

**GEORGE W. BUSH AND EAST ASIA:
A FIRST TERM ASSESSMENT**

Edited by
Robert M. Hathaway
and
Wilson Lee



**Woodrow Wilson
International
Center
for Scholars**

Asia Program

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Essays by:

**Richard W. Baker
Chan Heng Chee
Catharin E. Dalpino
Evelyn Goh
Harry Harding
Jia Qingguo
James A. Kelly
Ilsu Kim
James A. Leach
Koji Murata
Jonathan D. Pollack
Robert Sutter
Nancy Bernkopf Tucker
Jusuf Wanandi**

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GLOSSARY

APEC – Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

ARF – ASEAN Regional Forum

ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations. ASEAN comprises Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar/Burma, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

ASEAN + 3 – ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea

BSE – bovine spongiform encephalopathy (mad cow disease)

CBM – confidence-building measure

CINCPAC – Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet

CSCAP – Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific

DPJ – Democratic Party of Japan

DoD – Department of Defense (United States)

DPP – Democratic Progressive Party (Taiwan)

DPRK – Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)

EAI – Enterprise for ASEAN Initiative

EP-3 – a U.S. Navy reconnaissance plane

EU – European Union

FDI – foreign direct investment

FTA – free trade agreement

GOP – Grand Old Party, nickname for the U.S. Republican Party

GWOT – Global War on Terrorism

G8 – group of eight industrialized nations. The G8 comprises the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Canada, and Russia.

Glossary

IAEA – International Atomic Energy Agency

IMET – International Military Education and Training

IPR – intellectual property rights

LDP – Liberal Democratic Party (Japan)

MCA – Millennium Challenge Account

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NPT – Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

NSC – National Security Council (United States)

PRC – People's Republic of China

PSI – Proliferation Security Initiative

RMB – renminbi, the Chinese currency. Also known as yuan.

ROC – Republic of China, or Taiwan

ROK – Republic of Korea (South Korea)

SARS – Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome

SDF – Self-Defense Forces (Japan)

TMD – theater missile defense

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

WMD – weapons of mass destruction

WTO – World Trade Organization

INTRODUCTION

ROBERT M. HATHAWAY

George W. Bush did not set out to be a foreign policy president. As is usually the case (2004 being a striking exception), foreign policy did not figure prominently in the 2000 presidential campaign. Certainly little in Governor Bush's speeches and statements that year—with the exception of an occasional attack on the Clinton administration's conduct of relations with China—gave any indication that the candidate had thought deeply about Asia, or had any detailed policies for the region.

Four years later, with his re-election effort successfully behind him, President Bush possesses an extensive Asia résumé. Anticipated or not, Asia has figured heavily in Bush's handling of foreign policy and national security since he entered the White House in January 2001. On November 9, 2004, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars hosted a daylong conference on the George W. Bush presidency and East Asia—the policies, the assumptions behind the policies, the key personnel, the style, and the results of the first term. A distinguished roster of diplomats, scholars, congressional leaders, and past and present policy practitioners were asked to issue a preliminary report card on the Bush administration's Asian policies, and on how successfully the administration has safeguarded key U.S. interests in the region.

Following the conference, the Wilson Center's Asia Program solicited essays from several additional Asianists. This volume is the result. It provides an early scholarly analysis of George W. Bush's stewardship of American interests in East Asia. But beyond that, it is our hope that this report might help set the Asian agenda for the second Bush administration.

The essays presented here focus on East and Southeast Asia, with only passing reference to South and Central Asia. Regional analysts increasing-

Robert M. Hathaway is director of the Asia Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

ly recognize the artificiality of geographical divisions among the various parts of Asia, and indeed, the Wilson Center in its programming and its publications has been among the leaders in the movement to erase these imaginary lines drawn willy-nilly across the expanses of Asia.¹ Be that as it may, the organizers of the conference that spawned this volume reluctantly came to believe that an effort to treat all regions of Asia equally would lead to a diffuse and less useful analysis of the policies of George W. Bush. The challenges faced by Bush in South and Central Asia over the past four years seemed of a markedly different nature—clearly worthy of serious examination in their own right, but not easily grouped with those emanating from the Asia-Pacific region. Accordingly, the focus of this report is on East and Southeast Asia.



Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly, in this volume's opening essay, offers a spirited defense of the administration's Asian policies—and wryly notes that he is engaged in writing his own report card. Kelly asserts that America's Asian alliances have been strengthened over the past four years, a judgment with which – except for the important exception of South Korea—most other contributors to this volume agree. The authors writing here conclude that America's ties with most of its long-time friends in Asia, including Japan, Australia, Thailand, Singapore, and the Philippines, are considerably more robust than they were four years ago.

Upon entering office, the Bush administration identified U.S.-Japanese relations as an issue of priority, and the authors in this report give the administration particular credit for the revitalization of the U.S.-Japanese partnership; Kelly suggests that the administration has “set a ‘gold standard’ for future cooperation with Japan.” Washington's thriving alliance with Tokyo contrasts sharply with its strained ties with many of its traditional European allies. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has been one of Asia's strongest backers of the war in Iraq, notwithstanding the lack of enthusiasm for this war among the Japanese public. Koji Murata offers the provocative point that the “less institutionalized” character of the U.S.-Japan alliance in the cold war—compared to U.S. ties with its NATO partners and with South Korea—provided the relationship with a flexibility that enabled it to meet the new challenges of the post-9/11 era.

Introduction

Murata's essay skillfully links domestic politics in Japan with Koizumi's support for Bush's foreign policies, especially the controversial war in Iraq. Koizumi's shaky domestic base, Murata argues, led him to value his close relationship with Bush; the prime minister's political vulnerability has been "a source of stability" within the U.S.-Japan alliance. Harry Harding makes the related point that Bush was fortunate to find a relatively conservative government in power in Japan (and in Australia). Different governments in Tokyo and Canberra might well have been less enthusiastic about cooperating with the United States in Iraq.

The Bush administration also receives praise in these pages for its handling, after a rocky start, of relations with China. Rarely has the United States simultaneously enjoyed good relations with both Japan and China, Robert Sutter observes, yet today it does. The same might be said, Sutter continues, for U.S. relations with China and Taiwan, and with India and Pakistan. Harding, in a presentation highlighting the "intriguing mixture of change and continuity" in the Bush approach toward Asia, is one of several contributors who notes that the administration has completely abandoned the phrase "strategic competitor," the rubric that Candidate Bush routinely employed in describing China. Indeed, Bush's China policy by 2004 looked remarkably similar to the Clinton policy so roundly denounced during the 2000 presidential campaign. In fact, Harding writes, whereas the Clinton administration described cooperative ties with China only as a hope for the future, the Bush team has portrayed such ties as an existing reality. Had Clinton followed such a course, Nancy Bernkopf Tucker adds, he would have drawn outraged condemnation from the Republican majority in the U.S. Congress. But Sutter points out that it is not only Washington that has softened its rhetoric. Beijing, he observes, has dropped the condemnation of U.S. "hegemonism" that had been a staple of official Chinese pronouncements for many years.

Chinese scholar Jia Qingguo refers to the "converging values" linking the United States and China, which some have seen as a sign of the diminished importance of human rights in Washington's dealings with Beijing, if not in Bush's Asian policies generally. In looking at the shift in the administration's views toward China since 2000, Jia highlights Washington's changed priorities after 9/11—the result, he judges, of Beijing's "strong and unambiguous" support for U.S. efforts to combat terrorism—as well as President Bush's personal involvement in deciding

on a less confrontational relationship. Jia finds that the administration's management of relations with China has increased American prosperity, enhanced U.S. security in the post-9/11 environment, diminished the likelihood of a dangerous confrontation in the Taiwan Strait, and even promoted "liberal and democratic" change in China.

But Jia believes the administration has yet to decide between the two competing views of China as "strategic competitor" and "cooperative partner." The "ultimate test," he warns, is Taiwan; Washington has not yet convinced "the Chinese people" that it has abandoned plans to separate the island permanently from the PRC. If the United States truly wishes a cooperative partnership with Beijing, Jia writes, Washington must dispel Chinese doubts "and publicly support China's peaceful reunification." The Chinese people, he adds, look for the Bush administration to take such a step during its second term.

Nancy Tucker warns the Chinese not to expect such a step. While she details at considerable length the tensions between Washington and Taipei over the past four years, she also quotes Richard Armitage, the first term deputy secretary of state, to the effect that China is mistaken if it concludes that the United States will sacrifice Taiwan's interests in exchange for Beijing's cooperation in the war on terrorism. More fundamentally, she notes, few of the long-standing problems in Chinese-American relations have been tackled, let alone resolved. Nor, she adds, has Chinese cooperation in the anti-terrorism effort been as extensive as claimed, or as Washington had hoped for.

The war on terrorism, quite naturally, figures heavily in these pages; Catharin Dalpino notes that counter-terrorism has provided the United States with a "central organizing principle" for its foreign policy that had been absent since the end of the cold war. Assistant Secretary Kelly asserts that there has been a widespread rejection of Islamic radicalism in Southeast Asia since the terrorist attacks of 9/11. But several essayists, including the Indonesian Jusuf Wanandi and the Singaporean Evelyn Goh, caution that Southeast Asians do not view the threat posed by terrorism with the intensity felt by most Americans, even though Southeast Asia has itself experienced terror attacks. As Goh remarks, for many in Southeast Asia, terrorism is less about 9/11 than about "domestic politics, uneven and under-development of ethnic minority groups, and separatist movements of relatively long standing."

In thinking through the long-term nature of the terrorist challenge in Asia, Congressman James Leach, chairman of the House Asia subcommittee, urges American policymakers not to forget words by two of Bush's most eminent predecessors. He cites Thomas Jefferson's evocation in the Declaration of Independence of "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind," and pairs this advice with that offered more than a century later by Theodore Roosevelt: "speak softly but carry a big stick." For Leach, the twenty-first century meaning of these two aphorisms is straight forward: "The greater any country's power, the more important it is to use it with restraint."

Dalpino asserts that the war on terrorism has ended more than a decade of drift in U.S. relations with the countries of Southeast Asia. The Bush administration has paid attention to Southeast Asia with a seriousness that Washington had not exhibited for many years, although this increased focus has been uneven in nature and scope. Dalpino, Wanandi, and several other authors here urge the administration to give Southeast Asia more attention over the next four years, and to broaden its focus beyond what the distinguished U.S. diplomat Michael Armacost has called "the 'Johnny One Note' quality of U.S. diplomacy"²—that is, the law enforcement and military cooperation activities connected with the war on terrorism. Dalpino also warns that the United States has bifurcated the region, paying considerable attention to those states that are potential or actual partners in the war against terrorism, but almost completely ignoring smaller and poorer countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Burma, and even Vietnam. She also cautions that the administration's preoccupation with counter-terrorism and its relative neglect of the poorer members of ASEAN have given rising powers such as China and India an opportunity to gain influence in the region at Washington's expense—a point echoed by Tucker and Goh as well.

As put by Singapore's Ambassador Chan Heng Chee—whose laudatory evaluation of the Bush policies in Asia reflects the official viewpoint of one of Washington's best friends in the region—the U.S. agenda for the second term should be more directed toward addressing the concerns of mainstream Muslims in the region. Success in this area, she adds, could provide the United States with a bridge to Muslims in the Middle East and elsewhere around the world. Richard Baker, on the other hand, reverses this sequence: until the United States convinces Southeast Asia's

Muslims that its Mideast policy is fair and not inimical to Palestinian aspirations, Washington will find it very difficult to win the hearts and minds of Southeast Asia's 250 million Muslims. Many of the essays presented here observe that the war in Iraq has exacted a heavy price in terms of the American image in the region—though Sutter correctly points out that Asian governments have followed a far more “pragmatic” policy in dealing with Washington, notwithstanding the anger at the United States widely prevalent in “the streets.” Even so, Wanandi asserts, this divide between Asians and their governments is unhealthy and, especially as democratic governance spreads in the region, unsustainable.

The promotion of democracy is, rhetorically at least, a key element in the Bush approach to the fight against terrorism. Kelly declares that none of the trends in Asia in recent years is more important than the region-wide strengthening of democracy, and singles out Indonesia's “remarkable” advances, culminating in three separate and successful national (parliamentary and presidential) elections in 2004 alone. Yet according to Sutter—who generally gives the administration high marks for its Asia—the U.S. position in Asia today is as strong as it is at least partially because Washington is no longer pushing the democracy and human rights agendas that in the past have created resentment in the region. Perhaps this explains the rather startling absence of any discussion of Hong Kong in these essays; Hong Kong simply never figured prominently on the administration's Asian agenda. Reflecting this de-emphasis on democracy and human rights, Ambassador Chan urges the Bush administration not to “hold ASEAN hostage to Myanmar”—that is, Washington should not allow its support for democratic governance in Burma to get in the way of flourishing relations with the other countries comprising the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

With respect to probably the most contentious—and arguably least successful—of its Asian policies, dealing with North Korea's nuclear ambitions, Kelly maintains that the administration remains committed to a peaceful resolution of its differences with the DPRK and adheres to the principle that multilateral diplomacy offers the most promising route toward that end. Nonetheless, he adds, “we are sober and realistic about the prospects for diplomacy and will not approach the DPRK with blinders on. North Korea needs to make a strategic choice.” One of the large uncertainties for Bush's second term is whether Pyongyang's February

2005 announcement that it possesses nuclear weapons and has suspended its participation in six-party talks—a declaration made after these essays were written—constitutes the “strategic choice” Kelly calls for, and if so, what this means for the prospects of a peacefully achieved non-nuclear Korean peninsula. The impasse with North Korea, Sutter writes, presents “the most immediate problem” for U.S. policy in East Asia in the months ahead.

Jonathan Pollack notes that while no other regional issue consumed more time and energy from senior Asian decision makers in the administration over the past four years, the Bush team has little to show for its North Korean diplomacy. Leach suggests that the president’s overblown rhetoric may not have been helpful. “When the appellative of ‘evil’ is applied to countries instead of leaders,” the Iowa Republican writes, “it too easily offends whole populations, in this case Koreans on both sides of the 38th parallel.” South Korean scholar Ilsu Kim is more blunt, asserting that Bush’s “hard-line approach has only exacerbated U.S.-North Korea, South-North Korea, and U.S.-South Korea relations.” Baker, on the other hand, credits the administration with demonstrating “great practical flexibility even within the broad context of a hard-line policy,” while Sutter notes that for all its internal differences and bombastic rhetoric, the administration “generally behaved in a consultative and moderate way on North Korea.”

Most analysts would agree, even before Pyongyang’s February 2005 statement, that North Korea’s nuclear weapons capabilities today are greater than four years ago. Whether Washington might have prevented this unhappy development is a subject of continuing debate. A number of the authors here applaud the Bush administration’s more “multilateral” approach (in comparison to Clinton) in dealing with North Korea. Administration critics, on the other hand, contend that the Bush approach has been multilateral only in the sense of trying to enlist others to promote U.S. objectives, not in the genuine consultation and collaboration—not to mention compromise—usually denoted by that term.

Many of the authors writing here warn that Washington’s long-standing partnership with Seoul needs serious attention during Bush’s second term. Few seem prepared to conclude that the two allies, a half-century after the *de facto* end of the Korean War, are now committed to different visions of the future. But neither is this idea as far-fetched as it once was.

In order to reassure South Korea that Seoul and Washington have complementary aims, Kim writes, Bush must publicly affirm that his second term will pursue a policy of engagement, not containment, with the DPRK. “Supplementing rather than replacing the Agreed Framework would be the best way of reducing the North’s threat,” and not incidentally, of assuaging South Korean concerns about an unnecessarily provocative U.S. posture. Above all, Kim cautions, “one rule remains unchanged: we must seek a peaceful resolution of Pyongyang’s nuclear ambition through dialogue.” These are sentiments all can embrace, yet they leave unidentified that point at which this insistence on exclusively peaceful means of persuasion becomes an implicit acquiescence in a North Korean nuclear weapons arsenal.

For all the talk about how 9/11 “changed everything,” several of the scholars writing here—Harry Harding and Richard Baker most prominently—find a great deal of continuity between George W. Bush’s Asia policies and those of his predecessors. As Baker rightly asserts, “Fundamental U.S. interests and relationships tend to have a remarkable continuity through administrations, and this administration is no different.” Baker also underscores another constant across administrations: the manner in which the expectations and ideologies carried into office gradually give way to the day-to-day realities of conducting foreign policy. The abandonment of the “China-as-strategic-competitor” rhetoric and the reluctant June 2001 decision not to walk away from the Agreed Framework drive home Baker’s point.

While emphasizing the broad overlap in objectives between Bush and his predecessors, Harding also highlights a potentially significant change in American thinking about Asia. Under previous administrations, he notes, the U.S. security objective for Asia consisted of preventing any other country or grouping of countries from establishing hegemony in the region. The Bush administration, by contrast, has hinted of an intention to establish such hegemony for the United States, and to discourage any other power (read “China”) from challenging American dominance in the region. This, Harding observes, represents “a significantly more ambitious definition of what constitutes a favorable balance of power than has been normal in American diplomacy in Asia.” Harding also singles out the administration’s announcement of substantial troop redeployments from Asia as another important innovation in Bush’s Asia policy.

Apparently the heretofore sacrosanct doctrine that the American regional security commitment requires a forward-deployed force of at least 100,000 personnel no longer applies in the post-9/11 world.

Considerations of style as well as substance dominate these pages. Many of the essays presented here call on Washington over the next four years to rely less on the assertion of American primacy and military power, and more on consultation and coalition-building (though not necessarily the type of “coalitions of the willing” characteristic of the first term). Even good policies can be undercut by inadequate presentation. Pollack, for instance, commends the administration’s determination to update U.S. military deployments on the Korean peninsula so as to reflect twenty-first century realities. Nonetheless, he notes, by announcing changes “in preemptory fashion” and without adequate consultation with Seoul, Washington has encouraged Korean suspicions about ultimate American intentions and unnecessarily roiled U.S. – ROK relations. Leach also notes that many of America’s closest allies in Asia are uncomfortable with the manner in which the administration has exercised America’s extraordinary primacy in world affairs. The second Bush administration, he counsels, “needs to be more sensitive to the views of others; it also needs to inspire.” Goh calls on the administration to demonstrate a greater awareness of the domestic constraints on Southeast Asian governments, and as a result, to be satisfied with less visible forms of cooperation, especially in the war on terrorism.

Assistant Secretary Kelly argues that the Bush administration has achieved a “solid record of accomplishments” in East Asia. On balance, the essays presented here qualify but do not reverse that assessment.

Still, even those inclined to give the Bush Asia team relatively high marks concede that America’s overall standing in Asia has eroded over the past four years. The United States today, many of these essays warn, faces a serious challenge in convincing Asians of the wisdom of its policies and the benign nature of its intentions. More effective public diplomacy might help, but only to a certain extent. Not even the most sophisticated public relations effort will sanitize U.S. policies deemed selfish, immoral, or just plain wrong-headed by large numbers of Asians. As Richard Baker writes, the best way to restore America’s standing in the region is “to change the realities on the ground—specifically by achieving a satisfactory outcome in Iraq and progress on the Arab-Israeli problem.”

Indeed, it is striking how often these essays single out U.S. policy in the Greater Middle East as a crucial element in America's standing in Asia. Baker, for instance, finds that the Palestine issue has become "a central reference point" in Asian attitudes (non-Muslim as well as Muslim) toward the United States, in ways that greatly complicate the management of U.S. diplomacy in Asia. Goh notes that the war in Iraq has been "the key stumbling block" in Southeast Asia to deeper alignment with U.S. counter-terrorism efforts. Opposition to U.S. policies in Iraq and the potential for Islamic political parties to exploit this popular antipathy, she judges, has kept Indonesia and Malaysia, among others, from enlisting in the Bush administration's regional maritime security initiative.

In writing about America's diminished standing among the peoples of Asia, Dalpino makes another cogent point: restrictive U.S. visa and immigration policies, as well as perceived American prejudice against Asia's Muslims, will render even the most skillful public diplomacy programs ineffectual. Several of the essays here echo the view that the U.S. visa process is broken, in ways that profoundly harm American interests. For the first time since the early 1970s, the number of foreign students studying in the United States is dropping. The number of Chinese undergraduates declined by 20 percent in the past year; Japanese student enrollments fell by 14 percent. The decline at the graduate level is even more dramatic.³ And these are not Muslim countries. If remedial action is not taken quickly, the United States will have foregone the opportunity to win life-long friends among the next generation of Asian leaders.

Kelly readily concedes that Asia will not be without its challenges during the second Bush term. Among the challenges he cites will be reining in the North Korean nuclear weapons program; managing cross-Strait tensions between China and Taiwan; promoting genuine national reconciliation and democracy in Burma; pushing China to liberalize its trade regime; and addressing various transnational problems such as proliferation, human trafficking, environmental degradation, and the spread of infectious diseases. Representative Leach underscores the significance of the final item on Kelly's list by boldly asserting that the "biggest public challenge and foreign policy issue of our time" is not war and peace, but HIV/AIDS.

And yet, those challenges we fail to anticipate can create the greatest difficulties for us. The final report of the 9/11 Commission has noted that

the topic of terrorism did not figure at all in the 2000 American presidential campaign. Yet, the Bush presidency was fundamentally shaped by terrorism and the American response to the attacks of September 11. As Lee Hamilton, the 9/11 Commission vice-chair and president of the Wilson Center, has observed, “Unforeseen crises often consume a president’s foreign policy.”⁴ The 9/11 attacks constituted one of these “unforeseen crises” in George W. Bush’s first term; the outbreak of SARS, a new, poorly understood, and highly virulent form of pneumonia, might have been another. In the case of the latter, Asian economies reeled, tourism plummeted, airlines cancelled flights and laid off staff, schools and universities were closed, and upwards of seven hundred people died. Yet all agree it might have been far worse.

It is impossible to predict what unanticipated Asian developments will help set the agenda of the second Bush administration. Nonetheless, the work being done by the scholars presented in this volume, as well as by hundreds and thousands of their colleagues, has raised warning flags that President Bush’s new Asia team would do well to heed. To mention just a handful at random—

- Should we be worried that China, with 22 percent of the world’s population, has only seven percent of the globe’s arable land?
- What would we do if Rangoon erupts in large-scale demonstrations, which the regime then crushes with much loss of life?
- Is the United States adequately prepared for the emergence of an East Asian version of the European community, or even, farther down the road, an East Asian version of the EU?
- Are we sufficiently focused on the insurgency that appears to be gaining strength in Thailand’s Muslim south?
- Have we clearly thought through the full range of implications of Japan’s becoming a more “normal” nation, a course Tokyo seems set upon, and one that the Bush administration has encouraged?
- Is the United States responding adequately to the challenge to its scientific and technological dominance posed by Asian powers such as China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and India?
- Is Washington prepared to cope with a pandemic of bird flu that, according to World Health Organization officials, could be far more lethal than the 2003 SARS epidemic?

The December 26, 2004, earthquake and tsunami that wreaked havoc across a wide swath of southern Asia—a catastrophe that occurred only after these essays were written—presented the Bush administration with another of these unforeseen crises. As this volume goes to press, the costs of this calamity, human and economic, are still unknown, though clearly it represents one of the greatest natural disasters ever to strike the region. The Bush administration was widely and justly criticized for a sluggish and ungenerous initial response to the disaster, but quickly increased its aid pledges and in other ways, such as dispatching U.S. military forces to aid in the massive effort of humanitarian relief, has played a key role in assisting the people of Indonesia and elsewhere throughout the region to rebuild their shattered lives. Historically, sustainability and follow-through have been recurrent problems in U.S. aid efforts. Ultimately, the Bush record in Asia will be heavily influenced by how successfully Washington delivers on its promises of substantial and sustained relief and reconstruction assistance to the countries devastated by this tragedy.

As George W. Bush settles into his second term, there exists an odd disconnect between the generally positive evaluations of his Asia diplomacy over the past four years (North Korea being a partial exception), and a sense that long-term American interests in Asia are increasingly vulnerable. “The U.S. is losing the competition for influence in Southeast Asia,” warns veteran Singaporean diplomat Tommy Koh. “The winner, at least for the time being, is the People’s Republic of China.”⁵ Writing in a recent issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Francis Fukuyama has expressed anxiety about the United States being excluded from key developments in the region and declared that “a creative re-evaluation of Asia must be a top priority for George W. Bush in his second term.”⁶ *Washington Post* columnist Jim Hoagland has phrased it somewhat differently: “think hard and soon about Asia, Mr. President. Strategic change is on the gallop there.”⁷

Whether at a gallop, or a more stately promenade, change, momentous change, is indeed afoot in Asia. How George W. Bush and his chief lieutenants respond to, and shape, that change will go far to determine whether the twenty-first century escapes or repeats the unhappy history of the twentieth.



Introduction

The preparation and publication of this volume marks the end of a rewarding collaboration with Wilson Lee, who after more than three years as a member of the staff of the Wilson Center's Asia Program is set to embark upon a new stage in his career as an Asia-watcher. I thank him sincerely and enthusiastically for his manifold contributions to the Asia Program, and wish him smooth sailing and a stimulating voyage as he casts off for new horizons. Similarly, I wish to acknowledge the invaluable assistance in the preparation of this volume offered by two other Asia Program colleagues, Amy McCreedy Thernstrom and Gang Lin. Without their help, the publication of this report would have been a far more burdensome chore, and the end product surely less satisfactory.

NOTES

1. For one such example, see Francine R. Frankel and Harry Harding, eds., *The India-China Relationship: What the United States Needs to Know* (Washington and New York: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Columbia University Press, 2004).

2. Michael H. Armacost, "What's Ahead for U.S. Policy in Asia?" PacNet 1, Jan. 6, 2005.

3. Fareed Zakaria, "Rejecting the Next Bill Gates," *Washington Post*, Nov. 23, 2004.

4. Lee Hamilton, "Foreign policy surprises lie just around the corner," *Indianapolis Star*, Oct. 25, 2004, <http://www.indystar.com/articles/7/189013-3537-021.html>

5. Tommy Koh, "America's Role in Asia: What Does Southeast Asia Want From Washington?" PacNet 53, Dec. 21, 2004.

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GEORGE W. BUSH AND ASIA: AN ASSESSMENT

JAMES A. KELLY

I was very pleased to have this opportunity to offer an assessment of the Bush administration's East Asia policy—which might also be seen as my own report card for the last four years. Never before have I been given the opportunity to help write my own report card.

As I address this administration's accomplishments thus far in furthering our foreign policy in East Asia and the Pacific, I hope you will conclude that we deserve "A's." We have come a long way since January 2001, with many successes that have expanded security and opportunity for America. While no administration can claim to have resolved all the issues confronting it in only four years, we can say with confidence that we have had excellent achievements and made solid progress in Asia. We have faced many challenges during this administration—especially the realities of a post-September 11 world—and we are proud of our record. We also put in place new structures and mechanisms that can serve as a foundation for further progress in the new century.

REGIONAL ISSUES

If there is one constant in Asia it is rapid change. For the most part, that change has been positive, dynamic and very much in the interests of the United States. Asia is largely at peace. Democracy, perhaps the greatest success story in recent years, is blossoming. Economic growth has rebounded, led by China, a re-energized Japan, and an ASEAN region that has left the financial crises of the late 1990s behind. Growing intra-

James A. Kelly was assistant secretary of state for East Asia and Pacific affairs between 2001 and 2005. Previously, he served as president of the Pacific Forum at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Honolulu (1994-2001), and president of EAP Associates, Inc. He has also served on the staff of the National Security Council, and as deputy assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs.

regional trade and investment have raised living standards, dramatically reduced poverty, and brought new opportunities to hundreds of millions. These positive developments have naturally led to efforts to consider new regional architecture arrangements. The United States supports efforts that contribute to openness and inclusiveness. We are, and will remain, an essential and pivotal power in the region.

Engagement with China

One essential Asian question concerns the peaceful rise of China. From a bad start—the EP-3 incident of April 2001—with effort from both sides, we have successfully forged an effective relationship with China that defies description by any slogan.

We have worked hard to develop a relationship that lets us communicate often and directly to address common challenges—regional and global, economic and political. In fact, the Secretary of State has already talked on the phone with Foreign Minister Li 14 times in 2004 (as of early November), and the two men have met face-to-face five times. And as the Secretary said on his most recent trip to Beijing, in our search for common ground, we are finding many more areas in which we agree than in which we disagree. First and foremost is our joint dedication to a Korean peninsula that is free from the threat of nuclear weapons. Here we are encouraging China to move from being a convener and mediator among the six parties to becoming an even more active participant in the effort of persuading the North Koreans that their security and prosperity are best assured by putting nuclear weapons aside. China has responded in a way that shows it can be a “player” in this process, not just an interested observer on the sidelines. Increasingly, that is how China engages us and the world, and that shows an important maturity in its foreign policy.

We also have differences and disagreements, of course, whether on Taiwan, Hong Kong, human rights, religious practice, or encouraging a dialogue with the Dalai Lama. There has been some progress on the latter, and we work to be direct on our approaches to all of these matters so that a crisis does not arise out of a misjudgment.

Strengthening of Alliances

From the beginning, President Bush emphasized strengthening and revitalizing our alliances, and, in Asia, we have succeeded quite well.

Nurturing our alliances is work that is never done. As Secretary Shultz used to put it, the “garden” must be tended, and that was what Secretary Powell was doing late last month in Northeast Asia. In each case, the ties we have with our five key allies in the region—Japan, Australia, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand—have been strengthened since 2001.

Japan

This administration came in with a vision for advancing our relations with Japan toward a more mature partnership. Many senior officials in the administration had worked closely with Japan and saw much more potential for U.S.-Japanese relations. Among these is Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage, who was one of the driving forces behind a noted study on U.S.-Japanese relations issued before his current appointment. September 11 gave those efforts a new urgency and focus, and the administration has continued to expand and deepen our alliance with Japan since then.

President Bush and Prime Minister Koizumi established a very warm relationship when they first met at Camp David in 2001. Their confidence in each other has brought our cooperation to new heights. Indeed, there is too much good news about Japan to cite in this brief essay, but I can say that within three months of 9/11, Japan began providing fuel at no cost to U.S. and other coalition ships patrolling to prevent terrorists from using sea lines in Operation Enduring Freedom. Japan has now provided over 84 million gallons of fuel to coalition vessels, and recently extended the program for six more months. Japan has also proven itself to be a major partner in rebuilding Afghanistan.

Japan now has deployed in Iraq members of its Self-Defense Forces to provide humanitarian and reconstruction assistance, Japan’s first such overseas deployment in the postwar era. In the six-party talks, where our cooperation is critical, as a partner in important areas of ballistic missile defense, in its cooperation with the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), in the key acts of legislation passed, Japan has become an even more vital partner. It is also fair to say that the Japanese people are increasingly aware of their country’s need to play a more significant role in regional and global affairs. And these opinions are resonating among the country’s political leadership.

We are consulting closely with Japan on our U.S. military presence there in order to enhance deterrence and maintain the security of Japan while addressing the concerns of base-hosting communities. Equally important, we are resolving challenging trade issues in a spirit of cooperation. Last month, talks in Tokyo ended a 10-month ban on U.S. beef imports brought on by fears over BSE—mad cow disease. This temporary agreement will resume U.S. beef imports to Japan, giving Japanese consumers access to safe, high-quality U.S. beef while restoring an important trade link.

Some have called this a “Golden Age” in U.S.-Japan relations. I believe the administration has indeed set a “gold standard” for future cooperation with Japan.

Australia

Our alliance with Australia has been strengthened by the especially close personal relationship President Bush developed with Prime Minister Howard. This began with the events of September 11 when the prime minister was visiting the United States. The U.S.-Australian relationship is at a new level. Bilateral security is enhanced by stronger defense, non-proliferation, and counter-terrorism ties, and broadened joint intelligence cooperation, while trade barriers have been diminished through a historic free trade agreement. And, of course, Australia has been a vigorous ally in the global war on terrorism, including its dispatch of troops to Afghanistan and Iraq.

South Korea

Prominent among the policy successes of the past four years has been the consolidation of our partnership with South Korea. I consider this a particularly satisfying achievement, not least for the difficulties we have overcome. When Roh Moo-hyun campaigned for the ROK Presidency, there was talk of his charting a “middle path” between the DPRK and the United States. But his victory, and later that of the Uri Party, instead committed a far broader range of the South Korean political spectrum to the close military and political ties between our two nations.

How to explain this? By understanding and appreciating the strengthening of democratic institutions in South Korea. Recent elections empowered the reform-minded “386 Generation.” Too young to have

experienced directly the 1950–53 conflict and too often suspicious of U.S. motives, their rise to political maturity challenged us to anchor bilateral relations more deeply, and on what could be clearly seen as a more equal basis. We have to work to justify the importance of our ties in new terms to a new generation of leaders. This is as it should be. I am proud to have cultivated cordial relationships with key Uri figures like Floor Leader Chun Jung-bae and Party Chairman Lee Bu-young. Secretary Powell, former Ambassador Tom Hubbard, and our new ambassador to Korea, Chris Hill, among others, have met with many of the numerous first-term parliamentarians. There has been more contact with young Koreans as we have reached out to make new friends and bring new energy to our public diplomacy. This outreach has enjoyed considerable success, paving the way for the smooth restructuring of the U.S. military presence in South Korea, the ROK's sizable and courageous contribution to the coalition effort in Iraq, and to the ROK's central role in working with us in the Six-Party process. I believe that by encouraging appreciation among ROK reformers and younger policymakers of our shared interests—and these remain both broad and deep—we have grounded more firmly our future relations with this strategic partner.

The Philippines

Another success of this administration is that relations with the Philippines have rebounded after reaching a low point in the mid-1990s after the withdrawal of our bases. In the global war on terror, a joint U.S.-Philippine operation in 2002 cleared Abu Sayyaf Group terrorists from what had been one of their strongest bastions on Basilan Island. In addition, Philippine officials enthusiastically support the jointly-funded Philippine Defense Reform, which we recently launched, to restructure and train the Philippine armed forces. This will make them a stronger force for stability and will discourage terrorists from moving into the area. The Philippines was one of our first coalition partners to send forces to Iraq as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, and earlier this year we named that country a major non-NATO Ally. While we were disappointed at their sudden withdrawal from Iraq following the kidnapping of a Filipino citizen, our alliance remains strong and we continue to cooperate on a broad range of issues.

Thailand

We have steadily strengthened our alliance relationship with Thailand over the past several years. Following the September 11 terrorist attacks, Thailand began providing vital over-flight rights and access to facilities for Operation Enduring Freedom and the conflict in Afghanistan. It became an active provider of stabilization forces when it sent an engineering battalion to Afghanistan to help rebuild Bagram airfield. In the war against terrorism, Thailand has also been a staunch partner and ally. In August 2003, Thai authorities captured senior Jemmah Islamiyah terrorist Hambali, who was responsible for the deadly bombings in Bali and Jakarta. Thai troops served bravely in Iraq, where they suffered two fatalities in December 2003. President Bush, following his state visit to Bangkok last fall, recognized the strength of the alliance by designating Thailand as a major non-NATO Ally. And Thai leadership at last year's APEC strengthened that forum, and also highlighted Thai economic resurgence. Now, FTA negotiations are proceeding.

Since the beginning of this year, Thailand has been confronting a significant surge in violent attacks against its security forces, government officials, schools, and other symbols of central Thai authority in the far southern provinces. The roots of this violence are complex and will require the Thai government to address long-standing resentment by the local population against central rule. As a long-time friend and ally of Thailand, we will continue to offer our support, while making clear our views on the importance of respect for human rights in dealing with the ongoing violence.

Cooperation on Counter-terrorism

The counter-terrorism cooperation we have received from Asia-Pacific countries goes well beyond just these five allies. An ironic by-product of the September 11 terrorist attacks has been a strengthening of our ties with many of the governments of the region—which appears to be the exact opposite of what the terrorists would want. Immediately after the attacks, we received an outpouring of support for our efforts to eliminate the scourge of al Qaeda. This support came in the form of offers of military or material assistance, as well as statements of solidarity and offers of other kinds of counter-terrorism collaboration. Governments around the

region have cooperated in freezing terrorist assets, and Malaysia established a regional counter-terrorism training center for which we have provided several courses. There is a growing realization throughout the region that terrorism threatens all civilized governments, and that the best way to confront this menace is to work together pro-actively. Terrorists routinely disregard national boundaries; we need to reach across those boundaries to defeat them.

Indonesia tragically discovered on October 12, 2002, that it was not immune to the tide of Islamic radicalism when close to two hundred people, foreign visitors and Indonesians, perished in the devastating Bali bombing. In the months since then, Jakarta has seen two other major bomb attacks, but the government has also taken major steps to arrest terrorist operatives, put them on trial, and convict them. The United States and others, notably Australia, have provided assistance to Indonesia to help them pursue and confront terrorism. Our cooperation has been one element of our overall relationship with this burgeoning democracy and contributed importantly to the safety and security of the entire region.

Compacts of Free Association

Although issues involving the most populous or wealthiest of Asia-Pacific nations occupied much of our attention, we also achieved little heralded, but significant successes with two of the smallest countries in the region. During the past two years, we renegotiated Compacts of Free Association with the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, a continuation of our unique relationships with these sovereign countries. These compacts contain revised immigration procedures that allow both nations' citizens continued privileges while improving security measures. They also provide for new management and financial oversight to ensure that U.S. support to these nations results in real improvement in the peoples' lives and lays the groundwork for long-term growth and prosperity. I should also note that these nations, as well as Palau, have shown a commitment to keeping the world free of terror. Hundreds of their citizens are serving in the U.S. armed forces; both the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau have lost countrymen in the service of our country in Iraq.

Economic Engagement

Asia is also vitally important to the United States in an economic sense. U.S. trade with East Asia and the Pacific totals over \$600 billion a year—a figure that exceeds our trade with the EU—and it’s growing at a rapid clip. Home to nearly 30 percent of the Earth’s population, East Asia accounts for over a quarter of world production and nearly a quarter of world trade—and those numbers are growing, too. The region buys about 40 percent of our agricultural exports and supports, directly and indirectly, millions of American jobs in all sectors of our economy. For these and many other reasons, East Asia is just as important to the United States in an economic sense as it is in a military, diplomatic, or geopolitical sense.

The administration’s economic policy was rooted in clear and mutually reinforcing goals:

- to open markets for U.S. goods and services;
- to improve the region’s overall business environment;
- to maintain a stable macro-climate favoring open trade and sustainable growth; and
- to encourage regional cooperation.

Opening Markets

Opening markets for U.S. goods and services is priority number one. Toward this end, the administration worked hard, and to excellent effect, to put the once-wobbly Doha Round of the WTO negotiations back on track. The administration scored successes in reducing trade barriers across a wide range of sectors through free trade agreements, or FTAs. Our FTAs helped create new opportunities for American business and benefit American consumers by ensuring more competitive prices on the goods and services covered by the agreements. Our FTA with Singapore came into force on January 1 of this year; we have recently concluded an FTA with Australia; and we have entered into FTA talks with Thailand. We also have Trade and Investment Framework Agreements with a number of Southeast Asian partners.

China has been a major focus of administration attention, and rightly so. China made some strides since its WTO accession in opening its markets, but we continue to have serious concerns, especially with respect to IPR enforcement, standards, transparency, and services. We are encouraged by Chinese leadership pledges to implement market-access commitments, but

the next administration will have to remain deeply engaged with the Chinese until full implementation of its WTO commitments is achieved.

Business Environment

For open markets to be meaningful to the business community, there must also be a favorable business environment, and the administration worked hard to achieve progress in this area. We helped improve the business environment in Asia by developing transportation links, opening up the Asian civil aviation and telecommunications industries, improving intellectual property rights protection, and combating corruption. Working through the International Civil Aviation Organization and International Maritime Organization, for example, we helped make air and maritime services more secure for passengers and cargo alike. The U.S. Container Security Initiative now includes many major ports in Asia. The United States worked bilaterally and multilaterally to improve IPR protection, and we obtained good results in some places, but piracy and counterfeiting are still rampant in many parts of Asia. In these and other ways, we improved the business environment in Asia to the benefit of U.S. businesses, workers, and farmers. I regard our work in this area as a significant success, though there is plenty more to do.

Macroeconomic Environment

Maintaining a stable macroeconomic climate is the third element of our economic approach to Asia, and here again, we have met with great success. The region has certainly come a long way since the financial crisis of 1997–1998. We have encouraged, among our Asian partners, more prudent and sustainable fiscal policies, monetary policies focused on price stability, and increased openness to international trade and capital flows. As a result, interest rate spreads are down; there have been no major foreign exchange or balance of payments crises; “contagion” is less prevalent; and, among those economies with flexible exchange rates, volatility has decreased. Japan is showing strong signs of recovery, and China is maintaining a strong rate of growth.

The United States has invested a terrific amount of time urging China to move toward a more flexible, market-based exchange rate for its currency, and the Chinese agree that making this transition is a top priority. China is undertaking important measures to liberalize capital flows, to

restructure its banks, and to develop a currency derivatives market. While China clearly needs to do more, these are all steps in the right direction.

Increased Regional Cooperation

Our Asian partners have begun forging more regional organizations among themselves, reflecting their growing cooperation. We welcome this trend, understanding that strengthened ties and cooperation between nations of the region contribute to regional prosperity and stability, two of our highest priorities. I have seen suggestions that the growth of regional organizations reflects a loss of U.S. influence in the region. I disagree. The trend toward regional cooperation offers the United States the opportunity to engage on a multilateral level to address issues we were unable to resolve through bilateral approaches.

Throughout this administration, the United States brought important leadership, expertise, and resources to address the economic, political, and security challenges facing the region. We provided active leadership in the ASEAN Regional Forum, attending dozens of working level meetings throughout the region. The Secretary himself attended each year's ARF ministerial meetings. We supported confidence-building measures and cooperative work in key areas such as enhancing the security of Southeast Asia's strategic waterways, non-proliferation, and counter-terrorism. We have also worked to strengthen ARF as an organization, getting agreement on an ARF Unit within the ASEAN Secretariat and guiding the ARF members toward preventive diplomacy.

The United States also participated actively in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum—or APEC. APEC provides a unique opportunity for leaders from around the region to meet annually. In fact, the President, Secretary of State, and U.S. Trade Representative will all be attending the APEC annual meeting in Chile next week. President Bush will meet with his twenty APEC counterparts and work through a very substantive agenda that includes three key objectives:

- support for trade liberalization and facilitation, especially by supporting the Doha Development Agenda and ensuring that FTA's are truly trade-liberalizing, WTO-consistent, and comprehensive;
- concrete action to implement the APEC Leaders' 2003 Bangkok Commitments on security; and
- promotion of transparency and fighting corruption.

The president announced in October 2002 the Enterprise for ASEAN Initiative, which we are using to deepen our trade relations with Southeast Asia. We have implemented the ASEAN Cooperation Plan, announced by the secretary in 2002. Under this plan, we have committed over \$9 million to fund cooperative projects with ASEAN on issues from trade facilitation to counter-terrorism to disaster management. In this work we developed partnerships with other countries like Australia and Japan who contribute financial support for projects of common interest.

FAVORABLE TRENDS

At the beginning of the administration, we reaffirmed America's traditional policy priorities of security, stability, democratization, free markets, and human rights. These priorities formed the cornerstone of our engagement with the region throughout the four years. We pressed forward on a broad front on these priorities, raising them at every opportunity and supporting them with our actions and assistance. What we have seen over the past four years are several trends favorable to our interests in the region.

