparation, Although a comprehensive review of the state of preparations in all nonmilitary policy domains lies beyond the scope of this testimony, I

will highlight a few key areas: politics, economy, defense industry, defense mobilization, and medical care. Politically, Xi Jinping has made no statement suggesting the entire nation must prepare for war or otherwise suggesting war is likely or at all desirable. On the contrary, Xi has consistently affirmed that Beijing adheres to the pursuit of the "China Dream" of national revitalization through a peaceful development strategy.¹⁸ To be clear, Xi has made numerous criticisms of the United States and has stated on several occasions that Taiwan unification must occur and that use of force cannot be ruled out. Yet his statements about Taiwan largely resemble those of his predecessors.¹⁹ For example, when Xi makes pledges to ensure Taiwan's unification, he has done so in sections of long speeches that outline national priorities and imperatives, such as the 19th or 20th Party Congress reports. In such reports, mention of Taiwan usually appears near the end of the report, in a section typically reserved for the issue. **The overwhelming focus** of those speeches **is on socioeconomic**

issues, such as jobs, corruption, and in **equality**.²⁰ What about China's **economy** and defense industry? **Countries that are serious**

about waging war tend to significantly increase their defense spending to maximize the odds of

victory. In World War II, mobilized Allied and Axis powers increased defense spending to between 50 and 70 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). In more recent wars, states have

ramped up spending, though to a lesser degree. U.S. defense spending surged to around 6 percent of GDP in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, for example.²¹ Russia has ratcheted defense spending to between 6 and 9 percent of GDP in its war in Ukraine.²² By contrast, **China's defense spending remains relatively modest** at under 2

percent of GDP, although the actual amount spent is probably slightly underreported.²³ Although China has pursued a "military-civil fusion" strategy, its purpose seems as much to be about supporting the country's economic development strategy as it is about improving military capability.²⁴ Some have cited evidence of stockpiling to suggest war preparations. But this may be explained more simply by Chinese concerns over a more unstable and unpredictable global economy, given the disruptions from the Russia-Ukraine war and other crises. It is a concern shared by many countries. For example, China may have amassed about 300-400 million barrels of oil, while the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve has accumulated 364 million barrels.²⁵ China has carried out reforms to streamline defense mobilization procedures and clarify roles and responsibilities. However, the system continues to face shortfalls.²⁶ As an example, the People's Armed Forces Department (PAFD) has experienced a resurgence in activity. The PAFD is responsible for overseeing the recruitment, organizing, and management of militia forces and also plays a key role in the mobilization of militia. However, improvements to the PAFD do little to address the more fundamental problems with China's defense mobilization system, such as a lack of standardized data management, understaffed and misaligned bureaucracies, inconsistent authorities, and unresolved compensation policies.²⁷ China's medical infrastructure has made little progress in national war preparations as well. Chinese hospitals appear, at most, to be prepared for earthquakes but otherwise have little capacity to cope with mass casualties.²⁸ A survey of academic reports in 2018 observed that China lags its counterparts in the study of emergency medical systems for mass casualty incidents.²⁹ Chinese military medical journals have also judged the existing system of medical evacuation and treatment of war-related injuries deeply inadequate.³⁰ China's medical system has seen some improvements during Xi's tenure, but it continues to suffer serious deficiencies, including ineffective regulation and inconsistent training and education of providers.³¹ China's mishandling of the exit from the COVID-19 pandemic underscored weaknesses in the system.³² China may have made little effort to put the country on a war footing, but Beijing has clearly sought to bolster the country's security. This activity has contributed

to the perception that China is stepping up war preparations. However, Chinese leaders have fairly consistently highlighted domestic dangers as the principal reason for such preparations. When Xi described the threats to national security at the 20th Party Congress, he began by listing issues of “social governance,” likely referring to popular discontent over corruption, inequality, and local malfeasance. He then mentioned “ethnic separatists, religious extremists, and violent terrorists,” as well as organized crime and natural disasters, before moving on to discuss other perils, including pressure from the United States.³³ The strong emphasis on domestic dangers should not be surprising. International polls similarly show that domestic issues, such as crime, unemployment, and corruption, are top concerns in many developing countries, including China.³⁴ **The security preparations observed in industry, defense mobilization**, the PAFD, the medical system, **and elsewhere are consistent with a country worried first** and foremost **about a deteriorating domestic situation and are less consistent with those** undertaken by a leadership **contemplating major war.**

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Subpoint A is China’s Motive

Political leaders in China are walking a fine line – they want to gain power by reunifying with Taiwan – but are held back by U.S. military presence.

