## AFF ANSWERS

### Ukraine Thumper

#### Ukraine thumps the link – Biden already losing in Asia.

Townshend and Corben ’22 (Ashley Townshend is director of foreign policy and defense and Tom Corben is a research associate in the foreign policy and defense program at the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney. “Op-Ed: War in Ukraine Threatens America's Ability to Counter China,” The Strategist, MAR 16, 2022, <https://www.maritime-executive.com/editorials/op-ed-war-in-ukraine-threatens-america-s-ability-to-counter-china>)

As the United States slides deeper into a proxy war with Russia, Indo-Pacific countries are increasingly concerned about the long-term implications of the Ukraine crisis for America’s power and position in this part of the world. And so they should be. While President Joe Biden’s initial approach to Ukraine struck the right balance of resolve and restraint—marshalling global allies in support of sanctions against Russia and funnelling military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine—the war is now sapping more and more American attention and defence resources. A dangerous tit for tat is taking hold. Washington’s lethal military aid and economy-breaking sanctions signal an investment in the war that could slip beyond Biden’s original articulation of limited interests. Russia’s nuclear threats and increasingly brutal operations have triggered further US involvement, including the deployment of advanced F-35 fighters and expensive Patriot missile-defence systems to NATO frontlines in Eastern Europe, and a massive $13.6 billion Ukraine emergency bill passed by Congress last week. Calls are getting louder for a ‘limited no-fly zone’ which, though rebuffed so far, may become politically harder to resist. All this is understandable given the humanitarian carnage. But hot on the heels of the release of Biden’s Indo-Pacific strategy, it’s unsettling to watch Washington’s strategic gaze drift, once again, away from a robust "pivot to Asia." As we argue in a new United States Studies Centre report, these developments are especially worrying given that the Biden administration has so far failed to deliver on key defense components of its regional strategy. Senior US officials insist that events in Europe will not see the Indo-Pacific or efforts to balance Chinese power deprioritised. Earlier this month, the White House’s Indo-Pacific coordinator, Kurt Campbell, again promised that Washington was capable of sustaining "deep commitments" in both theaters simultaneously, even at great cost, just as it had in the past. But while America can—and must—continue to buttress European security, it doesn’t enjoy the luxury of riches or unchallenged military primacy required to underwrite an expansive global strategy against two great-power rivals. Matching ends with means in the Indo-Pacific—America’s so-called ‘priority theatre’—requires difficult trade-offs between competing priorities, including in Ukraine. A more sustainable division of US and allied defense responsibilities in Europe and Asia is urgently required. Biden understands this and deserves credit for attempting to match US global interests and commitments in his first year. Poor execution aside, his Afghan withdrawal showed a willingness to make tough, politically unpopular trade-offs. His initially restrained approach to the Ukraine crisis suggested he would keep it in global strategic perspective. But Washington won’t be able to sideline Moscow from its foreign policy agenda the way it had hoped. Delays to the publication of the US national defense strategy and national security strategy suggest that Russia is forcing a hurried reassessment of Biden’s global priorities. In a worst-case scenario for the Indo-Pacific, it’s possible these documents will return US military strategy to an equally weighted focus on Asia and Europe—contradicting hard-fought efforts in recent years to make China the Pentagon’s outright priority. This is not a callous point to make. America simply doesn’t have the military resources required to prosecute an effective multi-theater strategy in an era of great-power rivalry. Nor is it spending enough to change this equation: while the 2018 national defence strategy recommended three to five percent real growth in defense spending annually to keep pace with China and Russia, not a single defense budget since has met these targets. Biden’s budget continues this unsatisfactory trend. And in contrast to the stark warnings from top brass at US Indo-Pacific Command, who see conflict with China as a possibility this decade, the administration’s defense budget prioritizes long-term military modernization in anticipation of high-end conflict in the 2030s - leaving the US underprepared to deal with Chinese military coercion over the next few years. Budget shortfalls are mirrored by slow-moving efforts to realign US forces globally. Efforts to empower US allies are even more important as Washington is once again pulled in conflicting global directions. Indo-Pacific allies should advocate for more. As a priority, Australia should caucus with Japan and other close security partners to push for overdue reforms to US export controls on defense technology. Indo-Pacific allies should also press Washington for greater insight and input into its regional military planning. A credible collective defence strategy requires clarity on when, where and how to address shared defence challenges. Biden’s effort to build support among regional allies for a Taiwan contingency is a step in this direction. But while Taiwan is the Pentagon’s "pacing challenge," regional countries face Chinese military coercion across a far wider range of lower intensity scenarios, as China’s intimidation of an Australian military aircraft in the Arafura Sea last month attests. New strategic planning initiatives must reflect these realities. In the end, however, these initiatives can’t change the strategic physics of the Indo-Pacific. A favorable balance of power with China can only be upheld with unprecedented US support. Alliance modernization is a necessary component of this strategy, but it’s not a substitute for a robust US military posture and presence in the Indo-Pacific. As the conflict in Ukraine grinds on, America’s capacity to deliver an effective defense strategy for the region will depend on its ability to keep its escalating involvement in check and in global strategic perspective.

#### Distraction now and the military is unprepared in Asia

Mark Montgomery and Bradley Bowman 3-8-2022, Retired U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Mark Montgomery is a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. He previously served as policy director of the Senate Armed Services Committee under Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz. His last Navy assignment was as director of operations for U.S. Pacific Command. Bradley Bowman is senior director of the Center on Military and Political Power at FDD. He served as a national security adviser to members of the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations committees, as well as an active duty U.S. Army officer, Black Hawk pilot and assistant professor at the U.S. Military Academy. (“Apply the lessons from Ukraine in the Taiwan Strait,” Defense News, <https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2022/03/08/nine-lessons-from-ukraine-to-apply-in-the-taiwan-strait/)//BB>

With the world’s attention fixed on the national security and humanitarian catastrophe in Ukraine caused by Russian President Vladimir Putin’s unprovoked invasion, a similar disaster is brewing in the Pacific. Taking a page from Putin’s playbook, the Chinese Communist Party, or CCP, is methodically assembling combat power to coerce or conquer the free people of Taiwan. Preventing that from happening will require Washington to learn the right lessons from the disaster in Ukraine. Among them is the need for Washington to spend less time worrying about provoking authoritarian bullies and more time working to defend threatened democracies before the invasion starts. This is especially critical as U.S. forces are much more likely to be directly involved in a response to coercion against Taiwan. For 25 years, Beijing has pursued a determined strategy featuring military modernization, technological advancements, economic infiltration, cyberattacks and persistent disinformation campaigns. These efforts have focused on building a world-class military, erasing American military supremacy in the seas and skies around Taiwan, and preparing for a potential attack designed to establish CCP dominion over Taiwan. Meanwhile, the United States has been distracted elsewhere, unable to focus its strategic and fiscal efforts on the rising power in China. This has been compounded by consistent congressional failures to provide the Pentagon with the timely, sufficient and predictable funding necessary to modernize U.S. forces and maintain sufficient readiness and capacity. Indeed, the Department of Defense has received on-time funding only once in the last 13 fiscal years. Exacerbating these dynamics, Washington has been slow in addressing serious concerns and specific requests for resources identified by Indo-Pacific Command in successive reports to Congress. Just last year, the command again warned that the military balance of power in the region continues to become “more unfavorable” for America and its allies.