Spread of Democracy

None of the trends is more important than the region-wide strengthening of democracy. Already this year, successful elections have taken place in Japan, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan, Mongolia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia, and even Hong Kong, for half of its Legislative Council seats. In the coming months, East Asians can look forward to elections in Taiwan and Thailand. The success of democratization cannot help but demonstrate to the remaining non-democratic countries the advantages of giving the people a voice in their own governance.

I would especially like to mention the remarkable democratic progress we have seen in Indonesia. Very little in its history of colonial rule prepared it to succeed as a democratic state. After a hard-fought battle for independence in the 1940s, its first hesitant steps toward democracy were followed by 32 years of autocratic rule under former President Suharto. In the late 1990s the Asian economic crisis provided the final stimulus for

transition to a new political regime. This year, Indonesia successfully conducted a series of elections, voting in a new parliament and for the first time in its history, a directly-elected president. International observers hailed these elections as fair and peaceful exercises, and the Indonesians are rightfully proud of the transition they have gone through. Incidentally, Indonesia's most recent election turnout was about 117 million, one million more than the number of American voters who cast ballots last week, despite our 25 percent larger population. Throughout this time of democratic reawakening, the United States has stood by Indonesia, providing support for its people and assistance in strengthening its democratic institutions. As an example, in August of this year, the embassy signed an agreement with the government of Indonesia for a five-year program that will provide a total of \$468 million for basic education, water, nutrition, and the environment.

Increased Economic Opportunities and Greater Prosperity

Prosperity is growing, and nations of the region are moving toward greater economic openness, lower trade barriers, and regional cooperation. Income levels have doubled and redoubled almost everywhere in East Asia. East Asian nations are looking increasingly beyond their borders for markets, investment capital, higher education, and ideas.

Increased Security and Stability

East Asia is an area largely at peace, despite the long-standing tensions on the Korean peninsula and in the Taiwan Straits or the handful of local separatist conflicts. There has been a widespread rejection of radical Islam in Southeast Asia. The kind of radical Islam that spawns terrorism appeals to a very small segment of society and the terrorists are few in number. Throughout the East Asia-Pacific region, governments and people have recognized the advantages of resolving differences through dialogue and the ballot box, and of maintaining political stability as an essential ingredient of economic prosperity.

Increased Attention to Global Issues

The U.S. continues to lead the way on alleviating human misery in Asia by combating human trafficking, HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, narcotics trafficking, international crime, and promoting human

rights. We've noticed a large increase in interest in the region to these issues. The increased efforts by governments in the region to combat human trafficking and to fight HIV/AIDS are very positive signs.

Development assistance is up sharply in Asia and even more world-wide; appropriated State Department and USAID resources for all of Asia totaled \$2.9 billion in FY 04, compared to \$1.93 billion in FY 02. At the UN in September 2003, President Bush pledged a significant \$50 million to combat human trafficking. On HIV/AIDS, the President has committed the largest portion of funds towards ending this horrible disease —\$15 billion over five years. Under the President's leadership, Vietnam was added as the 15th country to receive funds under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. The Emergency Fund will work with NGOs to prevent at least 660,000 new infections, and provide care for 65,000 people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. This is just a small example of giving substance to these issues.

Millennium Challenge Account

Every so often, a really significant new program appears. President Bush took our international development goals one step further and stated that America must lead by example. He created the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA)—a bold, new initiative that provides the greatest amount of foreign development assistance since the Marshall Plan. Through the MCA, the U.S. provides development assistance to nations with a proven record of governing justly, investing in their people, encouraging economic freedom, and fighting corruption. Congress approved \$1 billion in start-up funding in 2004, and we hope to increase this to \$5 billion a year by 2006. Sixteen of the world's poorest countries were selected for the first year of the program, including two in the East Asia-Pacific region: Mongolia and Vanuatu.

Through the Millennium Challenge Corporation, we negotiate compacts—or contracts—with developing countries to establish mutual responsibilities and expectations. We invest in their projects and measure the results in economic growth and poverty reduction. We believe this program will encourage other countries to follow suit and improve their governance in the future.

These successes over the four years of this administration represent a solid record of accomplishments.

THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

While it is clear that we have contributed much in the last four years to bring security, stability, democracy, and prosperity to the Asia-Pacific region, key problem areas remain. Chief among these are the situation in North Korea and continuing cross-Straits tensions. In addition, in the future, we will also have to contend with such challenges as promoting genuine national reconciliation and democracy in Burma; opening China to equal trade in products and services; countering terrorism; and addressing issues of a global nature, such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, environmental degradation, drug trafficking, the spread of infectious diseases, and human trafficking. What this administration did achieve was to put in place structures and mechanisms that will help future administrations resolve these challenges.

Good Starting Point

I have already mentioned the generally good bilateral and multilateral relations and the strong alliances we have grown and nurtured for the last four years. This wealth of friendship and good will serve to open doors for the second Bush administration.

We also began the work of restructuring our global defense posture to improve reactions to emerging threats while maintaining the ability to address traditional threats. We are taking advantage of advances in technology that have multiplied the combat power of our individual soldiers to reduce our military footprint in the region. At the same time, we are using our increased mobility to guarantee that we will be present when needed to help our friends and allies. Our forces will not only be available to meet long-standing threats lingering from the past century, but will also be able to move rapidly anywhere in the region to confront new threats. We are engaged in discussions with our allies and friends on how best to go about this restructuring while maintaining our commitments to them.

North Korea

Although, as I mentioned, we did not successfully reduce the long-standing tensions on the Korean peninsula, we have established what we believe offers the best hope for resolution of this problem: the six-party talks framework. As I explained at the Wilson Center in December of

2002, our discovery, and Pyongyang's subsequent acknowledgement, of a covert uranium enrichment program required us to adjust policy mid-stream by recognizing that in this instance bilateral diplomacy had failed. We now adhere to the principle that multilateral diplomacy is the best way to ensure that North Korea lives up to its international commitments and obligations. This administration remains committed to a peaceful resolution of the multiple problems on the Korean peninsula, beginning with the necessity for the DPRK to denuclearize. As President Bush said during his visit to the ROK in February 2002, "We're prepared to talk with the North about steps that would lead to a better future, a future that is more hopeful and less threatening." Nonetheless, we are sober and realistic about the prospects for diplomacy and will not approach the DPRK with blinders on. North Korea needs to make a strategic choice and, so far, shows no sign of a readiness to change course.

The six-party talks, hosted by China, harness the diplomatic leverage of the parties most directly affected by DPRK proliferation to our effort to dismantle in a permanent, thorough and transparent manner all of North Korea's nuclear programs. We recognize that all the countries in Northeast Asia have a vital stake in this issue. The six-party talks framework allows each to contribute to a successful outcome for all. The DPRK and the nuclear issue it poses represent a continuing challenge.

Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Another threat to regional and global security is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. While in the past we were primarily concerned with proliferation from state to state, we have become more conscious of the possibility that terrorist organizations could use these weapons to wreak death and destruction on innocent persons in any location in the world. For this reason we initiated the Proliferation Security Initiative to stop the transit of these weapons. I am pleased to say that Australia and Japan are among the core participants in PSI.

Maritime Security

Today, the states that border the Strait of Malacca are beginning to work together to ensure the security of that strategic waterway, through which half the world's oil flows to markets in the region and beyond. We will

continue to look for ways in which we can help these littoral states, which have the sovereign responsibility for ensuring the security of straits, to enhance their capabilities and their cooperation. Enhanced maritime security in the Malacca Straits can deter or even prevent a range of transnational maritime crime, including smuggling, trafficking, and potential acts of terrorism.

Burma

We continue to follow closely developments in Burma and remain deeply concerned about the safety and welfare of Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners. Over the course of the past several weeks, a number of senior Burmese officials have been ousted from their positions and replaced by hardliners. The current prime minister, Soe Win, was reportedly involved in the decision to attack Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters on May 30, 2004. In my opinion, Burma is moving steadily away from its ASEAN counterparts and toward a most objectionable one-man rule. We continue to press Burma's leader and his henchmen to engage the democratic opposition and ethnic minority groups in a meaningful dialogue leading to genuine national reconciliation, to release Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners immediately and unconditionally, and to allow the National League for Democracy to reopen its offices and to take steps to respect and ensure the free exercise of the fundamental human rights of the people of Burma.

CONCLUSION

For the past four years, this administration maintained a vigorous policy of engagement with the East Asia-Pacific region, and it has established a good structure to continue to move forward in President Bush's second term. Some have suggested that the U.S. is withdrawing from the region. But the record of the Bush administration is clearly reflective of an intensified American involvement and certainly not any withdrawal. Let me end with this thought: we are an Asia-Pacific country not only by geography, but also by virtue of our openness to free trade, our support for the growth of democracy, our interest in worldwide security and stability, and the enduring ties of the millions of Americans of Asian origin. We are a key player in the region, and we are in the region to stay.

CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S ASIA POLICY

HARRY HARDING

The Asia policy of the administration of George W. Bush has shown an intriguing mixture of change and continuity. In general, its foreign policy objectives are quite similar to those of its predecessors—indeed, they reflect a high degree of continuity with the general trends in American foreign policy over at least the past half-century. However, a new objective—combating transnational terrorist groups—has been added to the security agenda. And, perhaps relatedly, the relative priority assigned to the objectives has changed somewhat.

The larger change, however, has been with regard to strategies rather than objectives. What is different about the Bush administration, at least in its first term, is not so much the broad purposes of American foreign policy, but rather the ways in which those goals are being advanced. Compared with the Clinton administration, the Bush administration has been less inclined to pursue its objectives through broad-based multilateral institutions, more interested in forging “coalitions of the willing” to achieve its economic and security goals, less likely to impose sanctions for violations of human rights, and less willing to bargain directly with North Korea to deal with Pyongyang’s WMD programs. There has also been a significant rethinking of American military deployments in the Asia-Pacific region.

In one important aspect of U.S. Asian policy—Washington’s approach toward the PRC and Taiwan—big changes were announced when the Bush administration took office, but within a few months those changes had been almost completely reversed. This reflects a familiar pattern in

Harry Harding is dean of the Elliott School of International Affairs, and professor of international affairs and political science at George Washington University. His major publications include *A Fragile Relationship: The United States and China Since 1972*; *China’s Second Revolution: Reform After Mao*; and *The India-China Relationship: What the United States Needs to Know*.

which a new administration takes a more hostile posture toward Beijing or a more friendly posture toward Taiwan when it comes to power, but eventually reverts to a more mainstream approach when the costs and risks of that policy gradually become apparent.

CONTINUITY IN CORE OBJECTIVES

To a very large degree, the Bush administration's objectives in Asia have been similar to American goals in the region for the last thirty years, and in some cases even longer. They reflect the predictable interests of an established power like the U.S. in facing some of the key characteristics of the Asia-Pacific region.

- Asia is a strategically important region. The American objective has therefore been to maintain a favorable balance of power, traditionally defined as preventing regional domination by any other power or coalition of powers.
- Asia is a dynamic region with vibrant economies. The American objective has been to foster regional prosperity, and then to promote access to Asian markets for American exporters, investors, and consumers.
- Asia is a dangerous region, with several enduring regional hot spots. The American objective has been to deter the outbreak of hostilities and then, over time, to promote a resolution of the conflicts in such places as the Korean peninsula and the Taiwan Strait. Although this objective reflects a specific historical commitment to cold war allies like South Korea and Taiwan, it also reflects the more general concern that the outbreak of regional conflict could lead to destabilizing changes in the balance of power.
- Parts of Asia remain despotic. The American objective has been to resist the spread of authoritarian or totalitarian systems, to promote human rights, and to encourage the dissemination of democratic values and institutions.

The most obvious change in this list of core objectives during the Bush administration has been the addition of counter-terrorism as a central American goal in Asia after 9/11. At first, there may have been some the hope that the terrorist attacks on the United States would not have much

impact on American policy in Asia. Al Qaeda was based in the Middle East, with roots in the Arabian peninsula and with sanctuary in Afghanistan, without much apparent activity in Asia. Quite soon, however, it became evident that radical Islam had adherents in Asia as well as in the Middle East, and that the struggle against terrorism would therefore have an important Asian dimension. Tragic events in Indonesia (the Bali and Jakarta bombings), Singapore (the discovery of a terrorist plot against U.S. service personnel), the Philippines (kidnappings of foreign nationals by Islamic radicals), and Thailand (ethnic unrest in the south) have unfortunately validated this concern.

The preoccupation with terrorism in Asia could be seen as a continuity in American policy: as an example of the growing interest in transnational, unconventional security concerns that dates from the 1980s and especially the 1990s. But the level of concern with transnational terrorism is far greater than the previous interest in cross-border pollution, piracy, smuggling, trafficking in persons, migration or other transnational problems. Indeed, under the Bush administration, the struggle against terrorist movements has moved to the top of its foreign policy agenda in Asia, just as it has globally.

Conversely, other objectives, although not abandoned completely, have been assigned a lower priority. During the 2000 election, the Bush campaign said that it would conduct a “less arrogant” foreign policy, widely interpreted as meaning that it would be less critical of other countries’ human rights records. That appears to have been the case in Asia: the promotion of human rights, which headed the foreign policy agenda when the Clinton administration entered office, is arguably near the bottom of the Bush administration’s agenda. Although the promotion to democracy retains an important place in official rhetoric, the operational attention to this objective appears less now than it was in the early Clinton years. Security concerns, and the associated desire to see stability in friendly countries, may to some degree have trumped human rights in the post-9/11 era, just as they did at the height of the cold war.

And perhaps one objective is defined somewhat differently now than it was in previous years. In the past, the American security objective in Asia was said to be preventing any other country or coalition from establishing hegemony in Asia. Now, the Bush administration often implies that the American goal is to establish such a hegemony for itself, and to discour-

age any other party from challenging American dominance in the region or from seeking to become a “peer competitor” of the United States. This is a significantly more ambitious definition of what constitutes a favorable balance of power than has been normal in American diplomacy in Asia.

CHANGES IN STRATEGY

Although there have thus been some significant changes in objectives under the Bush administration, the principal discontinuities with the past are in the realm of strategy—the means that are being applied to achieve familiar goals.

- The promotion of human rights and democracy has been routinized. The most grievous violations of human rights (such as those in Myanmar and North Korea) are criticized, but the Bush administration has threatened few new sanctions. Although some new resources have been channeled into programs that promote political democratization, there has been more emphasis on finding new approaches to economic development, through such mechanisms as the Millennium Challenge Account, than on finding new ways to foster political reform. And although the Bush administration, in the middle of its first term, said that a better relationship with Beijing would depend on improvements in China’s human rights record, that conditional approach to cooperation with China appeared to have been abandoned by 2004.
- There is less attention to promoting freer trade through region-wide economic arrangements such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC), and more attention to the conclusion of free trade agreements with a smaller number of countries (such as Singapore, Australia, and Thailand) that are willing to forge them. The Bush administration appears to regard APEC less as an economic grouping than a political one, and uses the annual meeting of APEC leaders primarily to promote the war against terrorist organizations. The new focus on free trade agreements is understandable—they are the economic equivalent of the creation of “coalitions of the willing” in the security sphere—but carries risks. Even though the United States is less enthusiastic about region-wide economic architecture, many Asian nations remain committed to the concept. The

danger is that, with less attention being devoted to APEC, the process of economic integration will continue through alternative organizational frameworks, particularly the so-called “ASEAN+n” groupings (ASEAN+China, ASEAN+Japan, and ASEAN+3) that may exclude the United States.

- In the security sphere, the Bush administration similarly has assigned little weight to region-wide arrangements such as the ASEAN Regional Forum or the Shangri-la Dialogues. It sends representatives to the annual meetings, but does not appear to believe that security organizations with universal membership hold much promise. Its emphasis is on coalitions of the willing, particularly those that can be built around the key American alliances in Asia, such as those with Japan, South Korea, and Australia. This policy has been facilitated by the fact that two of America's key allies—Japan and Australia—have relatively conservative governments that are more enthusiastic about security cooperation with the United States than some of their predecessors have been. However, the alliances have been strained by differences over U.S. deployments and over the best strategy for dealing with North Korea's nuclear weapons program.
- One of the most important changes in Asia policy undertaken by the Bush administration has been the redefinition of American troop deployments in the region. For more than a decade, the United States had been committed to maintaining 100,000 troops forward deployed in the region. This number was deemed necessary to maintain a robust deterrent posture and to symbolize the continued strategic importance of the region to the United States. The Bush administration has departed sharply from this policy. The number of ground forces deployed in the region is being reduced, and the basing arrangements in South Korea and Japan are being altered. Some new deployments of naval and air forces into the region are being planned, but it is virtually certain that the net effect will still be a decline in American troop strength in the region. To some degree this is the result of the need to redeploy forces to Iraq. But, more fundamentally, it reflects the Bush administration's belief that the revolution in military technology makes it unnecessary to have so many forces forward deployed, where America's enemies might more easily target them for preemptive attack and where American's allies might constrain their use in the event of crisis.

- Perhaps the most obvious change in American strategy in Asia has involved North Korea. The Bush administration inherited from the Clinton administration a policy that involved a bilateral agreement between Washington and Pyongyang that would have provided certain economic and political benefits for North Korea in return for dismantling its nuclear weapons program. In coordination with the “sunshine policy” favored by then South Korean president Kim Dae-jung, the long-term American goal was to promote a so-called “soft landing,” in which North Korea would gradually engage in a program of reform and opening similar to that undertaken by China in the post-Mao years. By comparison, the Bush administration has preferred a more multilateral approach to North Korea, in which Pyongyang would be subject to concerted pressure from Japan, China, Russia, and South Korea as well as from the United States. It has also been far less willing than its predecessor to provide North Korea with positive inducements to eliminate its capacity to produce weapons of mass destruction. And, to at least some in the Bush administration, the collapse of the North Korean regime through a so-called “hard landing” is preferable to a program of economic aid or engagement that might increase Pyongyang’s political longevity and enhance its national power. However, the Bush administration has not gone so far as to undertake a preventive war against the North Korean WMD capacity, let alone to attempt regime change by force.

CHANGE, THEN CONTINUITY, IN POLICY TOWARD THE PRC AND TAIWAN

The Bush administration’s policy toward China and toward the conflict in the Taiwan Strait has traced an intriguing U-turn. The administration began by taking a harder rhetorical line toward China and by enhancing its security relationship with Taiwan. But by the middle of 2001 it had reverted to a relatively accommodative approach to Beijing, and by the end of 2002 it had begun to cool down its relationship with Taipei as well.

The Bush administration entered office seemingly committed to the realist proposition that some degree of conflict with a rising China would be inevitable. Where the Clinton administration had expressed the hope

that China could become a “constructive strategic partner” of the United States, the Bush administration described Beijing as a “strategic competitor,” whose growing military power was deemed to be the most important challenge facing America in Asia. The Bush administration initially viewed the strengthening of its naval and air forces in the Western Pacific, and enhanced security cooperation with such nations as Japan and India, as the principal ways of coping with the threat of a rising China.

To be sure, the Bush administration was careful not to portray China as an adversary of the United States. The administration's early rhetoric emphasized the importance of the robust economic ties between the two countries, and noted that Beijing and Washington would be able to cooperate on some important strategic issues, such as the North Korean nuclear weapons program. But the overall tone was that the rise of China would pose a severe strategic challenge to the United States, and that the Clinton administration's policy of seeking a strategic partnership with China had been dangerously naive.

Conversely, the Bush administration was committed in its early months to a closer relationship with Taiwan. In many ways it moved toward an unconditional commitment to Taiwan's security—to a promise to defend Taiwan against any attack by the PRC, even if Taipei had provoked the crisis by a move toward independence. Some members of the Bush administration had said as much during the 2000 election campaign, and even more had criticized the Clinton administration's seemingly equivocal commitment to Taiwan's security as reflecting an excessive degree of “strategic ambiguity.” Moreover, President Bush's statement in early 2001 that he would “do whatever it takes” to help Taiwan defend itself implied that his commitment to the island was unconditional, although the controversy surrounding the president's remarks led the White House to emphasize that they did not reflect any change in policy.

Less ambiguous was the Bush administration's willingness to upgrade military ties with Taiwan. This was reflected in its offer to sell advanced weapons to the island, including some advanced warships and some relatively unsophisticated forms of missile defense, and in the more frequent contacts between the Taiwanese and American military establishments. The latter were undertaken with an eye to promoting the closer coordination of the two armed forces in the event of crisis. The development of military-to-military relations between Taiwan and the U.S. was paralleled

by a more tolerant American attitude toward “transit visits” to the U.S. by top Taiwanese leaders nominally en route to third countries.

By the end of its first term, however, the Bush administration’s policies had become strikingly different than they had been at the beginning. Indeed, its approach to China had come to closely resemble the policies that it had inherited from the Clinton administration in 2001. Although the Bush administration does not use exactly the same rhetoric as the Clinton administration—it does not describe China as a “constructive strategic partner”—it expresses the same concept in only slightly different language. The American relationship with China is described as “constructive” and “cooperative,” Beijing is said to be a “friend” and “partner” of the United States, and the U.S.-China relationship is portrayed as the best it has been since the Nixon visit of 1972. In fact, where the Clinton administration described a cooperative relationship with China as a hope for the future, the Bush administration portrays it as a reality already achieved.

At the same time as U.S. relations with the PRC were improving, its relations with Taiwan were deteriorating. The Bush administration has returned to most of the standard catechism on Taiwan that was passed on by the Clinton administration, basing its policy on the three U.S.-China communiques and the Taiwan Relations Act. Again, under the Bush administration Washington’s official rhetoric has changed somewhat. It does not refer explicitly to the “three no’s” that the Clinton administration enunciated in 1997-98. But virtually all of the content remains in force: the Bush administration maintains a “one-China” policy, it opposes Taiwan independence, and it does not support Taiwanese membership in international organizations where membership is restricted to independent sovereign states.

Moreover, the Bush administration has criticized or questioned specific statements and actions by the Taiwan government that it regards as unilateral attempts to change the status quo. These include President Chen Shui-bian’s call for a national referendum on issues concerning national security, his statements that he regards Taiwan as an “independent sovereign country,” and his plan to amend the constitution. Most recently, the Bush administration has described as unhelpful Chen’s proposal to remove references to “China” from the names of government-owned companies and to replace them with references to “Taiwan.” Although it continued

to challenge some aspects of Chinese policy, particularly its missile build-up opposite Taiwan, the Bush administration had become, by the end of its first term, more critical of Taiwan's policy toward the cross-Strait dispute than of the PRC's policy. Its opposition to unilateral steps to change the status quo hinted that the U.S. had returned to a conditional commitment to Taiwan—that the U.S. would not help defend Taiwan in a crisis that Taiwan had itself provoked.

Nor is the military-to-military relationship between the U.S. and Taiwan entirely untroubled. The Bush administration has expressed considerable frustration at Taiwan's failure to buy the advanced weapons systems that its government had requested and that the U.S. had agreed to sell. It has also criticized the slow pace at which Taiwan has hardened key military installations against possible attack. And it has sharply questioned proposals by members of Chen Shui-bian's government to develop a retaliatory capability against the mainland.

None of this is to say that U.S. policy toward China and Taiwan is precisely as it had been at the end of the Clinton administration. There remains residual uncertainty about the strategic intentions of a rising China, and American military relations with Taiwan are still far ahead of where they were in 2000. But to a significant degree the Bush administration's early initiatives toward Taipei and Beijing have been reversed. Such a pattern, in which novel approaches toward China and the cross-Strait dispute are ultimately abandoned as new administrations learn old lessons, has occurred, although in different ways, in the Reagan, Clinton, and George W. Bush administrations. It once led the late Philip Habib to comment privately that "the first two years of any administration shouldn't count."

EXPLAINING CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

How can one explain this blend of change and continuity in the Bush administration's Asia policy—continuity in goals, changes in strategy, and a return to what might be called the mainstream policy toward China and Taiwan after an initial tilt away?

It is not surprising that there would be a high degree of continuity in American objectives in Asia. Fundamental national interests are supposed to be enduring, persisting over time regardless of change in administra-

tions. More noteworthy is that the changes in objectives that have occurred under the Bush administration reflect two divergent trends. On the one hand, the Bush administration appears to believe that it is feasible, from a conventional security perspective, for the United States to achieve dominance in Asia, and not simply block others from doing so. On the other hand, the Bush administration is also preoccupied, in Asia as elsewhere, with an unprecedented non-conventional security challenge: the struggle against radical Islamic terrorist organizations. These trends are, in a significant way, contradictory: it is not clear whether the United States is strong enough to maintain dominance in Asia while conducting a global war on terror and while China and India continue to rise.

The changes in strategy in Asia also parallel the changes in American global policy that have occurred under the Bush administration. Many of these reflect long-standing differences between conservatives and liberals in the formulation of American foreign policy. They include:

- Doubt that globalization and economic interdependence have made the traditional balance of power obsolete.
- Relatedly, concern about the rise of would-be “peer competitors” that could challenge American interests.
- Skepticism toward multilateral institutions with universal membership and even toward traditional alliances, and conversely a preference for ad hoc “coalitions of the willing” when possible and for unilateral action when necessary.
- Confidence that the revolution in military affairs has reduced the need for forward deployments, and has permitted a reliance on highly mobile forces, stationed on American territory, that could be deployed unilaterally, if necessary, to meet challenges to American interests.
- A tougher and less accommodative posture toward rogue states, especially those that might provide WMDs or sanctuary to terrorist organizations.

Other changes in the Bush administration’s policy can be explained as responses to changes on the ground in Asia. The Clinton administration’s focus on human rights had been seen as arrogant in much of Asia. Region-wide economic and security organizations such as APEC and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) had achieved less than had been hoped

or promised. The discovery of North Korea's uranium enrichment program provided strong pressure for a change in policy toward Pyongyang, since the 1994 nuclear agreed framework had not successfully capped the North Korean nuclear weapons program. And, above all, the evidence that Islamic radicalism plagues Asia as well as the Middle East explains why the Bush administration has raised terrorism to the top of its Asian, as well as its global, agendas. In all of these ways, the changes in Asia policy could be seen as responses to the failure of past solutions to solve old problems or to prevent the emergence of new ones.

The U-shaped path of U.S. policy toward China also reflected developments on the ground. Both realists and neo-conservatives in the Bush administration were initially concerned about the rise of Chinese power—the realists simply because a large and strategically located nation was growing stronger; the neo-conservatives because it was governed by a non-democratic government. But the EP-3 incident of April 2001 illustrated the risks of military confrontation between China and the United States if they regarded each other as prospective strategic rivals. After 9/11, the threat posed by radical Islamic terrorism seemed far more imminent than the threat of strategic competition with China, and the Bush administration was not eager to take on both challenges simultaneously. Moreover, China also adopted an increasingly responsible and accommodative foreign policy, cooperating with the United States in the war on terror, in dealing with the North Korean nuclear weapons program, in restricting proliferation, and in promoting regional economic growth. In response to China's more accommodative foreign policy, at least one major power that had once been considered to be a possible partner in an alignment against China —India—made clear that it was interested in developing a more cooperative relationship with Beijing. Events between 2001 and 2004, in short, demonstrated the risks of strategic competition and the benefits of strategic cooperation between Washington and Beijing.

Similarly, developments on Taiwan have shaped Washington's evolving policy toward the island. At first, the Bush administration was highly sympathetic to the new, democratically-elected government of Chen Shui-bian, and more willing to offer military and political support to Taipei. But Chen's tendency to probe Beijing's "red line" in a provocative manner led the Bush administration to warn Taiwan against any attempts to uni-

laterally change the status quo. And Chen's continued refusal to heed those warnings led the U.S. to increasingly distance itself from Taipei.

LOOKING AHEAD: THE FUTURE OF CHANGE

This conceptual framework for explaining past changes in the first Bush term can help us forecast the possibility of change and continuity in the second Bush term.

The first key variable is whether the philosophical directions of the second Bush term will remain the same as the first, or whether the balance among moderates, realists, and neo-conservatives will shift significantly as the second Bush administration makes new appointments. If there is a decisive tilt in favor of neo-conservatives for example, one would predict that American policy would begin to become more skeptical about China, more forthcoming to Taiwan, more dedicated to the promotion of human rights and democracy, and more insistent on regime change in Pyongyang. All of these trends, were they to occur, would also be predicted to produce greater tensions in America's relations with many of its allies.

Second, problems could emerge in Asia that would challenge existing policies and force change. These might include pressure from friends and allies to soften the U.S. policy toward North Korea, or an aggressive action by Pyongyang (such as a nuclear test or missile test) that would encourage the U.S. to toughen it. Provocative action by either Taipei or Beijing could cause a readjustment of American policy toward the cross-strait dispute. The growing trends toward the creation of economic and security organizations in the region that exclude the United States could lead Washington to take a more positive attitude toward multilateralism in Asia. Domestic political turmoil in China, or a crisis over Hong Kong's political evolution, could move human rights back to the top of the U.S.-China agenda. A major financial crisis in the United States could cause a retrenchment in U.S. objectives in Asia, or a revival of protectionist trade policies.

And successes in Asia could also lead to policy change in Washington. A breakthrough on the Korean peninsula could lead to a far more accommodative posture toward North Korea. If Chen Shui-bian acts in a more restrained and flexible manner toward the PRC in his second term, that

would reduce tensions between Washington and Taiwan. And if Chen's flexibility were to produce a breakthrough in cross-Straits relations, that would relieve a major irritant in U.S.-China relations, and possibly generate greater Chinese cooperation on other issues. A more active APEC—one that demonstrably promoted freer trade, reduced transaction costs, or adopted meaningful measures for addressing transnational security issues in Asia—could attract more favorable attention from the Bush administration. Or, paradoxically, a decisive victory in the war on terror could conceivably lead to a resurgence of the Bush administration's previous view that China poses the greatest challenge to American interests in Asia.

Thus, it is difficult to forecast whether the changes in Bush administration policy toward Asia are likely to be temporary or permanent. There will almost certainly be a high degree of continuity in broad American objectives in the region. But the priorities assigned to different objectives, and the strategies adopted to achieve them, could continue to change, depending on the balance of power within the second Bush administration and on conditions on the ground in Asia.

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION AND EAST ASIA: UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE SECURITY CLOUD

JUSUF WANANDI

This essay discusses the Bush administration's policies toward East Asia during the past four years, focusing on Southeast Asia and particularly on Indonesia. During that period there have been many changes and challenges in East Asia, some new and some old. The new challenges—the threat of global and regional terrorism and the proliferation of WMD—are the more obvious ones.

Many countries in Southeast Asia perceive the significance and urgency of terrorism differently than does the United States—although they face the threat equally, and recognize it as dangerous and real. For Americans, the struggle is one of life and death, a war that must be fought because terrorism aims at U.S. vital interests and the way of life of the United States and the West. For East Asian nations—which have also suffered terrorist acts, such as in Bali, Jakarta, the Philippines and southern Thailand—the threat is an important one, but not the only one, and not necessarily the most important one.

There is also a real divide between people and governments in the region in assessing and evaluating the policies of the Bush administration. The people, including the elite, resent and oppose the Bush administration more than do governments. The governments are much more pragmatic because they are aware that they need the United States in the region for stability, peace and development. Since the end of World War II, the

Jusuf Wanandi is co-founder and senior fellow of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Jakarta. He holds leadership positions in the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific, and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council. He has co-authored or edited over a dozen books, including *Europe and the Asia Pacific*, *Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region*, and *Asia and the Major Powers*.

United States has been the guarantor for peace and stability and the most important market for East Asian exports.

The divide between the populace and the governments is unhealthy in the long term, especially since more nations in the region have become democratic. That is why the new Bush administration needs to adjust its policies, approaches, and rhetoric, increase its public diplomacy, and take public opinion in East Asia seriously.

The Pew Foundation's public opinion polls over the past three years have shown a real decline in support for the U.S. in East Asia, including in Japan. The target of resentment and disillusionment, sometimes even hatred, is not always the United States *per se*, but rather the Bush administration. The administration's policies, rhetoric and approaches need to be changed, or the criticisms will come to be directed at the U.S. as a whole.

Another development in the region is the rise of East Asia with China as its core,¹ which will impact the strategic balance in the longer term. Although the United States will remain the only superpower globally and in East Asia for a long time, it needs to take East Asia's rise into its future strategic calculations—not only because of economic growth, but also because East Asia has embarked on promoting regionalism based on economic cooperation and interdependence. To keep the U.S. strategic presence in the region healthy and vibrant, the United States should recognize and accept the rise of East Asia. Washington might find it needs to make some adjustments.

However, it is incorrect to predict, as some journalists have done, that in the long run the rise of East Asia or China will replace the U.S. presence.² Despite real efforts to build an East Asian “community,” it is still a long way off due to historical and political constraints. China's rise is an important part of the ascension of East Asia as a whole, but China's success is still patchy and incomplete. Moreover, China is not fully trusted by the region to become the dominant power. A U.S. strategic presence is therefore imperative.³

BUSH AND EAST ASIA

Not himself being an expert on the region, President Bush appointed to his administration East Asian specialists such as Paul Wolfowitz as deputy secretary of defense, Richard Armitage as deputy secretary of state, and

Robert Zoellick as U.S. trade representative. They had made up the best Asian team under George Schultz and James Baker.

Their first attention went to allies, especially Japan and Australia, which were seen as having been “left behind” by the Clinton administration. They also worked to transform the relationship with China. China’s shift from a “strategic partner” to a “strategic competitor” created great apprehensions in the region, for which a long-term confrontation between the two powers is the greatest nightmare. U.S.-China relations were changed by the Hainan spy-plane incident, and it became clear that cooperation would have to accommodate certain differences and even some competition. Relations were altered further, and substantially, by the September 11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. The United States and China, particularly the defense establishments, came to understand the need for cooperation against global terrorism and proliferation of WMD, especially against the nuclear proliferation of the DPRK.

But the fundamental differences in the U.S.-China relationship, namely between political ideologies and systems, have not changed. In addition, there still are important pending issues between the U.S. and China, primarily the issue of reunification with Taiwan, which could flare up again to disturb the relationship.

At this stage there is no reason to believe that the U.S. administration thinks China will be wholly against the United States, as the USSR was during the height of the cold war. If, in the next quarter century or so, China becomes a superpower in its own right, real competition—between a U.S. that cannot accept competitors and a China that adopts the principle of multipolarity as its strategy—could become a problem.⁴ Currently, the Chinese feel uncomfortable with the U.S. strategy of “encirclement,” which involves bases (however temporary and limited) in Central Asia, near-alliances with both Pakistan and India, and strengthened relationships with other Asian allies, especially Japan and Australia. Meanwhile, the idea of a “concert of great powers” as envisaged in the U.S. National Security Strategy document of September 2002 is not taken seriously by the Bush administration, and the Iraq war has been a denial of the intention incorporated in that document.

China has matured politically and regained its self-confidence. Needing a peaceful environment in which to modernize and develop, China understands the importance of a stable relationship with the

United States in the future, especially in East Asia. But nationalism, which has replaced communism as an integrating factor for China and a source of authority for the Chinese Communist Party, could still result in “over-reaction” on the Chinese side, especially in regard to Taiwan and cross-strait relations. This has become the main critical issue between the U.S. and China.

China does not trust or have contact with Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian, under whom the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) is willing to push for independence (either through a referendum in 2006 and 2008 or a Constituent Assembly decision to change the constitution). This situation creates uncertainty and may lead to an explosive situation between China and Taiwan. The U.S. policy of “strategic ambiguity”—recognizing “one-China” (the PRC) and preferring a peaceful reunification while recognizing an obligation to defend Taiwan if it is attacked without provocation—is no longer adequate due to Chen’s possible new moves. Therefore, a more proactive U.S. role in getting both sides talking again for confidence-building measures (CBMs) is required. Also, the United States must continue to press both sides not to be irresponsible in their policies and actions. Here ASEAN also has done its part.⁵

Regarding North Korea’s nuclear proliferation problem, it is obvious that the United States was slow to formulate new policies except to call North Korea part of the “axis of evil.” The U.S. Departments of Defense and State appear to differ on how to deal with North Korea’s weapons program. It was only after 9/11 that the administration began to formulate new policies that were partly based on the Agreed Framework. However, these policies were never implemented because of the new case of enriched uranium, which violated North Korea’s pledge to forgo nuclear weapons. Because of policy differences within the administration and the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, the United States has allowed the region, especially China, to take the lead in negotiating with North Korea in six-party talks.

On its side, the DPRK has been adamant about dealing bilaterally with the United States for the security guarantees it feels necessary for itself. After three meetings, the DPRK cancelled the fourth one, tentatively scheduled for September 2004, to await the results of the U.S. presidential election, hoping that President Bush would lose. Now that he has been reelected, the DPRK will have to review its stance.

It is strongly believed that the DPRK does have nuclear weapons, perhaps up to ten bombs. The United States now considers the DPRK to be its most serious security problem, in view of its nuclear weapons or materials and its potential relationship with global terrorism. However, the Bush administration has no real alternative except to go along with East Asia's non-combative stance, because of East Asia's reluctance to address the problem militarily and Washington's preoccupation with Iraq.⁶ In the second Bush administration, a new team might be in charge of the North Korean nuclear proliferation problem. This team might not have a great many options, except to develop some flexibility towards the DPRK and to strengthen cooperation with other parties in the six-party talks, especially South Korea and China.

The problem of non-proliferation is serious for the East Asian region. If the North Koreans can get away with what they are doing, Japan, South Korea and even Taiwan might feel forced to go the same way in the future. On the issue of North Korean nuclear proliferation, there is a real division between the United States and South Korea, since South Korea believes that North Korea considers its nuclear weapons mainly as a deterrence against a possible U.S. attack.

President Roh, backed by a young generation who never experienced the Korean War and U.S. support, also believes that the North is in such a dire economic situation that it has no intention of instigating a war, especially since South Korea has developed and strengthened itself. Some in the South even see the United States as the more aggressive party. That is why President Roh and his government are trying to create CBMs with North Korea and to find a peaceful way of solving the DPRK's nuclear proliferation. It will take some real efforts by South Korea and the United States to get their policies synchronized on how to face the DPRK, and to strengthen an alliance eroded by a new generation in the ROK and the Bush administration's hard-line policy. Also, both countries should come to a better understanding on the realignment of U.S. troops in South Korea and in the region, the result of new threats and the Revolution in Military Affairs. Such realignment has created suspicions and misunderstandings about the diversion of troops for Iraq and the size and locations of the withdrawal. In other parts of Asia, the withdrawal would be acceptable if explained thoroughly. But East Asia, being very conservative, tends to oppose change, especially if it is sudden and fundamental.

Japan-U.S. relations have mostly benefited from the Bush administration's policies to strengthen the alliance. At the same time, the war against global terrorism has made it possible for Japan to change its strategy and to enhance its capabilities and operations to become a "normal country" without much reaction from Korea and China. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has always been convinced that Self-Defense Forces (SDF) have to change so as to be able to defend Japan and her interests in and outside the region. Japan has become more worried about its strategic environment due to the DPRK's nuclear capabilities and China's efforts to increase military capabilities. In strengthening its alliance with the United States, Japan has made efforts to participate in Theater Missile Defense (TMD) and to increase its capabilities as well as to overcome legal and constitutional impediments to do so.⁷

What about U.S. relations with countries in Southeast Asia and ASEAN, the sub-regional entity? First the United States should recognize the extent to which ASEAN has been in the doldrums because of the financial and economic crisis of 1997, which "knocked out" Indonesia constituting half the region as the informal leader of the group. There is a chance that Indonesia could again be leader if Bambang Yudhoyono, the new president, adopts a decisive and proactive posture. But while ASEAN was disparate and leaderless, the U.S. was preoccupied with only one issue in Southeast Asia—global and regional terrorism—and did little to encourage and support ASEAN to "get its act together" and strengthen cooperation and integration.

There are differences between the United States and most Southeast Asian nations in their perception of the terrorist threat and what to do about it. The countries in the region (except for Singapore) face the problem of coping with the challenges of development and globalization. There is still a lot of poverty in the region. Moreover, most countries in Southeast Asia face challenges of nation-building, and the pressures of globalization have complicated matters by affecting their social, political, economic and even value systems. These challenges have been destabilizing for the Southeast Asian nations. The United States, on the other hand, has been preoccupied since 9/11 with its struggle and "war" against global terrorism, which has received regional support in Southeast Asia from Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and other local extremist groups.

Of course, the new threat and strategic challenge of terrorism is important to the region. But East Asia, as in Europe, has a history of

extremism, conflicts, insurgencies and revolts. Global and regional terrorists are only one challenge, however lethal and well-connected internationally and regionally. It is a pity that the Bush administration has been so preoccupied with this issue, however vital for the United States. The administration has to recognize and appreciate local and regional challenges in order for the region to pay attention to the most important U.S. challenge. In some instances, supporting Southeast Asian countries in their own areas of concern will help them better contribute to U.S. efforts.

Another issue is the limitation of U.S. public diplomacy. The trauma endured by Americans due to 9/11 is not well appreciated and sometimes even misconstrued in Southeast Asia, and the U.S. “over-reaction” (some say the U.S. is “running amok” due to 9/11) is also not understood. The lack of domestic debate, even by the press, in Southeast Asia after 9/11 did not help people to grasp U.S. public reactions.

Because the United States is the sole superpower and has tremendous and overpowering military might, the administration’s behavior has been considered “unilateralist” (“the coalition of the willing”) and in some instances “arrogant.” After 9/11, there was overwhelming sympathy. But Southeast Asia began asking serious questions after the White House released its National Security Strategy (NSS) in September 2002. To be fair, NSS 2002 was not only about preemptive strategy, but encompasses other fields of importance, including the global economy. But because of its partial implementation, the National Security Strategy was not well accepted, and was sometimes wrongly interpreted. This was especially true in the preparation and implementation of the Iraq war.

The right to use force and the principles and rules of preemptive and preventive war are issues that have not been completely resolved in global terms. The existing rules, such as included in Article 51 and chapters VII and VIII of the UN Charter, are adequate, but their implementation is yet unclear and unresolved. The threat of global terrorism and WMD are real threats not only to the United States but to the whole international community—but these new threats are not sufficiently covered by how the rules on “use of force” have been implemented so far. In recognition of this, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has established the high-level panel on Threats, Challenges and Change under former Thai Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun, which includes distinguished and well-

known statesmen and women, to come up with new proposals on policies, rules and institutions.⁸

The question of humanitarian intervention had already come up, and was addressed by a prominent group under Gareth Evans, former foreign minister of Australia, in the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). The group proposed some rules based on the concept of “the responsibility to protect,” which tried to resolve the tension between the claims of state sovereignty and individual rights. They have formulated the question in the right way and have come up with proposals on how the international community should cope with future challenges like Rwanda and Bosnia.⁹

Another challenge for the Bush administration has been cooperating with Southeast Asian nations to fight against global and regional terrorism. This challenge is especially important because Southeast Asia has about 250 million Muslims, about 20 to 25 percent of all Muslims globally. Most of them are considered moderate and, to a very large extent, modernized. If Southeast Asian Muslims are successful in promoting democratic governments with sound economic development and social justice, they can provide an important model for other Muslim countries to follow and emulate. But there has always been an extremist wing among the Muslims in Southeast Asia, including in Indonesia. The extremists’ presence has been compounded by the “Afghanistan school” of *mujahiddin* (freedom fighters) who were indoctrinated and trained to fight against USSR during the 1980s. It was estimated that about 1,500 Indonesians participated in that venture. They differ from the earlier extremists, who also supported the establishment of an Islamic state (implementation of the *chalifah* and the *Syariah*, or Islamic laws), in that they are better indoctrinated, trained in acts of terrorism, networked, financed, and equipped with the most advanced communications and other technologies.