Shelley **Rigger**, xx-xx-20**11**, "Why Giving Up Taiwan Will Not Help Us with China", American Enterprise Institute,

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep03112.pdf> // RB

Although we can hardly expect them to admit it, **the status quo in the Taiwan Strait serves the political interests of Chinese leaders** whose top priority is domestic development and regime stability. Indeed, **even the best-case scenario for Beijing is unpredictable and potentially destabilizing.** We can say Gilley is right, and Taiwan is moving toward Finlandization. In fact, there is ample evidence for a consensus within Taiwan that deeper engagement with mainland China is both inevitable and desirable. At the same time, however, the Taiwanese people are more attached than ever to their political autonomy and distinctive identity. **Withdrawing US security assistance** would not change these

attitudes, but many Taiwanese people would view this action, rightly or wrongly, as a deathblow to the island's autonomy. Some would try to flee. Others would urge their government to develop doomsday weapons to keep the PRC at bay, a desperate measure the United States has so far dissuaded Taiwan from pursuing. Others still would encourage Taipei to hold out as long as possible. The economic costs of undermining the Taiwanese people's confidence in their own security would be huge, and negotiating a peaceful, mutually acceptable unification in such an environment would be nearly impossible. To finish the job, China would almost certainly be forced to resort to coercive measures—precisely the expensive and risky undertaking Chinese leaders are hoping to avoid. And even if its coercive measures succeeded in winning the Taiwan government's acquiescence, integrating 23 million sullen and terrified Taiwanese into the PRC would be yet another daunting and expensive project. US security assistance stabilizes both sides of the Taiwan Strait by reassuring the Taiwanese people and justifying Beijing's decision to be patient.

Problematically, cutting support for Taiwan proves the U.S. is weak and unreliable. That emboldens China to push for an invasion now.

Shelley Rigger, xx-xx-2011, "Why Giving Up Taiwan Will Not Help Us with China", American Enterprise Institute,

<https://www.istor.org/stable/pdf/resrep03112.pdf> // RB

US security assistance—both the possibility of direct intervention and support for Taiwan's self-defense— makes unification risky and expensive. If the United States withdraws its support, we should expect nationalists and hardliners in the PRC to press the Chinese Communist Party leadership to solve the Taiwan problem sooner rather than later. China's newly muscular posture in the East and South China Seas is already raising eyebrows around the region; the last thing Beijing needs is a reinvigorated nationalist movement howling for satisfaction on another offshore issue.

Nancy B. **Tucker** and Bonnie S. **Glaser**, xx-xx-20**11**, "Should the United States Abandon Taiwan?". The Washington Quarterly Vol. 34, Issue

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Careful examination of these variables leads us to conclude that **the United States should neither abandon nor reduce its**

commitments to Taiwan, but strengthen them. Taiwan remains the single issue which could spark war between the U.S. and China. What Would Sacrificing Taiwan Gain?

Would abandoning or reducing support for Taiwan secure smoother U.S.–China relations? Those in China and the United States who call for a change in Taiwan policy insist there would be significant benefits. The decision by Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger to trade Taiwan for normalization with Beijing facilitated a momentous improvement in U.S.–China relations, setting a powerful precedent.[2] To choose China over Taiwan once again, it is asserted, could help Washington resolve differences with China over maritime rights, nuclear proliferation, cyber security, and the uses of space. This line of thinking argues that even issues not directly connected with Taiwan policy could be easier to reconcile if what China deems a core interest were satisfied. Beyond breaking the U.S.–Taiwan bond, Beijing has denied any desire to push the United States out of Asia. It has reaffirmed Deng Xiaoping's injunction to "hide its light and bide its time, while getting something accomplished" (taoguang yanghui, yousuo zuowei).[3] It has repeatedly put development and peace first. However, China's superior economic performance during the recession, surging global trade and investments, and developing military might led Beijing during 2010 to implement a series of assertive initiatives which caused widespread anxiety in its neighborhood and internationally. As China's power grows, its allegiance to Deng's maxim becomes more dated and stale. **A decision to jettison Taiwan, or even**

cut back significantly on U.S. support, would prove to an increasingly confident China that Washington

has become weak, vacillating, and unreliable. The 2009 U.S.–China Joint Statement reflected Beijing's estimate that Washington could be intimidated or

misled, as it juxtaposed a reference to Taiwan as a Chinese core interest with concurrence that "the two sides agreed that respecting each other's core interests is extremely important to

ensure steady progress in U.S.–China relations."[4] **Analysts who argue that Washington can safely appease Beijing** because "territorial

concessions are not always bound to fail" **are**, without evidence, **assuming improbably modest Chinese objectives** (emphasis added).[5]

Relying on the sacrifice of Taiwan to fulfill Chinese ambitions ignores more than intentions, it also **overlooks internal**

dynamics in China. Beijing confronts constant domestic turmoil. Corruption, income inequality, and environmental

degradation **have tarnished the** accomplishments of the government and **party**. Fears among the leadership concerning mounting social unrest, spurred by the Jasmine

Revolutions in the Middle East, produced harsh restrictions of the media and the Internet along with the imprisonment of artists, underground church members, protesting peasants, lawyers, and human rights activists. Regaining Taiwan is unlikely to provide a broad and enduring balance to internal unhappiness. Beijing also confronts militant nationalism which, though fostered by the government, is still difficult to control. Any suspicion that authorities are not adequately safeguarding Chinese interests and securing international respect could threaten regime stability.