### No Trade-Off

#### No trade-off – the US is and can focus on both.

Garamone ’22 (Jim, Reporter for DOD News, “Austin: How the U.S. Walks, Chews Gum at the Same Time,” June 13, 2022, <https://www.safia.hq.af.mil/IA-News/Article/3062747/austin-how-the-us-walks-chews-gum-at-the-same-time/>)-mikee

The Indo-Pacific is a U.S. national security strategy priority, but the United States is a global power with global interests and responsibilities, and "we are walking and chewing gum at the same time," Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III said today in Bangkok. As the United States works toward a free and open Indo-Pacific it also is leading the effort to supply Ukraine with the arms, ammunition and supplies it needs to defend itself against an unprovoked war. Further, the U.S. military has worked to reassure NATO allies with the addition of more than 20,000 U.S. service members in the European theater. At the same time, there are 300,000 service members serving in the Indo-Pacific. The reason the United States can "walk and chew gum at the same time" is because of the unparalleled network of allies and partners. Austin's current trip around the world is an example how the U.S. values and relies on that network of allies. The trip started with a meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at the command that symbolizes the close bond between the two countries — the North American Aerospace Defense Command in Colorado Springs, Colorado. From there, Austin went to the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore and then to Bangkok, where he conferred with the United States' oldest treaty ally. Austin spoke to reporters at the end of his meetings with Thailand Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Prayut Chan-o-cha to put the trip into perspective. At Shangri-La, Austin delivered a major speech about "the centrality of this region to vital U.S. interests and the vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific that we share with our regional allies and partners." And the secretary also used the gathering of defense ministers to participate in bilateral and trilateral meetings with allies and partners. These included Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, Vietnam, the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Australia and China. The secretary plainly laid out U.S. concerns and proposals for the region. He spoke about the need for communication between China and the United States to lessen the chances of an escalation. He spoke of concerns over China's behaviors as it tries to assert control over international waterways and air lanes. He also said the United States "never shies away from honest competition, but we don't seek conflict, nor do we seek a region that's split into hostile blocks." The dialogue "was an important opportunity to raise our concerns about the potential for instability in the Taiwan Strait and to underscore that our long-standing policy toward Taiwan is unwavering and unchanged," he said. Austin worked with allies to increase cooperation across the region. His stop in Bangkok is another piece of this effort to increase cooperation across the region. The United States military is working with Thailand's forces to modernize the military. Discussions centered on this and increasing the complexity of an already large exercise program headlined by the Cobra Gold series. Now, the secretary will travel to Brussels for the defense ministerial — the last such meeting before the NATO Summit in Madrid that begins June 28. While the ministerial is important "my first order of business will be convening the Ukraine defense contact group for the third time," Austin said. "That's going to be an important opportunity to gather our growing group of partners from around the world to ensure that we're providing Ukraine, what Ukraine needs right now in order to defend against Russia's unjustified, unprovoked assault." The group will also look at what Ukraine will need in the long run to build and sustain defenses. "We'll hear directly from the Ukrainian leaders, led by my good friend and counterpart Oleksii Reznikov, and we'll work to intensify our shared efforts to meet Ukraine's priority requirements to defend itself," he said. The bottom line to all this is that the United States can deal in two theaters and with two competitors and then some. He said the number of operations, exercises and training events that the U.S. has conducted with Indo-Pacific allies and partners over the past year "... is impressive in and of itself." Austin continued, "But by the same time, we've been able to not only to help to unify NATO, we've also led the effort to rapidly rush much needed security assistance to Ukraine with the help of allies and partners," he continued. President Joe Biden has been instrumental in solidifying NATO and other nations opposition to Vladimir Putin's unjust war — first by sharing intelligence openly about Russia's intentions and then in his quick response to the invasion itself, Austin said. "[NATO] is more united than I've seen it, and I've been associated with NATO since … 1975 when Lieutenant Austin first started down that road," he said. "So, we are walking and chewing gum. And we're able to do that because the strong network of alliances and partnerships that we have around the globe."

#### The US can focus on both regions at once

Kroenig ‘22, deputy director of the Atlantic Council’s Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security and a professor in the Department of Government and the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University (Matthew, “Washington Must Prepare for War With Both Russia and China,” *Foreign Policy*, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/02/18/us-russia-china-war-nato-quadrilateral-security-dialogue/)//BB>

As Russia threatens the largest land invasion in Europe since World War II, the most consequential strategic question of the 21st century is becoming clear: How can the United States manage two revisionist, autocratic, nuclear-armed great powers (Russia and China) simultaneously? The answer, according to many politicians and defense experts, is that Washington must moderate its response to Russia in Europe to focus on the greater threat posed by China in the Indo-Pacific. This would be a mistake. The United States remains the world’s leading power with global interests, and it cannot afford to choose between Europe and the Indo-Pacific. Instead, Washington and its allies should develop a defense strategy capable of deterring and, if necessary, defeating Russia and China at the same time. In recent weeks, Biden has sent several thousand U.S. troops to reinforce NATO’s eastern flank—and for good reason. A major war in Ukraine could spill across international boundaries and threaten the seven NATO allies that border Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine. Moreover, if Russian President Vladimir Putin succeeds in Ukraine, why would he stop there? Putin has shown a clear interest in resurrecting the former Russian Empire, and other vulnerable Eastern European countries—Poland, Romania, or the Baltic states—might be next. A successful Russian incursion into a NATO ally’s territory could mean the end of the Western alliance and the credibility of U.S. security commitments globally. The threat posed by China is also serious. Adm. Philip Davidson, former commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, predicted China could invade Taiwan within the next six years. This is a war the United States might lose. If China succeeds in taking Taiwan, it would be well on its way to disrupting the U.S.-led order in Asia, with an eye to doing the same globally. Moreover, Russia and China are increasingly working together. As this month’s summit between Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping shows, Moscow and Beijing are forging a closer strategic partnership, including on military matters. These dictators could coordinate dual attacks on the U.S. alliance structure or opportunistically seize on the distraction provided by the other’s aggression. In other words, there is a serious risk of simultaneous major-power wars in both Europe and the Indo-Pacific. To address this problem, many have proposed answers that simply will not work. The Biden administration initially hoped to put relations with Russia on a “stable and predictable” footing to focus on China, but Putin had other ideas, as the world is now seeing in Ukraine. Unfortunately, Washington does not get to decide how its adversaries sequence their aggression. Others have expressed hope that Washington can peel these powers apart or even align with Russia against China, but these are not realistic solutions. The misguided view gaining the most recent acceptance, however, is that Washington should simply choose the Indo-Pacific over Europe. Politicians and experts argue that the United States lacks the resources to take on both Russia and China. They point to China’s power and Asia’s wealth and argue that Asia should be the priority. While Washington pivots to Asia, wealthy European countries, such as Germany, should step up to provide for NATO’s defense. Indeed, the Biden administration’s National Defense Strategy, which has been delayed due to the Ukraine crisis, is expected to focus on China without offering a clear solution to the two-front-war problem. A good strategy starts with clear goals—and Washington’s objectives are to maintain peace and stability in both Europe and Asia. A good strategy, however, starts with clear goals, and Washington’s objectives are to maintain peace and stability in both Europe and Asia. U.S. interests in Europe are too significant to let them be worked out solely between Putin and the United States’ European allies. Indeed, the European Union, not Asia, is the United States’ largest trade and investment partner, and this imbalance is much starker when China (which the United States seeks greater economic decoupling from), is removed from the equation. Furthermore, China has conducted military exercises in Europe and the Middle East. Competing with China militarily means competing globally, not just in Asia. In addition, Xi is gauging U.S. resolve, and a weak response in Ukraine might make a Chinese move on Taiwan more likely. Moreover, the United States is not France; it is not compelled to make gut-wrenching strategic choices about its national security due to constrained resources. In short, publishing a defense strategy that can only handle one of the United States’ great-power rivals (which is what is expected from the forthcoming national defense strategy) is planning to fail.