The first task is to create a higher threshold of domestic security of each country to prevent terrorists from pulling off their act. This requires cooperation in intelligence, police activity, border control and the control of financial support for terrorism. In these efforts, a fine line should be drawn and a balance sought between the need to fight terrorism and the promotion and maintenance of democracy, the rule of law and human rights. The United States also must promote cooperation with nuance and

finesse, due to differences among Southeast Asian countries in terms of size of Muslim populations, political systems, and stages of economic development, as well as methods of fighting terrorism.

In Indonesia, intelligence, besides the police, could be most important in preventing certain *pesantrens* (religious schools) from involvement in terrorist acts. (Perhaps only 15 or so out of 35,000 are so involved—along with some other extremist schools.) But, unlike in Malaysia and Singapore, an Internal Security Act allowing preventive detention without *habeas corpus* could never be established, because of democratic developments since the end of 40 years of authoritarian rule.

Economic policies and support are important to the region as explained above, because poverty creates desperation and despair that can lead to extremism. Promoting human resources development and providing support to education (including to Muslim schools) and to health care are also critically important.

In the end, the question is how to get the support of the moderates among the Moslem community, because only they can win the debate about what Islam stands for. In that respect the role of Indonesia, the world's biggest Muslim country, could be crucial. Moderates are now defining the debate about Islam in Indonesia, having been awakened by the Bali bombing. Earlier, the policy was not to persecute extremists—though they be recognized as such—because of what they suffered under Suharto. However, the Bali and Jakarta bombings changed the attitude among moderates, who are now the ones that are leading the *ummah* (community). In fact, the 2004 general elections testify that the moderates are defining the issues for the Muslims—only 23 percent of members of parliament are in favor of implementing *syariah*. The moderates believe that they can overcome Islamic extremism if Indonesia can establish a genuine democracy where all, Muslims and non-Muslims, have the same rights and opportunities to define state affairs and take part in the economy. The United States can assist and support Indonesians in achieving the important goal of a democracy with social justice. Economic support is important, but assistance for political development and judiciary capabilities also should be increased.¹⁰

Public diplomacy is important. The United States must explain its policies to the Southeast Asian public, be willing to modify them if necessary, and change its rhetoric. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the most impor-

tant issue for Muslims across the globe and has an impact on Southeast Asia. The one-sided policies of the United States (and this administration in particular) have aroused deep resentment among Muslims worldwide. Also, the way the Iraq war was launched and waged—including the abuses of Abu Ghraib—have not helped relations between the U.S. and Muslims in Indonesia and other Southeast Asia countries. Indonesia should be the centerpiece of U.S. policies in the region, not only because of its size, but because it is the biggest Muslim nation and is large, developing, and democratizing. It can influence and be significant to other Muslim countries.

ASEAN is now in a crucial stage. Can it deal with Burma (Myanmar), and create a credible Southeast Asian community? With the recent setbacks in Burma's reconciliation and democratic development, ASEAN should be addressing its credibility and future development in a real and dramatic way. ASEAN is divided as to the degree to which it should engage Burma, and pressure from the United States and Europe to isolate Rangoon will be important in influencing ASEAN's willingness to become the main "interlocutor" between Burma and the West. As Burma will be chairing ASEAN in 2006, the United States and Europe have a window of opportunity for providing such pressure.

The impact of U.S. policies in the region could not be completely assessed without examining the role and position of Australia and the impact of the Indian subcontinent on East Asia. Australia is important for East Asia, as a trading partner, provider of education for East Asian elites, and supplier of professional services, such as engineering, consulting, and accounting. But above all, Australia is a serious partner in East Asian regionalism through its initiatives and intellectual input.

Australian Prime Minister Howard's reference to being the "U.S. deputy sheriff" for East Asia raised eyebrows in the region. However, after all the schmoozing with President Bush, Howard found out that Australia's future and fate is, after all, also with East Asia and the Southwest Pacific. That is why he is now active in the region, especially through his foreign minister, Alexander Downer. For Australia the United States is paramount, but Australia understands that it cannot ignore its immediate strategic environment, namely Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific. This understanding is appreciated by the region, especially by Australia's big neighbor, Indonesia.¹¹

Since World War II, the Indian subcontinent has never had a big impact on East Asia, except for during the last decade. The main reasons were India's huge domestic problems, its political and security alliance with the USSR during the cold war, and its inward-looking, socialistic strategy of economic development. Moreover, India's inclination to lecture others was not well received. However, that all these factors have largely changed in the last 10 years augurs well for future India-East Asia relations. India has been a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) for almost a decade, and now holds a special summit with ASEAN annually. Trade has increased and there is a huge willingness on both sides to strengthen the relationship. Although only the United States has real influence on the subcontinent, East Asia could support the subcontinent for peaceful development, especially now that Pakistan has also become a member of ARF, and there is the possibility of additional CBMs to be established.

What are the Bush administration's attitudes and policies towards the regional institutions of Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Asia-Pacific's regional institutions? More importantly, what do they mean for the United States in the future?

Regional institutions in East Asia and the Pacific are undergoing a "midlife crisis." First, the economic crisis of 1997-1998 has weakened the region's economic dynamism. That dynamism was one of the major engines for regionalism in the Asia-Pacific. Second, the catalysts for regional institution-building have been ASEAN, Japan and Australia. The former two have been in limbo for some time, and Australia was restricted through being left out of the East Asian Community idea. Third, the United States has not consistently pursued the initiative. Clinton lost his fast-track authority and was no longer active after his first APEC summit. The Bush administration showed interest through U.S. Trade Representative Zoellick's trade initiatives, but the intervention of 9/11 made security Bush's main preoccupation—a focus that was also brought to APEC. For reasons of simplicity, the United States instead pursued bilateral trade agreements. It paid some interest to the WTO, but gave little attention to regional institution such as APEC.

Meanwhile, ARF is fine as a talk-shop, but has not gone beyond that. Some type of action plan is necessary to revive it again. A small unit at the ASEAN secretariat to assist ARF is a modest beginning. ASEAN, for its

part, must get its act together and coordinate on security affairs through the ASEAN Security Community cooperation before it can have greater impact and influence in the greater East Asian region.

The United States has always been present in the region, but she is reluctant to do more. It will be interesting to see how Washington, especially a re-elected Bush, will react to serious pursuit by regional countries of the idea of an East Asian Community. Thus far, the Bush administration has given no public comment or reaction to the idea of such a Community, thinking that Japan-China relations must be improved before anything real can happen.

Some members of the U.S. security establishment are worried about East Asia's "ganging up" on the United States in the same way the EU has done. East Asia will need all its creativity to make the idea of an East Asian Community acceptable to the Americans. Here, Japan can play a pivotal role.¹² The United States must be convinced that the idea is not against U.S. interests or presence in East Asia.

To the contrary, Washington should actively support an East Asian Community, for three main reasons. First, such a Community would help the region cope with a rising China. By bringing China into a regional structure, the region can have greater assurance that China will become a status quo power. In much the same way, Southeast Asia brought Indonesia into ASEAN. Second, such a Community can assist in the improvement of Japan-China relations, which will not weaken the irreplaceable U.S.-Japan alliance. Third, it can assist in preventing a confrontation, which would be calamitous for the region, between a United States as sole superpower and a powerful China. If China's rise is also moderated by limited natural resources especially energy, and a worsening of her environment, as well as by demographic changes, this nightmare could, after all, be alleviated.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Bush administration has had some successes in East Asia in the security field. It has achieved good relations with the great powers of China, Russia and India. Meanwhile, as planned at the beginning of Bush's first term, it has improved ties with allies, especially Japan and Australia. The United States has developed cooperative relations on anti-terrorist activi-

ties with ASEAN countries, including those with large Muslim populations. But such cooperation is mainly with governments, who appreciate the U.S. presence and its guarantee of peace and stability in East Asia, as well as the U.S. market—the main market for exports from East Asia.

However, public opinion about the United States is increasingly negative, because of Washington's "unilateralist" image, especially in the Iraq war, and the Bush administration's rhetoric, poses and approaches. These postures of the administration have to change before negative public attitudes harden. The United States must improve its public diplomacy, but it also must adjust its policies to become more even-handed, especially in the Middle East (the Israeli-Palestinian conflict).

In East Asia, it is critical that the United States continue to support development efforts and nation-building, which are as important as the fight against global and regional terrorism. Anti-terrorism efforts should not be short-term or limited to cooperation in intelligence, police and financial aspects. They should be medium-term, at least, to address terrorism's root causes. Here, the role of moderate Muslims to win support for the right interpretation of Islam is critical. Moderate Muslims can do this successfully if a democratic state, paired with economic growth and social justice, is established in Muslim countries. Only in such a situation can all Muslims accept a modern secular state and reject the idea of establishing the caliphate.

That is why assistance for moderate Muslims is so important. The United States will provide such assistance if its policy toward East Asia is all-encompassing, not only in security, but also in political, economic, and social affairs. Such a policy requires greater attention at the highest level, more visits at the secretary and under-secretary levels, and more congressional visits. U.S. policy should be integrated and coordinated in all fields—security, politics, and economics.

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SUSTAINED U.S. LEADERSHIP IN ASIA

ROBERT SUTTER

Entering office with a strong focus on China and East Asian affairs, the Bush administration shifted foreign policy priorities after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on America. The administration's strategic focus on wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the broader war on terrorism saw U.S. policy in East Asia become generally reactive and secondary in U.S. foreign policy. Whatever plans the Bush administration may have had to formulate a comprehensive American strategy toward East Asia that would deal with salient security, economic, political, environmental, and other developments in the region were put aside with the new focus on Southwest Asia and the broader war on terrorism that seemed likely to last for many years to come. Nevertheless, prevailing conditions in East Asia and in U.S. interaction with the region, along with the policies the Bush administration followed in Asia in reacting to regional hot spots like Korea and Taiwan, , and in improving U.S. relations with Asia's larger powers, sustained and arguably strengthened the leading position for the United States in the region.

Bush administration unilateralism over Iraq and other issues was widely criticized among Asian popular and elite opinion, but it was a secondary consideration to most Asian governments. The latter remained focused on domestic concerns involving conventional nation building, and they also remained wary of one another as they dealt with immediate and dangerous security issues in Asia. Asian governments also gave much higher priority to crises in East Asia, particularly North Korea, than to Iraq or U.S. unilateralism elsewhere. They found that despite its internal

Robert Sutter has been a visiting professor in Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service for the past three years. Previously, he held a variety of analytical and supervisory positions with the Library of Congress, and served as the U.S. National Intelligence Officer for East Asia and the Pacific. He has published 13 books, including *The United States and East Asia: Dynamics and Implications*.

differences and sometimes harsh rhetoric, the Bush administration generally behaved in a consultative and moderate way on North Korea, reassuring Asian powers. For these kinds of reasons, Asian governments generally reacted more pragmatically to Bush administration policies than counterparts in Europe and the Middle East. Most notably, China's government dropped in mid-2001 its strong emphasis against U.S. "hegemonism" that had prevailed for more than a decade.

Meanwhile, the large powers of Asia, including India, seemed to have less of a sense than some West European powers of being key stakeholders in the prevailing international system. They benefited from and participated in the system, but they were more flexible than West European powers in considering alternatives raised by U.S. unilateral actions and other developments. Asian governments also were more interested than ever in multilateral mechanisms to deal with regional, especially economic, problems. However, prevailing security issues like Korea and Taiwan underlined continuing competition and wariness among the Asian powers. This situation made the U.S. security role in the region essential to most Asian governments. The situation offset to some degree the Asian governments' concern regarding recent U.S. refusal to be bound by multilateral mechanisms in various world arenas.

Crises for U.S. policy in Korea, involving U.S. relations with both North and South Korea, headed the list of Bush administration difficulties in East Asia and seem unlikely to be resolved soon or satisfactorily. The process for dealing with the Korean crises was the subject of strong debate within the Bush government and continues to occupy U.S. policy in East Asia; on balance it probably weakened U.S. leadership in the region. Nevertheless, the crises appear likely to remain manageable for U.S. policy, particularly given the continued broad strengths in U.S. power and influence in the region. If protracted Korean crises were to combine with other significant complications for U.S. policy, it would be more difficult for the U.S. government to manage the crises smoothly and would increase the likelihood of disruption of U.S. interests in Asia. Those complications include: failure of U.S. policy toward Iraq; military confrontation in the Taiwan Strait; failure of governance in Pakistan or Afghanistan; major terrorist attack on the United States; India-Pakistan war; and/or major U.S. economic downturn.

POST-COLD WAR RELATIONS

The collapse of the USSR and the end of the cold war represented a victory for the United States, but they also posed a major challenge for U.S. foreign policy. In the 1990s, Americans demonstrated deep divisions over foreign policy, and contending policy perspectives could not be bridged to develop coherent policy toward Asia or other important areas. Because security issues and opposition to Soviet expansion no longer drove U.S. foreign policy, economic interest, democratization abroad, and human rights gained greater prominence. Various pressure groups and other institutions interested in these and other subjects, like environmental and transnational issues, also gained enhanced influence in policymaking. U.S. policy toward China vividly illustrated the stronger influence of U.S. interest groups and the media and congressional opinions reflecting their concerns regarding human rights, trade issues, proliferation concerns, Taiwan, and Tibet. Historically, such fluidity and competition among priorities have more often than not been the norm in U.S. foreign policy. The requirements of the cold war were effective in establishing rigor and order in U.S. foreign policy priorities, but that era was over. In particular, the post-cold war period saw substantial changes in the way foreign policy was made in the United States. In general, there was a shift away from the elitism of the past and toward much greater pluralism. This increased the opportunity for input by nongovernmental or lobby groups with a wide range of foreign policy interests.¹ The divisions among Americans over foreign policy during this period were seen in often sharply contending schools of thought prominent among U.S. leaders, interest groups, and elite and popular opinion.²

In Asia, meanwhile, the post-cold war period witnessed the rise of a variety of transnational forces that seriously challenged nation states. The government in Pakistan remained under tremendous pressure from economic, demographic, political and other sources. Transnational forces of economic globalization and political pluralism seriously weakened the authoritarian Suharto government in Indonesia and complicated the prospects for its successors. Many other Southeast Asian governments, as well as Japan and other states in the region, had serious difficulties reviving economies in the face of the strong international competition associated with economic globalization.

Nevertheless, the nation state continued to be the key actor in Asian regional dynamics. Assertive nationalism characterized most countries. Their populations tended to look to government to protect their nation's interests and meet their concerns. In general, the post-cold war period saw greater assertiveness and nationalism on the part of most Asian governments. One result was a slowness and wariness in movement toward regional cooperation. Various Asian governments remained at odds over important nationalistic issues, notably significant territorial issues focused on the South China Sea islands but also involving disputed territory between China and Japan, Japan and South Korea, Russia and Japan, and others. Taiwan was in a class by itself in this regard.

Regional rivalries, notably between China and Japan and China and India, also made regional cooperation over security issues difficult. The governments were less wary of regional cooperation in other issue areas, notably economics, opening the way by the end of the 1990s to some significant developments under the auspices of ASEAN + 3—the ten members of the Association of Southeast Asian nations plus China, Japan, and South Korea—among others.

Other general trends characterizing Asia included an upswing in the overall power and influence of the region relative to its power and influence during the cold war. The government leaders also tended to eschew strong ideologies. They endeavored to legitimate their rule with generally pragmatic policies focused on economic development and nation-building.

POST-COLD WAR CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR U.S. INTERESTS AND POLICIES

The post-cold war challenges and opportunities for the United States in Asia were determined in considerable measure by prevailing security, economic, and political trends prompted by five categories of factors influencing regional dynamics. Those categories were:

- Changing regional power relationships and trends. Since 1990, these included the rise of China, Japan's stagnation, Indonesia's declining power and influence, and the more active role in regional affairs played by Russia, India, the European Union, and other powers outside the region.

- The changing dynamics on the Korean peninsula, characterized by the off-again, on-again thaw in North-South Korean relations and North Korea's nuclear weapons programs and its varying engagement in international affairs.
- Economic concerns. These focused on the difficulty of sustaining economic growth in the highly competitive global economic environment.
- The challenge of freer information flows to both authoritarian regimes and non-authoritarian governments.
- Uncertainty in the region over U.S. policy. At times, regional leaders saw signs of U.S. withdrawal or preoccupation elsewhere. At other times, they saw evidence of U.S. unilateralism and intervention. Both were viewed as disruptive to regional stability.

These five categories of factors influencing regional dynamics led to several important post-cold war trends that the United States continues to deal with in seeking effective policies in the region in the first years of the new century. Several factors created an uncertain security environment. It was not so uncertain that countries felt a need to seek close alignment with a major power or with one another to protect themselves. But it prompted a wide variety of “hedging”—each government sought more diverse and varied arrangements in order to shore up its security interests. All powers wanted generally positive relations with the United States, but sought diversified ties to enhance their security options. They continued to differ on the desirability of a strong U.S. regional security presence, with China notably encouraging a gradual weakening of the U.S. position as it sought expanded regional influence, while most others backed a strong U.S. presence.

Following the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington, Asian governments offered mixed support to the U.S. anti-terrorism campaign. The U.S. war against the Taliban and the widespread U.S. involvement and deployment in Central, South, and Southeast Asia appeared justified to many Asian governments and their popular and elite opinion. The assertive U.S. policy against Saddam Hussein in Iraq and the U.S. military-led assault on Iraq prompted much stronger anti-U.S. demonstrations and sharp criticism from many Asian governments. However, few of the Asian governments departed from their generally

pragmatic nation-building efforts that saw little use in a major dispute with the United States over the war.

This gap between more pragmatic government policy and strident anti-U.S. sentiment by popular and elite opinion was difficult to manage for several Asian governments. China's effective control of the official media and other mechanisms allowed Beijing to pursue a moderate stance against U.S. policies, in stark contrast with China's frequent outbursts against U.S. "hegemonism" during the previous decade. Japanese, Indian, South Korean, Australian, Philippine, Thai and other leaders alienated important constituencies by adopting more moderate and supportive stances toward the Bush administration than their electorates. The strong anti-American opinion in predominantly Muslim countries clearly affected those governments' willingness to be closely associated with the anti-terrorist efforts of the United States. Meanwhile, many Asian states appeared more concerned about the implications of the aggressive U.S. stance in Iraq for an escalating dispute between the United States and North Korea over North Korea's nuclear weapons program, and were reassured by the generally consultative and moderate approach taken by the Bush government on this issue in 2003–2004.

The challenge of economic globalization, meanwhile, caused regional states over time to band together in order to channel and regulate the consequences of increasingly pervasive free market economic competition. While generally recognizing the need to conform to international economic norms, Asian governments, especially East Asian governments, sought to block or slow perceived adverse consequences of economic globalization by greater cooperation with similarly affected governments in and outside the region in existing organizations like ASEAN, APEC, and WTO, and in emerging regional and broader groupings, notably the ASEAN + 3. National rivalries and other regional differences were less of an obstacle than in the past to East Asian multilateral economic cooperation. These rivalries and differences remained more of an obstacle to multilateral cooperation over more sensitive security issues, however.

The opportunities for the United States posed by these regional trends and developments focused on the continuing broad regional support for close economic engagement with the United States and for a continued strong U.S. military commitment to the region. But these regional trends and developments also posed challenges for U.S. policy. Heading the list

were security dilemmas regarding regional hot spots like Korea and Taiwan. The changing regional power alignments and developments on the Korean peninsula seriously complicated U.S. alliance relations. Though the Bush administration gave high priority to alliance ties with Japan, South Korea, and others, the fact remained that the publics and elites in these countries—especially South Korea—had deeply ambivalent feelings about aspects of the alliance relation.

U.S. policy makers also faced broad pressure in the United States to pursue vigorous free market policies and to seek to spread democracy and improved human rights practices abroad. This often did not mesh smoothly with Asian leaders trying to control the disruptive consequences of economic globalization, the free flow of information, and perceived political challenges to stability.

Experienced observers pointed out that the types of challenges facing U.S. policy makers in post-cold war Asia (e.g., managing alliance relations, dealing with security hot spots, handling differences over economic policies and human rights) were not new or much worse than in past decades. What had changed from the past was the coherence and salience of U.S. policy after the cold war. During the cold war, U.S. leaders tended to pay close attention to developments in key world areas and were prone to guard against allowing U.S. domestic interests to influence U.S. foreign policy in ways contrary to broadly accepted U.S. strategic goals. After the end of the cold war, the consensus in U.S. foreign policy broke down and U.S. domestic debate and domestic interests and groups had a much stronger role to play in the making of U.S. foreign policy, including policy toward Asia. As a result, U.S. leaders had to work harder in order to establish a proper balance between U.S. domestic and foreign concerns in the making of American policy toward the region. The difficulties of the George H.W. Bush and William Clinton administrations in coming up with a China policy acceptable to aroused U.S. domestic groups illustrated this trend.

The terrorist attacks on America on September 11, 2001, sharply reduced the salience of post-cold war U.S. domestic debate over foreign policy. The U.S. campaign against the Taliban and broader U.S. military and other involvement in various parts of Asia enjoyed broad bipartisan support. U.S. domestic criticism of the Bush administration's firmer line on China dissipated as the policy resulted in a marked improvement in U.S.-China ties.

U.S. domestic criticism of the administration's hard line on North Korea also declined for a while, though it began to reemerge as the U.S. administration followed its initial success in military operations in Afghanistan with strong rhetoric and military preparations specifically targeted against Saddam Hussein in Iraq, but also potentially including North Korea and Iran.

The Bush administration's decision to initiate a military attack on Iraq without the support of key allies or the full support of the United Nations provoked strong U.S. domestic opposition. This grew as the United States became bogged down in a protracted and expensive effort to stabilize postwar Iraq amid continued international rebukes of perceived U.S. unilateralism and attempts at domination.

RECENT CONTROVERSIES

The overall Bush administration's record in Asia and the outlook for U.S. policy over the next few years are matters of debate among specialists.³ Many particularly criticized the Bush government for mishandling Korean issues, for issuing unilateralist policy declarations adding to tension in the region, and for a lack of attention to economic, environmental, and multilateral measures seen as important to long-range Asian stability and smooth U.S.-Asian relations.

North Korea took provocative actions in late 2002 and 2003, breaking declared non-proliferation commitments and reactivating nuclear facilities frozen under the 1994 U.S.-North Korea Agreed Framework accord. This posed a major challenge for U.S. policy that was not adequately anticipated by the Bush government. The Bush administration's reaction was complicated by deep divisions within the administration over how to handle North Korea, and by strong differences in U.S.-South Korean policy toward North Korea and broader alliance relations.⁴

Tensions in U.S.-South Korean alliance relations and anti-American sentiment in South Korea rose markedly during the Bush administration, and were important factors in the election of South Korea's new president, Roh Moo-hyun, in December 2002. Subsequent U.S. and South Korean efforts to ease tensions, bridge differences, and solidify relations remained awkward in 2003-2004, and added to the arguments of those claiming that the U.S.-South Korean alliance was in crisis and poised for a major change in the next few years.⁵

Significant additional problems for U.S. policy in Asia came as Asian elite and public opinion joined the worldwide complaints against U.S. unilateral actions and dominance in international affairs seen at the time of the U.S.-led attack on Iraq and repeated U.S. policy declarations supporting preemptive actions against adversaries.⁶ The *Far Eastern Economic Review* cited a June 2003 study by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press to assert that “the image of the United States plummeted in the wake of the war in Iraq.” Only 15 percent of Indonesians polled in spring 2003 had a positive view of the United States, down from 75 percent in 2000.⁷ A January 2004 poll showed that South Koreans saw the United States as a greater threat to Korean security than North Korea.⁸

Chinese popular opinion had been against the U.S. action in Iraq and later polls showed that Chinese opinion favored a UN refusal to support the postwar U.S. reconstruction efforts in Iraq.⁹ In Southeast Asia, government leaders took account of the strongly negative view of the U.S. attack on Iraq on the part of Muslim populations, notably in Indonesia and Malaysia.¹⁰

Antipathy to the U.S. assault on Iraq and perceived disregard for UN prerogatives elicited large-scale demonstrations and other actions in Australia, South Korea, Japan, India and elsewhere, indicating that even U.S. allies and Asian government leaders leaning to support President Bush had to take account of strong elite and popular opinion moving in anti-American directions. It was widely held that the U.S. leadership and President Bush in particular, were not well aware of the decline of previously favorable attitudes in Asia toward the United States and the strong hostile reactions to the U.S. attack on Iraq.¹¹

CONTROVERSIES IN PERSPECTIVE—U.S. STRENGTHS IN ASIA

While the impact of recent controversies and criticisms of U.S. policies toward Iraq, the United Nations, Korea and other issues remains important, they are balanced by many continuing favorable trends in Asia for U.S. policy and interests, and by generally effective Bush administration policies in dealing with leading Asian powers. The result leads to a generally positive assessment of U.S. leadership in promoting stability, development, and U.S. values in the region, despite serious U.S. challenges and

preoccupations in Southwest Asia and more broadly in world affairs.¹² For starters, it is ironic that U.S. preoccupation with Iraq and other priorities has led the Bush administration to adjust in generally pragmatic ways to the challenge posed by North Korea's assertive nuclear weapons stance since 2002. This has been broadly welcomed by East Asian governments that see the Korean peninsula as an area of much more salient concern than Iraq.

Several key strengths prevail in U.S.-Asian relations that support the Bush administration's ability to manage Asian crises and to sustain U.S. leadership in promoting stability, development and U.S. values in Asia.¹³ Government leaders on both sides of the Pacific continue to put a high value on the U.S. security commitment and military presence in Asia. U.S. resolve to remain actively involved in regional security has been strengthened by U.S. government efforts after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on America. The strong U.S. military presence is generally welcomed by Asian government leaders, and even Chinese leaders have notably modified their past criticism of the U.S. security role.¹⁴

Debate over the size and deployment of U.S. forces in South Korea has become a key element in the crises facing U.S. policy on the Korean peninsula. Nevertheless, the South Korean and U.S. governments continue efforts to manage the debate without jeopardizing strong mutual interests, supported by a continued U.S. military presence in South Korea.¹⁵ Meanwhile, the 2003 polls that showed setbacks for the U.S. image in certain countries in Asia also showed that most of those polled retained overall positive views of U.S. leadership and that clear majorities in Asia agreed that their interests would suffer if the United States were no longer the world's dominant power.¹⁶

The Bush administration has a less activist international economic policy than the Clinton administration, but the United States maintains open markets despite aberrations such as moves in 2002 to protect U.S. farmers and steel manufacturers. The administration's handling of currency alignment issues with China and Japan underlines a broad commitment to avoid protectionism feared by Asian exporters. U.S. open market policy is welcomed by Asian governments that view the U.S. economy as more important to Asian economic well-being, especially after the 1997-98 Asian economic crisis and Japan's persisting stagnation. Though China is a new engine of regional growth, U.S. economic prospects remain much

more important for Asian development. The United States in recent years has absorbed an increasing percentage (about 40 percent, according to U.S. government figures) of the exports from China, which is emerging as the export-manufacturing base for investors from a wide range of advanced Asian economies. The U.S. market continues to absorb one third of the exports of Japan. The economies of South Korea, Taiwan, and ASEAN rely on the U.S. market to receive around 20 percent of their exports. Meanwhile, U.S. direct foreign investment has grown notably in China, but the cumulative level there is only about a third of the level of U.S. investment in Australia, Hong Kong, or Singapore, and less than 20 percent of the U.S. investment in Japan.¹⁷

After the cold war, strong U.S. domestic pressure pushed democracy, human rights, and other U.S. values in Asia, and met resistance from authoritarian governments seeking to preserve their ruling prerogatives and even Asian democracies fearing regional instability. Despite strong rhetorical emphasis, Bush administration policy has been pragmatic, especially as the United States sought allies and supporters in the global war on terrorism and other endeavors. This adjustment generally is welcomed in Asia and has worked to ease U.S. differences with authoritarian governments in Asia.¹⁸

The United States held the preeminent power position in the region, especially after September 11, 2001. U.S. power appeared to belie predictions in earlier decades of an inevitable U.S. decline, as the United States became more powerful and influential in Asia and the Pacific than at any time since the defeat of Japan in World War II. There was concern over possible U.S. “overreach”—stretching military and economic commitments beyond U.S. capabilities amid the protracted violence and resistance in Iraq in the wake of the toppling of Saddam Hussein. For the time being at least, U.S. military forces focused on East Asia—especially naval and air forces—seemed adequate; the planned realignment and downsizing of U.S. forces in Asia and elsewhere abroad continued. While some in the region might have wished to challenge or confront the United States, most remained loath to do so given the dangers they would face in opposition to the world’s dominant power, with a leadership seemingly prepared to use that power against its enemies.¹⁹

The asymmetry of power between the United States and Asian governments probably will not change soon. U.S. realigned military forces in

Asia, backed by the unsurpassed U.S. military capabilities demonstrated in recent conflicts in Europe and Asia, seem well positioned to deal with regional contingencies. The massive size and overall importance of the U.S. economy to Asian economic well-being has risen in the post-cold war period in the eyes of Asian governments seeking international outreach and economic development as a foundation for their conventional nation-building strategies. U.S. protectionist measures in response to large trade deficits and U.S. job losses probably will dampen Asian enthusiasm for closer ties to the U.S. market and reduce U.S. influence in the region.

The major regional powers, including stagnating Japan and such rising powers as China and India, remained domestically preoccupied and are likely to remain so for some time to come.²⁰ Focused on internal issues, they sought support from the United States and other powers, and strove to avoid difficulties in their foreign relations. In theory, there was a danger that the Asian powers might align against the United States and its interests in significant ways. The Asian nations, including leading regional powers Japan, China, and India, were actively maneuvering and hedging, seeking new and more multifaceted arrangements to secure their interests in the uncertain regional environment. They sometimes cooperated together in broader arrangements, like Sino-Japanese cooperation in ASEAN + 3. ASEAN + 3 promoted U.S.-backed goals of regional cooperation, though some Americans were wary of such regional arrangements that excluded the United States. At bottom, however, the Asian nations—especially the leading powers—were divided by deep suspicions, indicating that any meaningful cooperation seriously detrimental to U.S. interests remained unlikely.²¹

U.S. policy makers also did a better job in managing the often-strong U.S. domestic pressures that in the post-cold war period tended to drive U.S. policy in extreme directions detrimental to a sound and balanced approach to Asia. President Clinton's engagement policy toward China in his second term was more coherent than the policy in his first term that appeared driven by competing U.S. domestic interests. President Bush's policy was better suited to mainstream U.S. opinion regarding China and had the added advantage of avoiding the need for significant U.S. concessions toward China on sensitive issues like Taiwan that seriously exacerbated the U.S. domestic debate about China policy.²² President Bush's attention to Japan reduced Japanese concerns caused by the Clinton

administration's emphasis on China and its tough public criticism of Japan's economic policies, avoiding U.S. domestic controversy over this policy area.²³

A major U.S. weakness—more important in Asia than the Bush administration's aggressive policy regarding Iraq and other world issues—remained the Bush administration's tough stance toward North Korea, which posed obvious and serious difficulties for U.S. influence in East Asia. The difficulty of meshing a tough U.S. stance toward North Korea while supporting South Korea's asymmetrical engagement efforts with Pyongyang was not fully addressed. For a time, U.S. policy drifted with leaders in Washington and much of the rest of the world focused on other more immediate problems. North Korean brinkmanship in 2002–2003 brought the issue to a head, forcing the U.S. to act. There remained a possibility for unilateral, forceful U.S. actions, including military attack on North Korea. However, the danger that Bush administration hardliners would push policy to an extreme and create a major crisis in U.S.-Asia relations was mitigated to some degree by strong countervailing opinion in the administration and more broadly in the Congress, the media, and among U.S. experts and opinion leaders warning of dire consequences of excessive U.S. pressure on the North Korean regime.²⁴ The protracted U.S. military commitment in Iraq added another reason against a forceful U.S. policy toward North Korea.

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION AND ASIA'S GREAT POWERS

The Bush administration's success in improving U.S. relations with all the great powers in Asia added to the strength of U.S. leadership in the region, and reinforced the U.S. government's ability to deal with crises on the Korean peninsula and other regional difficulties. The United States having good relations with Japan and China at the same time is very rare. The United States being the dominant power in South Asia and having good relations with both India and Pakistan is unprecedented, as is the current U.S. maintenance of good relations with both Beijing and Taipei.

The administration came to power with plans to markedly enhance political-military partnership with Japan. The Japanese government of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi was a responsive partner, though constraints posed by Japanese economic difficulties and political differences in

Japan limited cooperation to some degree. Japan provided strong support in the war on terrorism, including an unprecedented Indian Ocean naval deployment in support of allied operations in the war in Afghanistan. Prime Minister Koizumi was outspoken in backing the U.S.-led attack on Saddam Hussein, and deployed hundreds of Japanese forces to Iraq. Koizumi may have diverged from U.S. interests in meeting Kim Jong Il in September 2002, but he found common ground with the Bush administration in its subsequent efforts to deal with North Korea's provocative nuclear weapons development.²⁵

Compared with traditional U.S. allies, India's government was less critical and more understanding of Bush administration policy regarding sensitive issues in missile defense, arms control, the United Nations, and the war in Iraq. It welcomed the U.S. administration's plans for a greater Indian role in Asian security and world affairs, and the steadily expanding U.S. military relationship with India.²⁶

The improvement of U.S. relations with Russia seen in the first summit between Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin in the months before the terrorist attack on America was markedly enhanced by U.S.-Russian cooperation after September 11, 2001. Russia joined with France and others in standing against U.S. military actions to topple Saddam Hussein without renewed UN approval. After the U.S.-led coalition succeeded militarily in Iraq and senior Bush administration officials made significant gestures to ease tensions with Moscow, Russia appeared prepared to resume a more cooperative stance toward the United States on key foreign policy issues, though there were growing U.S. concerns over Putin's moves toward greater political control and authoritarianism in Russia.²⁷

The breakthrough in U.S. relations with China was by far the most important success for Bush administration policy in Asia. The rapid rise of China's power and influence in world affairs, especially around China's periphery in Asia, initially received negative Bush administration attention and prompted a steady stream of U.S. media, congressional and other commentary warning of PRC efforts to push the United States out of Asia. In contrast, actual Chinese behavior in the region and in improving relations with the Bush administration seemed to underscore strong awareness by Chinese leaders of the difficulties involved in competing directly with the U.S. superpower. The power and policies of the George W. Bush administration indeed did change the Asian situation in impor-

tant and sometimes negative respects for Chinese interests, especially after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on America. Chinese leaders nonetheless reacted with restraint and moderation—helping to set the stage for a significant upswing in U.S.-China relations over Asian and other issues. American specialists held different views about what factors were most important in causing the favorable turn in China-U.S. relations since mid 2001, but they tended to agree that the improvement in U.S.-Chinese relations reinforced Beijing's moderate trend in policy toward the United States, Asia, and world affairs.²⁸

OUTLOOK

The large-scale deployment of U.S. military forces and other government resources to the U.S.-led war and occupation in Iraq seems to insure that U.S. government strategic emphasis will focus on southwest Asia and the Middle East for several more years. Popular and elite opinion in much of the world opposed the U.S. war and demonstrated broader concerns over U.S. dominance and “hegemony” in world affairs. France, Germany, Russia, and governments in the Middle East and much of the Muslim world strongly criticized the U.S. decision to attack Iraq. In much of Asia, however, the governments stood at odds with their publics and non-government elites and reacted more pragmatically in dealing with the United States over the Iraq war, and broader concerns flowing from U.S. international dominance.

Prime Minister Koizumi was outspoken in support of Japan's U.S. ally, quick to lend military support within the confines of Japan's existing constraints on deployments abroad, and prominent in leading the post-war aid effort. South Korea's president pushed a reluctant parliament to approve the deployment of several thousand troops to Iraq, repeatedly stressing the importance for South Korea of preserving a close alliance relationship with the United States in the face of North Korea's provocations. Chinese leaders showed little interest in being associated closely with international resistance to U.S. leadership in Iraq. Similarly, India's government remained restrained in criticizing the U.S. attack on Iraq.²⁹

Contingencies could seriously weaken U.S. policy in Asia. They include possible setbacks in the war on terrorism involving large scale terrorist attacks, possibly including weapons of mass destruction (WMD),

against U.S. or allied targets; and regime failure in such front line states as Afghanistan or Pakistan, where political conditions and governance remain unstable and weak. A major—possibly nuclear—war between India and Pakistan, precipitated by disputes over Kashmir or other issues, would be disastrous for regional peace and stability. World economic trends remain uncertain, with the U.S. economy among those grappling with recovery and large-scale government budget and trade deficits.³⁰

The impasse with North Korea presents the most immediate problem for U.S. policy in East Asia. The Bush administration had some success in the immediate aftermath of the war in Iraq in limiting the damage from the crises in U.S. relations with North Korea and in U.S. alliance relations with South Korea, but few predict a quick solution to either set of problems. The crises place U.S. policy on the peninsula in a reactive stance, responding to sometimes unanticipated events and endeavoring to formulate options that limit the damage to U.S. interests and hold out the possibility of resolution in accord with U.S. interests.

Most likely is a protracted process involving diplomacy, negotiations, and possibly sanctions and military moves to seek safeguards regarding North Korea's nuclear program. Recent U.S. policy regarding North Korea buys time and keeps South Korea and other powers in an ostensibly common front, but it may not end North Korea's nuclear weapons development, or deep U.S. differences with South Korea, China, and others at home and abroad on how to deal with North Korea. The next months and possibly years may have episodes of improvement in U.S. relations with concerned powers, and episodes of crisis brought on by North Korea's brinkmanship or other factors. The process of dealing with the North Korean nuclear problem may be prolonged because of the mix of North Korean rigidity and frequent brinkmanship, U.S. refusal to be blackmailed, and seemingly insufficient U.S. power or influence to coerce the North. In this context, U.S. alliance management (notably, relations with South Korea) and great power diplomacy (notably, relations with China) over this issue will be complicated and probably difficult. U.S. ability to manage American domestic critics may also be challenged, especially at times of tension with North Korea. Overall, the process promises to preoccupy and weaken U.S. leadership in Asian affairs.

Less likely is a more assertive U.S. policy, presumably involving U.S. pressure or perhaps military attack. This could follow the military success

in Iraq or come in response to a North Korean nuclear test or transfer of nuclear material to terrorists. Such an assertive U.S. stance would face North Korea's military power and the strong opposition of key powers—especially South Korea and China. It would make more probable a war on the Korean peninsula that would place the United States at odds with China, South Korea, and many others.

Also less likely is the U.S. administration offering major concessions to North Korea, without a clear path to the North's denuclearization, in order to ease the crisis and meet demands of South Korea, China and U.S. domestic critics. Such a course might smooth U.S. relations with South Korea, China and others in Asia, but would face strong opposition from within the administration and from U.S. conservatives in Congress and elsewhere.

Other potential flashpoints in Asia include the Taiwan Strait. For the time being, Chinese leaders seem sufficiently constrained by U.S. power. They emphasize burgeoning mainland-Taiwan economic relations, though they worry about growing political separatism on the island. On balance, these circumstances appear likely to prompt Chinese leaders to avoid aggressive actions unless provoked by Taiwan or the United States. There probably will be little let-up in the Chinese military buildup opposite Taiwan, as PRC leaders have set a long-term course to achieve military dominance over Taiwan.³¹ Taiwan leaders chafe under the carrots and sticks of Chinese policy, and seek to take initiatives in cross-Strait or international relations, sometimes even at the risk of disrupting the prevailing modus vivendi in cross-Strait ties. However, the Bush administration in the recent past has come down hard against Taiwan leaders who risk such disruption, and the fear of jeopardizing U.S. support probably will be sufficient to curb possible Taiwan actions that might provoke a harsh response from China.³²

Southeast Asia is an area of serious concern in the war on terrorism but appears to hold few major problems for U.S. policy, though managing sometimes difficult U.S. security ties with countries like Indonesia and the Philippines represents a complication in the broader U.S. war on terrorism. As noted earlier, there remains the distinct possibility of such major failures for U.S. policy in Asia as government collapse in Afghanistan or Pakistan, or a war between India and Pakistan. As a consequence, there appears to be too much at stake for U.S. leaders not to give a high priori-

ty to diplomatic and other efforts to prevent such negative outcomes in Central and South Asia.

In sum, U.S. assertiveness over Iraq and other issues continues to be widely criticized among Asian popular and elite opinion, and has damaged the image of the American government in Asia. However, Asian governments are reacting pragmatically. They remain focused on domestic concerns involving conventional nation-building. From their perspective, the crisis posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons development is more important, and the Bush administration thus far is dealing with that issue in a consultative manner acceptable to concerned Asian powers.

Recent U.S. crises in Korea, involving U.S. relations with both North and South Korea, seem unlikely to be resolved soon or satisfactorily. The process for dealing with the Korean crises likely will preoccupy U.S. policy in Asia, and on balance probably will weaken U.S. leadership in the region. Nevertheless, the crises appear likely to remain manageable for U.S. policy, particularly given the continued broad strengths in U.S. power and influence in Asia. Those strengths will continue to support U.S. regional leadership, notably in the war on terrorism, and regional stability and development compatible with American interests.

NOTES

1. Harry Harding, "Final Report of the Eighty-Ninth American Assembly," based on the American Assembly of Columbia University's Public Engagement Workshop, February 23-25, 1995, <http://www.ciaonet.org/conf/aac03/aac03b.html>.

2. One school reflected a sense of relative decline of U.S. power and called for the United States to work harder to preserve important interests while adjusting to limited resources and reduced influence. A second school argued for major cutbacks in U.S. international activity, including military involvement and open trade exchanges seen as disadvantageous to the United States. A third school of thought became much stronger and more dominant as U.S. economic conditions improved later in the 1990s and government spending resumed increases amid budget surpluses. This third school argued that policy needed to promote more actively a wide range of U.S. interests in international political, military, and economic affairs, and to use U.S. influence to pressure countries that did not conform to the norms of an appropriate world order. For greater detail on these views and other aspects discussed in the rest of this section, see Robert Sutter, *The United States and East Asia*, (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), chapters 1 and 10.

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12. Sutter, "United States," in Tellis and Wills, eds., *Strategic Asia 2004-2005*.

13. These are reviewed in more detail in Sutter, "United States: US leadership—Prevailing Strengths amid Challenges," in Ellings, ed., *Strategic Asia 2003-2004*, 36-41. Pew Research Center, "What the world thinks in 2002," T-45, T-50.

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BUSH ADMINISTRATION POLICY IN ASIA 2001-2004: SECOND THOUGHTS AND SECOND FRONTS

RICHARD W. BAKER

Presidential campaign rhetoric on foreign policy (as in other areas) tends to be overblown and oversimplified, is frequently wishful and often proves impossible to implement in the real world of governing. The statement of candidate George W. Bush in 2000 about the need for the United States to be more “humble” in its international conduct and to avoid involvement in “nation-building” is illustration enough of the truism that events can make, or unmake, policies almost regardless of the lofty declarations and intentions.