Accordingly, **a U.S. sacrifice of Taiwan**, while gratifying, **could not thoroughly slake a continuing need for Beijing to**

demonstrate its power. Indeed, the sacrifice might promote new appetites and necessitate fresh

efforts to satisfy that need.

Historically,

Keren **Yarhi-Milo**, Alexander Lanoszka, Zack Cooper, 10-01-20**16**, "To Arm or to Ally? The Patron's Dilemma and the Strategic Logic of Arms Transfers and Alliances", MIT Press,

<https://direct.mit.edu/isec/article-abstract/41/2/90/12143/To-Arm-or-to-Ally-The-Patron-s-Dilemma-and-the-//RB>, **brackets, ellipses in og**

Whatever its intent, the Carter administration failed to anticipate Congress's negative reaction regarding the **lack of consultation on the termination of formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan in 1979** and **the end of the Mutual Defense Treaty in 1980**.

Members were also outraged because they perceived Carter's actions as abandoning an ally and damaging the United States' reputation. Indeed, shortly after China received diplomatic recognition from Washington, it invaded North Vietnam—an action that amplified the concerns expressed in Congress.¹⁰³ The Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), which

came into force on April 10, 1979, committed the United States to provide Taiwan with "arms of a defensive character . . . in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability . . . based solely upon their judgment of the needs of Taiwan."¹⁰⁴ The TRA also required that Washington maintain the capacity to "resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people of Taiwan."¹⁰⁵ In a memorandum to President Carter, Secretary of State Vance noted: "We have a dual problem in determining our position on the resumption of arms sales to Taiwan. On the one hand, our action should be taken in such a way as to reassure Congress and Taiwan that we continue to have an interest in Taiwan's legitimate defense requirements. On the other hand, we wish to avoid provoking the PRC to react in a manner harmful to our developing bilateral relationship."¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, Vance warned: **"Taiwan views our arms sales commitment as the keystone of**

their security policy and will be anxious for reconfirmation of our pledges early in the new year."¹¹⁰ Indeed, on November 8, 1979, Taiwan placed a request

for "high-performance fighter aircraft... with most other requests focused on air and sea defense weapons."¹¹¹ U.S. officials now reconsidered selling F-4s to Taiwan, noting that "F-4 sale would dramatize that the U.S. is not 'abandoning' Taiwan.... Both with Congress and on Taiwan, an F-4 sale is probably the most popular step we can take."¹¹² Responding to Taiwan's demands, however, Vance reasoned in December 1979 that an upgrade in the U.S. military commitment to Taiwan was unlikely. To him, there was "no reason at this point to change our position of denying sales to Taiwan of F-4, F-16 or F-18 aircraft, all of which have offensive capability as well as violate the arms transfer policy." Reagan's election elicited hope in Taipei that Washington would upgrade its military commitment by supplying Taiwan with newer fighter aircraft. Reagan's election elicited hope in Taipei that Washington would upgrade its military commitment by supplying Taiwan with newer fighter aircraft. **Threatened by Reagan's stance toward normalization, China demanded in**

1981 that the United States commit not only to denying Taiwan advanced fighters, but also to **ending all arms sales**. Ultimately, **the Reagan administration rejected** the sale, **explaining that "[t]he military and intelligence communities agree that for the foreseeable future Taiwan's legitimate defense needs can be fully met,** by continuing the F-5E coproduction line on Taiwan

with the possibility in addition of replacing older worn out aircraft with used aircraft of a comparable type."¹¹⁴ **Beijing was adamant that U.S. arms sales**

to Taiwan should cease, arguing that even a supply of defensive military capabilities could have negative effects on U.S.-China relations. **Yet China**

eventually yielded to a "phase-down" instead of a "phaseout" of U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, **without an explicit U.S. commitment to end**

them. The Third Joint Communiqué of August 18, 1982, embodied this compromise. The communiqué acknowledged that “the United States Government states that it does not seek to carry out a long-term policy of arms sales to Taiwan, that its arms sales to Taiwan will not exceed, either in qualitative or in quantitative terms, the level of those supplied in recent years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and China, and that it intends gradually to reduce its sale of arms to Taiwan, leading, over a period of time, to a final resolution.”

