

Candidate's Name

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HWA CHONG INSTITUTION JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2010

GENERAL PAPER

8806/2

PAPER 2

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Date: 2 September 2010

Time: 1015 – 1145 hrs

INSERT

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This insert contains the passages for Paper 2.

This insert consists of **3** printed pages.

Passage 1: Harry Yarger writes on HARD POWER.....

- 1 Will military power become redundant in the coming decades? Ineffectual US interventions in Kosovo and Bosnia, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the 9-11 terrorist attacks have been **seminal** events calling into question common assumptions on the efficacy of what is termed “hard power”. But whilst it may be true that the number of large-scale, interstate wars continues to decline, and fighting is unlikely among developed nations with elected governments on many issues, as U.S. President Barack Obama said in accepting the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009: “We must begin by acknowledging the hard truth that we will not eradicate violent conflict in our lifetimes. There will be times when nations — acting individually or in concert — will find the use of force not only necessary but morally justified.” 5
- 2 When people speak of military power, they tend to think in terms of the resources that underlie the hard-power behaviour of fighting and threatening to fight — soldiers, tanks, planes, ships and so forth. In the end, if push comes to shove, such military resources matter. Napoleon famously said, “God is on the side of the big battalions,” and Mao Zedong argued that, “power comes from the barrel of a gun.” Fundamentally, the world has changed very little since Napoleon’s time: our planet is still segmented into sovereign states with hard borders and vested interests, which means that every nation still needs an army not only to secure its welfare but also to ensure its survival. In a world with few international laws and even fewer enforceable ones, whether we like it or not, might remains right. Even on an international level, where order is more tenuous, residual concerns about the coercive use of force, even if a low probability, can have important effects. Military force at least helps to provide a minimal degree of order. 10 15
- 3 In arguing for the increasing irrelevance of hard power, many analysts point to the fact that the number of interstate wars between “legitimate” armies has decreased drastically, rendering the use of coercive force obsolete. What they fail to recognise is that the nature of conflict in the 21st century has metamorphosised. Most “wars” today occur within, rather than between states, and many combatants do not wear uniforms. Contemporary military theorists refer to this as “fourth-generation warfare” that has no definable fronts. Here, the distinction between civilian and military disappears altogether with commercial aircraft being used as weapons of mass destruction and suicide bombers killing innocent bystanders. In the face of such an implacable and fanatical adversary, hard power is not just our last but our only resort. As if all this were not enough, technology has added a new foe that only the presence of hard power can deter: the prospect of cyber attacks by which an enemy — state or non-state — can create enormous destruction (or threaten to do so) without the need for an army to physically cross another country’s border. 20 25 30
- 4 Moreover, there is much more to military resources today than guns and battalions, fighting or threatening to fight. Military power is also used to provide protection for and assistance to allies. Even if the actual use of force among states has become less probable, its possibility can never be discounted, and it is this consideration that leads rational actors to purchase expensive insurance. This leads to a larger point about the economic role of military power in world politics. Economic security relies upon stable systems and institutions, which in turn rest upon the bedrock of hard power. In a well-ordered modern state, the credibility and reliability of this hard power depend on its monopoly on the legitimate use of force, which allows domestic markets to operate. In chaotic conditions, markets crash and economies crumble. 35
- 5 Military strength provides a degree of security that is to political and economic order as oxygen is to breathing: little noticed until it begins to become scarce. Once that occurs, its absence dominates all else. In this sense, the role of hard power in determining political calculations and shaping world politics remains paramount. The recent fuzzy liberal notion that so-called “soft power” has replaced hard power as the shaping force of world politics is as dangerous as it is unrealistic. Soft power is not only reliant on hard power for its very existence but also totally useless without its protection. As much as Kim Jong Il may enjoy watching Disney cartoons and eating fast food, Mickey Mouse is not going to persuade him to trade his nuclear weapons for a Happy Meal. 40 45

Adapted from “Perspectives on the use of military power in the 21st century.”