A corollary is that candidates invite trouble when they nail their colors too firmly to the mast with catchy formulations on complex problems. Jimmy Carter vowed to reduce U.S. troop strength in Korea; Bill Clinton supported linking most-favored-nation treatment for China with human rights performance. In each instance it took the respective administration years to work its way out of the ill-considered commitment.

In the case of the administration of George W. Bush and the Asia-Pacific region, a comparison of declaratory policy with what has actually transpired produces a mixed record. The Bush administration’s problems in Asia—as elsewhere—have had less to do with unrealistic going-in commitments and more to do with the fact that on September 11, 2001, their world changed—completely if not forever.

Richard W. Baker is Special Assistant to the President at the East-West Center in Honolulu. Prior to joining the East-West Center, he served as a career officer in the United States Foreign Service from 1967-1987, including assignments in Singapore, Indonesia, and Australia. He is the principal editor of *Indonesia, the Challenge of Change*, and a co-editor of the annual *Asia Pacific Security Outlook* series.

This essay cannot and does not attempt a comprehensive review of Bush administration policy in Asia between 2001 and 2004. Some areas (especially economic policy) will barely be touched on. In what follows I only deal with selected issues where the interactions between presumptions and reality seem to have been greatest. First I describe some of the approaches that the president (and many of his key advisors) brought into office, and how these played out in the early months of the administration. Then I discuss the impact in Asia of the post-9/11 war on terrorism, in which Asia became a secondary albeit important arena. And finally I try to draw a balance between the positive and negative outcomes of these developments in terms of broad American interests in the region.

My perspective on this subject is that of a somewhat grizzled veteran of twenty years in the Foreign Service and 15 years as an outside observer, which among other things brings with it a certain sense of *déjà vu*. Most of the specific points in this survey are also covered in one way or another in other papers; none are particularly original. But my take may be slightly different.

RHETORIC AND REALITY

The first thing to say is that much of the Bush administration's approach and experience with Asia has mirrored that of previous administrations. It was ever thus. Fundamental U.S. interests and relationships tend to have a remarkable continuity through administrations, and this administration is no different—as Harry Harding points out in some detail in his contribution to this volume. Stability, prosperity, U.S. access to the region, various kinds of values, preventing domination by any other power, these are all ongoing American interests.

But another constant across administrations is the phenomenon of realities adjusting initial approaches—the “second thoughts” referred to in the title. This is perhaps where the grizzled veteran perspective comes through most strongly, because we have seen this process so many times. There may even be some bureaucrats who, as Ambassador Chan's essay suggests about some foreign governments, are just as happy with the continuity in this administration because they are not going to have to spend the next two years explaining to a new group why they cannot reverse everything the previous group did.

Examples abound. In the case of Jimmy Carter's 1976 campaign pledge to reduce the U.S. troop presence in Korea, it took the not inconsiderable bureaucratic skills of Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Richard Holbrooke some two years to convince the president that he did not really want to take the troops away after all. George H.W. Bush campaigned to succeed Ronald Reagan on a more hardline anti-Soviet stance than Reagan's, which posed distinct problems of both presentation and response when the Soviet Union essentially collapsed during his first year in office. In the 1992 campaign, Bill Clinton accused the elder Bush of coddling the "butchers of Beijing" and embraced a Senate resolution linking continuation of most-favored-nation (MFN) trade status for China to its human rights performance. It was 1994 before the Clinton administration dropped the human rights-MFN linkage, leading to further lurches and learning experiences in its China policy. A similarly bold Clinton commitment to achieving Japanese agreement on "tangible progress" in reducing the bilateral trade deficit met a similar fate.

George W. Bush actually arrived at the White House with fewer specific foreign policy millstones around his neck than most of his recent predecessors. This may have been a paradoxically positive result of the new president's well-known lack of expertise or particular interest in foreign affairs, but it also probably left him particularly vulnerable to pains of the subsequent learning curve.

The aspect of George Bush's campaign rhetoric most frequently cited by commentators as having been upended by exposure to the real world was his talk about the need for a more humble and diffident U.S. policy and the need to avoid "nation-building" ventures. An emphasis on avoiding international adventures is hardly new. Clinton in 1992 argued that Bush 41 had spent far too much time traveling internationally. As a result, Clinton managed to meet all his Asian counterparts in his first year only through the coincidence that the 1993 APEC Ministerial was in Seattle, which enabled Clinton to take up an Australian suggestion of an APEC summit and thus meet the leaders without having to make an overseas trip. But by the end of his two terms, Clinton was among the most widely traveled of American presidents.

Candidate Bush's critique of Clinton administration foreign policy did not focus significantly on the Asia-Pacific region. The major debate in this regard was over the use of U.S. military power, in which Bush came across

as more cautious than opponent Al Gore in his willingness to commit American military power to overseas causes. In fact, a close reading of Bush's campaign statements clearly indicates that he was not reluctant to use force (specifically to deal with threats from "dictators"¹), but only intended to restrict the use of force to the most critical situations.² However, it took 9/11 to bring out the seriousness in the more muscular part of Bush's formulation.

Nevertheless there were clear indications from the start of a change in approach to U.S. foreign policy. Most pertinently, the Bush administration brought to office a fairly hard-nosed attitude (most pointedly represented by the group of advisors since dubbed the "neo-cons," but basically shared by Bush) toward what they saw as the realities of the international scene.

In Asia the clearest distinction with Clinton administration policies was over China. Clinton had more or less circled the block on China, from the human rights-trade linkage to "strategic partnership" and a public declaration by the president in China of the "three no's" on Taiwan. The Bush perception of the U.S.-PRC relationship was rather different. During the campaign Bush and others on his team spoke of the relationship with China as being neither a strategic partnership nor an adversarial relationship, but rather a combination of cooperation on some issues and competition on others. The first official defense policy assessment released by the Bush administration (the congressionally-mandated Quadrennial Defense Review of 2001—largely completed before 9/11 but released on September 30) described Asia as a region where "a military competitor with a formidable resource base" might emerge, a clear reference to China although no country was mentioned by name. The sense of potential conflict had been given practical salience by the incident on April 1 in which an American surveillance aircraft collided with a Chinese fighter and made an emergency landing in Hainan—although actually more indicative of the future was the successful handling and resolution of this incident, demonstrating the ability of the two governments to manage confrontational situations.

Similarly, the Bush team was seen as being more openly supportive of Taiwan than the late Clinton administration. The main signal in this area was public discussion during the formative months of the new administration of the desirability of clarifying the longstanding U.S. policy of "strategic ambiguity" regarding the conditions under which the United

States would defend Taiwan. The neo-con group was seen as advocating a more definitive statement of the U.S. position. The president's statement in a media interview in April 2001 that the United States would do "whatever it takes" to defend Taiwan from a Chinese attack provided half of the clarification and cheered the pro-Taiwan group. It was only at the end of 2003, after 9/11 and after Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian began pushing the envelope on the question of independence in the context of his re-election campaign, that Bush dropped the other shoe—tellingly during an Oval Office meeting with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao—stating that the United States would "oppose" a declaration of independence by Taiwan. In this instance the "second thought" in terms of maintaining a balance of pressure on Taiwan as well as China was some time in coming, but the need became clear enough over time.

Bush's spirit of frank realism was most immediately and vividly demonstrated in his famously blunt statement in an Oval Office meeting with ROK President Kim Dae Jung not long after the inauguration that North Korea was not to be trusted. Kim had (unwisely, as it transpired) pressed for and received an early invitation to meet with Bush. The meeting took place before Bush's East Asia policy team, including Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs James Kelly, was fully in place. Kim clearly saw this as an opportunity to gain endorsement of his signature "sunshine policy" of openness toward the North, but his move backfired badly, roiling the atmosphere between the two governments. In this instance, on the American side the second thoughts phenomenon set in almost immediately. An in-depth State Department-led policy review was launched, and after several months of quiet work produced a duly nuanced policy statement that met the requirements of continuing diplomacy. Jim Kelly and his colleagues have done an extraordinary job of maintaining that basic line through the more recent turbulence.

So, although the specifics differ from administration to administration, the basic phenomenon of re-thinking and policy adjustment does not, and has to be accepted as part of the normal cycle. The United States has a rhetorically competitive political system in which challengers have to stress what the incumbents have done wrong and how they would change things, but the real world is not that readily changeable, even by the so-called hegemonic sole super power.

9/11 “CHANGES EVERYTHING”

The truly new element in Bush foreign policy, and one that was forced on, not introduced by the Bush administration, was of course 9/11, leading to the war on terrorism and later the continuing preoccupation with Iraq. September 11 may not have changed “everything”—as the catch phrase of the day suggested—but it certainly changed a lot of things. Wherever Asia may have previously stood in the Bush administration’s policy hierarchy, 9/11 relegated Asia to a more secondary, albeit important position. From that point on, policy in Asia mostly if not primarily revolved around the war on terrorism.

One of the most immediate changes, as the administration mobilized for the war, was in relations with China. The PRC, along with most of the world, condemned the 9/11 attacks and terrorism in general (not neglecting its own battle with Islamic dissidents-cum-terrorists in its western provinces). Although the Chinese response was more reserved than that of Russia, the Bush administration seized the opportunity to welcome China as a partner in the broad anti-terror cause. References to China as a competitor virtually disappeared from official U.S. statements.

In the war on terrorism, Asia also provided two “second fronts” — the other phrase from this essay’s title. The first came after the success in Afghanistan at the end of 2001, when speculation was rife about a possible second front in the war on terrorism and where that was going to be opened. The speculation focused particularly on Southeast Asia, and produced reactions verging on paranoia.

Indonesia provided a good example of the atmosphere. Indonesians were understandably alarmed by an article (certainly inaccurate) in the *New York Times* in December citing unnamed American officials to the effect that Indonesia was the next target for a U.S. invasion. In early February 2002, Deputy Defense Secretary (and very popular former U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia) Paul Wolfowitz met with a group of visiting Indonesians and assured them that this report was nonsense. An interview of one delegation member (the head of Indonesia’s largest Indonesian Islamic organization) by a reporter from Indonesia’s Antara news agency yielded a story quoting the leader as saying Wolfowitz had told them “the U.S. no longer planned to launch its military operation” (sic) and describing this as a “change” in the U.S. stance. The story was carried at least in

the Singapore *Straits Times*, and as far as I know, no clarification was ever issued, thus confirming for suspicious Indonesians that there had in fact been such a plan.³

Of course, the real Southeast Asian second front of the war on terrorism ended up being the Philippines. The Basilan exercise in the spring of 2002 was publicly labeled by the administration as a new front in the war on terrorism—regardless of plausible questions as to the actual connections between the Abu Sayyaf criminal/insurgent group and the international al Qaeda network. Spurred by the discovery of Jemaah Islamiah cells in Singapore and Malaysia in late 2001–early 2002 and then the Bali bombings on October 12, 2002, the administration continued to look intensely at Southeast Asia for opportunities to fight against and cooperate on terrorism.

The other “second front” for the Bush administration in Asia involved the third leg of Bush’s “axis of evil”—North Korea. In dealing with the North Korean nuclear issue the Bush administration showed great practical flexibility even within the broad context of a hard line policy. The substance of the Bush administration’s National Security Strategy issued in late 2002—the policy of reserving the right to preempt in cases of rogue states, nuclear weapons, and terrorism—would seem to apply more directly to North Korea than Iraq. But when Pyongyang triggered a confrontation over its nuclear program the policy was not applied. In fact, virtually from the start, during Jim Kelly’s visit to Pyongyang in October 2002, the Bush administration excluded the military option as anything except a disastrous final step of the process. The contrast with the Iraq experience could not have been starker. Whether the difference in the U.S. response was due to the administration’s preoccupation with Iraq (as many Bush critics in Asia as well as the United States believe), skillful management by the East Asia hands, or a broader recognition of the particular imperatives of the Korean situation, the outcome provides a classic demonstration of the sometimes awkward interactions between declaratory policy and practical reality.

In the process of “coalition-building” in Southeast Asia, as elsewhere in the world, the Bush administration’s realistic streak came to the fore. Friends and cooperators would be rewarded; critics and defectors would be punished. This approach extended to economic policy: staunch supporters Australia and Singapore gained high-profile or accelerated free

trade agreements, while wayward New Zealand must wait in line. Thailand and the Philippines were designated “major non-NATO allies” in recognition—or anticipation—of their cooperation. In both of the latter cases, the elevation had mixed success due to popular opposition to the Iraq war. The governments of defense allies Japan and Korea joined the coalition and (for different domestic reasons in each case) agreed to contribute troops, but both faced vocal domestic criticism of their actions, and the process of dispatching and assigning the units in both cases (and for Korea the prospect of continued deployment) became very complicated. When Bush announced publicly in August 2004 the long-gestating plan to reduce U.S. troop deployments in Asia by some 30,000 troops, mostly from Korea, there was at least the suggestion that the timing of the announcement and the “be careful what you wish for” element of the decision reflected disappointment in the Roh government of Korea and weariness over negotiating possible reductions of U.S. forces in Okinawa.

The case of Indonesia may be the most complicated of the group, and something of an exception to the Bush administration’s generally direct style. As the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia has major symbolic status, and its size and role in Southeast Asia give it strategic and economic importance as well. It could be an important ally for the U.S. in the war on terrorism. But U.S. relations with Indonesia have been strained for years, due primarily to human rights issues involving the Indonesian military. And Indonesia’s Islamic community has become increasingly sympathetic to the Palestinian cause and other manifestations of Islamic hostility to the West. Indonesia’s President Megawati came to Washington on a previously scheduled visit just weeks after 9/11. In her meeting with Bush she made a solid if not ringing statement about opposing terrorism. But less than two weeks after her return home she declared—before an Islamic audience—that the use of force was not justified in any circumstances in any place (a clear reference to Afghanistan). Her vice president, the leader of an Islamic party, had already announced that it would certainly be permissible for Indonesians to go to Afghanistan to defend the Taliban (although the security leadership subsequently nixed that position). Until the Bali bombings in October 2002, Indonesia’s leaders refused even to admit to a terrorist presence in the country.

Indonesia's inability to visibly cooperate against terrorism has been a source of great frustration to the Bush administration, but the Bush team (including Wolfowitz) recognizes the complexities involved and the desirability of eventually securing active Indonesian support. So in this case the administration has employed a more nuanced approach, minimizing open criticism of Indonesian positions while providing anti-terrorism assistance to the Indonesian police and even announcing (by the president during a brief post-APEC visit to Bali in 2003) a major new assistance program in education and maintaining a patient dialogue, which may bear fruit under newly elected President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

AN ERODED POSITION IN ASIA

Arguably, compared with other recent American administrations the Bush administration has faced a truly unique set of complications in the post-9/11 period. This combination of circumstances constitutes a new basic condition for U.S. relations with Asia, an even more difficult situation than following the defeats in Indochina in 1975—when the fear in most of Asia was that the United States would withdraw from the region, not that it would behave in a recklessly assertive fashion.

In many of its specifics, the U.S. approach in Asia has actually been more realistic under the Bush administration than at the end of the Clinton administration. The best examples here are the more balanced appreciation of the U.S.-China relationship and the handling of the North Korean nuclear problem, including close consultation with South Korea and Japan. Of course, as always there have been differences within the Bush team on these questions, and these differences have frequently become public knowledge, contributing to some perception of confusion and lack of cohesion in policy. But the critical elements in both cases reflect well on the Bush administration's Asian foreign policy team as a whole.

Regardless, however, America's overall standing in the region has taken a hit during the first Bush term, as confidence in the wisdom and even the motives of U.S. policies has eroded. The depth and breadth of negative perceptions and images of the United States in Asia today, especially in Islamic Asia, must not be underestimated. This was clear almost from the beginning of the post-9/11 period, with reactions in Indonesia

and Muslim communities elsewhere in Southeast Asia to the American campaign in Afghanistan. This situation poses a serious problem for the United States.

A particularly imposing element of this problem is the increasing salience of the Israeli/Palestine issue to U.S. relations in the region. In Indonesia in the mid-1970s (when I served there), as in most Asian Muslim countries, the Israeli/Palestine issue was a relatively minor item on the agenda with the United States. Some politicians, particularly on the more opportunistic Islamic fringe, made this their pet cause, but the issue had little wider resonance. By contrast, today the Palestine issue is a central reference point in Asian attitudes toward the United States. This is not just the case within Muslim communities, although it is particularly true within Muslim communities. If the United States cannot somehow deal with this issue, it will be extremely difficult if not impossible to begin to climb back out of the current perception black hole.

This is not simply a contrarian American view. At the Shangri La conference in Singapore in June 2004, with Defense Secretary Rumsfeld in attendance, Singapore's then Prime Minister Goh, after praising U.S. leadership in the anti-terrorism fight, went on to bluntly criticize Washington's position on Israel. He called the United States "essential to the solution," but "also part of the problem" in the Middle East. When the United States' most staunch defender in Southeast Asia feels compelled to make that point, it is clear that the problem of Washington's perceived alignment with Israel has entered the core of U.S. relationships in the region.

The aura and to a certain extent the reality of U.S. physical power have been diminished in Asia despite our swift victories in conquering Afghanistan and Iraq. We are now tied down in Iraq; we hit the tar baby and have not been able to extricate ourselves. And as long as we are engaged in Iraq, despite our considerable remaining military assets, especially naval and air, people will wonder how much effective force we could employ were a military crisis to blow up in Asia.

More importantly, we have lost political leverage. We are now on balance the *demandeur* vis-à-vis China. U.S. spokesmen talk of the value of China as a collaborator in the anti-terrorism war and the organizer of the six-party talks on Korea. But from the Chinese perspective this suggests that we now need them to help us. In response, they are (unsurprisingly)

raising the price—whether this takes the form of expressing doubt about the actual state of the North Korean nuclear program or amending our second resolution on Iraq at the United Nations or becoming shriller on Taiwan. The Chinese are known for their geopolitical pragmatism and cannot be blamed for that trait, but the corollary is that in dealing with them, if you allow the balance between who wants what from whom to shift in favor of the Chinese side, you can expect that you are going to come out second best.

Other examples of America's reduced sway in the region abound. One was the unceremonious flip-flop by Philippines President Arroyo in July 2004 in pulling the Philippines' contingent out of Iraq in the face of threats against a Filipino hostage, despite having been dubbed by the administration as a "major non-NATO ally" and having received a large package of military assistance, essentially based on support in the war on terrorism. Another example was the crash-and-burn trajectory of the Regional Maritime Security Initiative, launched by Pacific Commander Admiral Fargo in congressional testimony on the 31st of March 2004. Admiral Fargo had actually been talking about this idea, including before Southeast Asian audiences, for at least a year by that time, but the testimony was the first time the press and therefore most of Asia really picked up on it. The initiative was immediately greeted with a chorus of boos and condemnations and "we won't participate" declarations. U.S. spokesmen now assert that all we really had in mind for the U.S. role was greater information sharing, and that we welcome the subsequent decision by Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore to enhance security in the Malacca Straits themselves. But the fact of the matter is that a U.S. initiative bombed totally in Southeast Asia, among our friends and co-fighters against terrorism.

As noted by Robert Sutter in his essay, other Asian states are beginning to hedge their bets. The Southeast Asians in particular are hedging against the possibility that the United States either will not or cannot provide the kind of stability and the kind of fall back, the balancing that has been our role in the past. The most dramatic example of this is the Philippines' overtures to China following the withdrawal of their contingent in Iraq. More broadly, the increasingly high profile of the Asians-only ASEAN+3 forum indicates at least a growing comfort with arrangements in which the United States is not involved.

The perception of declining American influence is not necessarily accurate. As several of the contributors to this volume note, the United States remains a key country, if not the key country in the region. This is a reality, and as Jim Kelly says, Asians know it. Further, criticism of the United States has long been a major international sport and a steady element in the background noise; this goes with the territory of being “number one.” (For that matter, self-criticism is a popular sport in the United States, providing a nearly endless stream of new material for the international arena.) However, perceptions are facts, part of the reality. And if you fail to deal with problems in perceptions, then when the crises come, you are at least in an inferior position and have to fight an uphill battle.

This need not be a fatal or even a lasting condition. Improved public relations and more public diplomacy would clearly help. But the solution goes beyond more effective marketing. The most convincing means of recouping America’s standing in the region and the world would be to change the realities on the ground – specifically by achieving a satisfactory outcome in Iraq and progress on the Arab-Israeli problem.

It is also true as Jim Kelly argues, that there are some positive long-run aspects to current regional trends. It is certainly desirable and consistent with American interests that Asians take more responsibility for their own security and regional order. But clearly it would be more in U.S. interests if this evolution were happening more as a result of positive U.S. encouragement and less in reaction to perceived U.S. shortcomings.

Put together, these developments and trends support the conclusion that there has been a fundamental erosion of the U.S. position in the Asian region over the period of the first Bush administration. This can be credited to Bush administration policy or just to an unfortunate series of events. Nevertheless, during the U.S. election campaign Asian observers frequently noted that people in their countries favored John Kerry. This was not so much because of what they actually knew about Kerry, but because they viewed the Bush administration as a problem. And they mainly just wanted the problem to go away. We can only wait and see how they adjust to Bush’s re-election and the second term.

The challenge in Asian policy for the second Bush administration is to restore more order and certainty to America’s position in the region, solidify our relationships with both the major regional countries and oth-

ers, and work to reestablish basic confidence in American purposes and the wisdom of U.S. policy. It is a daunting though not insurmountable challenge.

The author's views as expressed in this paper are his own. The East-West Center does not take institutional positions on policy issues.

NOTES

1. For example: "I think our troops ought to be used to help overthrow a dictator when it's in our best interests." George W. Bush, second presidential debate, October 11, 2000.

2. For example, in the second debate Bush also said, rather less prophetically: "But I'm going to be judicious as to how to use the military. It needs to be in our vital interest, the mission needs to be clear, and the exit strategy obvious."

3. "U.S. Cancels Plan to Launch Military Operation in RI," Antara news agency (New York), February 10, 2002.

GEORGE W. BUSH AND ASIA: RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

CHAN HENG CHEE

On November 2, America went to the polls to elect the president for the next four years. President George W. Bush was re-elected with a clear majority in the popular vote as well as the electoral college. I can safely say that never has a presidential election been so closely watched internationally and never has the world been so partisan. It may be the worst kept secret in Washington that Asia has always preferred incumbents—whether Republican or Democrat. It is just easier to work with people you have established relationships with. It normally takes a new administration a year or a year plus to get a good or right policy towards Asia in place. Sometimes it takes a whole four years. But in this election, there were preferences, if not among the governments, certainly among the people, the man-in-the-street. At least the Pew Global Attitudes Project survey tells us so.

When I accepted the invitation to pen this essay, I did not know which candidate would win. I would have written the same piece anyway because what I have to say holds true no matter who won. I believe the Bush administration's Asia policy was good in the first term, and I intend to offer some thoughts on what it can do in the second term. Had it been a Kerry administration, I would still have said, the Bush administration's Asia policy was good, and would have suggested this is what a Kerry administration can do next. I am taking this opportunity to make a pitch. I have always said to non-Americans that America is a great place for a diplomat to work. American officials and policy wonks actually ask us,

Chan Heng Chee has been Singapore's ambassador to the United States since July 1996. Previously, she was the executive director of the Singapore International Foundation, director of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, and the founding director of the Institute of Policy Studies. Ambassador Chan has published numerous articles and books on politics in Singapore, Southeast Asia, and international security.

“What should we be doing?” or “What would you like to see us do that we are not doing?” They will give the foreign diplomat a polite hearing. Unilateral or not, this is not a bad posture at all.

Foreign policy in the Bush administration can be divided into two phases—foreign policy before 9/11 and foreign policy after 9/11. After 9/11 the context became difficult in some countries in my region. Even so, relationships were reasonably managed.

First some general remarks about Asia. The Bush administration handled Asia well from the start except for China. It had a good pronounced policy and it had good personnel. We know that personnel is policy. The policy was defined by a paper authored by Richard Armitage, Paul Wolfowitz *et al.* which contained the key words that the United States would “give emphasis to allies and friends.” Allies like Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, and Thailand, and friends like Singapore, Indonesia, Taiwan and New Zealand. The U.S.-Japan alliance was regarded as the foundation of peace, security and prosperity. All the allies and friends felt comfortable with the United States. In the Iraq war, all of America’s Asian allies supported the U.S., with logistical assistance, boots on the ground, and humanitarian assistance. Singapore, less than an ally and more than a friend, offered a Landing Ship Tank (LST), a KC-135, a Charlie-130 for short terms of duty, renewable. We also sent police trainers to Baghdad and to Jordan.

9/11 was also good for Asia in that it created opportunities for new partnerships and coalitions, although it also put pressure on many of the governments in their bilateral relationship with the United States. Southeast Asia is home to 250 million Muslims. There are three Muslim-majority countries and the rest have a Muslim minority. While the terrorist attack on the twin towers on 9/11 drew universal condemnation, as time went on, the war on terrorism was seen, rightly or wrongly, by Muslims to be targeted against Muslims. The Iraq war further aroused anti-American sentiments and created an anti-unilateralism backlash even among people who were not Muslims.

Leaving aside China and the EP-3 incident, which I will return to later, the first four months of the Bush administration was a new era for Asia because President Bush had in fact received the following Asian heads of state and government in the first half year: Japan, South Korea, China and Singapore. It never happened under the Clinton administration

or previous administrations that a Southeast Asian country would be so early in the queue. Following Singapore were the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia. Malaysia visited in 2002. Many countries have revisited many times. There have also been numerous phone calls between President Bush and Japan, China and South Korea. This bespeaks the state of relations between the U.S. and allies and major powers. President Bush telephoned President Megawati every now and again. President Bush also made a major trip to four Southeast Asian countries after the 2003 APEC summit in Bangkok, which is something quite remarkable by American presidential standards.

Now let us think about Northeast Asia. The most impressive development in Asia policy is the change that has taken place in the U.S.-China relationship. Initially, the Bush administration cast China as “strategic competitor,” and given the conservative GOP wing’s support of Taiwan, the bilateral relationship was unpredictable at all times. In fact U.S.-China relations got off to a rocky start because of the EP-3 incident. But I believe this was fortunate it happened early in the administration because this confrontation brought both sides back from the brink. After this incident, President Bush made it clear good relations with China were important to him. He did not see China as an adversary. I believe he set limits to how “off-keel” the relationship can get.

9/11 created opportunities for China and the U.S. to work together. And with the U.S. tied down in Iraq, the U.S. gave the lead to China to handle the North Korean issue in the six-party talks. This opened up a new area of strategic cooperation between the two powers. But economic interests are pulling the two countries together as well—each looks on the other as a major market and a source of capital flow—U.S. FDI to China and Chinese investments in the U.S. bond markets. It is now clear to the U.S. that it is necessary to bring China into the G8, together with EU and Japan, to maintain stability and credibility in the international economic system. Today both the United States and China describe relations as never being better. It was Secretary of State Colin Powell who said, not since 1972 have relations been this good between the United States and China.

But the question of Taiwan looms large in U.S.-China relations as the volatility in the cross-Strait situation intensifies. We are now in a sensitive phase of cross-Strait developments—how the two sides will resolve the

issue and what the U.S. does during this period is crucially important. So far the U.S. seems to have played a positive role in talking to both China and Taiwan. The key is to avoid miscalculation on all sides.

The Japanese would also attest to a good relationship between the U.S. and Japan. In fact under the Bush administration the U.S.-Japan security alliance deepened immeasurably. There is no doubt to us in Asia that the personal chemistry between President Bush and Prime Minister Koizumi has solidified the relationship, but U.S.-Japan relations go beyond personal chemistry. It is structural self-interest. Under the Bush administration, Japan, a trusted ally, has used the opportunity of working with the U.S. to change its strategic culture through deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq. The question is how and where the U.S.-Japan alliance will go with the defense posture review under consideration. There are indications that Japan is thinking seriously about enhancing its capabilities in defense and security.

The handling of the denuclearization of North Korea is assessed by many as less than successful because the Bush administration has been inflexible. But frankly this is a very difficult issue and not easily subject to a solution. The administration has been quietly more flexible than the rhetoric suggests on many issues. But it is difficult to define success in the negotiations. No party is in a hurry to settle and the objectives are still wide apart. Now that the presidential elections are over, there may be greater incentive to move the process. It is an issue the Bush second term will still be wrestling with.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

Turning to Southeast Asia, the administration began well, giving attention to bilateral relationships. National security adviser Condoleezza Rice and deputy national security adviser Steve Hadley came into office wanting to help strengthen ASEAN. They came from a European experience and believed in confidence-building mechanisms. They wanted to be helpful with ASEAN, except ASEAN wanted to do things its own way, and the ASEAN countries were too engrossed with their individual recoveries. Whatever room existed was hampered by U.S. policy on Myanmar, which limited what could be done with the regional organization. I have been saying so often in different forums that the U.S. should

not hold ASEAN hostage to Myanmar. ASEAN is an important partner of the United States. There are bigger stakes at issue here.

After 9/11 Southeast Asia was seen through the prism of the war on terrorism, and that became the main focus of bilateral relationships. Once the war in Iraq started, there was far less consistent attention given to ASEAN as the administration was distracted elsewhere. The exception was the launch of the Enterprise for ASEAN Initiative in Los Cabos in 2002, and the completion of the U.S.-Singapore FTA in 2003. In 2004, the United States launched bilateral FTA talks with Thailand.

There is unhappiness in the Muslim countries in the region with the handling of the Iraq war, the stalling of the Middle East peace process, and the security measures to deal with the terrorist threats, which seem targeted at Muslims. But though pressured by the ground, the governments are still ready to work towards the best possible relationship with the United States and with President Bush.

WHAT NEXT FOR ASIA IN THE SECOND TERM?

What will President George W. Bush's Asia policy be like in the second term? What would we in Asia like to see? I said at the start of these remarks that I would like to make a pitch. Let me put down my wish list, and let me emphasize, this is *my* wish list.

At the top of the agenda, the second Bush administration should continue to play a stabilizing role in the cross-Strait issue: The ground is shifting and the window is closing. The United States is one country that simultaneously carries weight with Taiwan to instill caution and can talk to China. The U.S. clearly does not want to be drawn into a conflict it does not wish for. President Bush has by his clarity and leadership helped to ease the tension. He should continue to act in the same direction. On North Korea, I will give a pass since persons wiser than I are giving attention to this and I have no special expertise on this subject.

The agenda for Southeast Asia in the second term should be directed to addressing the concerns of the larger community of mainstream Muslims in the region. U.S. policy should be broadened beyond terrorism, sharing intelligence and hunting down terrorists and Islamic militants. U.S. engagement must be multifaceted—stepping up economic assistance, capacity-building, and support for long-term growth and sta-

bility and strengthening institution-building. This will ultimately undermine the terrorists' agenda. But this exercise must be accompanied by a good public communications program to ensure you earn the goodwill you deserve. I am struck by the fact that in FY 2002, U.S. assistance to ASEAN under USAID was \$294.58 million, in FY 2003 it was \$249.96 million, and in FY 2004 it is \$279.21 million. This does not include IMET training or other counter-terrorism assistance to specific countries like the Philippines, but the public perception is that the U.S. is not doing very much.

In following this program, the United States would be willy-nilly paying more consistent attention to Southeast Asia. More importantly, you would be engaging with Southeast Asian Muslims, who are arguably less hostile than Middle East Muslims towards the West and the United States. There are better prospects for success in winning back the hearts and minds of the Muslim community in Southeast Asia. Success in Southeast Asia will provide the U.S. with a bridge to Muslims elsewhere.

Finally I would ask the Bush administration to consider promoting a Partnership for Prosperity and Progress which builds on the Enterprise for ASEAN Initiative. This Partnership should be inclusive and provide a broad vision towards strengthening the ASEAN region. It would tell us the U.S. is ready to engage Southeast Asia with new vigor. Top that with a U.S.-ASEAN summit once in four years. There is a new multilateral game being played in the region. China is good at it. India is entering into it. Japan played it well in the 1980s and 1990s but seems less focused on it now.

In the end, I believe the United States would want to see a strong ASEAN develop, because a strong and cohesive region can better maintain the peace and stability, holding its own in the fluid and changing dynamics of the region.

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION AND EAST ASIA: DOES THE UNITED STATES NEED A NEW REGIONAL STRATEGY?

JONATHAN D. POLLACK

As George W. Bush's first term draws to a close, U.S. strategy in East Asia remains very much a work in progress. Although Asia and the Pacific have long been vital to American interests, the Bush administration has focused primarily on U.S. security policy, not on an overarching strategy that fully links the United States to the regional future. Unlike its two immediate predecessors, including the Bush 41 Department of Defense under Dick Cheney, the administration has not issued an official Asia-Pacific strategy report. To varying degrees, the White House's September 2002 national security strategy document and defense planning studies have assessed the regional dimensions of American policy.¹ In addition, speeches, interviews, and congressional testimony have enabled State Department officials to identify longer-term priorities and the recurrent challenges of policy management related to Asia.² But there has been no systematic enunciation of America's longer-term stakes in the Asia-Pacific region; the underpinnings and expectations of a larger strategy; and how the United States proposes to achieve its long-term objectives. Ensuring regional stability, maintaining America's military advantage, and enhancing various political, economic, and security partnerships seem largely self-evident goals. But how does the United States propose to advance its larger interests amidst East Asia's accelerating transformation?

Jonathan D. Pollack is professor of Asian and Pacific studies and chairman of the Asia-Pacific Studies Group at the Naval War College. He has published extensively on China's political-military strategy, U.S.-China relations, U.S. policy in Asia and the Pacific, and East Asian technological and military development. His recent publications include *Strategic Surprise? U.S.-China Relations in the Early 21st Century*.

The absence of a major policy statement on East Asia in the longer term begs an additional question: does the Bush administration even see the need for a regional strategy? The answer is not as obvious as it first seems. To some observers and perhaps some policymakers, since the United States has enunciated a global strategy, regional concerns are subsumed within it, even if the administration acknowledges that one size does not fit all. But this argument is not tenable. Unlike Europe, Asia and the Pacific lacks institutionalized, region-wide political-security arrangements in which the U.S. is a core member. Unlike Latin America, East Asia is geographically distant from American territory, and there are other major powers potentially capable of contesting U.S. predominance. Unlike South Asia, there is no pattern of regional relations defined by a dominant power (albeit one counterbalanced by a “frontline state” in the campaign against terrorism), and the potential of a strategic rivalry persists between regional major powers. Unlike the Greater Middle East and Southwest Asia, there is no armed conflict underway within the region, obviating the need to commit U.S. forces to current military operations. To be sure, the U.S. commitment to the region is hardly trivial. Major American military forces have been deployed in the West Pacific for more than a half century, and (even with the mounting demands on U.S. forces elsewhere) American maritime and air power in the Pacific will be augmented in coming years. But the Bush administration has also repeatedly emphasized the need to outgrow the military legacies of the cold war, including in East Asia. Something is therefore missing in U.S. regional policy, but the administration (beyond the articulation of broad regional goals) has not felt compelled to define it.

The missing pieces in U.S. strategy are explained in part by the war in Iraq and the parallel preoccupation with counter-terrorism and counter-proliferation. However, the latter two issues have a definite East Asian component, as evidenced by the reemergence of the North Korean nuclear issue and Southeast Asia’s prospective role as a second front against terrorism. In view of the new threats identified in the administration’s national security strategy (i.e., “terrorists of global reach” potentially armed with weapons of mass destruction provided by “rogue states”),³ the Asia-Pacific region should be near the forefront of American policy concerns. The lesser priority attached to these regional threats suggests two possibilities: either the presumed risks to American

security in these two cases are more manageable than threats in other locales, or U.S. national security strategy is not as universal in scope as the administration asserts.

Without question, the Bush administration's open-ended preoccupations with Iraq and with Islamic radicalism have deferred or delayed full attention to regional strategy. Some major policy issues (especially related to China, Taiwan, and North Korea) have also evolved in unexpected ways. However, there has been no effort to reconcile these changes with the original policy goals outlined by the administration. To address these issues, this essay will: (1) review U.S. policy priorities at the outset of the Bush administration; (2) assess the administration's record in achieving these objectives; and (3) speculate about the implications for the coming presidential term. We will focus on Northeast Asia, inasmuch as it remains the central preoccupation in U.S. regional strategy, although many of these judgments also pertain elsewhere in the region.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S INCOMING AGENDA

Very early in the administration, senior U.S. officials outlined numerous policy goals in East Asia, frequently drawing a direct contrast with Clinton administration policy.⁴ Incoming policymakers argued that the unambiguous assertion of American power and clarity and consistency in defining policy objectives would supplant the supposed laxity, idealism, and squeamishness of its predecessor. Reasserting U.S. sovereign prerogatives; rebuilding America's major bilateral alliances; preparing for a nascent strategic competition with China; and transforming American regional military strategy were all deemed integral to achieving larger policy goals. These statements reflected a power-oriented view of international politics deeply held by the administration's senior leadership.⁵ Multilateralism would remain a core component of trade liberalization strategy, with globalization and democratization also deemed major gains to long-term American interests. But these processes would be subordinated to U.S. leadership and military predominance.

The Bush administration's incipient strategy entailed four principal priorities: (1) an appreciable enhancement of the U.S.-Japan alliance, predicated on Tokyo moving much closer to the status of a "normal power"; (2) de-emphasizing the U.S.-China strategic partnership devel-

oped during President Clinton's second term, with a parallel effort to build closer security ties with Taiwan, including far more permissive arms sales to the island; (3) a major redefinition of U.S. regional military strategies intended to reduce the presumed vulnerabilities of U.S. forces, while enhancing the capacity to project American military power for new threats and unanticipated contingencies; and (4) deferring the Clinton administration's efforts to accelerate normalization with North Korea. Plans to enhance ballistic missile defense (based on the U.S. withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty) also posited the need to counter a projected long-range North Korean missile capability to reach American soil. All these shifts presupposed a much more threat-driven regional environment, in contrast to the Clinton Administration's supposed emphasis on East Asia's economic transformation, political engagement, and region-wide institution building.

ASSESSING THE POLICY RECORD

Japan

The administration's largest successes have been with Japan, especially Tokyo's readiness to advocate a much more vigorous political-security role. These changes were first evident in the immediate aftermath of September 11, with Prime Minister Koizumi (arguably the Japanese leader enjoying the closest relations with an American president since Yasuhiro Nakasone) intent on avoiding political costs comparable to those incurred by Japan during the first Persian Gulf War. By rapidly passing domestic legislation authorizing Tokyo to contribute logistics support to military operations in Afghanistan, Japan established a precedent for "out of area" operations, culminating in the deployment of Japanese peacekeepers to Iraq in 2004. Though these contributions were justified in terms of larger international responsibilities, Koizumi clearly understood how Japanese actions would cement much closer alliance relations with Washington.

These actions also reflected deeper changes within the Japanese leadership and in public opinion. The nation's security goals and budgetary priorities were outlined in two major policy reports released in late 2004. In October, a senior advisory group reporting to the prime minister issued a

forceful assessment of Japan's future security requirements, connecting Japan's aspirations for a more prominent international role to the building of "a multi-functional flexible defense force."⁶ These more diverse threats included terrorism, nuclear and ballistic missile proliferation, instability on the Korean peninsula, and the prospect of armed conflict in the Taiwan Strait. North Korea was explicitly identified as a primary threat to Japanese security, and the authors also deemed China's enhanced military power a growing concern. The connection between these issues and major U.S. policy priorities was hardly accidental. The advisory panel argued that Japan could not remain a bystander if it expected to provide for its own self-defense, fulfill alliance commitments to the United States, and address broader international responsibilities.

In December, Japan's National Security Council and Cabinet approved a new five-year military expenditure plan, emphasizing increased allocations for intelligence, missile defense, information technology, and counter-terrorist capabilities, with corresponding decreases in the size of Japan's conventional forces.⁷ The near-simultaneous publication of these two policy documents moved Japan much closer to the definition of a "normal state." This goal had been explicitly put forward in a major U.S. policy report on U.S.-Japanese alliance relations released a month prior to the U.S. presidential election of November 2000, with many of the signatories soon to assume senior positions in the Bush administration.⁸ The report's authors argued that Japan's aspirations to a larger international role would necessitate modifications of the "no war" clause in Japan's postwar constitution as well as Tokyo's readiness to move toward collective security responsibilities. These aspirations included Japan's push for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, which the Bush administration also endorsed. The advisory group report to the prime minister alluded indirectly to American expectations, describing Japan's contributions to the "international community" and characterizing the U.S.-Japan alliance as a "public good" for the countries of the Asia-Pacific region.⁹

These developments will reportedly culminate with the February 2005 publication of a new U.S.-Japan Joint Security Statement. This statement will obligate both countries to fuller military collaboration within Japan (including joint use of military facilities); consolidation and realignment in Japan of U.S. ground and air capabilities presently based in Washington State and in Guam; and Tokyo's more explicit concurrence with U.S. "out

of area” military operations.¹⁰ Attention has again focused on reducing the footprint of U.S. forces in Japan, especially the pervasive American military presence on Okinawa. This issue has long roiled local sensibilities, and Prime Minister Koizumi has also identified it as a core concern. Despite a 1996 bilateral agreement in which the U.S. pledged to relocate major facilities on Okinawa, movement on these issues has been glacial. It remains to be seen whether and how the United States will address this issue, since any resolution acceptable to Japan is likely to entail appreciable liabilities and costs that could limit future U.S. military options. But the essence of the Japanese–U.S. strategic understanding seems clear: in exchange for Tokyo endorsing shifts in U.S. global military strategy and in consenting to the enhanced American use of Japanese facilities, the United States has reiterated its commitment to Japan as its primary strategic ally in Asia, endorsed the development of a much more robust, future-oriented Japanese military force, and validated Japan’s aspirations to a more substantial international role. However, this strategic understanding does not address how an augmented U.S.–Japan alliance will affect the strategies of both countries toward North Korea and China. These are issues of singular importance to East Asia in the longer term, and therefore constitute vital unfinished business in a second Bush term.

China and Taiwan

The largest changes in U.S. regional strategy over the past four years have involved relations with China, and corresponding changes in U.S. policy toward Taiwan. In the early months of the administration, the shift toward a more arms-length relationship with China seemed inexorable. The collision of a Chinese naval aircraft with a U.S. EP-3 reconnaissance aircraft near Hainan on April 1, 2001, underscored the latent potential for adversarial relations. In the aftermath of the collision and subsequent detention of the U.S. crew, the State Department and the Defense Department drew strikingly different conclusions about the incident. To State, timely crisis management with Chinese counterparts opened channels of communication with Beijing that have grown wider ever since. To Defense, the EP-3 incident warranted a near-total freeze in U.S.–China military-to-military relations, a much more forward-leaning policy toward Taiwan, and a specific policy statement of the longer-term risks posed by an ascendant China with malign intentions toward the United States. The Pentagon’s

major strategy document of September 2001 made cryptic reference to “an [Asian] military competitor with a formidable resource base” seeking to deny U.S. regional access “from the Bay of Bengal to the Sea of Japan.”¹¹ Despite this obscure characterization, China’s identity was not even thinly disguised. By the early spring, the Department of Defense had also opened the sluice gates on arms sales to Taipei (including proposed sales of submarines previously denied Taiwan), and President Bush had stated publicly that the United States would do “whatever it takes” to ensure Taiwan’s self-defense capabilities. After only three months in office, the administration had seemingly fulfilled its stated intention to supplant long-standing U.S. “strategic ambiguity” toward Taiwan with “strategic clarity.”