### Asia Pivot Bad

#### Pivot to Europe solves Russia war, pivot to Asia causes it

McKinley ’22 (Michael, non-resident senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, “It’s Time to Pivot Back to Europe,” Politico, 2-24-2022, <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2022/02/24/its-time-to-pivot-back-to-europe-00011324>)

President Vladimir Putin’s recognition of the separatist republics of Luhansk and Donetsk, which opened the door to the wider assault on Ukraine that is now underway, is a game-changer on a historic scale. It underscores, like nothing else, that the drift away from Europe by the United States over the past 20 years in pursuit of wars and priorities elsewhere has been short-sighted. Like 1949, the year in which the North Atlantic Treaty Organization came into being, America and its European allies are facing a moment requiring a profound redefinition of their security, political and economic ties. Going forward, a strategic, not tactical, pivot back to Europe should be the driving imperative of American foreign policy. In doing so, it is important to accept reality: Putin called the bluff of the not-very-collected West, which was equivocating by placing only selective sanctions on Russia for its virtual annexation of part of Ukraine. Putin is unlikely to be deterred by a staggered escalation of these measures meant to allow room for him to change course: He is dead set on achieving at least a partial reconstitution of the Russian empire as he sees it and forcing the creation of a new security architecture for Europe. Putin’s words need to be taken seriously instead of being dismissed as ramblings or misleading. For all the lingering suggestions that there is still time for diplomacy, Putin could not have been clearer this week that he was also setting the stage for more aggressive steps in the very near future. He even raised a non-existent nuclear threat to Russia from a NATO-dominated Ukraine and again dismissed Ukrainian national identity as a fiction. Arriving at this point, too many commentators and politicians spent months resorting to dismissive rhetoric about Putin even as he outmaneuvered Western leaders. They belittled Russia — as a declining power, a declining economy and as a nation fearful of democratization on its borders. They argued that the United States and NATO allies could force Putin to rethink his actions — even though there has been no sign of him reconsidering course. Some argued that Putin would not risk war given the likely costs. It is now possible to see the limits of their world view. The inviolability of a nation’s sovereignty and its right to decide its own security alliances have also been presented as self-evident truths. In the case of Ukraine, however, many of us side-stepped uncomfortable questions about why NATO did not invite the country to join, and about the precedents set for Finland and Austria after World War II to ensure their neutrality. A now prophetic article by Henry Kissinger in 2014 makes it clear that something like the neutrality option would have been a more desirable outcome for Ukraine and reflected the reality of Ukraine’s situation. The West will find it difficult to break the momentum that Russia is building, or to reverse the new realities Putin is creating. Russia may not be a colossus, but it remains one of the most powerful countries in the world, with a nuclear arsenal, a modernized military and a serious player in international oil and gas markets. It cannot, in other words, be dismissed only as a “regional power threatening its neighbors out of weakness,” and while it is becoming an outright dictatorship by smothering democracy at home, that is not a central concern in the current crisis. Russia can project its military globally — as its interventions in Syria and elsewhere have shown. It can wage cyberattacks on Europe and the United States with relative impunity. Putin has triumphed in political showdowns with leaders like Turkey’s President Erdogan and, even as Russia’s relationship with Europe in general turns adversarial, the likes of Serbia and NATO member Hungary appear more sympathetic to Putin. World leaders until last week came to Putin as he limited his own international travel — and gave little away. Russia’s diplomatic fortunes are hardly crumbling elsewhere, as evidenced by a rising entente between China and Russia — aligned in their security interests against perceived Western encroachment. There is another factor at work, and that is that Putin’s view of history, often seen as opportunistic, does appear to be a primary driver of his actions. And it is not his worldview alone. The incorporation of Russian-speaking populations inside neighboring borders after 1991 remains an issue for nationalists in Moscow; and the West has systematically downplayed how NATO expansion since 1997 has looked to a generation of Russian leaders, and not just President Putin. It is not dovish, as a recent New Yorker article suggested, or appeasement as a British defense minister stated, to take these perceptions into account in the current crisis. The deep undercurrents of historical myth drive almost every nation into destructive paths. It is in this context that the United States and its allies have chosen to draw a line in the sand over a further Russian military intervention in Ukraine which has now materialized on a major scale. The relative success of President Joe Biden in preserving a united front with European allies on a gradual escalation of sanctions masks the lingering challenges of fully cohering on strategy. There have been differences between the responses by the United States and Britain on the one hand; the French and the Germans on another; and disparate governments like Italy (opposed to energy sanctions as late as this past weekend) and Hungary (offering veiled sympathy to Russia’s demands). French President Emmanuel Macron until recently was openly discussing the need for a new security architecture for Europe. Chancellor Olaf Scholz of Germany told national reporters on his return from Moscow that “we just can’t have a possible military conflict over a question that is not on the agenda” regarding Ukraine’s future membership in NATO. As EU foreign ministers met in Brussels this week, there were continued differences between those arguing for “incrementalism” on sanctions like Germany and Italy, and those wanting a more forceful response. There may be greater unity now as the scale of the Russian invasion becomes clear, but the proof will only be evident in the coming days. The allies’ caution in recent days contrasted with President Zelensky’s increasing concern as options close around him. The gathering of senior NATO and EU ministers at the Munich Security Conference on Feb. 18-20, as well as the presence of a U.S. delegation led by Vice President Kamala Harris, did not convey the strongest confidence on an agreed approach to Russian aggression. President Zelensky’s speech at the gathering was a searing indictment of the lack of decisiveness of Western nations over the last many years, and Ukrainian ministers were publicly critical of the slow pace of the imposition of sanctions since the recognition of the separatist republics by Russia. Western governments are now at a real, not hypothetical crossroads. The invasion is underway, and Putin would appear to be achieving his long-stated objectives, some of which he began to make clear 15 years ago in a speech to the 2007 Munich Security Conference. He has torn up the 2015 Minsk agreement which was meant to be the foundation for talks between Ukraine and Russia regarding the future of the Donbas. Putin is calculating he can survive sanctions for an indefinite period as he builds a significant war chest of foreign reserves. He is also betting on a swifter and easier military victory in Ukraine than Western analysts are predicting. If either of these scenarios were to hold, NATO, EU and American threats or actions would end up ringing hollow to most of the rest of the world. Putin, in short, means to complete what he has started, and more. As Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis suggested, Ukraine may not be the end of the story, and Belarus’ renewed and total subservience to Moscow can, in retrospect, be seen as prelude to Putin’s attempt to do the same to Ukraine. In responding to Russia’s expanding aggression in Ukraine, Western nations will build towards ever more severe sanctions. There will be United Nations resolutions and condemnations. Russian oligarchs may lose their right to residence and investment in London and Paris. Nord Stream 2 is being suspended and may be canceled. NATO may be strengthened; European members may finally spend 2 percent of their GDP on defense. NATO may accelerate military assistance to Ukraine or arm an insurgency in Ukraine in the future. The broader international community may be galvanized into supporting harsher measures to punish Russia depending on the scale of the conflict. Longer-term, however, the latest developments suggest it is time to rethink the West’s approach to the next phase of dealing with Putin. That will entail recognizing that the security landscape of Europe is being changed as we watch, in real time, and is unlikely to be turned back to what it was any time soon. The response must stop Russia from destroying the post-World War II architecture that has largely preserved peace for 70 years. Doing so will require another historic decision and response. We need to revitalize NATO and the transatlantic economic and political relations which have been weakened for two decades as the United States prioritized Asia, abandoned trade agreements, diverted NATO to fight wars farther afield and allowed allies to take for granted the alliance’s centrality to their own collective defense. In the process, we may rediscover that the future of the United States is still most fundamentally impacted by what happens in Europe.

#### Asia pivot breaks NATO

Lauren Sukin 11-18-2021, MacArthur Nuclear Security Postdoctoral Fellow at Stanford University’s Center for International Security and Cooperation (Lauren, “How Biden can improve European relations while pivoting to Asia,” The Bulletin, <https://thebulletin.org/2021/11/how-biden-can-patch-european-relations-while-pivoting-to-asia/)//BB>

The US focus on China is controversial, in part, because it comes at a moment when relations between NATO and Russia are severely strained. NATO’s Eastern European members don’t want China to “overshadow” concerns about Russia. Multiple Eastern European states have competed for additional US forces —though to little avail. Poland even offered, in 2018, to name a military base after President Donald Trump. Now, NATO waits for the US Global Posture Review, which will provide guidance on how best to allocate US military resources going forward. The review will be heavily scrutinized. If it re-aligns US military resources towards East Asia, the cracks in NATO may continue to grow.