Passage 2: Shashi Tharoor writes on SOFT POWER.....

- 1 It is increasingly axiomatic today that the old calculations of “hard power” are no longer sufficient to guide a country’s conduct in world affairs. Traditionally, power in world politics was seen in terms of military might but even in the past, this was not enough; after all, the United States lost the Vietnam War, and the Soviet Union was **ignominiously** defeated in Afghanistan. While the use of military power may serve to compel temporary submission, it also presents some glaring shortcomings with regard to its ultimate efficacy and its wielder’s legitimacy. 5
- 2 Military power strategies that do not take into account a country’s international image may have serious consequences. When a country behaves like an irate teacher brandishing a big stick, its credibility abroad deteriorates, engendering attitudes of resentment and mistrust. At the same time, international cooperation diminishes, such that the country’s ability to obtain its objectives is actually damaged rather than enhanced. The consequences of American reliance on hard power in removing Saddam Hussein and its subsequent handling of the crisis in Iraq provide unfortunate examples. Polling data reveal growing anti-Americanism and disillusionment with U.S. foreign policy. Worldwide opinion has mobilized against the United States which has in turn inhibited America’s capacity to attain its goals on many fronts. 10 15
- 3 What the United States needs to employ is not hard power, which has proved self-defeating, but soft power – a term recently coined by Harvard professor Joseph Nye. According to Nye, “power is the ability to alter the behaviour of others to get what you want, and there are three ways to do that: coercion, payments and attraction. If you are able to attract others, you can economise on the sticks and carrots.” Soft power is the power of attraction. 20
- 4 Nye argues that the “soft power” of a country rests primarily on three resources: its culture, its political values, and its foreign policies. In terms of culture, the United States possesses wealth in abundance. It is the home of MTV, Hollywood and Disneyland, McDonald’s and Starbucks, Macintosh and Microsoft – in short, home of most of the major products that dominate daily life around the globe. The attractiveness of these **assets**, and of the American lifestyle they epitomise, permits the United States to maximise its ability to attract and persuade others not only to adopt its values but also to support its policies. In terms of political values, the U.S. indisputably offers desirable democratic role models in terms of its egalitarian systems, ethical values, and efficient institutions. If its international actions mirrored its internal ideals, the world would indeed view it in a much more favourable light. Instead of being regarded as an arrogant and aggressive bully, it would be regarded with admiration and respect. 25 30
- 5 The potential of soft power goes beyond the United States. Other nations could successfully acquire and employ it. In today’s information era, three types of countries are likely to use soft power as **leverage**: those whose dominant cultures and ideals are closer to prevailing global norms; those with the most access to multiple channels of communication and thus possess more influence over how issues are framed; and those whose reputation is enhanced by their domestic and international performance. When France lost the war of 1870 to Prussia, one of its most important steps to rebuild the nation’s shattered morale and restore its **prestige** was to create the Alliance Francaise to promote French language and literature throughout the world. French culture has remained a major selling point for French diplomacy ever since. The United Kingdom has the British Council and Germany its Goethe Institute. Today, even China, that most combative and cranky of nations, has gone soft by marketing Confucius as a cultural icon. 35 40
- 6 Insofar as a country’s role on the world stage is increasingly decided by its international image, soft power has become not just influential but crucial in determining success. Rather than relying on the coercive (and usually counter-productive) use of military might, a state needs to garner cooperation and compliance through the attractiveness of its culture and ideology as well as through the proliferation of its norms and values. This use of soft power entails a more nuanced approach, involving the skillful use of diplomacy to not only augment a state’s international standing but also make legitimate its political status. The sooner politicians realise that soft power is a far more nimble, amenable and amiable creature to employ than the blundering, unruly, intimidating beast of hard power currently straining at its leash, the better. 45

Adapted from “The Elephant, The Tiger And The Cell Phone.”