However, there has been a remarkable turnaround in Sino-American relations ever since. Space limitations preclude a detailed review of the administration’s policy reappraisal and its larger policy consequences.¹² Although latent elements of a longer-term Sino-American competition still persist, these possibilities have been subordinated to complementary and far more immediate needs of both leaderships, triggered in part by September 11 but now moving well beyond it. President Bush has traversed appreciable political and psychological distance from his initial wariness toward China and warmth toward Taiwan, with the president’s strategic shift evident across a full range of administration policies. Military-to-military relations remain a partial exception to this larger pattern, although they have slowly resumed since 2001. Thus, with the exception of much enhanced U.S.-Taiwan military ties and more equivocal U.S.-China military relations, President Bush has extended and enlarged upon Clinton’s China policy.

Senior administration officials have also made clear that the U.S. commitment to Taiwan was not intended as a blank check, and did not extend to President Chen Shui-bian provoking needless tension or outright conflict with Beijing to advance his domestic political goals. These sentiments were fully and forcefully evident in the April 2004 congressional testimony of Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs James Kelly, marking the 25th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act.¹³ While Kelly reiterated continued U.S. support for the island’s democracy, prosperity, and security, his message was clear: the United States would not countenance unilateral changes in the *status quo* on either side of the

Taiwan Strait. These sentiments were reinforced by Secretary of State Powell in October and by Deputy Secretary of State Armitage in December. Their respective statements disassociated the United States from any effort to characterize Taiwan as a sovereign state, moved administration policy closer to Beijing's preferred characterization of "one China," and again made U.S. commitments to the defense of Taiwan more conditional. Though ambiguity had not fully returned to U.S. policy, clarity was again far less pronounced.

However, the latent contradictions in U.S. strategy persist. Chinese officials continue to object vociferously to Washington's "two track" policy of enhanced U.S. ties with both Beijing and Taipei. China has drawn particular objection to expanded U.S. weapons sales to Taiwan and to enhanced collaboration between U.S. uniformed personnel and their Taiwanese counterparts. The inherent tensions in policy will not be bridged anytime soon, and will require deft policy management by Washington to avoid entrapment in the policy agendas of either Taipei or Beijing or (even worse) an acute crisis. The impending departure from government of the entire top tier of State Department personnel charged with overseeing U.S.-China relations underscores the challenge that the Bush administration will face during its second term.

In addition, there has been a larger transformation in Beijing's global and regional roles that makes any characterization of China as a looming threat to U.S. strategic interests far less compelling. China's extraordinary economic dynamism has accelerated the process of integration and accommodation with nearly all its neighbors, and beyond. (The singular exception to this trend is Sino-Japanese relations, highlighting that long-term regional stability will not be possible without a larger strategic understanding among Washington, Tokyo, and Beijing.) China's leaders are increasingly prepared to give America a very wide berth in its global strategy, provided that U.S. policy does not challenge fundamental Chinese policy interests. Chinese officials repeatedly emphasize that they are not seeking to challenge or undermine the U.S. regional role. With China now a member of the World Trade Organization and with Beijing a stakeholder in the emerging regional order, the possibility of marginalizing (let alone containing) Chinese power is increasingly illusory. The open-ended U.S. focus on Iraq and international terrorism has provided the Bush administration with additional incentives to avoid a near-term

Sino-American strategic rivalry. The administration is also increasingly dependent on China's contributions to multilateral diplomacy on the North Korean nuclear issue.

However, China's enhanced regional power and influence has also encompassed a significant augmentation of Chinese military capabilities. The pace of PLA development has accelerated significantly in recent years, including missile, maritime and air capabilities that pose a direct threat to Taiwan's well-being, and that would appreciably raise the costs and risks of any prospective U.S. intervention on Taiwan's behalf.¹⁴ China's military modernization does not portend an inevitable crisis in the Taiwan Strait, but it has appreciably raised the costs and consequences should one occur. The administration's efforts to caution both Beijing and Taipei against any unilateral actions need to be viewed in this context. However, with or without a Taiwan crisis, Beijing is becoming a much more consequential military power. The longer-term implications of China's political-military emergence clearly require careful consideration by the Bush administration, doubly so given Japan's continued anxieties about its future strategic position in relation to a rising China. The necessity to address this issue with both of East Asia's major powers seems self-evident.

U.S. Regional Defense Strategy

The reshaping of U.S. regional defense strategy is the third principal leg in Bush administration policy, with the process still in its gestational stages. In early 2001, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld initiated an intensive review of American military priorities, specifically geared to building a military for the 21st century. This issue had surfaced during the 2000 campaign for the White House, so the review had clear presidential sanction. Rumsfeld argued that U.S. forces were ill prepared to address a wide range of potential future threats, many of them wholly detached from extant military planning. He also sought to maximize America's presumed technological advantage in future defense strategy, with particular emphasis on increased speed, lethality, flexibility, and precision.¹⁵ The DoD policy reviews engendered enormous controversy within the military services and among defense strategists, and continue to be hotly debated in light of subsequent events in Iraq.

The Pentagon's senior leadership envisioned the Korean peninsula as a principal test case of a new strategy. During the spring and summer of

2003, the U.S. and the ROK announced preliminary agreement on the redeployment of major U.S. combat units stationed near the 38th Parallel.¹⁶ DoD argued that the “tripwire” concept for U.S. forces had long outlived its utility, with no realistic possibility that a second Korean war would be a carbon copy of the first. U.S. defense officials contended that the presumed vulnerabilities of U.S. forces to North Korean artillery and missile attacks could be minimized by redeploying these forces well south of the Han River, while also exploiting new technologies and operational concepts to counter the North’s actions. In addition, American planners argued that defense responsibilities could be increasingly entrusted to ROK forces, thereby freeing up U.S. assets for more pressing needs, as well as consolidating America’s Korean deployments in a lesser number of locations.

In June 2004, American officials notified South Korean officials that the United States planned to withdraw approximately 12,500 troops from Korea by the end of 2005, or approximately one-third of the American forces currently deployed on the peninsula.¹⁷ ROK planners had anticipated that the 2003 redeployments would ultimately be accompanied by troop withdrawals, but the process was unfolding much more rapidly than Seoul expected, beginning with the mid-May announcement of the pull-out of the 2nd Combat Brigade of the 2nd Infantry Division. (The brigade quietly redeployed to Iraq in August, and additional units were scheduled for redeployment to Iraq in December.) But the June notification reached much deeper into U.S. combat strength, constituting the largest withdrawals from the peninsula in over three decades. In the Pentagon’s view, the United States could ill afford open-ended, static deployments of major combat forces in areas well removed from active hostilities, doubly so given that ROK forces were judged capable of fulfilling missions previously performed by U.S. forces.

The Pentagon had thus challenged the long-held shibboleth that a U.S. forward-deployed force of 100,000 personnel (with nearly 80 percent of these forces in Korea and Japan) was the irreducible embodiment of the American regional security commitment. Defense planners insist that these withdrawals in no way preclude the projection of overwhelming coercive power in the event of renewed hostilities. But the expectation of the open-ended deployment of major U.S. ground combat capabilities on the peninsula is no longer relevant. Secretary Rumsfeld also hopes to uti-

lize the peninsula as an air and sea hub for unspecified regional contingencies. This assumes that U.S. forces remaining on the peninsula will be increasingly “dual capable,” and that the ROK will ultimately concur in a shift of American strategy away from dedicated peninsular missions. American maritime and air assets would increasingly focus on long-range power projection, as evidenced by the buildup of air and submarine capabilities on Guam and active consideration to deploying an additional aircraft carrier in the Pacific, most likely in Hawaii. The U.S. tilt toward enhanced alliance relations with Japan can be seen in this light, as well.

In the event that these defense shifts are fully realized, Korean defense planners foresee a growing risk that the peninsula will be marginalized in U.S. regional security priorities. For now, the Korean leadership does not want to endanger bilateral security cooperation, and it has gone to ample lengths to accommodate American expectations, albeit after tough bargaining with Washington over the costs and timing of troop redeployments and the pace of U.S. withdrawals. Equally important, the ROK's August 2004 decision to send an additional 3,000 non-combat personnel to Iraq has met with the administration's strong approval. (Korea now has the third largest foreign military contingent in Iraq, following the United States and the United Kingdom, and these deployments have already been extended into late 2005.) In the weeks immediately following the ROK's August decision to deploy additional forces to Iraq, the United States agreed to slow U.S. troop withdrawals from the peninsula, with the process now extended by an additional three years. There seems little question that Korean policymakers drew a direct connection between these two decisions.

Viewed in a larger sense, the troop withdrawals and the declared shifts in defense strategy reflect deeper policy changes that seem likely to redefine the U.S. regional military presence in the years to come. There is much that is commendable and long overdue in the Bush administration's readiness to revisit the cold war “legacy force” in Korea; it has persisted more by inertia than by design or need. But many of these changes have been announced in preemptory fashion, in the absence of full consultation and agreement with the ROK. Without a straightforward statement of the ultimate purposes of such change—including practical military necessity—larger suspicions will persist that an undisclosed strategic design underlies U.S. actions. Crafting sustainable alliance bargains for the longer term will thus remain a pivotal challenge in a second Bush term.

North Korea

No regional issue has consumed more time and energy of senior Asia policymakers in the Bush administration than North Korea, and it remains highly debatable what the administration has to show for it. Three specific policy developments during this period warrant particular mention: (1) the abrupt collapse of the U.S.-DPRK Agreed Framework in late 2002; (2) successive rounds of multilateral diplomacy during 2003-2004 to end Pyongyang's renewed nuclear weapons activities; and (3) the establishment of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) to interdict possible transfers of WMD technologies and delivery systems.¹⁸ The larger issues that triggered the renewed U.S.-North Korea confrontation in the summer of 2002 remain wholly unresolved. At that time, the Bush administration concluded that Pyongyang had undertaken a covert uranium enrichment program to revive its dormant nuclear weapons activities, leading to the cancellation of U.S. heavy fuel oil deliveries to the North and Pyongyang's decision to resume its plutonium-based weapons program. The DPRK continues to deny the existence of an enrichment program. The United States repeatedly insists that Pyongyang retains both options for fissile material production, though it acknowledges that the site of any enrichment effort remains undetected. Washington therefore asserts that Pyongyang is obligated to full disclosure and dismantlement of the entire spectrum of its nuclear activities.

It is remarkable how little either of the principals has budged from the positions each put forward in the first weeks following the renewed nuclear confrontation. Establishment of the six-party talks in Beijing has provided a venue for exploring ideas to resolve the nuclear issue, and some representatives at the discussions have intimated that this process might ultimately provide an opportunity to explore future security arrangements in Northeast Asia. Successive rounds of the talks have entailed discussion, consultation, and the tabling of proposals by all participants, but only the most passing hints of an actual negotiation. The United States continues to focus on the maintenance of a united front with China, the ROK, Japan, and Russia to forestall nuclear weapons development on the peninsula. In a small display of flexibility at the June 2004 round of talks, U.S. officials argued that an unambiguous commitment by the North to forego its nuclear weapons potential (including nuclear energy applications for civilian purposes) would permit initial consultations among the other parties on responding to the North's security, economic, and energy needs. North Korea would then be obligat-

ed to proceed with nuclear dismantlement before it would garner any significant benefits. In Pyongyang's view, however, America's "hostile policy" compelled the North to resume its nuclear program, so American security assurances and resumed energy deliveries are required before it would again freeze its nuclear development and begin to discuss the conditions under which it would yield its "nuclear deterrent capability." Pyongyang also believes that the interests of the other four participants in the nuclear talks diverge from those of the U.S., possibly enabling North Korea to improve relations with each separately, apart from the standoff with Washington.

Does the renewed confrontation therefore constitute a "crisis?" Neither the United States nor North Korea has attached particular urgency to resolving the nuclear issue, with both states appearing to believe that they can play for time and await unilateral concessions from the other side. The contradictions in U.S. policy are especially striking. The administration's September 2002 national security strategy deemed prevention of the development and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (in particular nuclear weapons) by "rogue states" the preeminent imperative of U.S. security strategy. Unlike the case of Iraq, the Bush administration asserts that a North Korean nuclear capability would threaten Pyongyang's neighbors more than the United States. The administration also contends that China and South Korea, not the U.S., have far more influence over North Korea decision making.

Despite such claims, what courses of action are available to the United States should it be unable to forestall the credible development of a North Korean nuclear capability? Short of preventive war or the collapse of the DPRK regime, and with the Bush administration repeatedly rejecting Pyongyang's calls for another U.S.-DPRK bilateral agreement, Washington would have to acknowledge its inability to prevent nuclear weapons development in the North, or at least admit the near certainty of a virtual nuclear weapons capability. The United States would then focus its primary energies on containing and defending against any presumptive nuclear threat, while also seeking to prevent the flow of nuclear material or technology in or out of North Korea. During the fall of 2004, this damage-limiting approach was increasingly evident in Bush administration policy. The U.S. 7th Fleet initiated a missile defense early warning mission in the Sea of Japan in September, and American forces conducted interdiction exercises south of Tokyo in October.¹⁹ Notably, the mis-

sile defense mission was undertaken by U.S. forces alone (though with the obvious concurrence of Japan), and Tokyo was the only Northeast Asian state that participated in the interdiction exercises (Australia and Singapore are the only other Asia-Pacific members of PSI).

U.S. antipathies toward Pyongyang run very deep, and *vice versa*. North Korea is America's longest-standing adversary in international politics. The wellsprings of national power in the DPRK and its defiant challenges to the imperatives of globalization embody all that the United States deems objectionable in the dwindling number of post-Soviet states. Notwithstanding its isolation, defiance of non-proliferation norms, and acute vulnerabilities, the DPRK has proven resilient and determined. Pyongyang also understands that its ability to inflict immense harm on the ROK and Japan and the risks to regional stability posed by an internal meltdown in the North provide the regime with undeniable policy leverage. It is a repressive state and very possibly an endangered species, but, again, what are the policy alternatives if the North refuses to fold its tent or if it responds militarily to perceived threats to its survival? Indeed, what if the DPRK regime is able to revive its economy through gradual reform and enhanced links to neighboring states, without definitively forgoing its nuclear weapons potential? A North Korean nuclear weapons capability would constitute a profound failure in non-proliferation policy and an ominous turn in regional security. The administration has struggled to reconcile competing policy approaches toward North Korea, but without discernible success. North Korea thus remains a singular piece of unfinished business in U.S. Asia-Pacific policy. Barring significant policy shifts by either Washington or Pyongyang, it threatens to preoccupy the Bush administration as much in its second term as it did in the first.

THE ROAD AHEAD

As the Bush administration's first term draws to a close, the East Asian political and strategic landscape seems appreciably different than in early 2001. September 11 and its aftermath may explain some of these changes, but the deeper reasons concern the transformation underway within the region, not specific shifts in U.S. policy. To a far greater extent than administration spokesmen have acknowledged, regional leaders are increasingly intent on establishing new rules of the game with

Washington, even as both sides of the Pacific have clear incentives to sustain collaboration amidst differences. No regional state wants to be on the receiving end of American power, and nearly all (with the conspicuous exception of North Korea) are prepared to go to ample lengths to remain off the U.S. radar screen. China has confounded expectations by avoiding confrontation with the United States and pursuing a near all-azimuth accommodation within the region and beyond. This unanticipated and very positive development clearly benefits American interests. These changes do not foreclose more contentious relations with China over the longer run, but they deflate a more adversarial U.S. policy over the near- to mid-term. Other trends are far less encouraging. Pyongyang has repeatedly faced down American pressures to yield its nuclear weapons capabilities and weapons potential. U.S. relations with the ROK have been highly stressful at times, reflecting disagreements over the North Korean nuclear issue, generational changes within South Korean politics, and unease in Seoul over changes in the U.S.-ROK defense relationship, independent of the outcome of the nuclear impasse with the North. Taiwan has proven remarkably maladroit in exploiting its initial political opening with the Bush administration, alienating senior American officials in the process. The original Bush policy agenda in Asia has achieved pronounced success only with Japan, although Tokyo no doubt recognizes the liabilities of undue dependence on Washington.

The administration therefore needs to address four principal questions in its future Asia-Pacific strategy: (1) preventing a strategic breakdown or an acute regional crisis; (2) defining a sustainable alliance bargain that goes beyond defense planning; (3) achieving a durable relationship with both China and Japan, while facilitating a larger strategic understanding between the region's two major powers; and (4) more fully linking the U.S. to the region's rapid political and economic transformation, in which China's rise is central. The answers will depend on whether the U.S. seeks new power and responsibility-sharing arrangements with regional states, or defines success primarily by whether others accommodate to American strategic expectations and needs. The United States continues to enjoy unquestioned military primacy within the Asia-Pacific region, and no one is contesting the legitimacy of multilateral institutions and political arrangements that define the current international order. Regional states, however, seem intent on supplementing the extant order through new arrangements to which the

United States is not a party. Washington has little experience as an outsider in regional politics, but this trend attests to the region's increasing self-confidence and political maturation, both goals that the U.S. has long sought.

American primacy cannot guarantee undiminished political influence. Shoehorning the region into a post-September 11 template has proven at best an imperfect fit, with few states prepared to defer fully to new U.S. security imperatives, many of which derived from developments outside the Asia-Pacific region. Incantations of looming dangers have also not convinced regional states of the wisdom of U.S. strategy. To some in the region, the United States is ever more intent on expanding its latitude and freedom of action, selectively abetted by long-standing security partners. But this is not an acceptable long-term outcome to many regional states. The impending departure of Secretary of State Powell and Under Secretary of State Armitage, the senior officials best known in East Asia and most identified with regional consultation and coalition-building, heightens the challenge of building a mutually acceptable policy approach.

It is inconceivable that the administration would welcome either strategic drift or a major regional crisis over the next four years. However, America's military power and security relationships cannot fully address the internal political changes that are reshaping policymaking across the region as a whole. No one disputes the singularity of American military power should there again be a major regional crisis. But U.S. military superiority may prove a depreciating asset, not because U.S. military power is irrelevant, but because it cannot serve as a stand-alone instrument of American influence. In the event of an insufficiently attentive U.S. regional policy, leaders across Asia and the Pacific will increasingly conceptualize the United States as a more distant power that focuses on the region only when vital American interests are at risk. Under such circumstances, the United States may find itself progressively less attuned to the regional future, and hence less able to influence events to its advantage. There is nothing inevitable about such a possibility, but neither should the United States assume that regional states see no alternative other than accommodating to American needs and expectations.

The opinions in this paper are entirely my own, and should not be attributed to the Naval War College, the U.S. Government, or the Department of Defense.

NOTES

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2. For example, see Mitchell B. Reiss, Director of Policy Planning, “Challenges and Opportunities in a Changing Asia,” speech to the Asia Foundation, Washington, DC, May 14, 2004.
3. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, chapter V, 13–14.
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PARTNERS OR COMPETITORS: A CHOICE TO BE MADE

JIA QINGGUO

Like other opposition party candidates during the previous presidential campaigns since the normalization of relations between China and the United States, George W. Bush lashed out at his predecessor's China policy and vowed to change it in fundamental ways. Among other things, he claimed that China is not a strategic partner. Instead, it is a strategic competitor. Again, like other successful opposition party presidential candidates, after coming into office, he ended up in moderating his tones and finding it both necessary and useful to improve relations with China.

The most intriguing thing about the administration's China policy, however, is not that it did not follow up with its campaign promises. Rather it is the contradiction and inconsistency in its conceptualization and implementation. Throughout the last four years, one heard two different voices from the administration: one advocated a candid, constructive and cooperative relationship with China; the other insisted on the need for containment and confrontation with China. Since September 11, against the backdrop of the war against terror, the first voice appears to have prevailed over the latter. However, while the latter voice has remained in the background, it did reassert itself at times and is likely to come back when circumstances change. Four years after the Bush administration came into office, the question whether China is a partner or a competitor still remains unanswered.

Jia Qingguo is professor and associate dean of the School of International Studies at Peking University. He is a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and vice president of the China Association for Asia-Pacific Studies. He has published extensively on U.S.-China relations, cross-Taiwan Strait relations, and Chinese foreign policy.

This essay will first briefly review the evolution of the Bush administration's China policy in the past four years. Then it will try to analyze the major factors shaping this evolution. After that, it will offer a preliminary assessment of the administration's China policy during its first term. Finally, it will speculate on the prospect in the next four years.

BACK TO THE STARTING POINT: BUSH'S CHINA POLICY IN RETROSPECT

During the presidential election campaign in 2000, George W. Bush vehemently denounced Clinton's engagement policy. He condemned the alleged preference of the Clinton administration to deal with China over Japan, the most important ally of the U.S. in Asia, claiming that such a practice compromised U.S. security interests in Asia. He claimed that, given its ideological preference and ill-conceived ambitions, China is a strategic competitor of the United States, not a strategic partner as his predecessor claimed. He also announced that the policy of strategic ambiguity with regard to Taiwan was out of date. If he got elected president, he would clarify the policy so that the U.S. could more effectively protect its interests and help Taiwan defend itself.

Upon entering the White House, President Bush honored his campaign promises by assuming a tougher position on China. He telephoned every major world leader except the Chinese president. His administration was reportedly planning to target more U.S. missiles against China. It attached more importance to preparation for conventional war in East Asia against China and promotion of strategic cooperation with India and Japan. It encouraged Japan to enhance its regional military presence and proposed a "regional" dialogue with South Korea, Japan and Australia. It urged cooperation with Russia on missile defense at the expense of China. It decided to bar Chinese-made products and essentially stopped contacts between the Pentagon and the Chinese military. It violated a twenty-year U.S. policy by agreeing to sell offensive weapons such as submarines to Taiwan. It allowed high-profile visits to the United States by Chen Shui-bian and the Dalai Lama. On top of all this, the administration did not appoint a specialist on China to any senior position in the government.¹

The policy orientation of the new Bush administration on China accentuated its tough posture over the EP-3 incident in April 2001. To

many in Washington, China's objection to U.S. spy missions along the Chinese coast constituted an early warning of China's international strategic orientation: as it grows in power, it is going to expand its security perimeter and deny American access to an ever larger area in the Asia-Pacific region.²

In the aftermath of the EP-3 incident, both sides tried to control the damage to the relationship. President Bush sent Secretary of State Colin Powell to Beijing in July 2001. During the visit, the two countries agreed that it was important to avoid such incidents in the future and pledged to improve relations between the two countries. Also during the visit, the administration dropped the term "strategic competitor" as a description of China.³

However, despite these and other efforts, the Bush administration did not fundamentally change its view of China as a strategic competitor. By the time of the terrorist attacks against the U.S. on September 11, 2001, the Pentagon had not invited the Chinese military attaché to visit for eight months. It did not even feel appropriate to allow the CINCPAC to receive a group of Chinese college teachers in Hawaii in July 2001.⁴ The Pentagon was also busy drafting the new *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, which treated China as a potential threat and outlines measures to cope with it.⁵ Only after 9/11 and continuous demonstration of good will toward the U.S. on the part of the Chinese government did the Bush administration decide to change its previous approach toward China.

Immediately after 9/11, the Chinese government expressed sympathy to the U.S. and took a strong and unambiguous position in support of U.S. efforts to combat international terrorism. It voted in favor of anti-terrorism resolutions in the UN Security Council, supported Pakistan's efforts to cooperate with the U.S. to oppose bin Laden and the Taliban regime of Afghanistan, and shared with the U.S. intelligence information on terrorist networks and activities in the region. It also froze accounts of terrorist suspects in Chinese banks. On top of all this, it agreed to let the U.S. use the Shanghai APEC Summit platform to promote the anti-terrorist cause.⁶ Contrary to the expectations of some Americans, China did all this without any conditions.

These and other cooperative efforts on the part of China eventually evoked favorable reactions from the Bush administration. Secretary Powell acknowledged in Shanghai in October 2001 that the U.S. had been

encouraged by the support of the Chinese government. He said that despite the EP-3 incident earlier in the year, Sino-American relations were back on track. “The Chinese share our resolve to shut down the global terror network linked to Osama bin Laden,” said Gen. Frank Taylor, the State Department’s ambassador-at-large for counter-terrorism. “We’re pleased with the cooperation we have received from China since Sept. 11.”⁷ In his meeting with President Jiang Zemin in Shanghai in October 2001, President Bush thanked China for its clear and firm support for the Americans. He stressed that his administration attached high importance to U.S.-China relations. He also said that China was by no means an enemy of the United States. On the contrary, he viewed China as a friend. And his administration was committed to developing cooperative relations with China.⁸

With regard to the differences between the two countries, President Bush said that his administration was going to deal with them on the basis of mutual respect and candor. Despite the differences within the administration as to how to deal with China, it tried to contain anti-China views. While it refused to endorse China’s intensified efforts to combat Xinjiang separatist forces, it did not make a big issue out of it. President Bush made two trips to China in four months, setting a historical precedent in U.S.-China relations. And the administration successfully hosted Chinese leaders Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao.

As a result of these and other efforts on the part of the two governments, relations between the two countries have significantly improved. To begin with, the two countries have frequent and close contacts at all levels. Leaders of the two countries meet and talk over the phone quite regularly. Lower level officials are in close touch with each other. Even the Pentagon has been engaging in limited exchanges with the People’s Liberation Army now. At the moment, there is no significant communication problem between the two countries.

In the second place, economic relations between the two countries have been thriving, with both sides acquiring an increasing stake in the relationship. According to the U.S. Commerce Department, China-U.S. trade in 2003 amounted to \$191.7 billion, representing 23 percent growth over the year 2002.⁹ According to the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, it stood at \$126.33 billion, 30 percent growth over the previous year.¹⁰ By whatever standards, the trade volume is huge. Fast growth continued in

2004. According to the Chinese embassy in the United States, in the first five months of 2004, China-U.S. trade grew by 34.4 percent over the same period of the previous year.¹¹ By August 2003, U.S. companies had invested in close to 40,000 projects in China, with a contractual value of \$82.548 billion and actualized value of \$45.09 billion. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, China is holding \$122 billion in U.S. Government treasury bonds.¹²

In the third place, the two countries have engaged in cooperation on many substantive issues. Among other things, they have cooperated on the war against terror, efforts to resolve the Korean nuclear crisis, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and fighting against transnational crimes. Most recently the two countries even cooperated in preventing Taiwan separatists' activities from bringing about a military confrontation in the Taiwan Strait.

In the fourth place, the domestic political atmosphere for the relationship has improved. In the United States, the anti-China outcry which used to dominate the media has subsided. The press coverage on China has become more nuanced and balanced. Even the *Washington Times*, which is known for its hard-line coverage of China, has toned down its criticisms of Beijing. In China, popular feeling toward the U.S. has improved. And press coverage of the U.S. has become much less critical than before.

Finally, the two countries have adopted a pragmatic approach to dealing with problems between them. Old problems like trade, human rights, intellectual property rights, Taiwan, Tibet and Falun Gong remain. New problems such as the RMB exchange rate and military-to-military relations between the U.S. and Taiwan have emerged. However, the two countries have handled these problems in a pragmatic way and more effectively than before.

As a result of these and other developments, relations between the two countries are in good shape. Never before since the end of the cold war have the two countries found less to dispute about, or felt it more desirable to keep their differences as much from the public as possible. In his speech on September 5, 2003, Secretary Powell said that relations between China and the U.S. were the best since President Nixon's first visit.¹³

While some Chinese share this sanguine view on the state of the relationship between the two countries,¹⁴ many have been deeply troubled

with the administration's handling of the Taiwan problem. To begin with, the Bush administration has upgraded the level of official contacts with the Taiwan authorities. Among other things, it allowed Taiwan's "foreign minister" and "defense minister" to visit the U.S., and sent the U.S. deputy defense secretary and assistant secretary of state to meet them in Florida in March 2002. In the second place, the Bush administration has increased its arms sales to Taiwan. The most recently discussed package runs up to more than \$18 billion, setting a new record in U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. It has also tried to sell offensive weapons such as submarines to Taiwan, going against the previous administrations' practice of refraining from selling offensive weapons to that island. Finally, the Pentagon has increased its efforts to work with the Taiwan military in an attempt to improve interoperability between the U.S. military and the Taiwan military.

These and other activities on the part of the Bush administration have clearly violated the three communiqués between the two countries and threatened to derail the broader relationship. It is against this backdrop that some in Chinese foreign policy circles argue that the actual state of relations between the two countries is far from being the best in decades. On the contrary, some assert, it may be the worst.

INTERESTS, VALUES, PRIORITIES AND CHOICE

Explaining the Bush administration's China policy during the past four years, one finds that four factors may be of most importance. They are: increasing shared interests, converging values, reduction of priority conflicts, and policy choice on the part of some leaders in the administration.

Increasing shared interests

At the moment, China and the U.S. have a rapidly increasing and important stake in bilateral economic relations. The two countries also have shared interests in promoting market reforms, rule of law, human rights protection and environmental protection in both countries. Their interests even overlap over the Taiwan issue: both sides wish to keep peace in the Taiwan Strait and for that purpose oppose Taiwan separatism.

At the regional level, China and the U.S. have increasing shared interests in promoting stability and prosperity in Asia. Both have the goal of denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Both wish to maintain stability

in the Taiwan Strait. Both support various existing regional security mechanisms and dialogues such as the six-party talks on the Korean nuclear issue, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP).

At the global level, China and the U.S. have shared interests in international stability and prosperity. At bottom, both are important beneficiaries of the current international arrangements. Both support multilateral institutions including the UN, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Both wish to uphold international law.¹⁵ Both want to promote free trade. Both want to strengthen international efforts to fight against terrorism, drug smuggling and illegal migration. Both desire international cooperation to meet various global challenges.

These and other shared interests have provided an expanding material basis for China-U.S. cooperation.

Converging values

After more than 25 years of practicing a policy of openness and reform, China has changed in many ways. Among other things, it has replaced the central planned economy with a market one. It has attached increasing importance to rule of law. It has publicly advocated protection of human rights and has adopted many measures to improve the human rights situation in China. It has also tried to introduce democratic reforms such as nationwide village-level elections and other measures to broaden participation in the selection of leaders at various levels of the Chinese government and in the policy making process. These and other changes on the part of China have narrowed the value differences between the two countries and provided an expanding political basis for China-U.S. cooperation.

Reducing priority conflicts

Before 9/11, the most important source of friction between China and the U.S. came from a conflict in priorities. During the better part of the 1990s and the beginning of this decade, China's national capabilities grew at a rapid pace. The U.S. sought to cope with a perceived security threat from China by applying increasing pressures on China to make it democratic and therefore non-threatening to the United States. However, confronted with rapid and fundamental changes at home, the Chinese gov-

ernment was faced with serious challenges to domestic political stability. U.S. pressures even if benign threatened to undermine the Chinese government's legitimacy and therefore its ability to maintain stability in China. Accordingly, the Chinese government felt cornered and fought back. Facing the Chinese government's resistance, the U.S. government doubled its pressures and made military preparations to contain China in case the pressures failed to work. This led to the Chinese government's greater resistance. This vicious cycle contributed to the deterioration of the relationship during the better part of the 1990s and the months before 9/11.

An unexpected outcome of 9/11 is that it stopped the vicious cycle by altering the U.S. priorities from changing and containing China to waging war against international terrorism. Now that terrorism became the top priority, the U.S. needed all the support it could get from other countries. Wishing to focus its attention and energy to cope with its numerous domestic problems, China could not be happier to take advantage of the opportunity to improve relations with the United States. Subsequently, as the U.S. pressures on China receded, the Chinese government rendered whatever help it could give to the United States. This helped kickstart a new round of positive interactions between the two countries.

Leadership choices

If the previous developments encouraged the Bush administration to take a positive approach toward China, President Bush and some in his administration also played an important role in the process. Even before 9/11, some in the administration believed that it was in the best interests of the U.S. to improve relations with China. For example, during Secretary Powell's visit to China in July 2001, the administration quietly dropped the concept of "strategic competitor." After 9/11, President Bush personally decided to seek a better relationship with China and visited China twice in four months. The story goes that it was largely a result of President Bush's insistence that resumption of military relations between China and the U.S. became possible. More recently, President Bush again took the initiative to restrain the Taiwan separatists. Without these and other actions on the part of President Bush and some of his people, the Bush administration's China policy would have been quite different.

PROS AND CONS

Looking back at the Bush administration's China policy, one finds that it has changed over time: from one that treated China as a "strategic competitor" to one that regards China as a country with which it can work; and from one that stresses helping defend Taiwan whatever it takes to one that emphasizes opposition to Taiwan independence. These and other changes have served U.S. national interests well and contributed to the improvement in relations between China and the United States.

From the U.S. perspective, what ultimately constitutes a good China policy should meet the following three criteria: (1) whether it helps contribute to U.S. prosperity; (2) whether it helps make the U.S. more secure; (3) whether it helps to facilitate liberal and democratic changes in China. Measured by these criteria, the Bush administration's China policy has been rather successful since 9/11.

To begin with, as the previous discussion shows, the post-9/11 Bush administration's China policy has contributed to the development of economic relations with China. There has been much talk about the seemingly huge trade deficit between the two countries. According to U.S. statistics, its trade deficit with China in 2003 amounted to \$124 billion, about 23.2 percent of the U.S. total trade deficit. Even according to the Chinese trade statistics, the U.S. trade deficit came to \$58.6 billion.¹⁶ In part because of this, one hears increasing complaints on the part of some Americans about the U.S. trade deficit with China. They believe that the trade deficit has led to closing of American factories and rising unemployment. Such a view, however, does not square with reality. Just as the U.S.-China Business Council puts it, the deficit is neither the most important barometer of U.S. economic health nor the best measure of the benefits the U.S. gains from trade. Moreover, the size of the imbalance is often overstated, and some analysts tend to understate U.S. exports to China.¹⁷ The reality is that the U.S. has probably gained more than China does in the two-way trade between the two countries.

Moreover, the post-9/11 Bush administration's China policy has contributed to U.S. security. As discussed earlier, the policy has secured China's cooperation in the war against terror. It has encouraged China to cooperate with the U.S. more effectively to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missile technologies. It has also encour-

aged China to play a positive role on the Korean nuclear issue. Finally, by openly expressing its opposition to Taiwan independence, the Bush administration has reduced the chance for the U.S. to face a situation in which it has to make a difficult decision on whether to intervene and fight an extremely destructive war with China, or not to intervene and suffer a serious loss of U.S. credibility in the region.

Finally, the post-9/11 Bush administration's China policy has contributed to liberal and democratic changes in China. The Chinese government has repeatedly stated its intention to make liberal and democratic changes according to Chinese conditions. It would do so whether the U.S. puts pressures on China or not. However, when the U.S. applies pressures on China, it makes it more difficult for China to introduce such changes in part because it is politically objectionable to cave in to U.S. demands even when such demands make sense. As the U.S. pressures decreased after 9/11, the Chinese government felt more at ease to introduce liberal and democratic reforms. Among other things, it has amended China's constitution on the protection of human rights and introduced various measures to make Chinese officials more responsive to the interests and wishes of the common people.

Having said this, one should also note that the Bush administration's China policy has also suffered from inconsistency and contradiction. The inconsistency and contradiction is a reflection both of different views within the Bush administration on China, and of the questionable but broadly shared belief among Americans that they can develop a good relationship with China while maintaining support for Taiwan even when the latter is ruled by people committed to separatism. While the administration has expressed its intention to build a candid, constructive and cooperative relationship with China, it has also done things contrary to that spirit. Among other things, it has been hesitant at best in conducting military-to-military exchanges with China; it has been blocking EU's efforts to lift the arms export ban against China; and it has only put one of the terrorist groups in China on its black list. Most importantly, the administration has upgraded its official relations with Taiwan, sold more and better weapons to the island, and tried to integrate the Taiwan military with the U.S. military. The latter have clearly and seriously violated the three communiqués between the two countries and threaten to derail relations between the two countries altogether. They have also sowed distrust

among the Chinese toward the U.S. and discouraged China from engaging in full cooperation on a whole range of issues.

THE CHOICE YET TO BE MADE

Looking to the future, how China and the U.S. manage their relations is going to become more and more important both for the two countries and for the world as a whole. Both countries will benefit tremendously if they can actually attain a candid, constructive and cooperative relationship. For that to happen, the Bush administration has to make a choice between regarding China as a strategic competitor and treating it as a cooperative partner. The ultimate test is Taiwan. For the Chinese people, the inconsistency and contradiction of the Bush administration's policy suggests that the U.S. has an ulterior motive on Taiwan, that is, to separate the island permanently from China.

Because of history, political and other reasons, the Chinese people attach tremendous importance to national reunification. Under the circumstances, as long as the U.S. refuses to support their aspiration for national reunification, even if in a peaceful manner, the Chinese people have good reason to doubt U.S. strategic intentions vis-à-vis Taiwan. Such doubts clearly affect the deliberation of U.S. policy in Beijing. Whatever differences the foreign policy specialists there may have with regard to how to manage China's relations with the United States, few can say that the U.S. has a benign intention on China as long as the U.S. sells weapons to Taiwan and refuses to endorse China's peaceful unification. Under these circumstances, it is almost impossible to dispel the strategic distrust against the U.S. and attain full cooperation between the two countries.

A cooperative partnership between China and the U.S. would greatly contribute to their respective security and prosperity. China wants to be a cooperative partner with the U.S. Over the years, China has been trying to be a cooperative partner of the United States. Hence, it is up to the U.S. to decide whether it wants to do the same. If it does, it is time for the U.S. to dispel the doubt and publicly support China's peaceful reunification. It is the hope of the Chinese people that the Bush administration will do so in its second term. If this is the case, China and the U.S. will find themselves blessed with an unprecedented opportunity for constructing an enduring cooperative relationship in the best interests of both countries and of the world as a whole.

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BALANCING ACT: BUSH, BEIJING AND TAIPEI

NANCY BERNKOPF TUCKER

Conventional wisdom in Washington at the end of 2004 argued that the policies of the Bush administration on China and Taiwan took a sharp turn away from the first inclinations of George W. Bush and his advisors and returned to the normal path that American presidencies have followed since 1969. Thus, it is said, having condemned Beijing during the campaign season of 1999–2000 and initiated bold new policies toward Taiwan in 2001, Bush came to look more like Bill Clinton or George H.W. Bush or Jimmy Carter than like himself. This view of a fundamentally changed China/Taiwan policy, however, oversimplifies what happened in the first four-year Bush term. By doing so, analysts not only misread the past but risk misunderstanding where the future may lead.

U.S.–China relations, of course, have been transformed as much as any bilateral relationship during the first term of George W. Bush’s presidency. Moving from the hostile talk that cast Beijing as a strategic competitor and a rising power willing to endanger U.S. security and undermine stability in Asia, the administration discovered previously unheralded virtues in Beijing. The decision to set aside the belligerent approach of the presidential campaign and the anti-China views of many core supporters hinged upon the near disaster of the April 2001 EP-3 incident in which a particularly risk-prone, or daring, depending on your point of view, young Chinese fighter pilot harassed an American spy plane on a reconnaissance mission along the Chinese coast. Although there had been a series of similar encounters, the U.S. and China had failed to reach any agreement about avoiding confrontations, and this clash, unlike those

Nancy Bernkopf Tucker is professor of history at Georgetown University’s Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service. She was a Woodrow Wilson Center fellow in 1994–95, and served in the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. embassy in Beijing during the mid-1980s. Her recent publications include *China Confidential* and *Dangerous Strait: The US-Taiwan-China Crisis*.

before it, killed the PLA flyer and forced the U.S. aircraft and crew to seek immediate refuge on the island of Hainan. The crisis itself was bad enough, but the immediate efforts to handle it proved ill-considered and inept on both sides, risking much more serious repercussions. The depths to which Sino-American relations fell made clear that drastic corrective action had to be taken. Secretary of State Colin Powell traveled to China in July 2001 to begin what would probably have been a long, slow process of repairing severely damaged ties.

Reconciliation received a huge boost, however, with the attacks of September 11th. This occurred because the Chinese government offered its sympathies and support —recognizing an opportunity to work with the U.S. as it had when aligned with Washington against the Soviet Union—and because Washington believed that it needed Beijing's assistance. In no time, the United States and China began talking about coordination in fighting the war on terrorism. China provided help in intelligence gathering, tracking financial networks, sealing borders, feeding refugees and facilitating aid from Pakistan. The United States agreed to name a Uighur organization, the East Turkistan Islamic Movement, to a terrorist watch list, and China joined in drafting two UN resolutions for fighting terrorism. In the Pentagon's 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review, written prior to the attacks on New York and Washington, the Defense establishment had clearly seen China as a major security challenge. After September 11th, the China threat diminished in significance as those Americans seeking a substitute for the cold war had plenty to keep them busy in the struggle against terrorists.

The administration thereafter accrued a series of positive developments that led Vice President Dick Cheney to characterize U.S.-China interaction as an "amazing relationship." Bush became the first president to meet with a Chinese leader three times in a single year. Other officials visited China regularly (although military-to-military exchanges remained restricted¹) and Chinese officials came to the U.S. frequently as well. The two sides signed accords on law enforcement (establishing an FBI office in Beijing), on port security (the Container Security Initiative) and on environment and economic issues.

Where good relations proved of greatest significance was in dealing with North Korea. Bush refused to talk with the North bilaterally, insisting that the Clinton administration's approach had been deeply flawed.

He spoke of loathing Kim Jong Il and labeled the country part of an axis of evil. The multilateral alternative, however, proved difficult to activate, and Washington needed China's help to bring Pyongyang to the negotiating table. The Chinese did this even though they disagreed with Bush's hard-line tactics, arguing that U.S. officials must not be inflexible, must offer incentives and must provide security guarantees if they hoped to convince Pyongyang to give up its deterrent. So long as the U.S. committed itself to pursuing a diplomatic solution, China seemed ready to work with the Bush administration and, since Washington remained distracted by Iraq, it welcomed China's cooperation.

Although anti-Americanism, so widespread globally as a result of the Iraq war, had also been noticeable in China, commentators generally ignored it, preferring to celebrate the depth and breadth of growing Sino-American friendship. Officials and observers in the U.S. and China vied to find the most positive formulation to describe the interaction, calling relations the best they had been since Tiananmen, since normalization or, most excessively, since anyone could remember. Since these claims were patently unrealistic and could only be made by disregarding the fabric of the actual relationship, sober minds eventually found more felicitous language. During 2004, Powell talked instead about the best *communications* in 30 years and emphasized that the complexity of the relationship was really too great to be captured in one phrase, a construction that, in focusing on the wide range and frequency of contacts across issues and between officials at many levels, made far more sense. Indeed, Powell and Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing met face-to-face three times and spoke by telephone on at least fifteen occasions in the course of 2004, touching on predictable subjects such as Taiwan and North Korea, but also Sudan, Haiti, and G7 participation. A hotline between the secretary of state and the foreign minister appeared to be in the offing as Powell left office.