Similarly,

Ann Wang, 09-25-2024, "U.S. Military Support for Taiwan in Five Charts", Council on Foreign Relations,

<https://www.cfr.org/article/us-military-support-taiwan-five-charts> // TT

The U.S. Navy’s departure in early 1953 triggered the First Taiwan Strait Crisis (1954–55), which saw a significant exchange of military strikes between mainland Chinese forces and nationalists stationed on small fortified islands in the strait. A similar crisis again occurred in 1958. While both crises were limited, the United States and Soviet Union both at points warned of their willingness to use nuclear weapons to defend their putative allies in an expanded conflict.

Subpoint B is Taiwan’s Fear

Richard Weitz, 01-12-2016, "Taiwan Arms Deal Aims To Reduce Cross-Strait Tensions", China-U.S. Focus,

<https://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/taiwan-arms-deal-aims-to-reduce-cross-strait-tensions> // TT

In addition, Washington worries that declining to assist the Taiwanese military could encourage Beijing to adopt aggressive policies toward Taipei, increasing the risks of a Sino-American confrontation through miscalculation and thereby inflicting a major economic shock on China, Taiwan, the United States, and other countries. China’s 2005 Anti-Secession Law authorizes the use of force if Beijing concludes that peaceful reunification efforts will prove unsuccessful. U.S. officials have also feared that stopping conventional arms sales to Taiwan could have the untoward effect of prompting a panicky Taipei and other U.S. security partners, such as Japan and South Korea, to pursue nuclear weapons, long-range missiles, or

other destabilizing strategic weapons. Each of these three actors has been building offensive

conventional weapons and they have the capacity to make nuclear weapons. From a moral perspective, Taiwan is an

attractive partner for Americans given its democratic political system, with competitive multi-party elections in which the results are not decided in advance, and its other political and economic freedoms. Under present circumstances, the transfer of the PRC's political system to the island would result in a setback for the global democracy and human rights agenda

supported by the United States. From a realpolitik perspective, **Taiwan** contributes to U.S. security in multiple ways, from **serv**ing **as a strategic indicator**

regarding how China will use its growing international power to reinforcing **the credibility of the U.S. security guarantees that**

underpin the **East Asian security architecture** that has **promote regional peace and prosperity**, including to the benefit of

China and the United States. From the bargaining perspective, **the U.S. administration cannot** seem to **yield to Chinese threats to**

suspend defense exchanges or otherwise punish the United States over the issue of U.S. arms sales to Taiwan or related questions. Not only would encourage

negotiators from China and other countries to think they can achieve more gains from further threats, but a stream of unbalanced **U.S. concessions would**

undermine domestic public confidence and **support for a** generally **cooperative U.S. government policy toward China.**

Fundamentally, the United States continues its policy of strategic ambiguity, not taking sides on what Taiwan's ultimate fate should be, but insisting that Beijing-Taipei differences should be settled by peaceful means. U.S. arms sales policy have sought to balance enhancing Taiwan's defense capacity without emboldening rash Taiwanese actions, and to deter Beijing without

provoking the Chinese government. The United States could suffer as much as any actor from military conflict between China and Taiwan. **By providing the weapons,**

the United **S**tates **has** arguably **made Taipei more confident about working with Beijing to reduce** cross-Strait

tensions in recent years. **Continuing arms sales will help provide the reassurance the Taiwanese need to**

engage with Beijing in coming years without really threatening China, as even Chinese scholars acknowledge, presenting a security

threat to China.

However, affirming would effectively concede, giving China a springboard to boost their power.

Brands '20 [Hal; April 20; Distinguished Professor of Global Affairs at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, resident

scholar at the American Enterprise Institute; Foreign Affairs, "Don't Let Great Powers Carve Up the World: Spheres of Influence Are Unnecessary and Dangerous," <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2020-04-20/dont-let-great-powers-carve-world>] (recut lcp 10.29.24)

Offering **concessions to a revisionist state** may simply convince it that the existing order is fragile and can be tested further. Conceding a sphere of influence to a great-power challenger might not produce stability but simply **give that challenger a better position** from which to realize its ambitions. Consider the situation in the western Pacific. **The most minimal Chinese sphere of influence would surely include Taiwan. Yet if Taiwan became a platform for Chinese military capabilities, the defense of other U.S. allies in the region, such as Japan and the Philippines, would become vastly more difficult. Nor would such a concession likely satisfy Chinese ambitions. A growing body of literature** by scholars such as Toshi Yoshihara, James Holmes, Liza Tobin, and Elizabeth Economy suggests that **China desires at the very least to push the United States beyond the chain of islands running from Japan to Taiwan to the Philippines. Even a limited Chinese sphere in the western Pacific would serve as a springboard to this larger objective.** Meanwhile, the United States will have sacrificed a number of critical advantages by pulling out. A free Taiwan offers proof that Chinese culture and democracy are not incompatible; subjugating Taiwan would also allow Beijing to remove this ideological threat. Worse still, the United States would lose the edge that comes from being the only great power without significant security hazards near its borders. It was only after the United States achieved dominance in the Western Hemisphere that it could project power globally. Russia and **China**, by contrast, still have to deal with U.S. allies, partners, and military presences in their own backyards—a circumstance that diverts resources they might otherwise use to **pursue more distant ambitions and compete with the United States at a truly global scale.** Measures of Powers Fortunately, new spheres of influence are avoidable. Russia is a formidable player because of its willingness to take risks and pursue asymmetric strategies; but Moscow will not rebuild a meaningful sphere of influence so long as the United States opposes that ambition.