### Europe Focus Solve China

#### Europe is a key counterbalance against Chinese leadership

Khatiri ‘21, studied Strategic Studies at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (Shay, “Why Has America Forsaken Europe?,” *The Bulwark,* <https://www.thebulwark.com/why-america-forsaken-europe/)//BB>

The United States needs Europe to be peaceful because it needs NATO and the EU to be productive. The size of Europe’s economy makes it an important counterbalance to China’s growth. British, French, and Spanish ties with Africa are important in pushing back against China’s growing influence in the continent. European universities still produce stellar research which is crucial in the technological competition with China. Each of Europe’s strengths in a competition with China also makes it an important region in its own right. With three-quarters of a billion people, it is an important trade partner and plays a key role in the American economy. It is home to many U.S. military bases used for important missions, most recently during the evacuation from Afghanistan. Its scientific and technological achievements contribute to American prosperity—the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine that the president of the United States and millions of others recieved would not have been made without German partnership. America can’t afford to take Europe for granted anymore. They need us and we need them. The hard part of alliance management is supposed to be responding to the needs, wants, and objectives, and insecurities of the other side. But lately, the United States has had more trouble figuring out what its own needs, wants, and objectives in Europe are—or if it has any at all.

### No China War

#### **No US-China war**

Lei 20, PhD and MA in International Politics, associate research fellow with the China Institute of International Studies. (Cui, 7-24-2020, "Despite heated talk, risk of a US-China hot war is small", *South China Morning Post*, <https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3094121/why-risk-us-china-hot-war-small-despite-heated-talk>)

Many observers are pessimistic about deteriorating US-China relations and believe the two countries are heading towards a cold war. Even worse, some argue that the situation might be more dangerous than the US-Soviet Union Cold War, and that a hot war might break out between the two. This argument is unconvincing. First of all, deterrents to a flare-up are much stronger in US-China relations than in US-Soviet relations. Although economic and people-to-people ties between China and the US are declining, they are still close compared to US-Soviet ties. It is hard to decouple two closely intertwined economies and societies. Take two examples. China is expected to become the world's largest consumer market, a temptation hard to resist for exporters, including those from the US. And in education, more than 300,000 Chinese students study in the US, bringing in huge revenues for the US education industry. Many universities go to great lengths to woo international students. Recently Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology even sued the government over its new visa restrictions, now aborted, on international students. Second, even if there is decoupling, the pain would not be too great and can be kept out of the national security sphere if properly handled. In fact, for national security reasons, a modest degree of isolation will make both sides more secure and comfortable. For instance, if China’s information technology equipment cannot capture Western markets, the US will be more relaxed. If China cannot get advanced technologies from the US and its technological progress slows down, the US will be less anxious. In the same vein, China feels assured knowing that if the Trump administration does impose a travel ban on Communist Party members, it would be abandoning one of the tools available to the US to promote “peaceful evolution” in China. Economic decoupling is undeniably more painful for China than for the US. But unlike Japan during WWII, which was hit hard by the US oil embargo because of its lack of natural resources, China has no such problems. Given its large domestic market, losing the US as a major customer is not a disaster for China, and can be compensated through more dynamic economic activities at home. China can also make up for being freezed out of technological exchanges by turning to indigenous innovation. As for the US, it can import goods from other developing countries, albeit less cheaply. The relative loss is acceptable when weighed against the heightened perception of economic independence and security. Third, the ideological confrontation between China and the US is less intense than that during the Cold War. Unlike the obsession with ideology in those days, the line between capitalism and socialism is blurred today. The market economy has become universally recognised as the best way to promote economic growth and, politically, many countries have embraced democracy. Even North Korea calls itself the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Although ideological hawks in the US still long for the day when the beacon of freedom will light up the world, after many years of fighting bloody wars overseas, most American people are not interested in promoting democracy abroad. Meanwhile, China just wants to preserve its political system and has no interest in exporting it to other countries, as the Soviet Union did. Thus, ideological antagonism in China-US relations can easily be eased by calculations of realistic interests, which create conditions for compromise and cooperation. Fourth, both China and the US have many options other than war to achieve their policy goals. While they have no allies to serve as a buffer, given the nature of the potential conflict in the South China Sea or Taiwan Strait, both countries are adept at operating in grey zones and fighting psychological, public opinion or diplomatic warfare below the threshold of war. The forced closure of the Chinese consulate in Houston by the US government is just the latest act of brinkmanship. In addition, given China’s huge economic and financial interests in the US, the latter can wield the stick of sanctions when use of force is highly risky or not worth it. When both sides have many tools and options, why would they rush to war to achieve their goals? Last but not least, the imbalance of power will act as a deterrent. Some say the US and Soviet Union did not fight a hot war because they were evenly matched. It was not the case, actually. At the beginning of the Cold War, the Soviet Union was at a relative military disadvantage. Moreover, a country needs the will to fight before going to war, even if it is stronger militarily than its adversary. Having fought years of meaningless wars, the US is weary of war. China, too, abhors war. Having a clear understanding of US strength, especially when its own economy is slowing down and it is facing various domestic challenges, China would not wish to recklessly start a war with the US. In summary, the possibility of a hot war between China and the US is very small. The greatest danger for China is not a cold or hot confrontation with the US, but policymakers’ interpretation of the momentary hostility towards Beijing of a portion of the American population and the larger world. An erroneous interpretation could end China’s march to further opening up, and see it turn instead towards self-isolation.

#### No US-China war – nuclear deterrence and geographic factors

Keck 17 (Zachary, Wohlstetter Public Affairs Fellow at the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, former researcher at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, former managing editor of The National Interest, “The 2 Forgotten Reasons China and America Probably Won't Go to War”, The National Interest, 8-26-2017, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/the-2-forgotten-reasons-china-america-probably-wont-go-war-22061?page=0%2C1>) //ghs-ag

In recent years, many observers have woken up to the fact that a war between the United States and China is not unthinkable. Although this is true, there are still strong pacifying forces. Two factors strike me as the most important. The first, and most obvious one, is that both sides maintain secure nuclear arsenals. As Thomas Schelling and others have pointed out, nuclear weapons are not a game-changer simply because of their massive destructive capabilities. The speed and certainty of nuclear retaliation is just as important. These two characteristics simply aren’t present with conventional weapons. Leaders can delude themselves into thinking their conventional forces, however improbably, will end up victorious in battle. In any case, the consequences of being wrong are far in the future. For instance, Imperial Japanese leaders knew it was a tremendous gamble to take on the United States. Isoroku Yamamoto, the Japanese admiral who planned Pearl Harbor, warned his civilian leadership beforehand: “In the first six to twelve months of a war with the United States and Great Britain I will run wild and win victory upon victory. But then, if the war continues after that, I have no expectation of success.” After the American economic embargo, however, Japanese leaders were only faced with bad options: capitulating in the face of American pressure or fighting a more powerful enemy in a likely futile effort. In these circumstances, Tokyo decided to gamble. After all, it was conceivable that America would be so exhausted from fighting Nazi Germany in Europe that it would ultimately sue for peace in Asia, especially in the face of fierce Japanese resistance. Can America and Its Allies "Play Fort" against China Deadly Missiles? While the outcome of conventional wars hinges on a number of unknowable factors, nuclear retaliation is certain. And, unlike with conventional weapons—especially before airplanes and missiles—one doesn’t have to defeat the other side’s military to wreak havoc on its cities. Nuclear weapons can do so immediately. Moreover, as Robert Jervis points out , when two countries with secure, thermonuclear arsenals go to war, “the side that is ‘losing’ the war as judged by various measures of military capability can inflict as much destruction on the side that is ‘winning’ as the ‘winner’ can on the ‘loser.’” This changes the calculation of leaders, and makes it inconceivable that rational leaders would opt for total war. This is not foolproof of course— there is still the possibility that miscalculations, gradual escalation, or the “threats that leave something to chance” will produce an outcome neither side wanted— but it is a strong incentive for peace. While it is widely recognized that nuclear weapons make a U.S.-China conflict less likely, the pacifying effect of geography is often overlooked. Geography works to attenuate tensions in two interrelated ways. First, both China and the United States are massive countries that would be extremely difficult to conquer and occupy. Second, both are separated by the largest ocean on earth, and it is extremely difficult to project power over large bodies of water. As John Mearsheimer has written : “When great powers are separated by large bodies of water, they usually do not have much offensive capability against each other, regardless of the relative size of their armies. Large bodies of water are formidable obstacles that cause significant power-projection problems for attacking armies.” These two geographical factors reduce the intensity of the so-called security dilemma. Despite all their disputes over issues like Taiwan and the East and South China Seas, China and the United States generally do not have to fear that the other side will seek to invade and conquer them. This has usually not been the case for rising and ruling powers that went to war. In many of these instances, the rivals were located on the same continent or even shared a border, which generated significant insecurity and led to conflict. As Mearsheimer again explains , “Great powers located on the same landmass are in a much better position to attack and conquer each other. That is especially true of states that share a common border. Therefore, great powers separated by water are likely to fear each other less than great powers that can get at each other over land.”