Strikingly, praise for the China relationship escaped the criticism that had been so common in the U.S. since 1989. This could be attributed not just to fixation by members of Congress and the public on homeland security and wars in the Middle East, but also to partisan realities. A Republican-led Congress and conservative pundits, who had been so vociferous in their attacks on Clinton's China policy, assumed a more compliant attitude toward Bush's policies on China. Thus Bush could,

without criticism, travel to Shanghai shortly after September 11th to attend an APEC gathering despite reports that Chinese in the streets had cheered the attacks on the Twin Towers—something Clinton would not have been able to do. Even in 1998, when he visited China nine years after Tiananmen, Clinton was loudly berated for allowing himself to be welcomed in the square. By contrast, the more positive picture of China drawn by the Bush administration, after the rocky first months in office, went a long way toward erasing the dominant American image – that of a lone man facing down a tank on June 4, 1989. *The Wall Street Journal*, on the eve of the 2004 presidential balloting in the U.S., remarked that “There’s a broad sense that, if the civilized world is pitted against stateless terrorists, the U.S. would do well to have China in its corner.” The *Journal* observed that Frank Luntz, a noted Republican pollster, had found that “when he asked Americans in a survey to name the greatest threat facing the country, fewer than 10 percent said China.”²

Analysts who argue that these developments led to a fundamental shift in relations, nevertheless, exaggerate the distance that the U.S.–China relationship traveled after the grim early months of 2001. This becomes evident if one disaggregates the evidence, placing it in historical context and resisting the temptation to grasp at a prettified picture of Sino–American amity. First, the degree of cooperation in the anti-terrorism effort has been less extensive than desired or advertised. Second, few of the chronic problems in Chinese–American relations have been tackled, let alone resolved. Third, Sino–American accord remains contingent upon context in ways that are not true for relations more genuinely and basically part of the fabric of Washington’s friendship and alliance structure. And, finally, in order for Washington and Beijing to have reached an accommodation even approximating the “best relationship in thirty years,” the Bush administration would have had to distance itself far more from Taiwan than it has done.

The first measure of the new relationship rested upon cooperation in the war on terrorism. Judging precisely how effective this became must be constrained by the secrecy under which parts of the collaboration occurred. Commentators and participants, however, suggested that the extent of cooperation never encompassed the range of activities Washington sought, such as basing and over-flight rights for prosecuting the war in Afghanistan. When Admiral Dennis Blair, commander-in-

chief of the Pacific Fleet, testified before the House Armed Services Committee on March 20, 2002, regarding the assistance of various Asian states in fighting terrorism, his seventy-page long statement never referred to a Chinese contribution. The Chinese persisted in viewing the terrorist attacks largely as an American, not a Chinese, problem, ignoring Washington's pointed references to the fact that the World Trade Center had housed sixteen Chinese companies. With the notable exception of Islamic Uighur separatists who could be placed in the category of global terrorists after September 11th, Beijing did not perceive any immediate threat to the Chinese homeland.³

In fact, China nursed some reservations about U.S. activism along China's periphery. The sudden appearance of U.S. forces in Central Asia troubled Beijing, boosting its interest in building the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which had been conceived in part to protect Chinese access to raw materials in the region as well as to offset NATO's eastward expansion. The U.S. also stimulated Japan to take on more security responsibilities and demonstrated the greater value to Moscow of cooperation with Washington than alignment with Beijing against U.S. objectives.⁴

Disappointment regarding the common struggle against terrorism, however, remained a relatively minor theme since Chinese assistance was so unexpected. A more serious area of concern ought to be the relative lack of progress on continuing problems in the relationship. Whereas the Bush administration has not been inherently more or less willing to resolve outstanding disputes, its rhetoric has suggested that it would take a strong line, allow less compromise and refuse to permit problems to fester as has been the case in the Clinton years.

Administration officials contend that they never adopted the cautious approach that characterized the Clinton administration, where officials feared to "rock the boat" lest the ability to elicit compromises and get "deliverables" be jeopardized. Instead, they insist toughness worked as they applied sanctions on Chinese companies for proliferation, condemned human rights abuses in Geneva, hauled China up before the World Trade Organization and maintained a strong position on Taiwan. Of course, the administration also withdrew the United States from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2001 in order to advance work on missile defense, disregarding objections from a variety of nations, most especially China.

In fact, the Bush administration's preoccupation with terrorism and Iraq, however, proved at least as damaging to U.S. interests as accommodation to Beijing would have been. Attention to trade deficits, intellectual property rights and labor standards has been inadequate. Efforts to ameliorate religious persecution and fight other human rights abuses did not get sustained, high-level support even though the problems escalated during Bush's presidency. Further, although the positive trend in relations led to some important agreements, such as China's 2002 promises to curb proliferation, the agreements had a way of looking better on paper than in reality, given difficulties with compliance and enforcement.

Third, Sino-American accord remained contingent upon context in ways that are not true for relations more genuinely and basically part of the fabric of Washington's friendship and alliance structure. Relations between states in the international system are not as a general rule stress-free. Franco-American relations have always been the reference point for those who would argue that allies and friends can have disputes and yet not dissolve the bonds that link them. Nevertheless, the U.S.-China relationship has tended to be less firmly grounded and more subject to the vagaries of external events largely because of the lack of a shared body of common values and institutions. Although it can be argued that China and the U.S. are moving closer together, there remains some distance until common democratic principles can moderate the problems raised by competing national interests.

China, for instance, may be seeking to drive the United States out of the Asian region in which Beijing has the greatest claim to hegemony. It has made effective use of the years following September 11th to weaken U.S. influence in the area. This proved possible partly as a result of Beijing's improved diplomacy, but even more due to Washington's abdication of its traditional role there. Instead of concern for economic hardship or security challenges faced by friends and allies, the U.S. emphasized almost exclusively whether and how these nations would participate in the war on terrorism. Reminiscent of Lyndon Johnson's arm-twisting for his Vietnam era "Many Flags" campaign, the Bush administration made pledges of concrete support and adoption of domestic anti-terror programs the test of friendship. Johnson failed, damaging U.S. credibility. Bush failed too, allowing Beijing to win over U.S. partners with greater attentiveness to their needs. China may still offend Japan and Korea on

historical grounds, and frighten others because of its rapidly increasing military might, but it has articulated multilateral concerns in organizations like APEC, signed oil exploration and trade deals and courted leaders throughout Southeast Asia—and most recently, it should be noted, in Latin America as well. The overall price of the U.S. approach has been the weakening of American influence, credibility and interests. Anti-Americanism increased not simply among those who have often been critical of U.S. policies and culture, but even in places where Washington has normally been able to rely on understanding and support.

The U.S. and China may also find themselves on opposite sides of various impending problems. At the moment, economic and environmental issues constitute a set of challenges on which Beijing and Washington can cooperate constructively. China's steady and rapid growth has a positive effect on the U.S. and international economies. On the other hand, China's continuing and blatant violation of intellectual property rights damages U.S. business interests. Resource competition following from China's rapid industrialization could materialize and damage U.S. production. China's accelerating growth has meant huge pressure on world markets; for instance in 2003, demand for steel rose 36 percent, coal rose 50 percent, cement rose 30 percent and, most significantly, oil rose 30 percent. Conflicts such as the war in Iraq, moreover, strained relations, and the U.S. and China view humanitarian and proliferation issues in Sudan and Iran quite differently, both because raw materials are at stake and because China does not share American values and objects to interference in the internal affairs of states.

Fourth, Taiwan occupied a place of particular significance in relations between Washington and Beijing during the first term of the George W. Bush administration. Analysts who argue that U.S.-China relations have turned a corner in 2004, and are not going back, do so, in part, because they believe that U.S.-Taiwan relations have been derailed by the choices made in Taipei. Clearly, the progression of events since 2001 has produced a decline in enthusiasm for a government in Taipei unwilling to take U.S. interests seriously enough. There are, nevertheless, limits to the implications of what has happened.

The United States has over many years maintained that good relations with China and good relations with Taiwan are mutually supportive, but reality has not generally made testing of the argument possible, and each

side has been convinced that it is engaged in a zero-sum struggle. The Bush administration, however, said it would transform and upgrade relations between Washington and Taipei and continued to do so even after beginning to improve relations with China. Taking greater account of Taiwan's democracy and prosperity, it sought to eliminate demeaning as well as unnecessary and cumbersome practices. Transits for high-level officials became more elaborate and dignified, and a wider range of officials were granted the right to visit the United States. Bush repeatedly indicated support for the Taiwan Relations Act and equated Taiwan with allies such as the Philippines. Furthermore, the administration rejected, as did Taiwan, Beijing's demand that accepting a one-China principle be a precondition to cross-Straits negotiations. Indeed, Washington demonstrated no great eagerness to push for a resumption of dialogue.

The most striking assistance came in the security arena. Arms sales expanded, restrictive annual review procedures ended, military-to-military exchanges increased, as did collaboration on exercises and discussion of strategic planning. Military teams traveled to Taiwan to observe exercises and assess capabilities. Not only did Bush address the question of defending Taiwan in his April 2001 "whatever it takes" remark, other members of the administration underlined Washington's intention to give Taipei assistance.

Beijing, of course, objected vehemently to these initiatives. Although it quickly abandoned efforts to link post-September 11th cooperation to ending arms sales to Taiwan, it nevertheless sought to bargain for changes in U.S.-Taiwan policy. The Bush administration rejected its interference. Even when Jiang Zemin alluded to a deal whereby China would remove short-range missiles from its coast if the U.S. would stop selling Taiwan advanced weapons, the administration told the Chinese to raise this Crawford, Texas offer directly with Taipei. Richard Armitage, deputy secretary of state, emphasized that "China is operating under the mistaken assumption that the war against terrorism and Iraq will get them something in return on Taiwan, that the U.S. will make concessions on Taiwan. This won't happen."⁵

Even without Beijing's prompting, however, U.S.-Taiwan relations ran into trouble during the summer of 2002, and thereafter the basic trust and goodwill of the early days proved impossible to recapture fully. On August 3, 2002, President Chen Shui-bian, without warning to Washington,

declared that there was “one country on each side” of the Strait (*yibian yiguo*), a statement deemed provocative by Beijing. Since Chen headed the Democratic Progressive Party, a pro-independence organization, and the previous month had made clear that if China continued to be unresponsive to his overtures, Taiwan would “go its own way,” his words should not have been shocking. The administration, and Bush personally, however, resented the absence of consultation given the significant support Taipei had enjoyed. Nevertheless, Chen repeated his independent approach when advancing a referendum strategy during Taiwan’s 2004 election campaign, again without prior notification.

For Washington, where the priorities were Iraq and terrorism, Chen’s potentially destabilizing actions were extremely unwelcome. Reluctant to take an initiative that might do real damage to Taiwan vis-à-vis China or to sway the presidential contest, the White House had few options for restraining Chen. Secret missions by a high-level official and warnings from the Taipei head of the American Institute in Taiwan did not arrest the momentum. Chen memorably declared that, “Taiwan is not a province of one country nor is it a state of another.” He would not allow the island to be bullied by China or the U.S., he told the *Washington Post*.⁶ Bush felt compelled sharply to rebuff Chen, and to do so in the company of China’s premier, Wen Jiabao, telling Chen not to take irresponsible, unilateral action to change the status quo.

Chen Shui-bian’s re-election in March 2004 did not arrest the controversy surrounding his leadership, cross-Strait relations or dealings with Washington. U.S. efforts to curb rhetoric and actions that appeared to push the island in the direction of independence had only moderate success. Contributing to the friction between the U.S. and Taiwan was the growing perception in Washington that a risk-taking regime on the island refused to do the things necessary to defend itself. Indeed, the public appeared to assume it could rely upon Washington to reduce cross-Strait tension and defend Taiwan if things got out of hand. Polls indicated that few in Taiwan took the idea of a Chinese attack as seriously as did the United States. Accordingly, almost four years after Bush had offered his huge April 2001 arms package of weapons Taiwan had long requested, the Legislative Yuan still had not appropriated the funds to purchase them. Taiwan’s defense budget as a percentage of gross domestic product had fallen throughout the 1990s, and in 2004 the appropriation for 2005 fell sharply again.

So when Secretary of State Colin Powell traveled to Beijing in October 2004, he pointedly upbraided Taiwan for making dialogue with China more difficult. His statements largely echoed, if more loudly, a series of complaints about Taipei's rhetoric and actions. Condoleezza Rice had reportedly told Chinese leaders in July that Bush would not tolerate efforts by Chen "to make trouble for U.S.-China relations." She followed the much-remarked-upon overview of U.S. Taiwan policy delivered to Congress in April 2004 by Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly, who had underlined concern about Chen Shui-bian's constitutional reform, urging him to take Chinese threats seriously. Kelly warned that any "unilateral move toward independence will avail Taiwan of nothing it does not already enjoy . . . [and] could destroy much of what Taiwan has built and crush its hopes for the future."⁷ Powell's words had greater shock value as he observed to two journalists in Beijing that everyone looked forward to "peaceful unification" when he ought to have said peaceful resolution. On the other hand, his words fit into a long tradition of misstating the arcane language of U.S.-Taiwan policies, as when Clinton spoke of reunification in Beijing in 1998 or Bush failed to correct Hu Jintao's claim that the president opposed Taiwan independence at APEC in 2004. Powell's barb, gaffe or policy initiative continued with the thought that "There is only one China. Taiwan is not independent. It does not enjoy sovereignty as a nation, and that remains our policy, our firm policy."⁸

Although Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asia Randy Schriver assured reporters, and Taiwan's Washington representative, that the 1982 Six Assurances remained in effect, indirectly asserting that there had been no shift of policy on Taiwan's sovereignty, that did not appear to be the end of it. Powell personally retracted his error on "peaceful unification," but his words on sovereignty were never disavowed, essentially reflecting policy, if more fulsomely and bluntly than was customarily the case.

Powell's message, however, aimed also at the Chinese. Although it got less notice, he told China's leaders that the address delivered by Chen on October 10th, which they had denounced, contained constructive elements, particularly on the subject of renewing cross-Straits talks. Given the progressive deterioration of relations and the relentless imperatives of military modernization on one side and Taiwanization on the other, the U.S. government urged that both parties treat the months following Taiwan's December 2004 Legislative Yuan elections as a window of opportunity.

Whatever pleasure China may have taken from Washington-Taipei friction, the underlying reality remains a reservoir of Bush administration sympathy for Taiwan not easily drained. Efforts to rein Chen and his government in have repeatedly been followed by gestures of support. That these have come largely from the Defense Department reflects in no small part an administration working at cross-purposes. Whereas the State Department and the National Security Council have worried about arresting Taipei's drift toward independence and war with China, the Defense Department demonstrated greater anxiety about preparing Taiwan to deal with a looming conflict. On the other hand, the bifurcation in policy cannot be traced entirely to problems in keeping the administration "on message." Divisions have not been exclusively along agency lines and even individuals have fluctuated in their views from issue to issue. Taiwan amassed a broad constituency willing to assist a fledgling democracy even though it sometimes acted contrary to its patron's interests. The issue for the second Bush administration will be what limits it will impose on that support.

To date, a central difficulty in handling the cross-Strait dynamic has been the war on terrorism and the parameters set by the war on Iraq. These preoccupations reduced the material and, above all, psychic resources available for refining policies in Asia. The administration expanded cooperation with Taiwan and simultaneously improved ties with China—an unusual, although not unprecedented, achievement. But, as time went on, it became too distracted to follow through effectively and alienated many of the forces with which it hoped to work. In China and Taiwan, as in other parts of the world, the unpopularity of administration policies and the priorities imposed by the wars had a significant impact.

The Chinese, for instance, whom Bush viewed as friends, divided over his reelection. The public, so far as it could be determined, favored his opponent because they opposed U.S. unilateralism and reckless use of force as demonstrated in the invasion of Iraq. Bush might have assumed that the leadership was on his side, since they customarily favored incumbents, had grown comfortable working with him and had spoken so warmly of the relationship he had helped to establish. In fact, Bush and Hu Jintao had regular telephone contact during the campaign on various issues. But on the eve of balloting in an article in the official English lan-

guage newspaper *China Daily*, Qian Qichen, China's former vice-premier, condemned U.S. actions, warning:

Washington's anti-terror campaign has already gone beyond the scope of self-defence . . . The philosophy of the "Bush Doctrine" is in essence force. It advocates the United States should rule over the whole world with overwhelming force . . . [However] the pre-emptive strategy will bring the Bush administration an outcome that it is most unwilling to see, that is, absolute insecurity of the "American Empire" and its demise because of expansion it cannot cope with . . . [T]he troubles and disasters the United States has met do not stem from threats by others, but from its own cocksureness and arrogance. The 21st century is not the "American Century."⁹

Bush reacted with anger, believing his vision and policies to have been right and his choices confirmed by the mandate he believed the voters had bestowed. Bad enough that Europeans should question him, but the attack from the East was surprising. Meanwhile, an embarrassed leadership group in China explained that Qian had not authorized publication of the article, which was a summary of a longer essay originally carried elsewhere. Accounting for how and why it was so widely disseminated, however, did not erase the negative judgment of American policy. Qian's sentiments reflected those of many Chinese participating in internet chat rooms, demonstrating in the streets, working at think tanks and serving in the government. Although an emphasis on the positive nature of U.S.-China relations is of great significance to China today, this should not be mistaken for approval of policies and tactics that have long been condemned by Beijing.

Confronted with misunderstanding, miscommunication and accelerating momentum toward a military showdown across the Strait, the Bush administration during 2004 reluctantly moved toward assuming a more active role in addressing the cross-Strait standoff by promoting dialogue. Although Reagan's Six Assurances barred the U.S. from mediating or pushing Taiwan into negotiations, the fact that Taipei as well as Beijing had asked Washington to intercede makes a new stance more palatable. This initiative, however, is not without perils of its own. Undoubtedly, what enthusiasm China or Taiwan expressed for a U.S. role in mediating or facilitating a dialogue reflected the gamble that Washington would

favor the interests of one side in negotiations. Since even-handedness, or the perception of unbiased intercession, would not likely survive long in a serious negotiation, the U.S. would rapidly face recriminations; a case in point being the failed George Marshall Mission of the 1940s. Furthermore, the U.S. would be risking the burdens of enforcement of any agreement reached and the testing by each side of the parameters of any accord.¹⁰

Beyond this search for a mechanism to keep the peace in the Strait, a profound shift in administration policy regarding Taiwan and China would not appear in the offing. Bush administration officials far more readily criticize Taiwan in 2004 than in 2001, and Chen Shui-bian in particular has come to be seen as a troublemaker, prompting consideration of curbs on Taiwan designed to halt the momentum toward a future that could challenge U.S. security interests. The intimacy and understanding that characterized U.S.-Taiwan relations has been exhausted. What restrictions might be judged adequate without being damaging will require considerable discussion, and Taipei's ability to weigh-in will rest upon how sincere it is perceived to be. Nevertheless, these episodes do not signify a basic withdrawal of support. The commitment to arming Taiwan, training Taiwan's defense establishment and thinking about what would be necessary to protect Taiwan all exceed what has been within the realm of the acceptable before. The administration has remained staunchly behind the position that China must not use force in the Strait under any circumstances. Washington's inclination to stand by Taiwan, moreover, has increasingly been bolstered by elements in Japan, where hostility toward China and concern about Taiwan's vulnerability are playing an ever greater role.

A second Bush administration's thrust in Asia will not be likely to break in significant ways from the first four years of what were deemed successful policies. In particular, the relationships with China and Taiwan are part of a network of obligations and opportunities that are reasonably fixed. More emphasis on resolution of cross-Strait tensions may distinguish the second round from the first, but not at a high cost for Taiwan. Clearly individuals played an important role the first time through and new personnel in a second team may bring new views of China and Taiwan or they may be even more committed to the values and visions with which the Bush policies were launched in 2001. The only certainty

appears to be continuation of the war on terrorism and the constraints – of resources, time and imagination — within which policies in Asia will continue to be shaped for many years to come.

NOTES

1. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld ended those exchanges due to the EP-3 incident and then, under White House pressure, agreed to renew them on a case-by-case basis.

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3. Robert Sutter, “Evaluating the George W. Bush Administration’s Policy Toward Beijing and Taipei” (paper presented at the Conference on Taiwan and the World, University of South Carolina, June 2002), 9. A State Department report, “Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001,” however, gave a positive assessment of China’s cooperation. Bonnie Glaser, “Fleshing Out the Candid, Cooperative and Constructive Relationship,” *Comparative Connections*, April–July 2002, CSIS Pacific Forum, http://www.csis.org/pacfor/cc/0202Qus_china.html.

4. Jessica Matthews, “September 11, One Year Later: A World of Change,” Carnegie Endowment Policy Brief, no. 18, 2002, 4; David Murphy, “Softening at the Edges,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 4, 2004, 36.

5. Dennis Van Vranken Hickey, “Continuity and Change: the Administration of George W. Bush and US Policy toward Taiwan,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 13 (August 2004), 474.

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7. James Kelly, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, testimony, hearing on “The Taiwan Relations Act: The Next Twenty-Five Years,” Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington DC, 109th Cong., 1st sess., April 21, 2004, http://www.house.gov/international_relations/108/Kel042104.htm.

8. Secretary Colin L. Powell, interview with Anthony Yuen, Phoenix TV, China World Hotel, Beijing, China, October 25, 2004, transcript available at <http://www.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/>. The earlier session, also on October 25, was with Mike Chinoy of CNN International TV during which his words were “a reunification that all parties are seeking.” Ibid.

9. Qian Qichen, “US strategy to be blamed,” *China Daily*, November 1, 2004, online, accessed November 3, 2004; Wang Xiangwei, “Beijing disowns Qian Qichen’s broadside at Bush,” *South China Morning Post*, November 3, 2004.

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THE U.S.-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONSHIP: A JAPANESE VIEW

KOJI MURATA

In November 2004, George W. Bush was re-elected president of the United States of America. During the contentious presidential campaign, the rest of the world, as well as the United States, became extremely partisan. In Europe, public opinion was, in general, anti-Bush. President Vladimir Putin of Russia was a rare political leader in that he clearly expressed his wish for Bush's re-election.

In Japan, departing from the majority of public opinion, Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro also showed a pro-Bush attitude. This was because, first, he had established close personal ties with Bush. The relationship between Bush and Koizumi is, at least in Japan, often referred to as stronger than the "Ron-Yasu" relationship between President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro in the 1980s. This relationship has been important to the power base of Koizumi, who lacks political support in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the dominant party in the governing coalition. Second, Japanese policy elites have highly appreciated the Bush administration's strong Japan policy team, which includes Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly, and National Security Council senior staff Michael Green. In contrast, the Japanese government was uncertain about the foreign policies of Senator John Kerry, the Democratic presidential candidate, including his policies towards North Korea and Iraq.

Will the U.S.-Japan security relationship of the second Bush administration become stronger and tighter than before? To answer this question,

Koji Murata is associate professor of diplomatic history at Doshisha University in Kyoto, Japan. His areas of expertise include the history of the U.S.-Japan security relationship, U.S. foreign policy, and Japan's defense policy. He has many publications in Japanese and English, including *Japan and the United States Reconsidered: Evolution of Security and Economic Choices since 1960* (co-authored).

we have to examine changes and continuities in the U.S.-Japan security relationship during the first Bush administration. In so doing, this essay examines the effects on the U.S.-Japan security relationship of both the Bush administration's global and regional strategies, and Japanese domestic politics.

BUSH'S GLOBAL AND REGIONAL STRATEGIES

In his inaugural address of January 20, 2001, President George W. Bush noted:

The enemies of liberty and our country should make no mistake: America remains engaged in the world by history and by choice, shaping the balance of power that favors freedom. We will defend our allies and our interests. We will show purpose without arrogance. We will meet aggression and bad faith with resolve and strength. And to all nations, we will speak for the values that gave our nation birth.¹

One hundred years earlier, President Theodore Roosevelt had often drawn on the concept of "balance of power." Influenced by Admiral Alfred Mahan's belief in a great navy, Roosevelt tried to expand the U.S. fleet to be "second to none" and, with it, the U.S. national security sphere. Now, on the threshold of a new century, Bush endeavored to expand the U.S. security sphere once more, even as far as outer space.

During the 2000 presidential campaign, the Bush team denounced Clinton's foreign policy repeatedly. This was dubbed "Anything But Clinton" (ABC). The Bush team argued, for example, that the United States under a Bush administration would be cautious in dispatching troops abroad for humanitarian purposes and nation-building.²

Once it came to power, the Bush administration worked to increase U.S. military supremacy through various measures that constituted the Revolution in Military Affairs. For example, the administration brought under one roof the National Missile Defense program—about which both the George H.W. Bush and the Clinton administrations had been cautious—and the Theater Missile Defense program.

Also, the Bush administration's attitude towards international treaties such as the Kyoto Protocol and the International Criminal Court treaty became increasingly criticized as unilateral and arrogant in spite of the

president's calling for modesty during the presidential campaign.

The Bush administration's strategy for Asia, in particular, was quite different from that of the Clinton administration. The Bush administration saw China as a "strategic rival," and took a tougher stance on North Korea, demanding comprehensive talks that were to include the issue of reductions in conventional forces. As a consequence, the U.S. alliance relationship with South Korea under President Kim Dae Jung—who sought a "sunshine policy" towards North Korea—was damaged. In contrast, the importance of the U.S. alliance with Japan was expressed clearly. While Bush himself had little experience with Japan, his administration included foreign affairs and security specialists who strongly supported the U.S.-Japan alliance under the Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations. Thus, the George W. Bush administration clearly indicated the high level of priority accorded to this alliance.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, had a significant impact upon Bush's foreign policy. Other than the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, there had been no such attacks on U.S. soil by a foreign power since the War of 1812. The 9/11 terrorist attacks changed dramatically the process of international politics, as the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, had changed fundamentally the distribution of power and the cold war bipolar structure in international politics. Namely, U.S. foreign policy goals became more revolutionary than moderate.

The Bush administration declared "war" on terrorism, devoted close attention to homeland security, and began enlisting international cooperation for the war. U.S. relations with Russia and China improved dramatically. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), for the first time, invoked the Washington Treaty's declaration of the right to exercise collective self defense. Even Japan was quick to introduce the anti-terrorism special measures law and to proclaim support for the United States. (It should be noted that 24 Japanese citizens were killed by the terrorist attack of 9/11.) It was ironic that Washington's relations with allies became more solid when Washington sought "coalitions of the willing" than when they rested upon formal alliances.

When the Quadrennial Defense Review was published in October 2001, it included plans for maintaining U.S. military supremacy through the Revolution in Military Affairs and proposed countermeasures to "asymmetrical threats." At the same time, the statements that "the East

Asian littoral—from the Bay of Bengal to the Sea of Japan—represents a particularly challenging area” and that “the possibility exists that a military competitor with a formidable resource base will emerge in the region” were obvious references to China and appeared to presage a traditional balance of power scenario between great powers.³ The Bush administration was seeking dual strategies for the new “war on terrorism” against “rogue states” and non-state actors, and a traditional balance of power among nation-states. The U.S. military budget released in February 2002 reflected the realities of these strategies, showing a 14.5 percent year-on-year increase and a total expenditure of \$379 billion. U.S. military spending now accounts for 40 percent of all military expenditure worldwide.

In January 2002, as the war in Afghanistan was winding down, President Bush delivered his State of the Union address, dubbing Iraq, Iran and North Korea an “axis of evil.” Although the Bush administration had sought to define itself through the ABC attitude, these countries had been considered “rogue states” supporting terrorists and developing weapons of mass destruction (WMD) even during the Clinton administration.

Bush’s tough stance towards North Korea again caused tension between the United States and South Korea. Furthermore, in June 2002, two South Korean elementary-school girls were killed when they were struck by an American armored vehicle. The subsequent acquittal of U.S. soldiers by an American military tribunal touched off an unprecedented firestorm of anti-American sentiment throughout South Korea.

In the “axis of evil” speech, however, Bush’s real focus was on Iraq. The Saddam Hussein regime and its potential development of WMD had been a serious U.S. concern ever since the Gulf War of 1991. Now, after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, public support for a decisive resolution could be relied upon. The question for some key members of the Bush administration was not “why now?” but “why have we waited until now?” Since 1991, Saddam Hussein had intentionally created an atmosphere of uncertainty as to whether Iraq possessed or was developing WMD—thereby avoiding military sanctions while continuing its threat to neighboring countries and to factions within Iraq that were opposed to the regime. It was an Iraqi “neither confirm nor deny” policy.

As rumors of a possible unilateral U.S. attack on Iraq circulated, President Bush addressed the United Nations General Assembly in

September 2002, asking for a new UN resolution on Iraq and holding firm on his demand for international cooperation. However, the *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, which was released shortly afterwards, stated that “. . . we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-defense by acting preemptively . . .”⁴ This has become known as the Bush Doctrine. This NSS was touted by the distinguished cold war historian John Gaddis as being of great historical significance since it marked a shift away from mutual deterrence and containment.⁵ In this stage, however, the Bush administration was still seeking to put international pressure on Iraq, while keeping the possibility of unilateral action open. It was also September 2002 that North Korea accepted Prime Minister Koizumi’s visit to Pyongyang, and admitted the abduction incidents. It is reported that President Bush supported Koizumi’s visit, overturning the State Department’s opposition. This reflected the pattern of North Korean diplomacy; whenever the United States takes a tougher position toward North Korea, Pyongyang tends to take a softer position toward Japan, America’s primary ally in the region, for the purpose of avoiding a direct clash with the United States.

Although France and Germany, along with many other countries, opposed the attack on Iraq, initial expectations of fierce Iraqi resistance to the U.S. attack proved unfounded, and the swift and overwhelming U.S. victory served as a fresh reminder to the world of American military supremacy. In the aftermath, “rogue states” live in fear of becoming “another Iraq” in a head-on conflict with the United States. Libya, for example, declared it would abandon WMD development, and North Korea accepted the six-party talks over its WMD soon after the end of the Iraqi war. On the U.S. side, initiating the six-party talks meant agreeing not to use military force against North Korea, even if taking a long time for solving the problems of the Korean peninsula. While the United States is concerned about North Korean nuclear and missile development, Japan is more concerned about the abduction issue, South Korea conventional threats from North Korea, and China North Korea’s regime collapse. Thus, it is extremely difficult to coordinate policy priorities over the North Korean problems among the participants of the six-party talks. China’s role as a moderator is increasingly important.

The U.S. victory in Iraq has also, however, clearly underlined the gulf between the United States and its allies—in policy as well as in military

capabilities. Francis Fukuyama, who had once predicted the “end of history,” now predicted the “end of the postwar alliance pact.”⁶

Furthermore, failure to find any WMD stockpiles in Iraq after the war and strong resistance within Iraq to the continuing occupation have placed the Bush administration in a difficult position, both domestically and abroad. Now the number of American casualties in Iraq since the end of the war continues to grow. It is ironic that the Bush administration initially argued against deploying U.S. troops abroad for nation-building, which it now eagerly undertakes in Afghanistan and Iraq.

During the first four years, Bush’s foreign policy changed in several important aspects. First, after 9/11, the Bush administration focused on the “war on terrorism” and the prevention of the spread of WMD, while keeping in mind the importance of a balance of power among major powers. Second, although the Bush administration emphasized the centrality of alliances from the beginning, it in fact damaged U.S. alliance relationships with Europe and South Korea. Third, the basis of Bush’s foreign policy shifted from a Hamiltonian/Jacksonian approach to a more Wilsonian/Jacksonian approach.⁷ Through this period, U.S. military supremacy became clearer, too.

In spite of these changes, the U.S.-Japan alliance has been exceptionally stable. Now let us look at Japanese domestic politics.

DOMESTIC POLITICS IN JAPAN

In initiating the war against Iraq, the Bush administration made several serious mistakes. First, due to the military necessity for deploying a large number of troops in the Middle East, the Bush administration’s efforts to create an international consensus over the Iraqi issue were not enough. Second, in order to obtain domestic support for its Iraqi policy, the Bush administration overly emphasized the existence of stockpiles (not threats) of WMD in Iraq. Third, the Bush administration did not have a clear picture of how to occupy Iraq. Furthermore, President Bush declared the end of major military operations in Iraq too early in May 2003.

Nonetheless, stressing the importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance and international cooperation, Prime Minister Koizumi clearly supported the Bush administration’s decision from the beginning of the hostilities. Tokyo was strongly conscious of the linkage between Iraq and North

Korea. It is not that Tokyo thought Washington's protection against a North Korean threat was directly contingent upon Japan's support for U.S. military activities in Iraq. However, Tokyo worried that a Japanese reluctance on the Iraqi issue would lead Pyongyang to underestimate the closeness of U.S.-Japan ties and, possibly, assume a more provocative attitude. Also, Bush had supported Koizumi's visit to Pyongyang, which had strengthened domestic support for Koizumi, at least for a while.

Like Bush, Koizumi tended to overestimate the stockpiles of WMD in Iraq. He did so in order to appeal to a public that was divided over the Iraqi issue. Tokyo lacked, of course, its own intelligence capabilities for analyzing this issue.

Soon after the beginning of hostilities in Iraq, the support rate for the Koizumi cabinet decreased slightly from 44 percent in February 2003 to 42 percent. Only 31 percent supported the war in Iraq, while 59 percent were opposed. Meanwhile, 39 percent supported Prime Minister Koizumi's attitude of supporting the United States, and 51 percent opposed.⁸ Interestingly, while Japanese public opinion showed strong opposition to the Iraq war, it showed some understanding of Prime Minister Koizumi's attitude. While resenting the U.S. unilateral approach, the Japanese public understood, consciously or unconsciously, that East Asia was, unlike Europe, still a region where a traditional balance of power existed and a multilateral framework was not yet established.

On the one hand, criticism of the "war without cause" rose from opposition parties—including the largest, the Democratic Party of Japan (DJP)—and some major newspapers such as the *Asahi Shimbun*. Although the causes of the war were certainly insufficiently clear, these critics failed to tell the public what they meant by "war without cause." Some of them had been reluctant to support even the Gulf War of 1991. On the other hand, some prominent scholars and commentators criticized the efficiency and legitimacy of the UN Security Council, of which Japan wants to be a permanent member. Many Japanese people believe that representation in this organization is unfair and that the "enemy clause" of the UN Charter should be erased as soon as possible.⁹

In May 2003, Prime Minister Koizumi visited Crawford, Texas, to meet President Bush, and declared that Japan would play an active role in the rehabilitation of postwar Iraq. To do so was a logical consequence of his initial strong support of the war. In July, the Japanese National Diet

passed the special measures law for rehabilitating Iraq, under which Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF) would be dispatched. In this law, the distinction between combat areas and non-combat areas was insufficiently clear. Under the Japanese constitution, the SDF cannot be dispatched to combat areas abroad. Focused on the coming lower house general election in November, 2003, of course, the DJP and other opposition parties strongly opposed this law as unconstitutional. Inside the government, the most reluctant bureaucratic institution regarding this legislation was probably the Ground SDF, whose budget and personnel were slated for reductions, while its missions were dangerously increased.

Ironically, soon after Tokyo decided to dispatch the SDF to Iraq, the situation in Iraq worsened. Tokyo's dilemma was that the SDF dispatch to Iraq became more difficult in terms of domestic politics, while more necessary in terms of relations with the United States.

In the November 2003 lower house general election, the governing coalition again kept a stable majority even though it lost seats. When U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld visited Tokyo soon after the election, Prime Minister Koizumi repeated his promise that Japan would do its best. Since even South Korea decided to send additional troops to Iraq, Tokyo had no other choice than to send the SDF. Rumsfeld also visited Okinawa, while his talks with Governor Inamine Keiichi about the U.S. bases issues there found the two sides as far apart as ever. It was the first time that a U.S. defense secretary had visited Okinawa in 13 years.

Koizumi's position was made more difficult by the killings of two Japanese diplomats in November, but in December, the Koizumi cabinet finally decided on a basic plan for what was the first postwar overseas deployment of Japanese SDF, other than peace-keeping operations under the UN. One week after this final decision, Saddam Hussein was captured by U.S. forces in Iraq. If Koizumi's decision had come after the capture of Saddam, its diplomatic effect would have been much weaker. Because of this decision, however, the cabinet support rate decreased from 47 percent in November to 41 percent. Also, while 34 percent supported the decision of dispatching the SDF to Iraq, 55 percent were opposed.¹⁰

Since the dispatch of the SDF in December 2003, three Japanese citizens have been kidnapped, but safely returned, and three have been killed. In July 2004, the ruling coalition won the upper house election again by a small margin, and Koizumi was re-elected as LDP president

and then prime minister. After Bush's re-election, the Koizumi cabinet extended the dispatch of the SDF in Iraq for up to one year.

Given the domestic opposition, why has Tokyo continued to support Bush's Iraq policy?

First, Koizumi personally has been consistently supportive. He does not have enough political backing in the LDP, and the strong ties with Washington are, if risky sometimes, one of few political resources on which he can rely. And, by maximizing such resources, he won both lower and upper house elections. In this sense, Koizumi's vulnerability is a source of stability within the U.S.-Japan alliance.

Second, the Japanese public, if reluctant, has understood the volatile strategic environment surrounding Japan. Even some key DJP members have been cautious so as not to damage the alliance relationship with the United States by criticizing Koizumi's policy towards Iraq. To use Michael Green's term, Japan tends toward "reluctant realism."¹¹

Third, the U.S.-Japan alliance was not well institutionalized during the cold war era. Thus, facing new security threats in the post-cold war era, the Japanese government has been able to add new security functions by expanding the legal framework for the alliance. Special measures laws to counter terrorism and rehabilitate Iraq were good examples. In this sense, Japan differed from NATO and South Korea, each of which faced "clear and present dangers"—the Soviet Union and North Korea—during the cold war era. The less institutionalized character of the U.S.-Japan alliance has provided flexibility in the new era. That is not to say, however, that the U.S.-Japan alliance will work similarly in the future.

CONCLUSION

The U.S. Department of Defense is now reviewing the American forward deployment strategy globally under the name of "transformation." If, as planned, U.S. forces in South Korea are reduced by one-third, the importance of U.S. forces in Japan as the core of regional stability will be relatively increased. Nonetheless, the problems over the U.S. bases in Okinawa are not solved. Also, despite facing new security threats such as international terrorism and the spread of WMD, the budget and scale of the SDF have somewhat decreased. The National Defense Program Outline (NDPO) was revised at the end of 2004. On the one hand, under

the revised NDPO, due to budgetary constraints and the new security environment in the post-cold war era, the number of Ground SDF personnel and of major equipment such as tanks, in particular, in the northern part of Japan, are reduced. On the other hand, the new document focuses more on counter-terrorism and information gathering capabilities. Japanese security policy should cover these new tasks more effectively in accordance with a changing U.S. global strategy.

As Watanabe Akio, professor emeritus of the University of Tokyo, points out, Japan has not yet reached consensus about its global security role, while almost reaching consensus about the importance of its territorial defense.¹² While both the governing and many opposition parties supported the National Emergency Law, which improves the legal framework for the SDF to carry out necessary activities if Japan is invaded or suffers some other civil and military emergency, all opposition parties were opposed to the special measures law for rehabilitating Iraq. Nakanishi Hiroshi, professor of international politics at Kyoto University, also notes that Japan is concerned about being trapped in the U.S. global strategy against international terrorism, while fearing being abandoned by the United States in terms of North Korean security challenges.¹³

The gap in Japanese attitudes between “global security” and “territorial defense” is rooted in confusion over Japan’s self-image in international politics. On the one hand, Japan is the world’s second largest economy and a longtime ally of the United States. When emphasizing these aspects, Japanese tend to believe that an active Japan has a significant positive impact on the world and the United States. On the other hand, Japan is an overpopulated, small island country with almost no natural resources. Moreover, Japan is not a permanent member of the UN Security Council, and has no nuclear weapons. Focusing on *these* aspects, Japanese tend to think that their remaining passive has no significant negative impact on the world or on the United States. In fact, however, Japan overestimates the effects of its activity and underestimates the effects of its passivity. This is because Japanese national capabilities are imbalanced.

In order to escape the above-mentioned gap, Japan should develop more balanced national capabilities in military affairs, intelligence, and culture as well as economic activity. Wise exercise of soft power is more necessary for Japan than for the United States, which holds extraordinary hard power.

As Japanese national capabilities become more balanced, the U.S.-Japan alliance should be further institutionalized. The alliance's less-institutionalized character helped it to survive during the post-cold war era, but is not appropriate to meet globally expanding tasks.

Finally, human factors are also very important. Human networks between Japan and other countries, including the United States, should be further cultivated. For example, even after Bush's re-election, Tokyo should develop human networks with Democrats in the United States. Also, Japan should try to find new friends among Republicans, while keeping relations good with old friends. On Japan's side, educating a new generation of leaders is essential, since no successors to Koizumi are apparent, and the DPJ is still often inconsistent in regard to its foreign policy agenda.

More balanced national capabilities for Japan, institutionalization of the U.S.-Japan alliance, and human factors—none of these areas should be neglected in order to strengthen the U.S.-Japan alliance in the post-Iraq War era during a second George W. Bush administration.

NOTES

1. John Gabriel Hunt, ed., *The Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents: From George Washington to George W. Bush, Revised and Updated* (New York: Gramercy Books, 2003), 518.

2. See, for example, Condoleezza Rice, "Campaign 2000: Promoting the National Interest," *Foreign Affairs* 79, no. 1 (January/February 2000), 45-62.

3. *Quadrennial Defense Review* Report (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, September 30, 2001).

4. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, DC: The White House, September 17, 2002), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf>.

5. John L. Gaddis, "A Grand Strategy of Transformation," *Foreign Policy* 133 (November/December 2002), 50-57.

6. Francis Fukuyama, "End of the Postwar Alliance Pact," *Daily Yomiuri*, March 16, 2003.

7. The Hamiltonian approach focuses on the nation's need to be integrated into the global economy on favorable terms. According to the Jacksonian approach, the U.S. government's most important goal should be the physical security and economic well-being of the American people. The Wilsonian belief is that the United States has both a moral obligation and an important national interest in spreading American democratic and social values throughout the world. Walter Russell Mead, *Special*

Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), xvi.

8. *Asahi Shimbun*, March 22, 2003.

9. See, for example, Komori Yoshihisa, “Saraba, kokusairengo,” (Good-bye, United Nations), *Voice*, May 2003; Nakanishi Terumasa, “Kokuren wa nihon no teki da” (The United Nations is Japan’s enemy), *Voice*, June 2003. Komori is a Washington-based, senior journalist at the *Sankei Shimbun*. Nakanishi is a professor of international political history at Kyoto University.

10. *Asahi Shimbun*, December 12, 2003. Even when the International Peace Cooperation (PKO) Law was enacted in June 1992, 31 percent supported it, and 37 percent were opposed, according to the *Mainichi Shimbun*, June 25, 1992.

11. Michael J. Green, *Japan’s Reluctant Realism: Foreign Policy Challenges in an Era of Uncertain Power* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

12. Watanabe Akio, “Nihon wa Rubicon wo watattaka?” (Has Japan crossed the Rubicon?), *Kokusai Anzenhoshō*, December 2003, 80–81. An English version is also available in *Japan Review of International Affairs* 17 (winter 2003).

13. Nakanishi Hiroshi, “Kyofu to Senso no Jidai” (The age of fear and war), *Chuo Koron*, June 2004, 50–51.

PRESIDENT BUSH AND NORTH KOREA

ILSU KIM

In this age of the president as a world leader, it has become typical of America politics to describe the chief executive as the architect of U.S. foreign policy. Conventional wisdom echoes that the president of the United States dominates in making foreign policy, Congress wants to protect domestic interests in shaping policy at home, and presidential leadership is the engine of good government in all areas. According to this conventional view, even in the years since the Vietnam War and Watergate tarnished the image of presidential government, presidents have been able to direct the course of American foreign policy over congressional objections. Despite this conventional wisdom, however, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush encountered difficulty in shaping American policy toward the North Korean government.