McCoy 23 [Alfred McCoy is the J.R.W. Smail Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison., 03-07-23, "The Devastating Consequences of a War Over Taiwan", Nation, <https://www.thenation.com/article/world/china-war-taiwan-military/> DOA: 11-1-24] cgc

Should China launch an all-out invasion, however, **Taiwan would likely succumb within a few days** once its air force of just 470 combat aircraft was overwhelmed by the PLA's 2,900 jet fighters, 2,100 supersonic missiles, and **its massive navy, now the world's largest.** Reflecting China's clear strategic advantage of simple proximity to Taiwan, the island's occupation might well be a fait accompli before the US Navy ships could arrive from Japan and Hawaii in sufficient numbers to challenge the

massive Chinese armada. If Beijing and Washington somehow let the pull of policy and planning drag them into such an ever-widening war, however, the damage could still prove incalculable—with cities devastated, untold thousands dead, and the global economy, with its epicenter in Asia, left in ruins. Let us only hope that today's leaders in both Washington and Beijing prove more restrained than did their counterparts in Berlin and Paris in August 1914 when plans for victory unleashed a war that would leave 20 million dead in its wake.

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Right now, U.S. security policy remains a lifeline for Asian allies.

Edward Wong 24, Nieman Fellow at Harvard; Diplomatic correspondent and foreign policy writer, 7-26-2024, "As Trump Looms, Blinken Aims to Reassure Allies on U.S. Commitment to Asia", New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/26/us/politics/blinken-asia-us-election.html>, Accessed 10-2-2024, ARC (recut lcp 10.29.24)

For three and a half years, President Biden and his aides have insisted that the United States is a Pacific power, and that its allies and partners in the region need not worry about Washington's commitments. For U.S. officials, underscoring that message has become increasingly important as China's power has grown. Now Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken plans to deliver assurances in person across six nations, his most ambitious trip in the region. When Mr. Blinken lands in Vientiane, the capital of Laos, on Saturday, he will face a barrage of questions about what dramatic shifts in U.S. policy might or might not occur next year, given the upcoming change in the presidency. Mr. Biden's announcement last Sunday that he is no longer running for re-election sent shock waves around the world. Many of America's allies are especially concerned about a second Trump presidency, given that former President Donald J. Trump has constantly declared that those allies are conning the United States into providing military support. They are uncertain if Vice President Kamala Harris, the presumptive Democratic nominee, can beat him in November. Regardless, Mr. Blinken's core message will be one of American resolve. "I think the message that the secretary is going to be conveying to the region is that America is all in on the Indo-Pacific," Daniel J. Kritenbrink, the assistant secretary of state for East Asia and the Pacific, told reporters on Monday. "I think from Day 1 of this administration, we have significantly and dramatically stepped up our engagement." But the talking point does not answer in concrete terms the

main question from allies: Starting next year, will the United States invest significantly in Asia — in both economic and military terms? Mr. Blinken could argue that Ms. Harris's foreign policy would be a continuation of Mr. Biden's, but in no way can he speak for Mr. Trump. "Honestly, it will be a challenging task because countries in the region, including China, are looking beyond the Biden administration and thinking of the future," said Yun Sun, a director of the China program at the Stimson Center, a research group in Washington. Mr. Biden, Mr. Blinken and Jake Sullivan, the national security adviser, have spoken about China as the greatest long-term challenge to American power. They have tried to shape U.S. foreign policy around that but have often been forced to address crises elsewhere in the world. Even for this trip, Mr. Blinken left **Washington** one day later than initially planned after Mr. Biden agreed to meet with Benjamin Netanyahu, the prime minister of Israel, at the White House on Thursday. Yet, there has been a constant in Mr. Biden's approach to Asia: He has bolstered military alliances, to the consternation of Xi Jinping, China's leader. Along those lines, he **has signed new agreements with Japan, the Philippines, Australia and South Korea.** The United States is sending Tomahawk cruise missiles to Japan and nuclear-powered submarines to Australia, and it has obtained greater access to military bases in the Philippines. Mr. Biden has also, for the first time, used presidential authority to send weapons to Taiwan, the de facto independent island that the Chinese Communist Party aims to rule.

Abandoning Taiwan sends a dangerous message to our allies – they could be next.