### No Taiwan War

#### PLA doesn’t have the capability to invade Taiwan

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Roaring out of the sky, an F-16V fighter jet lands smoothly to rearm and refuel on an unremarkable freeway in rural Taiwan, surrounded by rice paddies. ¶ In different circumstances, this could be alarming sight. Taiwan's fighter pilots are trained to land on freeways between sorties in case all of the island's airports have been occupied or destroyed by an invasion. ¶ Luckily, this was a training exercise. ¶ There's only really one enemy that Taiwan's armed forces are preparing to resist -- China's People's Liberation Army (PLA). And as China's reputation as an economic and military superpower has grown in recent years, so too has that threat of invasion, according to security experts. ¶ Taiwan has been self-governed since separating from China at the end of a brutal civil war in 1949, but Beijing has never given up hope of reuniting with what it considers a renegade province. ¶ At a regional security conference in June, Chinese Defense Minister Wei Fenghe said: "If anyone dares to split Taiwan from China, the Chinese military has no choice but to fight at all costs for national unity." In some shops in mainland China, you can buy postcards and T-shirts emblazoned with patriotic emblems promoting the retaking of Taiwan. ¶ But for seven decades, China has resisted attacking Taiwan partly for political reasons, including the prospect of a US intervention and the potential heavy human toll. But the practical realities of a full-blown invasion are also daunting for the PLA, according to experts. ¶ Ferrying hundreds of thousands of troops across the narrow Taiwan Strait to a handful of reliable landing beaches, in the face of fierce resistance, is a harrowing prospect. Troops would then have a long slog over Taiwan's western mudflats and mountains to reach the capital, Taipei. ¶ Not only that, but China would face an opponent who has been preparing for war for almost 70 years. ¶ At mass anti-invasion drills in May, Taiwan military spokesman Maj. Gen. Chen Chung-Chi said the island knew it had to always be "combat-ready." ¶ "Of course, we don't want war, but only by gaining our own strength can we defend ourselves," he said. "If China wants to take any action against us, it has to consider paying a painful price." ¶ Difficult and bloody ¶ It could be easy to assume that any invasion of Taiwan by Beijing would be brief and devastating for Taipei: a David and Goliath fight between a tiny island and the mainland's military might, population and wealth. ¶ With nearly 1.4 billion people, the People's Republic of China has the largest population in the world. Taiwan has fewer than 24 million people -- a similar number to Australia. China has the fifth largest territory in the world, while Taiwan is the size of Denmark or the US state of Maryland. And Beijing runs an economy that is second only to the United States, while Taiwan's doesn't rank in the world's top 20. ¶ But perhaps most pertinently, China has been building and modernizing its military at an unprecedented rate, while Taiwan relies on moderate US arms sales. ¶ In sheer size, the PLA simply dwarfs Taiwan's military. ¶ China has an estimated 1 million troops, almost 6,000 tanks, 1,500 fighter jets and 33 navy destroyers, according to the latest US Defense Department report. Taiwan's ground force troops barely number 150,000 and are backed by 800 tanks and about 350 fighter aircraft, the report found, while its navy fields only four destroyer-class ships. ¶ Under Chinese President Xi Jinping, the PLA has rapidly modernized, buoyed by rises in military spending and crackdowns on corruption in the army's leadership. ¶ "China's leaders hope that possessing these military capabilities will deter pro-independence moves by Taiwan or, should deterrence fail, will permit a range of tailored military options against Taiwan and potential third-party military intervention," according to a 2019 US Defense Intelligence Agency report on China's military. ¶ Yet while China hawks in the media might beat the drum of invasion, an internal China military study, seen by CNN, revealed that the PLA considers an invasion of Taiwan to be extremely difficult. ¶ "Taiwan has a professional military, with a strong core of American-trained experts," said Ian Easton, author of "The Chinese Invasion Threat" and research fellow at the Project 2049 Institute, as well as "highly defensible" terrain. ¶ In his book he described an invasion by China as "the most difficult and bloody mission facing the Chinese military." ¶ The plan to take Taiwan ¶ China's Taiwan invasion plan, known internally as the "Joint Island Attack Campaign," would begin with a mass, coordinated bombing of Taiwan's vital infrastructure -- ports and airfields -- to cripple the island's military ahead of an amphibious invasion, according to both Easton and Sidharth Kaushal, a research fellow at the Royal United Services Institute for Defense and Security Studies. ¶ At the same time, the Chinese air force would fly over the Taiwan Strait and try to dominate the island's air space. Once the PLA was satisfied it had suitably disabled Taiwan's air and naval forces, Kaushal said soldiers would begin to invade on the west coast of the island. ¶ The island's rocky, mountainous east coast is considered too inhospitable and far from mainland China. ¶ The amphibious invasion needed to put troops on Taiwan, however, could be the biggest hurdle facing the PLA. ¶ In its 2019 report to Congress, the US Department of Defense said China -- which has one of the largest navies in Asia -- had at its command 37 amphibious transport docks and 22 smaller landing ships, as well as any civilian vessels Beijing could enlist. ¶ That might be enough to occupy smaller islands, such as those in the South China Sea, but an amphibious assault on Taiwan would likely require a bigger arsenal -- and there is "no indication China is significantly expanding its landing ship force," the report said. ¶ That makes it vital for Beijing to neutralize Taiwan's navy and air force in the early stages of an attack, Kaushal said. ¶ "The Taiwanese air force would have to sink around 40% of the amphibious landing forces of the PLA in order to render this sort of mission infeasible," he said. ¶ Essentially, that's only about 10 to 15 ships, he added. ¶ If they did make it across the strait, the PLA would still need to find a decent landing spot for its ships. ¶ China's military would be looking for a landing site both close to the mainland, and a strategic city, such as Taipei, with nearby port and airport facilities. ¶ That leaves just 14 potential beaches, Easton said -- and it's not only the PLA that knows it. Taiwanese engineers have spent decades digging tunnels and bunkers in potential landing zones along the coast. ¶ Furthermore, the backbone of Taiwan's defense is a fleet of vessels capable of launching anti-ship cruise missiles, on top of an array of ground-based missiles, and substantial mines and artillery on the coastline. ¶ "Taiwan's entire national defense strategy, including its war plans, are specifically targeted at defeating a PLA invasion," Easton said. ¶ Chinese troops could be dropped in from the air, but a lack of paratroopers in the PLA makes it unlikely. ¶ If the PLA held a position on Taiwan, and could reinforce with troops from the mainland to face off about 150,000 Taiwan troops, as well as more than 2.5 million reservists, it would have to push through the island's western mud flats and mountains, with only narrow roads to assist them, towards Taipei. ¶ Finally, the mobilization of amphibious landing vessels, ballistic missile launchers, fighters and bombers, as well as hundreds of thousands of troops, would give Taiwan plenty of advance warning of any attack, Kaushal said. ¶ "It's extremely unlikely that the invasion could come as a bolt from the blue," Kaushal added. ¶ There is, of course, one final deterrent to any PLA invasion of Taiwan. ¶ It isn't clear whether or not such an attack by China would spark an intervention by the United States on Taipei's behalf. ¶ Washington has been a longtime ally of the island, selling weapons to the Taiwan government and providing implicit military protection from Beijing. ¶ Easton said that, at present, the US would likely intervene in Taiwan's favor, both to protect investment by US companies on the island and reassure American allies in the region, who are also facing down a resurgent PLA in the East and South China seas. ¶ Collin Koh Swee Lean, research fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies' Maritime Security Program in Singapore, said there would also be "immense political consequences" from taking over Taiwan, in the event of a successful China invasion. ¶ "It will likely mean that China will be seen as the bad guy in the neighborhood, who uses force," he said. "It will alienate some regional partners and the good will which China has been trying to build over the years will evaporate. And it will set China on a collision course with the US." ¶ But Taipei isn't taking anything for granted. ¶ On the sidelines of the massive Han Guang drills, Taiwan's Maj. Gen. Chen pointed out the hundreds of spectators who had come out to watch and support the island's military. ¶ "These exercises let people know the national army of the Republic of China is ready," he said. ¶ Taiwan is taking no chances.