This essay analyzes U.S. policy toward North Korea, with an emphasis on the role of the American president. Needless to say, there is a multitude of studies on U.S.-ROK security relations and American foreign policy toward North Korea. Despite their contributions to our better understanding of U.S.-North Korea relations, we must acknowledge some limitations in the research. Owing to the employment of the unitary and rational actor model, this research has not explained the impact of the individual policy maker (the president), who plays a central role in shaping American foreign policy.

Within this consideration, this essay attempts to explore how President George W. Bush oversaw policy toward North Korea: how he shaped it, attempted to alter it, and was held responsible for it. The president

Ilsu Kim is assistant professor of political science and international relations at Chungbuk National University in Cheongju, South Korea. His research interests include U.S. foreign policy, comparative foreign policy, and international relations theory. He has published a number of articles in *World Affairs*, *Journal of International Relations*, *Korean Journal of Political Science*, and *Journal of American Studies*.

remains not only the chief architect of American foreign policy, but also bears the burden for the maintenance of international peace and security. The specific questions for research in this paper are: 1) to examine and analyze how President Bush's policy goals in dealing with North Korea actually materialized; 2) to illustrate how Bush implements his policy goals toward North Korea; 3) to discuss the congressional responses to Bush's policy toward the Pyongyang regime; and 4) to elucidate the responses from North Korea to the president's policy goals and strategies.

THE ROLE OF THE U.S. PRESIDENT IN MAKING FOREIGN POLICY

The wide array of American military and political commitments abroad invites the president to play a large role in world affairs. There are two schools of thought in considering the president's role as an international actor. The first is the "American Presidency School," which tends to put more emphasis on the president's role rather than that of other actors, such as the bureaucracy or Congress.¹ The second view is that of the "Foreign Policy Process School." This perspective tends to see the role of the president as but one of many factors in formulating policy.² Both schools of thought, however, hold two views in common. First, they agree that individuals play an important role in history. Second, they both think that behavior is a product of the interaction between the individual and the situation in which he finds himself. My position here is that American foreign policy is based on executive decision-making, where the president leads and the bureaucracy plays a minor role.

As the Korean peninsula has been one of the most important security issues for American presidents since the end of World War II, the role of the president remains the key to American foreign policy toward the Korean peninsula. The influence of other policymakers, such as Congress and the bureaucracy, has remained low; the president to a large extent affects the course of action toward the Korean peninsula. It remained so during the cold war era and remains so today. Within these considerations, the policies and decisions that the president enforces and guides are far more important than the structure through which they are developed and carried out.

There are several advantages to using this approach. It enables us to better understand the "big picture" of how American foreign policy is

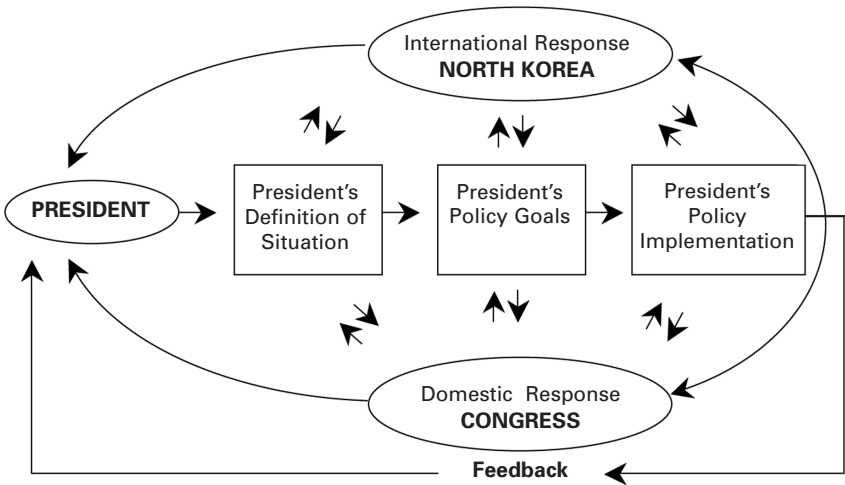


Figure 1: Sources and Logic of the U.S. President’s Policy Making toward North Korea

being made, applied, and implemented. It clearly shows the extent to which the president bears the burden of making and enforcing policy abroad. Not only as the chief executive in American politics but also as a world leader, U.S. presidents have tried to meet the challenges that they faced.³ This study attempts to bridge the gap in the current theoretical literature.

Figure 1 shows that the president’s policymaking toward North Korea goes through several stages before it reaches the final phase of policy formation. The president formulates policy toward North Korea that matches the contemporary historical situation as he responds to domestic and international settings. With different leadership styles, each president faces the same inter-Korean confrontation, but in a different historical context. The president must define the domestic as well as the international situation correctly and clearly.

Then, the president sets up his policy goal toward Pyongyang. “Goal” refers to the president’s foreign policy emphasis in a given time to contain North Korea’s nuclear ambition and maintain peace on the Korean peninsula. Also, I use the term “domestic response” in referring to congression-

al reaction to the president's policy goal. Congress does challenge the president by appropriating money that is needed to contain North Korea. Also, "international response" refers to the reactions of the North Korean government. The president of the United States must consider any reactions from Pyongyang throughout his policy making process toward North Korea. And once the president publicly announces the goals that he wants to achieve with regard to North Korea, he then seeks to implement them. Whatever constraints or challenges arise, the president must make the right choice for the peaceful resolution of North Korean problems. The president employs various strategies and devices to accomplish his policy goals.

PRESIDENT BUSH AND NORTH KOREA

How Bush Meets Reality

President Bush's overall foreign policy agenda consists of two elements: nonproliferation and the missile defense program. Nonproliferation refers to diplomatic efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Since proliferation has remained the top security goal in the United States during the past several decades, Bush's emphasis on nonproliferation is nothing new. In order to prevent the proliferation of WMD, Bush sets out counter-proliferation measures as viable U.S. options, including military strikes.

The second pillar of Bush's foreign policy goal is developing missile defense (MD). For Bush, the logic behind MD is related to his strategic belief that deterrence is unlikely to be an effective measure when rogue states or terrorist groups threaten nuclear use against the United States and its allies.

With regards to North Korean issues, President Bush faced challenges that were left unresolved by the Clinton administration. The question for the new president in 2001 was whether he simply signed on to what Clinton had worked out with the North Koreans on their missile and nuclear programs, or embraced totally different approaches and goals. The first term of the Bush presidency chose the latter option.

Bush's tough policy toward North Korea and Pyongyang's demand for compensation for the delay in implementing the Agreed Framework marred the progress made in the 1990s in the U.S.–North Korea diplo-

matic impasse. Two important documents impacted on the materialization of Bush's North Korean policy goals, the Rumsfeld Report and the Armitage Report. The Rumsfeld Report stated that it would be 15 years before any rogue state, such as North Korea, had the ability to launch a ballistic missile attack on the United States. It also warned that North Korea would be a major threat to U.S. interests because it had major ballistic missile proliferation capabilities.⁴

The second important document for the Bush administration in formulating its North Korean policy was the 1999 Armitage Report.⁵ The report stated that North Korean missiles have become far more dangerous, so that the United States must, in the near future, end Pyongyang's missile testing and exporting. In addition, the report stipulated that the United States needed to propose a six-party meeting to deal with the security of Korea. If diplomatic negotiation with North Korea failed, the report continued, the policy options that the United States could take are either strengthening deterrence and containment, or preemption. In the end, President Bush adopted missile defense to bolster the U.S. deterrent military posture.

Bush's Policy Goals toward North Korea

President Bush opened his presidency by negating Clinton's North Korean policy. Bush insisted that Clinton was in too great a rush for a missile deal with North Korea, and that the inter-Korean summit had not produced any changes in the internal structure of the North Korean political and economic system.⁶ Based on this strategic thinking, Bush saw the need for changes in Washington's North Korean policy in the direction of a more hard-nosed internationalism. Indeed, in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attack, Bush called North Korea, Iran, and Iraq members of an "axis of evil," and promised that the United States would not permit these countries to threaten the world with weapons of mass destruction.⁷

Complicating matters further, Bush confirmed the existence of a classified Pentagon review (Nuclear Posture Review, or NPR), in which tactical nuclear weapons could be used against Libya, Syria, China, Russia, Iran, Iraq, and North Korea under certain situations.⁸ This NPR also included a plan for the United States to build smaller nuclear weapons for use in certain war situations. This clearly shows that President Bush wanted his North Korea policy to be different from that of President Clinton.

Bush set up three policy guidelines in dealing with the North Korean nuclear weapons and missile issues: transparency, verification, and reciprocity. First, transparency meant that North Korea must allow internationally acceptable and adequate inspection of all its nuclear activities and fully cooperate with the inspection process. Second, Bush emphasized that he will deal with North Korea's missile issues only when the international community can nail down verification procedures guaranteeing that Pyongyang's nuclear program has ended. Third, Bush complained that flexible reciprocity only exacerbates the North's brinkmanship. Therefore, Bush will replace it with strict reciprocity in dealing with North Korea's nuclear as well as missile development program. At issue now is whether the North really has a plutonium-based nuclear program and a separate uranium-based nuclear program. Bush demanded North Korea dismantle all nuclear projects in a complete, verifiable and irreversible (CVID) way.

Policy Implementation

The blame for the U.S.-North Korea diplomatic *impasse* goes both to Washington and Pyongyang. More often than not, confusing signals emanated from Washington officials concerning policy goals, strategy, and tactics in U.S.-North Korea relations. For example, U.S. Secretary of State Powell confirmed that the United States planned to engage with the North to pick up where the Clinton administration had left off. On the other hand, the United States accelerated the MD program and has been pressing the North for prompt inspection of nuclear sites. While doves in the Bush administration, like Powell, believed in the benefits of an engagement policy, hawks like Condoleezza Rice said truly evil regimes (including North Korea) will never be reformed and such regimes must be confronted, not coddled.

President Bush has striven to apply these principles to tackle North Korean threats, including the Korean nuclear and missile programs. Bush argues that though the Agreed Framework has temporarily frozen Pyongyang's known nuclear activity, it is very hard to decipher whether nuclear weapons and related work is going on elsewhere. Bush criticizes the North's blocking of IAEA inspections of the Yongbyon nuclear facilities, and argues that Pyongyang has failed to take steps to implement the 1991 Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Complicating matters further, the United States revealed in 2002 that North Korea has a secret nuclear weapons program based on uranium enrichment. Thus far, the North denies that it has a uranium-based nuclear program. President Bush publicly insisted that the North must take visible measures to dismantle its nuclear program before negotiations could take place.

In terms of North Korea's missile threat, Bush demands, as his short-term goal, that Pyongyang abandon its long-range missile program and refrain from exporting missile technology to other countries. In the long run, President Bush seeks to encourage the North to adhere to the Missile Technology Control Regime.

Despite North Korea's consistent demand for direct negotiations with the United States on the nuclear issue, President Bush has declined to accept the proposal. Bush insists that the North Korean nuclear problem is the concern of all powers in the region and that the issue has to be resolved on a multilateral basis. His logic is simple: South Korea, China, Japan, and Russia all have vested interests in the stability of the Korean peninsula, and therefore, they all should have a stake in measures dealing with the crisis.

Faced with a deadlock in U.S.-North Korea relations, President Bush let China play the role of an intermediary in bringing the DPRK to the multilateral talks. The first six-party meeting was held in Beijing in August 2003. However, no meaningful progress materialized largely because neither side provided meaningful concessions to the other negotiating partner. In the second round of the six-nation talks, the North offered to freeze its nuclear weapons program in exchange for security guarantees and economic aid. In the third round of the six-party talks, in June 2004, the North demanded that the United States remove it from a list of terrorist nations and lift economic sanctions. North Korea, after three rounds of inconclusive talks, refused to attend a scheduled fourth session in September 2004.

Congressional Reaction

Congress remains an important player in shaping U.S. policy towards North Korea. As Bush prepared for military action against Iraq, Congress urged that the diplomatic standoff over North Korea's ambitions to develop nuclear weapons must not be relegated to a back-burner issue. Several

Democrats and Republicans began to challenge Bush's North Korean policy and urged President Bush to seek a diplomatic solution by talking directly with North Korea.⁹

Democrats in Congress have voiced their criticism that they were not told of North Korea's admission of its uranium-based nuclear weapons program when they were considering a resolution authorizing the administration to use force against Iraq. A leading Senate Democrat has complained that the administration's inattention and ideological rigidity has left America less secure today than it was in 2001. Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.), the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said, "It is time to get serious about negotiations . . . North Korea must dismantle its nuclear programs and stop selling missile technology."¹⁰

To the contrary, conservatives in Congress supported President Bush by asserting that having diplomatic negotiations with the North is appeasement and only results in blackmail. They believe that President Bush's policy toward North Korea is heading in the right direction. Though Republicans and Democrats differ in their policy on the North, they share the belief that the nuclear standoff between the United States and North Korea must be resolved through peaceful diplomatic negotiations.

With the Missile Threat Reduction Act of 2003, Congress threatened sanctions against North Korea. This was intended to provide a legal framework for preventing incidents such as Yemen's 2002 purchase of North Korean Scud missiles. Congress already stopped funding for fuel oil shipments to the North as part of the FY 2003 foreign operations appropriations. In 2004, Congress also passed the North Korean Human Rights Act.

However, many foreign policy experts agree that Congress has not done its job in dealing with North Korea's nuclear threat. "They have a responsibility to air questions in public and come up with suggestions," said Stephen Costello, a Korea specialist at the Atlantic Council.¹¹ Chris Nelson, author of the *Nelson Report*, also said, "Congress was slow to recognize that the Bush policy of aggressive non-engagement risked producing the crisis that we now face."¹² The problem is that there is no consensus in Congress regarding North Korea, and the Republican-controlled Congress is unlikely to challenge President Bush in a fundamental way to dismantle the North's nuclear weapons program.

North Korea's Reaction

North Korea reacted strongly against President Bush's policy. Pyongyang's frustration with regard to Bush's North Korea policy arose from a number of causes. It complained that the United States was unwilling to lift economic sanctions as well as move forward to normalize relations with North Korea. It felt that the United States violated the Agreed Framework by not delivering the heavy oil according to schedule and failing to construct light water reactors on schedule. It charged that the United States unilaterally set the agenda and simply advocated a containment policy toward the North. And it worried that the United States was even trying to disarm the North Korean military through negotiations. Criticizing Bush's hardnosed approach, North Korea stressed that it should no longer be regarded as a rogue state, and that the United States must abandon its hostile policy. North Korea has said that if the United States tries to disarm the DPRK, while persistently pursuing a hostile policy toward the DPRK, the DPRK is not interested in any dialogue and improvement of relations with the United States

Pyongyang maintained that its nuclear and missile threat has been exaggerated by the United States in order for Washington to justify an increase in American military spending and to deploy the MD system. North Korea interpreted the suspension of dialogue between the United States and North Korea as a clear sign that U.S. policy had changed from engagement to a strategy of "crime-and-punishment."¹³ Bristling over President Bush's skepticism and his hard-line approach to missile issues, Pyongyang warned that it might scrap the moratorium on long-range missile tests and revive its nuclear program.

Although Seoul and Washington share the goal of stopping North Korean threats, they differ in their approach and strategy. The South Korean government strongly argues that engagement has caused North Korea to make substantial policy changes, and remains determined to engage with the North. The atmosphere on the Korean peninsula has been relaxed much, and there are several indications of improved relations between North and South Korea

- North Korea's moratorium on missile tests
- no known North Korean nuclear reactor activity
- inter-Korean summit and joint declaration
- reunion of separated families in South and North Korea
- high-level talks.

Indeed, Bush's approach to North Korea seemed distinctly out of step with the Roh administration's "Policy for Peace and Prosperity," a successor to Kim Dae-jung's "Sunshine Policy." South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun has bluntly objected to the use of military force against North Korea to resolve the nuclear crisis.¹⁴ His remarks clearly show the South wants to pursue an engagement policy with the North and strongly disagrees with the U.S. pressure on the Pyongyang government.

Pyongyang has demanded from the United States the following package as a solution to resolving the current nuclear stalemate. It wants the United States to—

- conclude a non-aggression treaty with the DPRK;
- establish diplomatic relations with the DPRK;
- guarantee economic cooperation between the DPRK and Japan, and between North and South Korea;
- compensate for the loss of electricity caused by the delayed provision of light water reactors; and
- complete the construction of the LWRs.

In return for these actions by the United States, the North has proposed that Pyongyang would

- refrain from making nuclear weapons
- allow nuclear inspection
- dismantle its nuclear facilities
- freeze its missile tests and
- stop missile exports.

PROGNOSIS ON U.S.-NORTH KOREA RELATIONS

American policy toward the Korean peninsula is an "intermestic" issue. It is an international issue, but there is a strong domestic interest based on the history of the Korean War and a long-standing American commitment to the ROK. The conviction of many U.S. representatives and senators that North Korean aggression has to be contained is not only an ideological reflex, but also a position based on the continuing character of the regime in Pyongyang.

Bush expressed a hope to deal with North Korea's missile issues only when the verification procedures guaranteeing that Pyongyang's nuclear

program has ended can be nailed down. Bush also contended that flexible reciprocity only exacerbates the North's brinkmanship; thus his administration would replace it with strict reciprocity in dealing with North Korea's nuclear and missile development programs. However, Bush's hard-line approach has only exacerbated U.S.-North Korea, South-North Korea, and U.S.-South Korea relations.

After three rounds of inconclusive six-party talks, the North refused to attend the next session scheduled for September 2004. Though no meaningful progress has been made yet, all parties seem to agree on the idea of a nuclear-free Korea and on their commitment to the peaceful resolution of the North's nuclear activities in the future. For the resolution of North Korean missile, nuclear and conventional threats, and the reduction of tensions in inter-Korean relations, I recommend the following six points.

First, President Bush needs to fix the timetable for resuming talks with North Korea as early as possible. For Bush, the North still remains untrustworthy and unreliable. Dragging out issues pending between Washington and Pyongyang would not be the right policy choice for mutual reconciliation. The past years of U.S.-North Korean relations confirm that only when the two sides are engaging are positive results made possible in Korea.

Second, President Bush needs to affirm that he would opt for engagement, rather than containment, in dealing with North Korea. The past years of diplomatic relations between the United States and the DPRK indicate that the Bush administration failed to come up with an alternative policy toward North Korea. As Leon Sigal points out, cooperating with North Korea would benefit longer-term U.S. security interests. In doing so, the United States needs to promise that it would not seek the North's collapse, or a regime change in North Korea.¹⁵ Scholars are divided about the ways of handling North Korea. Conservative thinkers argue that the United States should maintain the North on the list of sponsors of terrorism. But the current U.S. policy is wrong to include North Korea as a member of the axis of evil because soft-landing, not hard-landing, of the Pyongyang regime is likely to benefit United States security interests.

Third, President Bush needs to maintain his commitments under the Agreed Framework. Nothing is more important than scrapping North Korea's nuclear weapons project. A discontinuation of the Agreed

Framework may deepen mutual distrust and thus endanger the situation in Korea. The North may threaten the world, saying it would resume its nuclear weapons program, and continue to sell and develop weapons of mass destruction. On that score, the successful implementation of the Agreed Framework is the key to paving the way for North Korea to open up and cooperate with the outside world. Supplementing rather than replacing the Agreed Framework would be the best way of reducing the North's threat.

Fourth, Bush needs to preserve policy coordination with the South in tackling North Korea's missile, nuclear, and conventional weapons threats. Issues related to signing a permanent peace treaty that replaces the Armistice Agreement and reducing forces in the DMZ area cannot be resolved only between the United States and North Korea. Therefore, supporting rather than discouraging South-North dialogue is the key to a successful implementation of the peace process in Korea. The recent inter-Korean dialogue juxtaposed with U.S.-North Korea negotiations would bear fruit in reducing tensions in Korea.

Fifth, the United States needs to maintain alliance partnerships for the resolution of North Korean issues. Bush's condemnation of North Korea as part of the axis of evil caused worldwide confusion. The United States needs to realize that its relations with North Korea are intimately tied to its relationship with South Korea, Japan, and China. The utilization of the six-party talks, sustaining a high level of commitment to South Korea and Japan, and diplomatic consultation with China and Russia are required if Bush wants a peaceful resolution of Korean matters.

Sixth, it is critical for North Korea to resume cooperation with the IAEA and to meet all of its obligations stipulated in the Agreed Framework. Pyongyang needs to allow the IAEA to carry out mandated, full inspections of its nuclear facilities at the Yongbyon research base. The matter of providing compensation for delays in constructing the light-water reactors can be overcome in future U.S.-North Korea negotiations.

No doubt, true confidence building is feasible when the North responds to the outside world with deeds, not words. Unsurprisingly, critics remain skeptical about the North's true intentions or its willingness to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. North Korea needs to get out of its economic and diplomatic predicament. Its experiment with market socialism requires security guarantees and financial assistance from the

United States, Japan and South Korea. Dealing with North Korea requires patience and prudence by all parties involved.

Until uncertainty disappears and the diplomatic halt is lifted in Korea, the prognosis for U.S.-North Korea relations remains guarded at best. Continuing U.S.-North Korean tensions would only prompt Pyongyang to suspend its contact with Seoul, which in turn jeopardizes rapprochement towards peace and security on the Korean peninsula. It is fortunate to see that international efforts, such as the six-party talks to resolve the North Korean nuclear tension, have gained some positive momentum. Though it is too early to predict how the North's nuclear activities will be contained, one rule remains unchanged: we must seek a peaceful resolution of Pyongyang's nuclear ambition through dialogue.

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BUSH IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: WIDENING GYRES

CATHARIN E. DALPINO

*Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer.*

—William Butler Yeats, *The Second Coming*

Without question, Southeast Asia has become more important to American foreign policy in the last four years with the opening of a “second front” in the U.S. global war against terrorism after the Taliban regime was overthrown in Afghanistan at the end of 2001. Bilateral ties with several Southeast Asian governments have improved markedly as a result. State visits and other forms of high-level access; free trade agreements; stepped-up allied arrangements (such as the Non-NATO Major Ally designations bestowed upon the Philippines and Thailand); expanded joint military exercises; and increases in targeted economic assistance are the fruits of cooperation in the post-September 11 era.

In counter-terrorism, the United States had found a central organizing principle for its foreign policy that had been lacking since the end of the cold war. It brought to a halt more than a decade of drift in American relations with Southeast Asia, an era punctuated by disagreements over trade and human rights and disappointment over the U.S. response to the 1997–98 economic crisis. If Southeast Asians complained that the new purpose in U.S. policy was single-minded and self-interested, they acknowledged the benefit to them of this more intense focus. Indeed,

Catharin E. Dalpino is adjunct professor of Southeast Asian Studies at Georgetown University’s Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service and Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies. She served as deputy assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor from 1993 to 1997. She is co-editor of the annual *Georgetown Southeast Asia Survey*.

some Southeast Asian leaders have made implicit comparisons between the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations which favor Bush.

Buttressing this new era of official cooperation was the perception that Southeast Asia had personal champions at high levels of the U.S. Government. In the first Bush administration, the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of State were known to be experienced Southeast Asia hands by virtue of their Vietnam War experience. The Deputy Secretary of Defense had been a respected ambassador to Indonesia, and a National Security Council director for Southeast Asia had personal ties to a Southeast Asian head of state. This rare convergence of interest and experience in Southeast Asia is unlikely to be replicated in the second term.

But, paradoxically, if relations between the United States and Southeast Asia have strengthened in the last four years, they have also deteriorated dramatically. This process of deterioration has been both abrupt and gradual. The single greatest catalyst for a drop in U.S. “soft power” was clearly the policy that has largely defined the second half of the first Bush administration, the war in Iraq. Simmons College scholar Zachary Abuza has argued that this mid-course intervention “...angered many, especially Muslims in Southeast Asia, who already viewed the war on terror as bring patently anti-Muslim. The United States [was] no longer perceived in the region as a benign hegemon, but as an aggressive and imperialist state.”¹

Some survey data, admittedly snapshots taken at a point of high tension, bears this out. For example, the Pew Global Attitudes Project charts a sharp reversal of views of the United States in Indonesian society. In 2000, 75 percent of Indonesians polled approved of the United States. By 2002 it had fallen to 61 percent, an obvious erosion but still a positive figure. By 2003, however, it was down to 15 percent, the greatest drop in approval of any country surveyed, a group that included several Muslim-majority countries that are popularly viewed as anti-American.²

This paradox in U.S.-Southeast Asian relations has deeper roots than the war in Iraq, however much a watershed the war might be. In an attempt to define relations in narrow terms of counter-terrorism, the United States has largely ignored new trends in Southeast Asia while it has exacerbated them. Improving the U.S. position in the region in the second Bush term will depend upon policymakers’ willingness and ability to confront and to close three widening gaps.

THE DOMESTIC GAP

Since the start of the global war against terrorism, and particularly after the invasion of Iraq, attitudes toward the United States in Southeast Asian domestic populations have been increasingly at odds with those of their leaders. This is hardly unique to the region—perception of the United States as an arrogant and unilateralist power, whether justified or unfounded, has created an anti-American malaise of near-global proportions. In Southeast Asia, this condition is neither universal nor unrelenting. The United States is still considered to be a primary source of higher education (although the number of Southeast Asians attending American graduate schools has dropped for several reasons), and American popular culture still has appeal with younger generations—Indonesia continues to be the world's largest market for MTV, the pop music television channel. (On the other hand, Indonesians purchased more than 100,000 Osama bin Laden t-shirts in 2002.) Moreover, Southeast Asians have tended to temporalize the problem to their American interlocutors: public resentment, they often insist, is not against the American people but against a specific political administration. This distinction will be more difficult to maintain in the second Bush term, given the administration's re-election with a larger mandate.

Despite these qualifications, in the past two years Southeast Asian governments have often found themselves caught between Washington and their constituent populations. This dilemma has been most acute in those countries with significant Muslim populations and democratic processes, particularly in election years. Thus, former Indonesian president Megawati Sukarnoputri felt compelled on occasion to adopt extremist rhetoric about the war in Iraq in the course of her unsuccessful 2004 campaign for re-election. More poignant was the vise that Philippines president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo found herself in mid-2004, just weeks after she won re-election by a very narrow margin, when she withdrew Filipino troops from Iraq before their scheduled departure to meet the demands of insurgents who had kidnapped a Filipino guest worker. Paramount for Arroyo was the humanitarian imperative and Philippine public pressure to withdraw, but the situation was further complicated by the fact that overseas workers are now permitted to vote absentee in Philippine national elections.

Beyond the immediate impact of an unpopular war, several factors have contributed to this domestic gap. One was the release of the Bush administration's National Security Strategy (NSS) in September 2002, less than a year after the war in Afghanistan, which articulated a doctrine of pre-emption. The NSS broadened the definition of pre-emption to include preventive war that could be waged without an imminent appearance of threat to the United States.³ To many Southeast Asian Muslims, the doctrine was tantamount to drawing battle lines with the Islamic world. This perception was exacerbated when Australian Prime Minister John Howard issued a similar statement defending pre-emptive action, and worsened again when Bush subsequently labeled Australia the "deputy sheriff" for Southeast Asia. The clarity of these battle lines for Muslims was underscored when 2003 Pew survey data showed that 82 percent of Indonesians polled were disappointed that Iraqis did not offer stronger resistance to the American invasion.⁴

Below this grand strategy, the American image was eroding with Southeast Asian Muslims at the level of personal contact with more rigid and restricted visa and other immigration policies after September 11. Fewer Southeast Asians ventured to the United States and those who did were sometimes treated harshly. These new regulations effectively eclipsed public diplomacy programs designed to target Muslims in a new-age "hearts and minds" campaign. In the same week in early 2003 that Indonesia agreed to broadcast a U.S. government film portraying harmonious relations between Muslims and other religious groups in the United States—the only Southeast Asian country to do so—the American government announced that all Indonesian males resident in the United States would have to register with immigration authorities. That they were the only Southeast Asians required to register only rankled Indonesians further.

But unilateral actions from Washington can account for only half of the problem. More broadly, U.S. policymakers were slow to realize that the Southeast Asian context was changing. Greater daylight between state and society in Southeast Asia was inevitable (and desirable) in an era of greater democratization. As a result, governments are more attentive to domestic dynamics than they were during the cold war. Accordingly, Southeast Asians were more inclined to resent the United States for a cavalier approach to rights in counter-terrorism policy, all the more so

because it represented an apparent about-face from high-profile U.S. human rights positions in the 1990s. In the previous decade, for example, Washington objected vigorously to the treatment of former Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim; post-September 11, the U.S. appeared not only to have closed the Anwar file, but to offer little objection to Malaysia's open-ended detention of terrorist suspects outside judicial channels.⁵

Equally important, and slow to be detected, was the growing universal Muslim consciousness among Southeast Asian Muslims. A parochial American approach to Southeast Asia had assumed that Southeast Asians themselves were parochial, concerned primarily with local issues and conflicts. American policymakers and scholars alike had long comforted themselves with the belief that Southeast Asia's more tolerant and moderate strains of Islam had inoculated the region against foreign extremist influence. By late 2001 it was obvious, if only from al Qaeda's expansion to Southeast Asia, that this was patently untrue. For several decades, increased contact with the Middle East through education and assistance (much of it funded on the Middle Eastern side with petro-dollars); the organizing effects of the *mujahideen* in Afghanistan in the 1980s; and the general effects of globalization had not only spiked extremism in the region but also gave mainstream Muslims a sense of Islamic world citizenship. As a result, the United States was judged not only on the basis of its policies in Southeast Asia but also by its actions in Muslim countries the world over. This amplified the impact in Southeast Asia of the post-September 11 wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and moved the Israeli-Palestinian conflict further up the agenda in U.S.-Southeast Asian relations. For the most part, U.S. policymakers have had difficulty incorporating this broader Muslim consciousness into its policy calculus for the region.

THE REGIONAL GAP

If the domestic gap is particularly acute within particular nations of Southeast Asia, another gap, which U.S. policy arguably makes worse, divides the region itself. Largely as a result of the admission of four new members—Vietnam, Laos, Burma and Cambodia—into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the region is split into two, and

possibly three, economic tiers. At the top are Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia. Singapore's per capita income is usually equal to (and sometimes exceeds) that of the United States, and both Thailand and Malaysia are on the verge of becoming developed nations. At bottom are Laos, Cambodia and Burma, with per capita incomes only a tenth of those of the upper tier countries, and fertility rates five times greater.⁶ An emerging middle tier includes Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

Although Muslim-majority countries are of greatest concern in the domestic gap, the lower-tier countries in the regional gap are reckoned to be far less threatening in U.S. counter-terrorism policy. With the war against terrorism a pre-eminent priority for the United States, this effectively bifurcates the region in U.S. policy and reinforces the tiered effect. Even American policies which are intended to promote economic development in the region seem to work against helping the disadvantaged countries. At present, there are no Southeast Asian countries under consideration for funds from the Millennium Challenge Account, although some political pressure is building to boost the Philippines and Indonesia, two important counter-terrorism partners, up the ranks. A more dramatic example is the U.S.-ASEAN Enterprise Initiative, a ladder of bilateral trade initiatives intended to culminate, in theory, with bilateral free trade agreements with each Southeast Asian country. In reality, the Enterprise Initiative gives advantage to the wealthier countries and so penalizes the poorer ones by increasing the economic development gap.

A free trade agreement with Singapore is in effect, and one is under negotiation with Thailand. The U.S. business community has urged that Malaysia be next in the queue for an FTA, but there are no obvious candidates after Kuala Lumpur. It is safe to assume that FTA's with Cambodia, Laos and Burma are far into the future and will be the last in line. (However, if all boats are lifted with the tide, it is to the administration's credit that Laos was granted Normal Trade Relations on its watch.)

This implicit division of Southeast Asia into two regions in U.S. policy also leaves the smaller, poorer countries more vulnerable to ideological pressure. If human rights and political freedom are subservient to concerns about security in countries with significant Muslim populations, these concerns are elevated in the "other" Southeast Asia. Burma, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos are the targets of the majority of U.S. human rights sanctions in the region. Many of these measures, particular-

ly in Burma, are longstanding and span both Republican and Democratic administrations. However, more subtle pressure has been applied, particularly to the former countries of Indochina, in the first Bush administration. This has taken the form of both a pro-democracy push that exhibits tinges of a cold war anti-communist campaign and a greater attention to religious freedom (particularly the treatment of Christians) in these countries. Policies toward these countries tend to resonate with Bush administration constituencies—most prominently the Christian right—in contrast to the policies toward other countries in the region. For example, the only Southeast Asian country to receive individual attention in the 2004 Republican Party platform was Vietnam. The Philippines and Thailand were given categorical mention in a long catalogue of U.S. allies, but Vietnam drew a full paragraph of its own, which advocated continued pressure on Hanoi to account for American POW/MIA's and greater attention to the prospects (or lack of) for democratization.⁷ This treatment was striking in its apparent effort to turn back the clock, at a time when Vietnam is seeking broader and deeper relations with the United States and the international community in general.

At present, there is little motivation or momentum for U.S. policy-makers to dismantle these firewalls within Southeast Asia policy. However, this division—and especially U.S. policy toward Burma—will prevent the United States from formulating more effective regional policies in Southeast Asia, since relations cannot be said to be fully normalized with half of the region. At present, the United States is content with cherry-picking its partners in the region and sees no apparent need for a more integrated approach, despite a predictable level of rhetoric about the benefits of regionalism and the value of ASEAN.

THE GREAT POWER GAP

If Washington does take a more comprehensive and integrated approach to Southeast Asia in the next four years, it will most likely be to keep pace with rising powers in the region. Although its role as a security guarantor in the Asia-Pacific region and prominence as ASEAN's largest trading partner assure the United States a continued prominence in Southeast Asia, Washington is increasingly challenged in its leadership role from several sides. This growing gap in regional influence is a consequence of the

domestic and regional gaps examined above. Bluntly put, rising powers are able to gain influence by exploiting the spaces in U.S. policies toward the Muslim countries and toward the poorer, newer members of ASEAN.

For example, while the United States maintains an essentially bilateral approach to trade with Southeast Asia that reinforces and may even extend the gaps between the richer and poorer countries, China has taken a more sympathetic regional approach. At the ASEAN meeting in Laos in November 2004, Beijing formalized this approach by signing an agreement to establish a China-ASEAN free trade area by 2010. When it goes into effect, this arrangement will be the largest free trade area in the world. China's stature was further boosted with its provision of "early harvest funds" to the poorer countries of ASEAN, to address their economic disadvantage in the new arrangement. This strengthens the perception that the U.S.-ASEAN Enterprise Initiative is a bilateral program in mufti, and that it will hurt, rather than help, the lower tier of countries in the short-term. China has also profited significantly from the isolation of Burma by the United States (as well as Japan and the European Union) and is now Rangoon's fastest growing trading partner, its largest aid donor, and its most important security partner.

This gap in power relations in Southeast Asia cannot be attributed solely to the Bush administration. For example, China's prestige and influence in the region received a major boost from the Clinton administration's decision to act through the International Monetary Fund during the Asian economic crisis, rather than on a bilateral basis with the countries hardest hit by the crisis. In contrast to this policy, Beijing made its first offers of bilateral loans to Thailand and Indonesia during the crisis. A longer-term effect of the crisis was the establishment of the ASEAN+3 group (including the ten member states of ASEAN as well as China, Japan and South Korea), which signaled the advent of regional groups that excluded the United States and other Western powers.

However, Bush administration policy in the last four years has accelerated the rise of new competitors for influence in the region. The perception that the United States is focused too narrowly on counter-terrorism as a policy goal in the region, coupled with more acrimonious relations with the newer ASEAN states, has provided new entry points not only for China but also for India, and it has breathed new life into regional roles for Japan and Australia. This trend is exacerbated by Washington's occa-

sional unilateralist swaggering; its preoccupation with wars in other regions; and its pressure on Southeast Asian friends and allies to provide troops and other support to Iraq. Competing regional powers need do very little to contrast themselves favorably with the United States under these circumstances, and symbolic gestures will often suffice. In the past year, China, India, Japan and even Russia have signed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation with ASEAN, and pressure is mounting on the United States to do the same. There is little chance that Washington will do so, if only because Burma policy would prevent it, but the United States has offered nothing in response to the implied demand to recognize and deal with Southeast Asia more as a whole. Instead, despite the customary rhetorical support for ASEAN, the Bush administration has made APEC the go-to institution for regional action. In 2003, for example, Washington based the Container Security Initiative with APEC.

With the possible exception of China's new role, hardboiled policy analysts would contend that this growing gap between the U.S. approach to Southeast Asia and that of the other powers does not present a serious threat to U.S. interests in the region at this time, and they would be right. It is even possible to argue that a more multipolar region supports U.S. policy; greater balance among the powers could lead to a reduction in security threats and a lesser need for the United States to act as a security guarantor. Some have also argued that multipolarity would also lower the U.S. profile in Southeast Asia at a time when its unilateralist image makes a high profile objectionable. With Australia and Japan acting as surrogates on occasion, they reason, a lower profile would not endanger U.S. interests and would offer a lighter touch. In particular, with official relations with key Southeast Asian countries closer than ever, ratcheting down the U.S. profile could be an effective way of improving relations with touchy Southeast Asian societies.

Although these points may have individual merit, any potential value is in the short-term. Collectively, they would amount to a greater degree of U.S. disengagement from Southeast Asia and an eventual loss of real influence and leverage. Moreover, the issue of "soft power" in the region is not merely a matter of optics. With Southeast Asian nations developing economically and opening their political systems, however incrementally, and with the region itself becoming more open to a multiplicity of influences, the United States must make a concerted effort to re-define itself in the

region, not only rhetorically but with policies that will help Southeast Asians achieve the goals they have set for themselves.

Taking coordinated and tangible steps to narrow all three of these gaps provides a full agenda for the second term of the Bush administration in Southeast Asia. Although common cause on counter-terrorism will remain an important priority for the near-term, the administration should refocus some of its concern and efforts on issues of greatest concern to Southeast Asians, including continued recovery from the 1997-98 crisis, the effective management of political transitions and the ongoing process of political development. As a preliminary step to improving relations with Southeast Asian Muslims, the administration must acknowledge the impact of U.S. actions in other regions of the Muslim world on Southeast Asia through official and track-two dialogue, while it also corrects visa and immigration policies that leave Southeast Asian Muslims feeling stigmatized. With a more secure mandate in the second term, the administration should re-examine some of its policies in the "other" Southeast Asia, particularly its former Vietnam War era foes, and consider whether support for indigenous processes of liberalization might not be more effective than attempting simply to score ideological points at home. At present, Burma stands out as resistant to change and the administration will likely be limited in its policy options until internal developments provide new openings. However, recognition that the past fifteen years has revealed no silver bullets to effect political reconciliation in Rangoon should encourage the Bush administration to work more productively with ASEAN to reinforce any signs of openness if they do appear. Lastly, although the administration is not likely to abandon its essentially bilateral approach to Southeast Asia for a dramatically different multilateral policy, it need not and should not be content simply to react (often negatively) to pressure that the U.S. be more accepting of ASEAN as a whole. Pro-active diplomatic measures, such as the establishment of a U.S.-ASEAN Summit, and efforts to help ASEAN toward greater regional integration as the Association itself defines it would be investments with long-term benefits for Southeast Asia and the United States alike.

NOTES

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THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN REGIONAL SECURITY STRATEGIES

EVELYN GOH

Other contributors to this collection provide an overview of U.S. policy in Southeast Asia under the Bush administration and an analysis of the issue of counter-terrorism within this set of relationships. Riding upon their coat-tails, this essay evaluates the Bush administration's approach to regional security as compared to the strategies and expectations of key countries in the region.

The main analysis is divided into two parts. The first section compares the Bush administration's definition of critical interests and threats in the region with those of key Southeast Asian states. The second section focuses on how these Southeast Asian countries are coping with their key threats or challenges, and what role the U.S., under this administration, has played in these efforts. This section of the paper applies a dual comparison. It compares U.S. policies to the hope and expectations of Southeast Asian countries. However, a key theme is also the comparison of China's approach to Southeast Asian security interests and issues with that of the U.S. between 2001 and 2004.

The thrust of this paper is to evaluate the extent to which the Bush administration has identified common security interests with Southeast Asian countries; the degree to which it has enabled the U.S. to play an effective role in achieving both American and Southeast Asian security goals; and the quality and nature of U.S. leadership in the region as compared to China's increasing role.

Evelyn Goh is assistant professor at the Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. In fall 2004, she was a Southeast Asia fellow at the East-West Center in Washington. Her publications include a forthcoming book: *Constructing the U.S. Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974: From "Red Menace" to "Tacit Ally."*

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the Bush administration, it appeared that Southeast Asia would remain in the secondary position it had occupied within East Asian affairs since the end of the cold war—an important strategic thoroughfare, but essentially peripheral to the main stage of Northeast Asia, where the nuclear standoff on the Korean peninsula was being played out and where China was rising, potentially to challenge U.S. dominance in the region. Preoccupied with the business of bringing about recovery after the 1997 financial crisis, during which the U.S. was perceived by some in the region as having been slow to help, key Southeast Asian countries were wary about continuing benign neglect from Washington under the Bush administration. At the same time, they were concerned about the fallout for regional stability from the downturn in U.S.–China relations, with the new administration’s more muscular rhetoric about China as a “strategic competitor,” the EP-3 incident, and Bush’s declaration of intent to do “whatever it takes” to defend Taiwan.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, changed Southeast Asia’s position in American strategy in three ways. First, at a time when the U.S. is the target of extremist Islamic terrorists, this region of sizable and mainly moderate Muslim populations has taken on particular significance in terms of political and diplomatic symbolism, as well as in the longer-term battle for “hearts and minds” that will call for sustained engagement by the U.S. Second, Southeast Asia provided some suitable outlets—the Philippine government’s fight against Muslim separatist groups in Mindanao, for instance—for immediate, relatively small-scale military action by the Bush administration to demonstrate that the war against terrorism is indeed global. Third, as a critical maritime trading and transport thoroughfare between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, Southeast Asia provides the focus of attention for Washington’s concerns about new terrorist threats related to container security and the transport and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Like the Bush administration, Southeast Asian governments have been rapidly adjusting to the new security context over the last four years. While accepting that terrorism has become the overarching lens through which Washington views international and regional strategic affairs, it is important to note that terrorism is not a new threat in many Southeast Asian

countries. The scope and nature of some organizations have changed in recent years, including their ties with international networks, but the basic issues of under-development, ethnic division and separatism remain. Among regional governments, there is a great deal of genuine concern and desire to combat the threat, but there is also some manipulation of the agenda to the best advantage and interest of these governments, their leaders and the state. Above all, Southeast Asian approaches to the new preoccupation with terrorism are often undertaken with an eye to other major concerns, particularly the imperatives of domestic stability and economic growth and competition. At the same time, these small- and medium-sized states also have to calibrate their policies bearing in mind the other major player in the region—China—whose preferences, options, and potential favors increasingly shape the strategic landscape.