Shelley **Rigger**, xx-xx-20**11**, "Why Giving Up Taiwan Will Not Help Us with China", American Enterprise Institute,

<https://www.istor.org/stable/pdf/resrep03112.pdf> // RB

The most-cited strategic argument for continuing **US security assistance to Taiwan is** that **the existing security architecture in the Asia-Pacific region** and beyond **serves the interests of many nations**. Within the network of global security relationships, **Washington's behavior toward Taiwan indicates its attitude toward security assistance** generally, including **its alliance commitments and willingness to honor other obligations** around the world. As retired admiral Eric McVadon said, "**American credibility as an alliance partner** and as a bulwark of peace and stability in the region and around the world **would be sorely diminished were we to** abandon the [Taiwan Relations Act], **cease**

support of Taipei, and lead Beijing to conclude that it can attack Taiwan and not be repulsed.”⁶The system

of alliances the United States constructed in Northeast Asia after World War II and the Korean War is not to be discarded on a whim. From 1895 to 1945 Japan, Russia, and China battled for regional supremacy, devastating huge swaths of Korea and China. American security guarantees put in place in the midtwentieth century suspended those conflicts. Ample evidence exists in current affairs—including conflicts over contested islands in the East and South China Seas—to suggest that military rivalry could return to East Asia. The US presence, however it may offend China, actually lightens Beijing’s military burden by restraining neighboring countries’ military investments and easing their strategic anxiety. As Glaser acknowledges, “the U.S. alliance with Japan also benefits China by enabling Japan to spend far less on defense.

Allies would lose confidence in American defense obligations, leading them to acquire their own weapons.

Kelly **Wadsworth 19**, Non-Resident Kelly Fellow at Pacific Forum at the Center for Strategic & International Studies, PhD Student in International Security Studies at the University of Pittsburgh, MBA and MA in International Studies (Korea Studies) at the University of Washington, Former Visiting Fellow at the Japan Institute of International Affairs, BA in International Relations and East Asia from the University of California, Davis, “Should Japan Adopt Conventional Missile Strike Capabilities?”, *Asia Policy*, Volume 14, Number 2, April 2019, p. 83-87, Accessed 10-21-2024, ARC (recut lcp 10.29.24)

American proponents of Japan obtaining a conventional missile strike capability interviewed for this research argued that the United States could use a more capable ally in the region to address the threat posed by heightened Chinese naval activity. While that prospect might be a tempting short-term fix to offset the U.S. Department of Defense budget cuts over the last decade, the long-term interests of the United States in maintaining regional stability should also be considered. In addition to the negative reactions of Beijing and Seoul, a Japanese offensive strike capability could **decrease regional confidence in the credibility of U.S. power in Asia.** As noted above, some experts argue that if Japan strengthens its offensive capability, such a move might be interpreted by neighbors reliant on the U.S. nuclear umbrella as a sign that Tokyo is losing confidence in the United States’ credibility.⁷¹ This **could start a chain reaction that causes more U.S. allies to hedge with China or to develop their own strike capabilities,** further **increasing instability in Asia.**

Unfortunately, this rapid build-up would spiral into an arms race, as each country rushes to pursue arms.

Gilber, Douglas. "Taking Arms against a Sea of Troubles: Conventional Arms Races during Periods of Rivalry" Journal of Peace Research, Vol.

42, No. 2 (Mar., 2005)//AB

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/30042270?seq=1>

In addition to escalation, arms races seem to have an important substantive impact on the likelihood of conflict, especially in comparison with the other variables in our models. For example, as

Table II shows, **the chance of a MID for strategic rivals more than doubles, from 16% on average to 35%**

during an arms race year, and the chance of war changes [increases 5 times] from 1 in 100 to 1 in 20

during arms race years.

Rebuttal

Miscalc. has empirically never caused wars.

Hansen 17 [Victor Davis Hanson is the Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution; his focus is classics and military history. Hanson was a National Endowment for the Humanities fellow at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford, California (1992–93), a visiting professor of classics at Stanford University (1991–92), the annual Wayne and Marcia Buske Distinguished Visiting Fellow in History at Hillsdale College (2004–), the Visiting Shifron Professor of Military History at the US Naval Academy (2002–3), and the William Simon Visiting Professor of Public Policy at Pepperdine University (2010). In 1991 he was awarded an American Philological Association Excellence in Teaching Award. He received the Eric Breindel Award for Excellence in Opinion Journalism (2002), presented the Manhattan's Institute's Wriston Lecture (2004), and was awarded the National Humanities Medal (2007) and the Bradley Prize (2008). Are Wars Caused by Accidents? October 3, 2007.

nationalreview.com/2017/10/what-causes-war-appeasement-weakness-postpone-war-invite-future-aggression/] recut mac