#### Trade ties make closer Taiwanese ties with China inevitable

**Chen 19** (Dr. Charles I-hsin Chen is Executive Director of the Institute for Taiwan-America Studies at Washington D.C., The Diplomat, 6-14-2019, "Why the US May Lose Taiwan to Beijing Economically," Diplomat, https://thediplomat.com/2019/06/why-the-us-may-lose-taiwan-to-beijing-economically/)SEM

In March 2019, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told the House Foreign Affairs Committee that China is a threat to the United States. “This is a great power battle and we’re engaged in it across the world,” he added. China now challenges American influence in all aspects, and Taiwan represents a frontier in this hybrid competition. While the island’s security still relies heavily on Washington’s guarantees, there’s a rising risk that the United States may lose Taiwan to Beijing economically. There are three reasons for this trend. A Drifting Taiwan The first is Taiwan’s drift. Taiwan’s trade dependency on the United States was largely replaced by dependency on China after 2001, when both Taiwan and China entered the World Trade Organization (WTO). The share of Taiwan’s total trade involving the United States halved, falling from 23 percent to 12 percent, from 1998 to 2018, while China’s share doubled from 15 to 31 percent. In January 2017, Taiwan adopted a New Southbound Policy (NSP) attempting to divert the island’s exports away from China and into South and Southeast Asia, but without concrete results. Taiwan’s export reliance on China increased 2 percentage points to 41 percent in 2018, peaking historically at 45 percent that March, while the export share to the 18 countries covered in the NSP decreased by 1 percentage point in the same period. Simply put, this new policy did not work well. Even worse, Taiwan’s global strategy is not leading anywhere. There are two groups of regional integration emerging around Taiwan, but the island is unlikely to enter either. First, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which targets 16 Asia-Pacific countries, including China, would require Taiwan to join as a province of China — a condition Taiwan simply cannot accept. Second is the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), which includes 11 Trans-Pacific countries, now led by Japan after the withdrawal of the United States. However, China may also block Taiwan by pressuring its partners to veto any Taiwanese bid to join. The alternative for Taiwan to promote its trade relations is to sign free trade agreements (FTAs) with major economies. Yet the political issue of the status of Taiwan would halt most negotiations in the first round. Unfortunately, Taiwan’s economy is drifting to the middle of nowhere. A Pulling China The second factor is China’s pull. China’s economic attraction for Taiwan is growing at both the regional and local levels. China’s GDP per capita has increased nine times on a purchasing-power-parity basis since 1990. This formed a strong economic gravity pulling all neighboring economies into China’s orbit — and particularly Taiwan, which is just 100 nautical miles off the mainland’s southeast coast. China now is capable of offering lucrative incentives to convert the loyalty of its commercial allies as the existing economic hegemon — namely, the United States — is in relative decline. For example, some Eurasian leaders in developing or underdeveloped countries may see China’s Belt and Road Initiative as a good opportunity. They may also feel that the Chinese-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is more accessible than the American-led World Bank in granting big loans for development projects. At the local level, China’s economic influence on Taiwan specifically has become more tangible and comprehensive. Since the late 1980s, Taiwanese investment had been lured by preferential policies from Chinese central and local governments. As of last year, the total amount of Taiwanese investment in China has accumulated to $180 billion — 10 times the Taiwanese investment in the United States in the same period. As a result, over 400,000 Taiwanese quality managers and talents are currently working and living in Chinese cities with their family members. The total number may surpass 2 million people, close to one-tenth of Taiwan’s population. In terms of cross-strait relations, the two sides of the Taiwan Strait resumed warm ties in 2008 and reached 23 agreements during Ma Ying-jeou’s presidency. Yet the official channel of dialogue was suspended after President Tsai Ing-wen’s inauguration in May 2016. Beijing began to unilaterally conduct cross-strait affairs without prior consultation or negotiation with Taipei. Even while cross-strait tensions rose, in January 2018, quasi-citizenship was granted to Taiwanese living, studying, or working in China and some national treatments involving subsidies or bank loans were opened to Taiwanese enterprises. Beijing’s carrot-and-stick approach towards Taiwan remains, and the carrot is growing sweeter. A Pushing America Meanwhile, the United States risks pushing Taiwan away. President Donald Trump’s Taiwan policy, if there is one, has been inconsistent between political and economic affairs since 2017. In politics, the United States has strengthened its security commitment to Taiwan to tackle the escalating tension in the Taiwan Strait. The new Taiwan Travel Act, taking effect in March 2018, encouraged more frequent and higher level official exchanges between Washington and Taipei. To maintain Taiwan’s capacity of self-defense, informal notification of a $2 billion sale of 108 M1A2 tanks and weapons was sent to the U.S. Congress in early June. Another, bigger package — possibly including 66 F-16V fighter jets — may also seek Congress’ approval later this year. The Pentagon has further made naval patrols in the Taiwan Strait a new normal to contain Beijing’s maritime aggression. Nonetheless, these policy favors do not apply to the economic field. While economic ties have faded in recent years, the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Office did not change its tough attitude toward Taiwan. Its latest annual report reiterated serious concerns over Taiwan’s bans on U.S. pork products and beef products containing ractopamine. Due to this first priority issue, the USTR has suspended regular trade talks since October 2016, and put on hold the initial steps of preparing an FTA with Taiwan. During the APEC summit last November, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence agreed to bring the Taiwanese envoy’s request to restart talks back to Washington but there was no change. Apparently, the USTR is not inclined to compromise on this issue. Another case is even more acute and embarrassing. Taiwan was subjected to Trump’s tariffs on steel and aluminum imports to the United States starting in March 2018, because Taiwanese steel products were suspected to contain China-made steel. In response, Taiwan resorted to severe measures that restricted its steel products with any content of China-made steel from being exported to the U.S. market. Taipei even launched a self-investigation into dumping and government subsidies focused on select China-made steel products sold in Taiwan from 2015 to 2017. Embarrassingly, these extra efforts were all in vain, and Taiwan was not included on the tariff exemption list. While politicians in Washington have been wooing Taiwan, their economists are sabotaging that effort.