Is there evidence in history that wars break out largely because of an accident or over a misplaced word? **Seldom.** ENEMIES FIGHT, BUT NEUTRALS, RIVALS, AND FRIENDS RARELY DO The precise timing of particular outbreaks of war, of course, can depend on unique factors. A sudden perception of a loss of deterrence can cause an army to mobilize. So can almost anything, from the introduction of a new weapon to a change in government. Yet the larger events that originally drove two sides to fight are rarely, if ever, accidental in the manner of car wrecks. Enemies go to war, rivals, neutrals, and friends rarely do. There is little chance that an accidental foreign incursion across the Canadian or even the Mexican border will result in war. The apparently accidental, but quite lethal, 1967 Israeli air attack on the USS Liberty did not result in a U.S. retaliatory strike on Tel Aviv, much less escalate to a general war. Yet a similar Soviet strike might have. In general, the best deterrent policy in dealing with multiple aggressors is Teddy Roosevelt's dictum to speak softly and carry a big stick — because loud speech is sometimes misinterpreted as a compensatory effort to disguise military incapability, and thus paradoxically it can lead to a fatal loss of deterrence. Next best perhaps is speaking loudly while carrying a big stick. Intemperate words are not fatal if ultimately reinforced by overwhelming force. Most dangerous is speaking loudly (and especially sanctimoniously) while carrying a twig — basically what we have seen in the past eight years with Russia, Iran, and Syria. WAS WORLD WAR I REALLY AN ACCIDENT? It is often said that accidents and extraneous forces — nearly automatic and mindless mobilization, fumbled diplomacy, greedy arms merchants, archaic alliances on autopilot, confused messaging, or bellicose strutting and rhetoric in August 1914 — triggered World War I, which otherwise might have been prevented. But a continental war had come close to breaking out earlier in