### China Not Revisionist

#### China isn’t revisionist

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In the abstract, such claims are alarming—in context, and in balance, rather humdrum. In fact, the evidence of any Chinese intention to destroy, or even merely undermine and exploit, the current order is slight. China is certainly using its growing military power to defend its claims in the SCS and even—on occasion— to coerce its neighbors. It uses protectionist economic policies to boost the prospects of Chinese companies and reduce competition. It employs economic statecraft to serve its interests abroad. And it certainly is opposed to America’s policy of global democracy promotion. However, none of these positions fundamentally challenge the existing order, none of them radically depart from America’s own actions when it was a rising power in the nineteenth century, and none of them obviously surpass America’s own contemporary record of order subversion. When the United States was a rising power, it took half of Mexico and considered taking the rest, it colonized the Philippines and Hawaii, and it unilaterally seized the maritime choke points of the Caribbean (Puerto Rico and Cuba).21 The United States used tariffs—which by 1857 averaged 20 percent22 and by the end of the nineteenth century were “the highest import duties in the industrial world”23—to protect its industries. It stole intellectual property,24 and it ideologically challenged the governments of the “Old World.” Today, despite no longer being a rising power, the United States has launched two disastrous invasions, tortured prisoners, and dispatches drone strikes at a whim with little international legal authority.25 The point is not that two wrongs make a right; it is that international order is much more resilient than critics seem to realize,26 and it is utopian to expect any rising Great Power to act in a way that uniformly satisfies one’s moral scruples, evolving, in Friedberg’s words, “into a mellow, satisfied, ‘responsible’ status quo power.”27 Friedberg or Harris might object that America’s rise took place in the context of a different order. This is perfectly true, but the more important point is that the long nineteenth century (1815–1914)—the era of America’s rise—was the first iteration of the New Peace.28 The implication is that relative peace can and has coexisted with limited wars, property and territorial thefts, acts of coercion, and aggressive assertions of status. This does not mean any of these are desirable— they are not—but it shows that they need not be fatal to the system. Insofar as there is a lesson from that first period of relative peace, it is that Great Power confrontation is the one thing that is fatal. Accepting this does not mean capitulating in every instance, as implied by some,29 but it does mean rediscovering the rules of Great Power competition30 alongside the art of strategy.31 Focusing only on areas that China’s rise violates the scruples of the established powers, moreover, downplays the extent to which China, has, in fact, conformed to the existing order. As a RAND Corporation report published in 2018 concludes, China has been a supporter—albeit a conditional one—of the international order: “Since China undertook a policy of international engagement in the 1980s … the level and quality of its participation in the order rivals that of most other states.”32 The way in which Xi Jinping, following his 2017 Davos speech in defense of globalization, has been heralded as the most prominent champion of international order and defender of globalization underscores the fact that there are different elements of this order, and that China supports many, if not most, of them. Even in places where China is supposedly “altering” the current order, Beijing tends to simultaneously affirm that order. China’s Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, for instance, actually mirrors existing structures, and China has intentionally copied elements and “best practices” of the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. China is playing the same game, even if it is seeking a bigger role within it.33

### China Not a Threat

#### The US has the overwhelming military advantage

Sawant 12-13-2021 (Mangesh, master’s in international affairs from Columbia University, where he concentrated in international security policy, “Why China Cannot Challenge the US Military Primacy,” *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/JIPA/Display/Article/2870650/why-china-cannot-challenge-the-us-military-primacy/)//BB>

The US military dominates the strategic, tactical, and operational levels of warfare across the spectrum. The Pentagon is implementing sophisticated network warfare programs such as the Advanced Battle Management System, Project Convergence, and Joint All Domain Command and Control. China is concerned about the lethal and distributed US military, equipped with a potent combination of quantity and quality of weapon systems. The USN surpasses the PLAN in rapid deployment, maneuverability, and expeditionary warfare capabilities. The overwhelming display of US military power since 1945 is a credible deterrent for Beijing. Since the First Gulf War, the United States has demonstrated its capability of destroying the adversary through preemptive strikes consisting of long-range weapon systems such as cruise missiles in the first few days of the war, giving no time for the adversary to retaliate.75 According to Taylor Fravel, China is not a military superpower.76 There is not much evidence about China’s plans for global military capabilities on par with the United States. China’s military power is miniscule as compared to United States’ former adversary the Soviet Union. China’s military will be thinly stretched defending the third-largest country in the world. The top echelons of the CCP and PLA acknowledge US military advantages. Chinese scholars like Xu Ruike and Sun Degang admit that China is an economic heavyweight but is a military featherweight and will remain so for the coming decades.77 US primacy in the post–Cold War world has prevented World War III. The two most likely contenders for expansion, North Korea and China, have restricted their militaries within their borders. The United States retains unrivaled military power, and China is not in a position to challenge it.

#### The US leads across all military spectrums

Sawant 12-13-2021 (Mangesh, master’s in international affairs from Columbia University, where he concentrated in international security policy, “Why China Cannot Challenge the US Military Primacy,” *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/JIPA/Display/Article/2870650/why-china-cannot-challenge-the-us-military-primacy/)//BB>