1911 over Morocco and again in 1912–13 in the Balkans. A war would likely have broken out later, if not in 1914. Berlin by 1914 held views that were incompatible with peaceful resolution: 1) Germany felt cheated that its economic dynamism, population, and military power somehow had not resulted in what Germany thought it deserved: commensurate colonial expansion overseas and dominant influence on the Continent; 2) the German army since 1871 had felt that its size, and organizational and technological excellence, increasingly replicated in a rising and powerful navy made it nearly unstoppable vis-à-vis other European rivals; 3) any sudden German strike in either the East or West could not be immediately deterred or stopped by the existing forces of Britain, France, or Russia. The net result of these unchallenged assumptions was a likely German war of aggression sometime in the second or third decade of the 20th century. Preventing World War I would have required far closer coordination and greater deterrent capability among Germany's intended targets. Or the Germans would've needed to be far less aggressive, perhaps with a Kaiser more like Wilhelm II's grandfather, Wilhelm I, who under the influence of Otto von Bismarck had realized that long-term German aspirations were achievable without a sudden and destructive European war. Or a more interventionist United States would have had to intervene on the side of the democracies before, rather than after, the war — somewhat akin to America's proactive Cold War leadership after 1945. Just days after the war broke out, German professor and diplomatic analyst Kurt Riezler issued his Septemberprogramm draft of annexing much of Western Europe — a plan of aggression that only summarized long-held German agendas. Indeed, since 1871, Germans had believed that their empire was destined to do as it wished in Europe, and, more immediately, that another border war would, as in 1870–71, be rather short and earn great dividends that were richly deserved at tolerable costs. APPEASEMENT, NOT ACCIDENTS, START WARS if rising tensions are not to lead to war, the key factor in confronting aggressors is avoiding accidental impressions that cause a loss of deterrent power. What will start a war with North Korea is not a bellicose tweet from Trump. Instead, a war will follow if North Korea does a cost-benefit analysis that leads it to conclude that an attack will produce more positive results than setbacks, or if it has the impression that its forces can inflict lots of damage without the regime's destruction. Again, mellifluous appeasement is far more dangerous even than sloppy, bellicose rhetoric. Of course, the latter should be avoided if not backed by force, but "fire and fury" words, ipso facto, will not provoke to action an otherwise stationary aggressor. Rather the danger is that rhetoric alone can project a sense of weakness that invites aggression, on the theory that fiery but empty words are intended to mask military inability. The last century of so-called accidental wars did not start over an unwise taunt or an accidental bombing. To the degree that there was a miscalculation during rising tensions, the culprit was most often a loss of deterrence, whether real or imagined: -Much of Europe and Britain weakly appeased Hitler's serial aggressions in the 1930s rather than stopping them, persuading Hitler that his rather meager forces could nonetheless win a continental war against America. Britain, and the Soviet Union. -Japan wrongly surmised that U.S. isolationism in the 1930s and inaction from 1939 to 1941 would not lead to a muscular response after Pearl Harbor — and so Japan tried its luck. -Dean Acheson in 1950 suggested that South Korea was outside the U.S. protective shield; the miscue probably encouraged a North Korean invasion. -A series of unwise British actions in the early 1980s (from a parliamentarian's occasional naive reference to the Falklands as the "Malvinas" to the more serious tactic of withdrawing a small Royal Navy ship from the Falklands) suggested to the Argentine dictatorship that London did not see retaining the Falklands as worth a war. -April Glaspie sloppily remarked in 1990 that Arab border disputes were not of paramount interests to the U.S., which may have encouraged Saddam Hussein to invade Kuwait. - THE TERRIBLE LABORATORY War is a horrific laboratory experiment that confirms or rejects vague and inexact prewar guesses about relative strength or weakness. The way, then, to prevent conflict from breaking out is to assure potential aggressors during peacetime that they are weaker than their targets and would lose catastrophically if they were foolish enough to test the obvious. Only in this way does war appear as a costly redundancy that is avoidable. World Wars I and II were tragic and unnecessary demonstrations of what should have been obvious in 1914 and in 1939–41. In the former case, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Ottoman Turkey could never match the combined power of the eventual alliance of Britain and its Empire, France, Italy, Russia, and the United States. In the latter war, Germany, Italy, and Japan had no business dreaming that their combined might could ever defeat the forces of the British Empire, the Soviet Union, and the United States. But for a variety of reasons (in the case of World War II, British appeasement, Russian collaboration, and the isolationism of the United States), that reality from 1939 to 1941 was not made clear. The result was that the Axis started a series of wars on false impressions; the truth would have been obvious if their enemies had adopted wiser prewar deterrent policies and military preparation. AN ACCIDENT — OR AN ACCIDENT WAITING TO HAPPEN? So too it is with North Korea. Even the sloppiest outburst from Kim Jong Un or promises of fiery retaliation from Donald Trump are not likely to prompt a second Korean War — at least until the conditions for it are nearly preordained by tragically false perceptions of relative strength. Still, Trump should be careful what he says, largely because rhetoric at best is a shrinking asset that encourages adventurism when not reinforced by concrete action. At worst, tough talk can be wrongly interpreted as a surrogate for a quiet willingness to use force to deter enemies. In contrast, a clear and firm statement about what will happen if North Korea attacks either U.S. bases or American soil or its allies, backed by demonstrations of deterrent force, will likely prevent a war. As far as North Korea, a deterrent policy involves periodic shows of overwhelming force by our alliance, a concerted effort to implement missile defense, and diplomatic efforts to line up big powers such as China, the European Union, India, and Russia to apprise North Korea that it will face only global hostility if it starts a war against the overwhelming strength of the U.S. alliance. A bombastic outburst may change the date of an inevitable war with North Korea, but it won't in itself ensure a war. In contrast, an inadvertent or deliberate effort to assure North Korea that the U.S. will not respond in apocalyptic fashion to its aggression is a guarantee that war will follow. THE FEAR THAT WE ARE STILL REPTILIAN Why do we ignore this lesson of history? Pacifism and appeasement in the short term often postpone war and are achieved at little cost. Both win popular and elite acclaim for demonstrating sophisticated moderation and forbearance. In thinking that war is always irrational, only an accident can explain why otherwise sober people would launch such an atrocious enterprise. In contrast, military preparation, deterrence, and a willingness to use superior force against aggressors is a de facto admission that humans are still Neanderthals — and in their limbic brains fear not so much starting a war as being utterly defeated in a war. Deterrence is a hard sell for an affluent and leisured society convinced that its supposed success at evolving and improving human nature has made the tough lessons of the past seem prosaic and irrelevant. Let us pray that we accept the bitter reality that the world is still full of reptiles and not college professors.

Weapons are offensive.

Bremer '23 [Maximilian and Kelly Grieco; January 25; Director of the Special Programs Division at Air Mobility Command, M.P.P. in International Security from the Harvard Kennedy School, Master of Airpower Art and Science in Economic Coercion from the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies; Senior Fellow with the Reimagining U.S. Grand Strategy Program at the Stimson Center, Ph.D. in Political Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Adjunct Associate Professor in the Center for Security Studies at Georgetown University, former Senior Fellow with the New American Engagement Initiative in the Atlantic Council's Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security and Assistant Professor at the Air Command and Staff College; Stimson Policy Paper, "Assumption Testing: Airpower is inherently offensive," <https://www.stimson.org/2023/assumption-testing-is-airpower-inherently-offensive/>] DOA: 10/07/2024 DSL

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has pursued a grand strategy of liberal primacy reliant on power-projection capabilities, especially airpower. Overwhelming advantages in stealth aircraft and precision-guided munitions made it possible to reach deep enemy territory and strike quickly and cheaply at low risk of U.S. casualties. The assumption that airpower is inherently offensive — the best defense is a good offense — underlies much of American military activism. Many security experts believe that the American "bomber must always get through," and the United States must spend whatever it takes to retain its military-technological edge. As China races to catch up, they argue, the United States must invest aggressively in new and emerging technologies for next-generation penetrating stealth aircraft and air-dominance capabilities to secure a military advantage

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