Why China Cannot Challenge the United States People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Major General Zhang Shaozhong ranked Chinese military power in 2020 in the fifth place behind the United States, Russia, Britain, and France, while PLAN surface power was ranked in the eighth place behind Japan and India. The Peoples Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) was ranked seventh in the world, due to its lack of fourth-generation fighter planes and high-end drones. In General Shaozhong’s view, China will become the second-largest military power in the world only in 2049, when it celebrates its centennial anniversary.27 The US Military as an Economic Deterrent The US military plays the central role of economic deterrence. The Communist Party of China (CCP) gains its legitimacy from economic development. It is possible that China could target Guam with its small fleet of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM). However, the use of ICBMs will lead to massive retaliatory strikes by the United States leading to total annihilation of China’s military and economic centers of gravity.28 The USN Maritime Strike Tomahawk Cruise Missile Block V will destroy coastal cities like Shanghai, obliterating China’s hi-tech industries in a matter of hours. The CCP leadership is inexperienced in nuclear matters as it lacks exposure to a nuclear warfare strategy as practiced by the United States and Russia. China’s nuclear policy is based on low-level deterrence, “minimum deterrence,” and its nuclear arsenal remains small and vulnerable.29 Threatening the United States with 200 nuclear weapons is not an option. Geographically, the United States and China are similar in size. However, China’s economy will be decimated by a few US nuclear weapons, as its critical infrastructure is concentrated on the coastlines and not dispersed like the US infrastructure. A war will lead to a loss of China’s exports to the United States worth USD 310 billion. The war will result in a decline in industrial production, unemployment, and inflation, causing an economic crash and a people’s revolution. As seen from World War II, the United States will experience reverse economic gains and benefit from the war, resulting in high employment and industrial growth. It is expensive to be a superpower. Sun Tzu wrote in The Art of War two and a half millennia ago, “first count the cost.”30 China’s defense budget cannot compete with the combined power of United States, India, Japan, and Australia. The United States alone spends more on national defense than China, India, Russia, Saudi Arabia, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, South Korea, and Brazil combined.31 Can China afford it? An arms race will lead to an increase in China’s military spending, affecting its development goals. The Absence of War-fighting Experience The United States has an analytical learning process in place—China does not.32 Lessons learned have been well documented by the US military in the form of doctrines, tactics, techniques, and procedures. The US military has been documenting lessons learned since as early as the Boxer Revolution during the China campaign.33 The US military has been led by outstanding military generals like George Marshall, Dwight Eisenhower, George Patton, and David Petraeus, while China always lacked great generals. The world sends its military officers to US military institutions and not China’s military colleges. The PLA strategy is based on Mao’s theory of the weak contender fighting a stronger adversary through deceit and deception. China’s only option is an asymmetric strategy due to its incapability to fight symmetric wars. Chinese scholars have authored books like Science of Military Campaigns, Science of Military Strategy, and Unrestricted Warfare.34 However, China is unable to convert the strategies and tactics mentioned in these books into an executable doctrine. The Lack of Power Projection Power projection capabilities set a superpower apart. From its Charm Offensive to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China has been wielding its economic power to compel US allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region to align with China, which has not been greatly successful.35 China lacks global reach, as it does not have foreign defense treaties or logistical bases abroad equipped with military stockpiles.36 During a war with the United States, soliciting Pakistan’s military support looks difficult, as China’s all-weather friend has been hesitant to cut its military ties with the United States. China is constrained to operate beyond the unrefueled range of its aircraft, warships, and submarines. US nuclear-powered carriers can rule the seas for four years before being refueled. China’s nonnuclear-powered AC can barely operate beyond its green waters. The Type 903 replenishment ship can only support two to three ships for approximately two weeks.37 The USN’s 68 nuclear-powered submarines have been prowling the world’s oceans displaying naval power, while the PLAN’s nuclear-powered submarines are unable to do so. Fighter aircraft operating without a package of air-refueling tankers, Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft, or a network of expeditionary airfields cannot travel very far. The PLAAF’s capability to target US bases in the Pacific is hindered by a lack of air-refueling capacity. A flight group of eight J-11B Flankers will have to be simultaneously refueled twice by two air-refueling tankers for a seven-hour flight.38 The PLAAF will have to deploy 20 percent of its tanker fleet to refuel the Flankers. The PLAAF has 10 tankers for more than a thousand fighter aircraft, while the USAF has 625 tankers for 1,956 fighter aircraft.39 The tankers will be the prime targets for the USN potentially putting the Flankers at risk. China’s only existing bomber, the H-6K, is reverse engineered from the 1950s Soviet-designed Tu-16 bomber. The bomber is incapable of attacking Hawaii—even when equipped with CJ-10 cruise missiles. The H-6K has a range of 3,800 miles, while Hawaii is 5,157 miles from the closest H-6K base. The H-6K cannot attack nearby US bases, as the bomber will be detected on open seas by the US C4ISR systems. PLAAF fighters are unable to escort the bombers, as they cannot match its range.40 An Archaic Military Less than 30 percent of China’s surface forces, air force, and air defense forces and 55 percent of its submarine fleet were modern in 2011.41. Subsequently, nothing much has changed, as a substantial percentage of China’s military remains obsolete.42 China’s military faces institutional shortcomings arising from obsolete command structures, low quality of personnel, and corruption.43 The military has weaknesses centering on supporting capabilities such as logistics, inadequate airlift, and deficient air defense and antisubmarine warfare.44 The PLA’s loyalty to the CCP has hampered its competence.45 China’s military training and operational capabilities and competences do not match US standards.46 PLAAF pilots fall short on the requirement of executing sophisticated aerial maneuvers during unplanned operations.47 China’s military structure presents significant cultural challenges,48 as it emphasizes control above command.49 A culture of risk aversion and low levels of trust in subordinates impacts the PLA effectiveness.50 A highly centralized structure does not allow the PLAN to operate autonomously during a war. Therefore, a political commissar is positioned on PLAN warships and submarines.51 The USN values autonomy from the individual to the institution, which reflects its emphasis on commanding at sea.52 Nation states cannot project power globally through a rigid command-and-control system.53 PLAN submarines have the worst safety record in the world.54 The PLAN’s rudimentary nuclear missile submarine fleet carries a limited number of missiles.55 The PLAN cannot threaten the US mainland, as its submarines will have to sail through chokepoints such as the Kuriles and the Ryukyus islands, Luzon Strait, Taiwan Strait, and the Philippine archipelago—all of which are controlled by the USN.56 These chokepoints, forming a crescent-shaped chain, are also a defensive line for US containment policy; and the United States is involved in monitoring them. The PLAN submarine power is outdated, compared to the overwhelming USN undersea warfare capabilities. The US submarine arm brings strategic deterrence to the Indo-Pacific through a wide array of capabilities such as antisubmarine warfare antisurface warfare precision land strike; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; and special warfare capabilities. Soviet weapon systems were much sought after by the United States to learn their strengths and weaknesses. Numerous Soviet-made fighter aircraft defected during the Cold War. An Iraqi MiG 21 defected to Israel, while a Soviet MiG 25 landed in Japan. The aircraft were later handed over to the United States to decipher the technical details. However, US intelligence is not similarly orchestrating any defections of PLAAF fighter aircraft, as the United States is not interested in obsolete Chinese technology. Instead, China is stealing weapon data or reverse engineering US weapon systems.57 The CCP-controlled military press described the Shenyang J-15 Flying Shark fighter aircraft as a “flopping fish” and criticized it for lacking the stealth capabilities of the F-35 Lightning.58 The US F-117 Nighthawk stealth fighter entered service in 1983 and saw combat during the First Gulf War, while the fifth-generation F-22 Raptor and F-35 Lightning fighter aircraft have been deployed in conflict zones. However, the PLAAF has not operationally inducted the J-31 fighter aircraft while the J-20 fighter aircraft has not yet proven its capabilities in any bilateral or multilateral military exercise. The much-hyped Chengdu J-20 is a heavy fighter aircraft comparable to the MiG 31, which is essentially an interceptor and not a multirole or an air superiority aircraft. China’s Vulnerable A2/AD Zones A study of modern wars suggests that the United States will decimate China’s military without entering the A2/AD zone. This is how the United States devastated Iraqi defenses in 1990. US strategic depth in Asia will allow military planners to concentrate the military at different locations. The United States has a devastating array of lethal weapon systems, such as submarines, for countering China’s A2/AD strategies. During the First Gulf War, the United States launched 297 Tomahawks, which destroyed the Iraqi military.59 Ohio-class submarines can operate unhindered in the adversary’s A2/AD zone closer to the shore; thus, striking targets far inland. Collectively, four Ohio-class submarines installed with 616 BGM-109 Tomahawk cruise missiles would obliterate China’s military. The inexperienced PLAN AC group will be destroyed by long-range antiship missiles (LRASM), Tomahawks, and Mark 48-Mod 7 torpedoes launched from USS Key West, USS Oklahoma City, USS Topeka, and USS Asheville submarines based in Guam. The USN and USAF have signed a USD 414 million contract for autonomously guided with onboard sensors, jam-resistant, and difficult to detect antiship LRASM.60 The stealthy Zumwalt-class warship—equipped with emerging technologies—can sail undetected in littoral waters and contested territories to launch LRASM and Tomahawk cruise missiles. China is constructing military bases on islands in the South China Sea; however, this military infrastructure is vulnerable to US weapon systems, as the islands lack natural defenses and camouflage.61 During a war, the bases will be annihilated by the USN as the PLA cannot hide behind hills and forests. Once destroyed, these facilities cannot be supported from the mainland, as the logistical supplies will be demolished by the USN. China’s military modernization may enhance A2/AD zones, but it does not contribute to a blue-water, sea-control capability.62 China’s Hyped DF-21 Missile The antiship DF-21 missile, carried by colossal transporter erector launchers, has a range of 1,400 miles. The missile regiments are based in the barren Gobi Desert, which makes it an easy target for the US military. The DF-21 has been tested on a stationary ship, but it has not yet been successfully tested against a moving target.63 A system of systems is required to track the AC,64 acquire the precise location, keep the missile locked on the target, penetrate the carrier’s multilayered defenses, and provide mid-course updates as within one hour the ship will have moved 30 miles. China does not know about the DF-21 performance against the US CSG countermeasures.65 The United States and Russia have not yet developed a missile equivalent to the DF-21. However, China lacks the C4ISR systems to strike targets at that range. China does not release the missile testing data, leading to many questions, including whether it can hit moving targets. Does it have precision targeting technologies?66 Until proven otherwise, the functionality of the missile is based on nothing but circumstantial inference and speculation.