THREAT PERCEPTIONS

After September 11, 2001, the Bush administration's approach to Southeast Asia has been almost entirely dictated by its overarching preoccupation with terrorism. By maintaining this focus over the last four years, it not only renewed attention on Southeast Asia, but has also managed to marshal a significant convergence in threat perceptions in a region characterized more by its disparities than its similarities.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has adopted numerous declarations and agreements for cooperation on counter-terrorism at meetings of its foreign ministers, with its dialogue partners, at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and at APEC. The Bush administration has persuaded the ASEAN members not only to cooperate among themselves, but also to put counter-terrorism on the top of their regional security agenda and to develop systematic bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the U.S.

Beyond this general declaratory level, the degree of U.S. cooperation with Southeast Asian states on counter-terrorism is uneven, of course. It has arguably been most obvious with the Philippines, as a result of the *Balikatan* exercises in Mindanao. In 2004, there were also rumors of American offers of help to Bangkok with its recurring problem of violence in predominantly Muslim southern Thailand, but the Thaksin government's controversial handling of the problem is likely to hamper such a

development. Singapore is the country that has cooperated most closely with the Bush administration, in terms of intelligence cooperation, high-level dialogue, diplomacy and strategy. It is the only Southeast Asian country to have signed up to the Container Security Initiative, allowing U.S. security officials to vet containers in the Singapore port bound for the U.S., and was the only country to support the idea of the U.S. playing an active role in ensuring sea lane security in the Malacca Straits in 2004. Indeed, post-September 11, Singapore leaders' perceptions have aligned significantly with those of the Bush administration in identifying terrorism and political Islam as the greatest threats to its security.

This is less marked in other countries in the region, particularly Indonesia and Malaysia, where the politics of religion pose serious constraints to the governments' open support for the U.S. agenda. Yet, U.S. intelligence cooperation and funding to the Indonesian police forces have grown significantly since the Bali bombing in 2002, and while problems remain with aid to the military because of Congress' concerns over human rights issues, the situation may improve with the new government led by Susilo Bambang Yudhono, who has been more pragmatically willing to accommodate the U.S. than his predecessor. With Malaysia, too, the Bush administration has managed quiet and effective cooperation; the opening of the U.S.-funded regional center for terrorism in the country is one indication of this.

Almost all the countries in the region—with the possible exception of Myanmar and Laos—have come to realize that, by virtue of its sizeable Muslim population and its strategic geographical location, Southeast Asia is set to be the “second front” in the worldwide counter-terrorism campaign for the long term whether they like it or not. The key stumbling block in deeper alignment with the U.S. over the last four years, though, has been the Bush administration's decision to undertake the war in Iraq. While Washington presented this war as an extension of the war on terrorism, Southeast Asian perceptions—like those of many others in the rest of the world—are that this is not only a separate war, but that it detracts from and undermines the war on terrorism. The unpopularity of the war amongst the public and the potential for Islamic political parties to exploit this strong opposition have made it particularly difficult for Indonesian and Malaysian leaders to lend high-profile support to U.S. policies and initiatives, such as the regional maritime security initiative. At the same

time, it has limited the Filipino and Thai governments' willingness to support the campaign in Iraq.

The difficulties surrounding the war in Iraq highlight two critical differences between the American war on terrorism and the Southeast Asian fights against terrorism. First, rather than a global, extremist, anti-West conspiracy, Southeast Asian variants of terrorism are intimately related to domestic politics, uneven and under-development of ethnic minority groups, and separatist movements of relatively long standing. That these groups have more recently linked up with wider international funding and ideological networks might render them more effective and cohesive, but does not uproot them from the domestic political contexts within which they operate, nor alter the political aims they pursue within these contexts. The implication is that while governments in the region are keenly aware of the need to boost their intelligence functions, they are fundamentally less interested in short-term military capacity than in longer-term, non-military instruments of sub-regional development, socio-economic integration, and religious education reform – all of which would help to sustain national integrity and sovereignty. In some of these aims, high-profile U.S. aid could be more of a hindrance than a help because of the widespread perception that the U.S. is anti-Islam, unilateralist and interventionist, with the Bush administration's war in Iraq as exhibit number one.

Second, it is important to recognize that while the Bush administration has been able to focus largely on the threat of terrorism in its security strategy, Southeast Asia continues to grapple with a regional threat matrix in which China features conspicuously. Over the last decade, China's importance in Southeast Asia has been in growing evidence across some critical realms—regional security and stability, economic development, and regional institutions and identity. While Beijing has made some important inroads in the region over the last four years, most Southeast Asian states remain wary about growing Chinese power and influence in the region, and continue to hedge against potential problems ranging from territorial conflicts to economic competition. In these strategies, the U.S., as the incumbent power in the region, naturally plays a significant role. The next section of this essay examines Southeast Asian relations with the U.S. during the Bush administration in comparison to China's role in the region during the same period.

BALANCE OF POWER

The last four years have been eventful, and in Southeast Asia, there has been a strong sense of significant undercurrents of systemic change, although no one is yet quite sure in what direction these trends might eventually lead. On the one hand, the Bush administration has galvanized the region and the world to the war against terrorism, and on the other hand, China is rapidly rising and spreading its influence. Southeast Asians know that both these developments will have long-term implications for the balance of interest and power in this region. For the moment, though, there is strong awareness that given the huge differential between Chinese and American economic and military capabilities, it is not the balance of *power* but rather that of *influence* that may be changing more significantly over the short- to medium-term.

Influence, of course, is a nebulous concept—it derives from strength, but also from style, particularly in these troubled and uncertain times. The U.S. and Chinese approaches to Southeast Asia over the past four years have diverged notably in style. Like previous administrations—including Clinton's—the Bush administration has stuck resolutely to the San Francisco alliance system as the bedrock of strategy in the region. It has reinforced the alliances with Japan and Australia, and elevated Thailand and the Philippines to major non-NATO ally status. Together with the strengthening of security relations with Singapore under the new Framework Agreement being negotiated, these approaches have been bilateral and have emphasized the Bush administration's policy of pursuing coalitions or partnerships of the willing. It has not paid a great deal of attention to multilateral institutions apart from using them to marshal largely declaratory support for the war on terrorism. Meanwhile, the various agencies of the U.S. government continue to emphasize sticking points in relations with Southeast Asian countries related to human rights and democratic development. One notable development under the Bush administration, though, has been the Enterprise for ASEAN Initiative, which provides for countries that are ready to negotiate bilateral Free Trade Agreements with the United States. While such countries remain subject to the same conditions as before, and no one expects these negotiations to be easy, it is taken as a sign of recognition of the economic imperatives of the region.

China has had a contrasting and perhaps more obviously successful record in Southeast Asia over the last four years. It has not only continued to increase and deepen its participation in regional multilateral institutions (ASEAN+, ARF, APEC), but has also demonstrated a growing capacity to influence the agenda of some institutions – the slowing down of the move towards preventive diplomacy in the ARF, and its two-year absence at the Shangri-la Dialogue being examples. At the same time, Beijing has proposed new areas and channels for cooperation with the region, most notably the meeting of deputy defense ministers, the Bo'ao economic forum, its support for the Asian Monetary Fund, and its recent discourse suggesting that ASEAN+3 is a forerunner for an East Asian Community. Partly because of the low baseline of previous Chinese participation and initial regional expectations, many of these advances have been welcomed in the region. At the same time, Beijing has concentrated on improving and elevating key bilateral ties, as witnessed in its dialogues to resolve border issues with Vietnam, the early harvest FTA with Thailand, and the recent agreement for security cooperation with the Philippines. Beijing's style of emphasizing "mutual benefit" and informal equality with its neighbors has been appealing and has contributed to the success of its campaign to reduce regional perceptions of the China "threat."

The Bush administration appears to have recognised the incipient challenge posed by China's recent successes in the region. For instance, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs James Kelly told a House Committee hearing in June 2004 that China "is challenging the status quo aggressively" in some areas, citing as the only example Beijing "expanding its influence in Southeast Asia by enhancing its diplomatic representation, increasing foreign assistance, and signing new bilateral and regional agreements."¹ While Southeast Asians are not likely to agree with Kelly's aggressive portrayal of recent Chinese initiatives towards the region, they would be pleased at the implication that Washington ought to pay more heed to how to balance this rising Chinese influence.

Yet, it is important to bear in mind that balance of influence in the region relates strongly to the relative ability of the U.S. and China to provide strategic common goods in the region. A brief assessment would include the following:

- Counter-terrorism. On this issue, there is simply no comparison between the two. In terms of intelligence, money, technology, train-

ing, boots on the ground, and political leadership, the U.S. is recognized as indispensable in the war against terrorism, be it the hunt for al Qaeda or related groups like Jemaah Islamiyah, or in terms of external capacity-building and funds for fighting domestic insurgency. Note, though, the recent interesting negative reception from Malaysia and Indonesia to both American and Chinese offers to get involved in maritime security in the Straits of Malacca (Singapore was the only country that was keen on the American offer). This suggests that there remain areas in which high-profile U.S. or Chinese provision of security goods is perceived with sensitivity to sovereignty issues.

- Economic stability and development. In Southeast Asia, economic security is indivisible from national security. In this arena, too, the U.S. is the largest market and one of the top investors for the region—its critical economic role in the region is recognized and welcomed by all. China is making headway with the promise of a China-ASEAN FTA and its early harvest programs, in providing economic aid to some countries, and in its promises of being a source of return investments to the region. But for the medium-term, it remains potential, and is unlikely to replace or displace the U.S. economically. Yet Chinese economic partnerships in the region tend to be given more publicity and play because they are state-directed. In contrast, U.S. economic relations reside more in the private sector, are much more well-established, and generate less “noise.”
- South China Sea. The regional disputes over islands in the South China Sea is one area in which China may contribute more to the provision (or disruption) of common security goods than the U.S. might. As one of the principal parties that has generated most conflict over the last two decades, China is a critical player. It has contributed to some significant progress in the last four years, notably the Declaration of Conduct (the problems during negotiation of which were due more to ASEAN discord than Chinese reluctance) and the recent bilateral agreement with the Philippines. Some Southeast Asian countries would prefer to see Washington change its strict “hands-off” policy to a stance more actively in support of an eventual diplomatic or joint-development solution to the issue.
- Regional leadership. Do Beijing’s recent advances in Southeast Asia suggest that the region is recognizing in China not just its dominance

by dint of size and history, but also its role as a regional leader? Perceptions vary across the region. As Catharin Dalpino suggests in her contribution to this collection, there are in fact two parts to Southeast Asia now. Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, because of geography and international isolation or neglect, may be argued to already acknowledge China's regional hegemony. As for the other countries, there is evidence of hedging (such as in the case of the Philippines' recent cooperation) or of approaching China as an alternative source of political support or affirmation, or of arms supplies (such as in the case of Indonesia under President Megawati). Vietnam, because of its history and pragmatism, seems to have some genuine desire to grant "due respect" to its big neighbor in order to ensure good relations and stability, while Thailand and Malaysia lead the general enthusiasm about China as a second potential "lead goose" in regional economic development. There are clearly limits to these treatments of China, and, at the same time, all these countries continue to see the U.S. as a world leader in the way it shapes the global and regional agenda and security context. All acknowledge U.S. predominance in the region in economic and security terms, although many feel the need for a more regional focus in order to improve the effectiveness of U.S. policies.

Thus, Southeast Asia is responding to and cultivating both the U.S. and China. However, the manner in which relations with the two powers are envisaged differs in terms of weight, extent and nature. As the two sets are not mutually exclusive or zero-sum, they do impact on each other. The Bush administration has been relatively effective in Southeast Asia in terms of achieving its own interests and objectives in the short-term, but indications are that its approach will not be so effective in the longer term, in terms of regional influence, public diplomacy, and winning "hearts and minds" in the long campaign against terrorism and extremism.

CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATIONS

U.S. relations with Southeast Asian countries and U.S. policy in the region have been relatively effective and successful under the Bush administration. It has managed to garner support for its main objectives in anti-terrorism, and has boosted the important strategic commercial ties with

the region. At the same time, American predominance and leadership continues to be acknowledged and valued generally in Southeast Asia.

However, the Bush administration's style of conducting business, and the war in Iraq, has reduced the level of comfort in most countries in the region with American leadership. In and of itself, this may not be a major consideration for the administration in the next four years, since Southeast Asians by and large prefer U.S. dominance anyway. But widespread suspicions of Washington's intentions, particularly amongst Muslim populations, will constrain and complicate the level and degree of support governments in the region can extend to American policies regionally and internationally. Taken together with China's increasing influence in the region, in order to more effectively project its power in the region, the next administration might wish to consider paying greater attention to two aspects of policy in Southeast Asia: partnership and public diplomacy. Partnership suggests two-way cooperation that emphasizes understanding of the aims and limitations of each side, which leads to realistic expectations, mutual benefits and perhaps quid pro quo exchanges across a variety of issue areas. Public diplomacy will help to explain Washington's policies, and eventually to moderate the style of relations. There are four areas in which these may be achieved.

- 1) A greater sensitivity to the nexus between domestic politics and the security agenda for many key Southeast Asian countries. At the most obvious level, this relates to the difficulties faced by governments with large Islamic populations in expressing obvious support for U.S. policies. Given the widespread popular dissatisfaction and disaffection with Washington, particularly over the Iraq war, this problem extends also to other countries like the Philippines and Thailand. In the context of leadership transition (almost every country in the region has had an election or change in leadership over the last year) or weak coalitional governments (especially the Arroyo and Megawati governments), such popular feeling exercises significant political constraint, as seen in the withdrawal of Filipino and Thai troops from Iraq, and the reticence of Malaysia and Indonesia in contributing to postwar Iraq. The second Bush administration might want to adjust its expectations. It may be more productive to look for quieter but just as effective cooperation from these countries in key elements of the war against terrorism—an expansion of support and coordination in the

area of maritime security from the key littoral states is an obvious priority. While some countries have objected to high-profile U.S. involvement, such as patrolling the Straits of Malacca, there remains much room for American support for regional cooperation in terms of capacity-building, intelligence exchange, and bilateral container and port security arrangements.

- 2) More attention to the economic imperative in the region. This will go some way towards reassuring the region that Washington values it for reasons other than anti-terrorism alone. The Bush administration's EAI has seen it sign an FTA with Singapore, and begin negotiations with Thailand. The Philippines and Malaysia now have Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) status and could start FTA negotiations over the next few years. The next administration may consider giving more public attention to these positive developments, and to the depth and breadth of U.S.-Southeast Asian economic relations in general, as part of improving public diplomacy. Other steps that might help to convince the region of continued U.S. support in this area include establishing normal trade relations with Laos, and support for (or at least not vociferous objection to) the Asian Bond Market.
- 3) Multilateral institutions. The Bush administration has continued in the recent tradition of American involvement in some key regional institutions, particularly the ASEAN Regional Forum and APEC. However, it has turned these into fora for pushing a primarily counter-terrorism agenda, and has not managed to bridge the growing differences with some countries that want a slower pace of development for the ARF. The next administration should continue the active engagement with these institutions, but not only for counter-terrorism—it should work on the range of other security issues, and in pushing for the development of more transparency and moves towards preventive diplomacy in the region. It will have to demonstrate U.S. leadership in a region-specific manner, so as to make clear that the region cannot afford to leave out Washington in important economic and security matters, even though some would try to exclude it from certain Asian institutions. In so doing, it may have to work with certain key partners in the region that are willing to negotiate for a quicker pace of development in regional security cooperation.

- 4) Manage relations with China in tandem with Southeast Asian partners. The Bush administration's initial strong stance against China was tempered by Chinese support after September 11. The second Bush administration must see that China has made serious advances in becoming an integral part of the region in the last four years, and countries in the region are now less willing to have to choose against China than they were before. As a result, Washington would be ill-advised to pursue zero-sum policies against China. Rather, it should try to strengthen ties with as many Southeast Asian countries as possible, establish strategic relations where possible, explain its Taiwan and China policies well and clearly, and work at deepening the multilateral security dialogue. The aim would be to work with Southeast Asian countries to persuade China to build on and deliver on the progress it has made in the last four years. After all, the U.S. and Southeast Asia share the aim of socializing China into a responsible regional power. Without the backing of the U.S. and the draw of its economic strength as well as its potential power of containment and censure, Southeast Asian strategies of engagement are much less persuasive.

Overall, therefore, the first Bush administration has successfully managed to garner support from Southeast Asia for its policy priorities, particularly in anti-terrorism. The region continues to appreciate the critical importance of the U.S. in regional security. However, while critical, anti-terrorism forms only one aspect of the various common security interests between Southeast Asian countries and the U.S. Key Southeast Asian states also have pressing concerns about religious politics, national integrity, regime security, economic development, and the rise of China. In order to more effectively harness regional support for its global and regional strategies, and to better buttress the quality of American leadership in the region, the second Bush administration will want to pay greater attention to questions of style, and to emphasize partnership and public diplomacy.

NOTE

1. James Kelly, U.S. Secretary of State, testimony, "An Overview of U.S.-East Asia Policy," Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington DC, 108th Cong., 2nd sess., June 2, 2004, <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2004/33064.htm>.

A CONGRESSIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

JAMES A. LEACH

While the United States continues to be focused on the critical tasks of countering global terrorist threats and stabilizing Iraq and Afghanistan, it is nevertheless impressive that the greatest challenges of the 21st century are likely to arise in Asia, where the role and policies of the U.S. will have seminal implications for world peace and security.

With half the world's population, including a majority of all Muslims on the planet, a growing share of global GDP, powerful military establishments, as well as several of the world's most dangerous geopolitical flash-points, Asia demands discerning and constant attention.

As the Bush administration begins a second term, it is appropriate to review where it has been and where it is headed, to the extent events are controlled or influenced by Washington.

It is notable that the new Bush team got off to a bit of an ideological start in Asia as well as in the Middle East, but the Asia policy rudder has been generally righted. Issues in the region are large and varied, but American leadership is challenged less by their unique nature than by the spillover effects of our Iraqi policies on Asian consciousness. Our intervention in Iraq—which is widely viewed by Asians as a foreign policy blunder, reflective of an increasingly violent culture—has undercut our influence, moral as well as political, throughout the region.

Not all aspects of our post-9/11 involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan have been negative. Given its religious and ethnic diversity, China, for

James A. Leach is chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific of the U.S. House International Relations Committee. Prior to his election to the House in 1977, Rep. Leach had a distinguished career in international relations, serving as a Foreign Service Officer assigned to the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and a delegate to the United Nations General Assembly and the Geneva Disarmament Conference.

instance, shares our concern for destabilizing religious extremism. India, while encompassing the world's second largest Muslim population, has for a variety of reasons moved out of its cold war umbrella relationship with Russia to a much more American-centric trade and cultural orientation. Pakistan has a government which recognizes the downside of certain fundamentalist and terrorist organizing both in relation to its differences with India over Kashmir and with the U.S. over nuclear policies and the ongoing hunt for Osama bin Laden. The challenge for the U.S. in crafting policies for each of these countries is to seek ways to expand commonality of interests while dealing constructively with areas of difference, such as human rights concerns (China), outsourcing (China and India), and fundamentalist education and politics (Pakistan).

To the extent the East Asian landscape contains obvious points of instability as well as the seeds of far-reaching change and transition, it is important that the region be directly engaged on its own as well as within the context of larger global issues. The most challenging geopolitical problems in the Asia-Pacific region relate to: (1) the spread of terrorism; (2) the North Korean anomaly; (3) tension across the Taiwan Strait; and (4) the question of whether China will become one of the most stabilizing or destabilizing forces of this new century. These issues will be the primary focus of my this essay.

TERRORISM

There are many lessons of 9/11, but one that stands out is that it is relatively easy to destroy. A few can inflict havoc on the many, with advanced economies more vulnerable than less advanced ones to terrorist acts.

Anarchy is terrorism's fellow traveler. But as we've only begun to contemplate, unleashing weapons of mass destruction could make even Hobbesian anarchy look civilized.

In the most profound observation of the 20th century, Einstein noted that splitting the atom had changed everything save our mode of thinking. Now we are confronted with the even more sobering prospect of splicing genes and manufacturing diseases.

For the first time in history weapons exist that jeopardize life itself on the planet. Access to these weapons is becoming wider, not only between

nation states, but potentially by terrorist organizations accountable to no government.

The administration has sought and largely secured contributions or support for our policies in Iraq from a number of our allies, including Australia, South Korea, Japan, Thailand and Singapore. Americans are divided on the wisdom of our Iraqi intervention, but all are appreciative of the support we have received from our friends in Asia. The tragedy is that our decision to go to war in Iraq and seek outside support for our policies has come at a cost, both in a weakening of our ability to advance other aspects of our national interests, and in the loss of goodwill of peoples, even in countries whose governments have been supportive of our policies.

As we think through the long-term nature of the terrorist challenge in Asia, policymakers would be wise to keep in mind Jefferson's commitment in the Declaration of Independence to a "decent respect to the opinions of mankind," and Teddy Roosevelt's admonition that America should speak softly as it carries a big stick. The greater any country's power, the more important it is to use it with restraint.

And the greater our power, the more important it is to understand the values as well as the economic and political interests of others.

Civilized values whether of the East or West are rooted in just behavior and fundamentals of faith. Indeed, human communities are structured by religious thought and institutions. History has shown how the individual spirit can be uplifted by faith and the sense of community it engenders. History has also shown how individuals of faith who lack respect for individuals of other faiths can precipitate catastrophic events that subvert the most basic of human values.

The September 11 attacks on New York and Washington raised troubling questions about the relationship between Islam and terrorism. From a U.S. perspective terrorism—not Islam—is the enemy. We respect Islam and Islamic nations. The only brief we hold is against parties that manipulate hatred and employ tactics of terror.

In this context, it is incumbent on the U.S. to recognize that there are elements of Islamic radicalism in Asia, and these could in quick order mushroom. But Islam in Asia has generally been of a moderate character, integral to national development and even democratization—as was impressively demonstrated in recent elections in Muslim majority countries as diverse as Indonesia, Malaysia and Bangladesh.

It would be a mistake of historical proportions if respectful relations between America and the Muslim world were to rupture. We are all obligated to see that they don't.

THE KOREAN PENINSULA

Perhaps the clearest policy departure of the Bush administration from its predecessor came with respect to the Korean peninsula. In a *realpolitik* change of attitude the administration recognized there was too much wishfulness in Clinton administration initiatives, but it initially underestimated President Kim Dae Jung and appeared to disparage South Korea's policy of engagement toward the North. Our North Korean policy was put on hold, pending an ambiguous, if not inconclusive, policy review. In the process, U.S.-ROK relations became strained, and many South Koreans, particularly the younger generation, have come to view the U.S. as an obstacle to North-South reconciliation.

Ironically, our "axis of evil" rhetoric which specifically encompassed North Korea angered many in the South. When the appellation of "evil" is applied to countries instead of leaders, it too easily offends whole populations, in this case Koreans on both sides of the 38th parallel.

Washington can prudently agree with Seoul that there is no alternative to a policy of "sunshine," provided that we all recognize that the North Korean dictatorship is capable not only of casting dark shadows in its domestic policies but exploding the darkest of bombs abroad.

After all, the basis of the North Korean economy is the sale of military hardware, counterfeit currency, and addictive drugs, and the continuous effort to blackmail various nation-states. It is not only a rogue state; it is a criminal one.

There are few parallels in history in which the U.S. has found itself with a less appealing menu of options than with North Korea. Pyongyang's ongoing nuclear program and the potential export of weapons of mass destruction have particularly profound implications for regional stability, the international nonproliferation regime, and terrorist threats to the United States.

Here it should be noted that the mission of Assistant Secretary James A. Kelly to Pyongyang in October 2002—which led to the unraveling of the 1994 Agreed Framework when North Korea's representative

acknowledged the validity of our intelligence assessment of their clandestine highly enriched uranium program—was intended as a high-level American effort to advance a bettering of relations, not a worsening of tension. Understandably, Kelly did not have very flexible talking points from the National Security Council, but the goal of his visit to Pyongyang was to institute a constructive dialogue. Diplomacy like all human pursuits can sometimes be counterproductive, even when advanced by estimable professionals.

The judgment call of the day on the Korean peninsula is the question of time. Whose side is it on? With each passing month, North Korea increases its nuclear weapons capacities. On the other hand, the history of the 20th century has shown that governments which lack democratic legitimacy and fail to give their people the opportunity for a decent life are vulnerable to rapid internal implosion. Military might is simply no substitute for societal attention to human concerns.

America should be prepared at all times for sober dialogue with the North. We also have an obligation to redouble our efforts to define and reaffirm a mature, respectful, and value-based partnership with Seoul that is supportive of the Korean people's desire for national unification.

In the presidential campaign Senator Kerry attempted to differentiate himself from the president by suggesting he would initiate a bilateral dialogue with North Korea. The irony that he attacked the Bush administration for too much unilateralism in the Middle East and too much multilateralism on the Korean peninsula wasn't lost on the foreign policy establishment. And for the record, it should be noted that in the framework of the six-party talks, bilateral discussions between the U.S. and the DPRK also take place, as they do in New York at the United Nations.

One of the issues of the last several years that has caught Washington off-balance is the growth in negative South Korean attitudes toward the United States. We should have been more cognizant that when a country or people might be expected to be appreciative of another country or people for past acts, friction sometimes occurs. Gratitude too frequently implies embarrassment and, as it works out, is seldom cross-generational. On the other hand, umbrages, real or perceived, often are. With respect to both Koreas, there is an historical concern for big-power chauvinism, whether from its neighbors China, Russia and Japan, or as is increasingly the case, from across the Pacific. Ironically, attitudes about American pol-

icy may be more generous today among the youth of former enemies, Japan and Vietnam, than among historical allies, South Korea and France.

Nevertheless, America's commitment to South Korea has to be steadfast and our alliance unquestioned as the unpredictable unification process with the North proceeds. The North must not be allowed to drive a wedge between the U.S. and South Korea. Respect for the South's vibrant democracy must be our guiding principle.

In this setting the only prudent approach is to maintain wariness and concomitant preparedness while seeking to de-escalate tension. There is no alternative to attentive engagement.

While progress has been minimal to date, the administration's multilateral approach to the North has had undeniable benefits. A more respectful and balanced harmony of views has been established with the governments of Russia, Japan and South Korea. And China, while attempting to play a neutral role as the facilitator of the six-party talks, shares many of our common, vested interests.

It is entirely conceivable that North Korea is determined to maintain a nuclear weapons capacity. But as abhorrent and untrustworthy as the regime is, it is nevertheless clearly in our interest to maintain the six-party process and use the next round of talks, whenever they occur, to offer a clear vision of the advantages to all of a diplomatic solution. We have no choice except to continue to test whether Pyongyang is willing to abandon its march toward nuclearization, and at the same time be prepared to discuss a panoply of associated and unassociated issues.

The goal with the North should be to craft a policy of firmness toward leaders but compassion toward the subjected populace. Here I am pleased to report that legislation introduced by Senator Sam Brownback and me, the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004, was recently passed by Congress and signed into law by President Bush.

During the past two-and-a-half years, the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific has received testimony from a number of North Koreans who have survived some of the gravest rigors of the human condition—wrenching famine, a vast and brutal gulag, and for refugees, repatriation at the hands of the Chinese, sexual trafficking and exploitation. Their accounts buttress the growing awareness that the people of North Korea have endured some of the most acute humanitarian traumas of our time.

Provoked by these crises, this broadly bipartisan legislation aims to promote international cooperation on human rights and refugee protection, and increased transparency in the provision of humanitarian assistance to the people of North Korea.

SINO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

Let me turn for a moment to the largest issue in Asia: the future of China and the challenge of Sino-American relations. Here we must begin with the basics.

At the root of the basics are theories of revolution, theories of the individual, theories of economics, and questions of the adaptability of abstract systems to the culture and heritage of people in varying circumstances.

If one assumes that abstract systems of government must fit historical frameworks and the accident of social challenges at given points in time, what is so interesting about China today is that the communist model, which convulsed the country for such an important part of the 20th century, is so alien to China's heritage. While the radicalism implicit in Marxism-Leninism may have been useful in galvanizing nationalist sentiment, particularly as an oppressed and impoverished Chinese people faced Japanese aggression during the Second World War, few theories either of revolution or governmental management have been more troubling for those who have experimented with them.

Just as Americans would be wise to learn from older elements of Chinese civilization, particularly as we contend with modern problems of family break-down and urban violence, the Chinese might want to review the possibility that the decentralized American model of democratic government fits their society better than it fits smaller, more homogenous countries, including those in Europe.

In the context of China, the economic reforms which Deng Xiaoping initiated in the late 1970s have produced certain regional and other inequities, but also unprecedented economic dynamism. In international affairs, China has begun to wield influence in the Security Council and to assert its authority as a regional power, laying the groundwork for an expanded involvement on the Korean peninsula, in Southeast Asia, and the Middle East as well as the oil-rich but undeveloped Central Asian republics.

But problems loom ahead—including unemployment, rampant corruption, a frail public health system and environmental abuse, to name just a few—that may yet undo some or all of the progress that has been made. Meanwhile, China’s policy of seeking to press Beijing’s norms on Hong Kong and greater authority over Taiwan are unacceptable to the populations concerned, while the “autonomy” guaranteed by China’s nationalities laws is undercut by oppressive state security policies.

Whether the 21st century is peaceful and prosperous will depend on whether China can live with itself and become open to the world in a fair and respectful manner. Hong Kong is central to that possibility. As such, Hong Kong’s affairs and people deserve our greatest attention, respect, and good will.

America and China both have enormous vested interests in the success of the “one country, two systems” model in Hong Kong. From a congressional perspective, it seems self-evident that advancing constitutional reform—including universal suffrage without undemocratic power structuring—would contribute to the city’s political stability and economic prosperity.

In this context, the September 12, 2004, elections had both good and bad news. A record number of Hong Kong’s voters turned out and voted heavily for candidates favoring continued reform, but the process was constrained by rules under which the Hong Kong people could not enjoy full democratic autonomy. Hence, we continue to be concerned that while the recent decisions by Beijing that set limits on constitutional development in Hong Kong implicitly acknowledge a degree of autonomy for Hong Kong, they do not represent a forthright commitment to the “high” degree of autonomy that was promised by the central authorities in the 1984 Joint Declaration and the 1990 Basic Law.

The recent election is a step forward, but democratic frustration continues to build. There is simply no credible reason to thwart the pace of democratic transformation in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong is important unto itself; it is also a model for others. What happens there is watched particularly closely by Taiwan, where in May, 2004 I had the honor of leading the American delegation to the second inauguration of President Chen Shui-bian and carrying a letter from the president making clear the administration’s concerns about the danger of independence rhetoric on Taiwan.

In addition to Taiwan's presidential election, 2004 also marked the 25th anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA). As one who was a proponent of the Act, I am proud of a small provision I authored relating to human rights and democratization. And as a lead member of a small band of senators and House members known on Taiwan as the American "Gang of Four" who advocated greater democratization on the island in opposition to the Kuomintang-centric policies then in vigor, I came to know many of the political dissidents who are now the current leaders of Taiwan. It is with the greatest respect that I observed the courage and sacrifices of those who challenged their government to open up to democracy. It is therefore with the humility of a legislator who never had to face, as they did, the prospect of imprisonment for holding views different than that of authorities in power that I feel so obligated to underscore the president's message of restraint for Taiwanese leaders today.

All of us are acutely conscious that the 20th century was the bloodiest century in world history. It was marred by wars, ethnic hatreds, clashes of ideology, and desire for conquest. Compounding these antagonisms has been the prideful miscalculation of various parties. Hence it is in the vital interests of potential antagonists in the world, in this case those on each side of the Taiwan Strait, to recognize that caution must be the watchword in today's turbulent times. Political pride and philosophical passion must not blind peoples to the necessity of rational restraint. Peaceful solutions to political differences are the only reasonable framework of future discourse between the mainland and the people of Taiwan.

Here, it is critical to review the history both of the breakthrough in U.S.-China relations that occurred during the Nixon administration and the philosophical aspects of American history which relate to issues of a nature similar to mainland-Taiwan divisions today.

United States recognition of China was formally ensconced in a carefully negotiated communiqué and two subsequent understandings. The U.S. accepted a "one China" framework for our relations with the most populous country in the world. At the same time, the three Executive branch initiatives were complemented by the Taiwan Relations Act, which establishes a commitment of the United States that no change in the status of Taiwan be coercively accomplished through the use of force.

While anti-communist, the party of Chiang Kai-shek on Taiwan had certain organizational attributes similar to the Communist Party on the mainland. And in one circumstance of philosophical consistency, both the Kuomintang of Chiang Kai-shek and the Communist Party of Mao Zedong claimed to be the governing party of all of China, including Taiwan. Hence, the Nixon “one China” approach did not contradict the nationalistic positions of the Kuomintang or the Chinese Communist Party.

The dilemma which comes to be accentuated with the passage of time is the question of whether Taiwan can legally seek today *de jure* independence on the basis of a referendum of the people. Here, there are contrasting models in American philosophy and history as well as security concerns for all parties to a potential rupture that must be prudently thought through.

Philosophically, Americans respect Jeffersonian revolutionary approaches. We also respect Lincolnesque concerns for national unity. It is in this context that America delivered a split judgment. The three Executive initiatives affirmed “one China” and the Taiwan Relations Act affirmed *de facto*, but not *de jure*, relations with a government of a non-state, one which was authoritarian in the 1970’s but democratic today.

From the perspective of the American government, there should be no doubt of the consistency of American policy. Under this president, as each of his predecessors—Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton—the governing American position is the acknowledgment of the Chinese position that there is but one China of which Taiwan is a part. For U.S. or Taiwanese leaders to assert any other position would create an earthquake in world affairs.

The issue of Taiwan is unique but anything except abstract. It is conceivable that missteps of political judgment could, more readily than many suppose, lead to a catastrophe for Asia, the United States, and the world.

The precepts of “self-determination” and “independence” may in most political and historical contexts be conceptually almost synonymous. But these two precepts are juxtaposed on one place on the planet. Taiwan can have *de facto* self-determination—meaning the ability of a people to maintain a government accountable to its populace—only if it does not attempt to be recognized with *de jure* sovereignty by the international

community. To be precise, the Taiwanese people can have self-determination as long as they do not seek independence; if they assert independence, their capacity for self-determination will collapse. Hence, for the sake of peace and security for peoples of the island and the broader Asia-Pacific region, there is no credible option except to emphasize restraint.

While clarity of national identity is psychologically attractive, security for the Taiwanese people comes best with political ambiguity. There is simply nothing to be gained by steps toward independence if such steps precipitate a catastrophic and unwinnable conflict between the mainland and the island.

Any unilateral attempt by either side to change the status quo across the Taiwan Strait is fraught with danger of the highest order.

As we make it clear to China that the U.S. is steadfastly committed to ensuring that the status of Taiwan not be altered by force, we also have an obligation not to entice Taiwan through ill-chosen rhetoric of “ours” or “theirs” into a sovereignty clash with China. Substantial Taiwanese self-determination can be maintained only if sovereign nationalist identity is not trumpeted.

Together with our historic “one China” policy, the Taiwan Relations Act has to date made an enduring contribution to peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. It provides a sturdy framework to help ensure Taiwan’s security. There should be no doubt that Congress stands with the administration in a common determination to fulfill obligations under the TRA. However, these obligations presuppose that Taiwanese leaders must understand the realities of mainland resolve and refrain from capricious actions that invite conflict or make constructive dialogue impossible.

Beijing also has implicit obligations to the international order. Yet it is amazing how so-called realists in government circles in so many capitals underestimate the “soft power” of people-to-people and cultural relations.

While recent years have witnessed a new maturity and sophistication in Chinese foreign policy, more nuanced and pragmatic policy approaches have not generally been applied to Taiwan.

For instance, instead of seeking to isolate Taiwan, isn’t it in Beijing’s interest to be magnanimous toward the people of the island? Shouldn’t it shepherd Taiwanese membership in international organizations that do not imply sovereignty—such as helping Taiwan gain observer status in the

World Health Organization? Rather than setting deadlines for unification or continuing a counterproductive military buildup, wouldn't Beijing be well-advised to emphasize culture and economics in its relations with Taipei?

And, on the military front, wouldn't it be in both side's interests to upgrade communications, widen professional exchanges, and engage in confidence building measures to reduce the likelihood of accidental conflict?

There is an assumption among students of Beijing politics, particularly in Singapore, that no one in or aspiring to power in China can afford to be "soft" on Taiwan. Hence, particularly given the proclivity for independence rhetoric within the governing DPP party on Taiwan, the risk that an escalation of rhetoric could trigger an irrational confrontation is high. Likewise, mainland leadership may choose to precipitate a crisis. Singapore's leaders, who follow trends closely in Beijing, even suggest that China may be prepared to precipitate conflict over Taiwan in the next several years.

The greatest geo-strategic irony in world affairs is that the U.S. and China have a commonality of interest and are working well together to resolve or at least constrain challenges associated with North Korea where the economics and politics of an isolated, rogue regime may ultimately deteriorate to the point of potential implosion. By contrast, it is Taiwan, a severely isolated island on which economics and politics have conjoined to take more progressive strides than any place on earth over the past generation, where the greatest prospect of great power conflict may exist in Asia.

At the risk of over-statement, an alarming build-up of polarizing attitudes is occurring on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Whether prospects of conflict are 50 percent or only 5 percent, they are too high. The human toll could be great; the rupture in trade relations devastating, causing impacts that could last decades after any conflict concluded.

Here, a footnote about the recent U.S. presidential campaign. For all the domestic fireworks, Taiwan was not an issue. Neither presidential candidate wanted a repeat of "Quemoy and Matsu" argumentation. The fact that neither campaign broached the issue this year, however, doesn't mean that sometime in some future campaign Taiwanese politics might not be injected into American politics in a way destabilizing to world order and our national interest.

The issue that did surface but was better understood abroad than at home is the tendency of the Democratic Party to be protectionist on economic issues as the Republicans tend toward political unilateralism. In some countries in Asia, the Democratic tendencies are more consternating than the Republican one, although interestingly, perhaps based on an electoral miscalculation, or perhaps related simply to a newspaper desire for emotional headlines, the Chinese chose to blast President Bush for his political interventionism the day before the vote commenced.

One of my favorite anecdotes about a Chinese leader relates to a group of French journalists who interviewed Zhou Enlai a little over a generation ago. At the end of their discussion they asked him what he thought was the meaning of the French Revolution. Zhou Enlai hesitated and then said, "It is too early to tell."

From a Chinese perspective, Zhou may have been right to reserve judgment. It is too early to assess the meaning of the French Revolution in an Asian context. Thirty years ago, many western-educated Asians were Franco-Jeffersonian democrats. Jefferson's emphasis on individual rights—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—and the revolutionary French call for "liberte, egalite, fraternite" appeared to be compelling universalist notions vastly preferable to Marxist jargon. Today, however, Asian intellectuals accept the market economy and recognize the coercive nature or, at best, irrelevance of Marxism. But they look at the interventionist nature of contemporary American foreign policy in the Middle East and the violence of American culture at home, and many have concluded that unconstrained power and unmitigated freedom can sometimes produce negative consequences. They believe that rights should be tempered by a concomitant emphasis on responsibilities and that a cohesive society requires a greater neo-Confucian family and, by implication, governmental discipline.

So while the future of the Chinese-American relationship may primarily relate to the direction of change in China, it also relates to the direction of change in American governance and culture. America sees issues between our countries reflected in the balance of trade, in the sharing of global obligations, in the defusing of tensions in countries like North Korea, in Chinese belligerency, or lack thereof, in relations with its neighbors. But, at the same time, China is apprehensive about the possible development of an American enemy-oriented mindset and about the

potential dissolution of traditional American family values. They would like us to become more Confucian as we would wish them to become more Jeffersonian.

With Zhou's restraint in mind, it may also be too early to tell the political ramifications of a quarter century of economic reform in China. But it is certain that the ramifications are deep and profound. Whether political change will occur this week, next year, or next decade, change is inevitable. The only question is whether that change will be principally for the good.

In the years since the tragedy at Tiananmen Square, pundits at several points have declared U.S.-China relations to be at a confrontational crossroads. Each time, the leadership of both countries chose to exercise restraint and find ways to pragmatically address the issues of concern. These action-reaction incidents suggest Beijing's leadership is prepared to moderate decisions based on overriding economic and other pragmatic priorities and that Washington is prepared to maintain its focus on the long-term and endeavor to build a cooperative, mutually beneficial framework for Sino-American relations, one that welcomes greater Chinese participation in the rules-based international system, and encourages progress by China toward a more open, accountable, and democratic political system.

Here, the role of Secretary Powell in resolving the EP-3 incident should not be underestimated. There are times and places where countries, even when right, have to demonstrate patience and some humility. Powell managed both, largely because he came at the issue without ideological blinkers or neo-con machismo.

The nature of politics is that pride plays a disproportionately large role relative to its role in other human enterprises. The human factor—foibles in particular—can never be underestimated in governmental decision-making. As two obscure 19th century Italian political theorists—Vito and Pareto—noted, whatever the political system, at critical times a few at the top have the authority to make decisions for a nation. In times like these, leaders, no matter how democratic and well intended (or the reverse), can advance the common good or make mistakes that carry monumental consequences.

It is in this sobering context that the most important bilateral relationship of the 21st century will be between China and the United States. If

that relationship is ill-managed, the likelihood of conflict and economic trauma will be great. But if the relationship is managed well, the benefits in terms of economic prosperity and world peace will be commensurate.

ISSUES FOR A SECOND TERM

As an instrument of envy and fanatical hatred, terrorism in Asia and elsewhere cannot be guarded against simply by maintaining a strong army. The reasons people of the world lash out must be understood and dealt with at their roots. As the ancient Chinese strategist Sun Tzu wrote, “Know thy enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril.”

America and various other countries will remain in peril unless we are able to eliminate the conditions that gave rise to al Qaeda and like organizations in the first instance. While current proposals by Lee Hamilton and others to reorganize our intelligence agencies are eminently sensible, the great challenge is to determine how best to deny terrorist groups legitimacy and hence support among disaffected peoples throughout the world. Accomplishing that objective requires getting our policies right.

The issues are self-evident. The importance of resolving the Israeli-Palestinian standoff cannot be underestimated. We know from attitudinal surveys that Muslims do not generally dislike Americans or American culture. Many have chosen to immigrate to the United States. They do not, however, trust our government. Many ask how America can square support for authoritarian regimes which protect American interests with our professed desire to reform and democratize systems of governance in the Middle East and beyond.

The war on terrorism has required the administration to make a number of foreign policy trade-offs. For example, there is little question that the rising importance of securing Beijing's cooperation on a range of international security concerns has lessened our ability to object to our deteriorating terms of trade. Last year merchandise imports from China were \$125 billion, while exports to China were \$22 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of \$103 billion—by far the largest with any country in the world.

Reasonably balanced and mutually beneficial trade is a cornerstone of good Sino-American relations. Likewise, unbalanced trade—particularly

in periods of economic weakness—contains the smoldering prospect of diplomatic rupture. Normal trade relations are all about reciprocity. It is self-evident that an almost two billion dollar a week trade deficit is politically and economically unsustainable. In this context the case for China's pegging the renminbi to a fixed relationship with the dollar is indefensible. Flexible exchange rate systems which allow for market driven trade balancing are more stabilizing and equitable than governmentally managed currency relationships.

On the Korean peninsula, the U.S. deserves credit for constructing a multilateral process that holds out some, albeit limited, prospect for a peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue. Nonetheless, there are a number of pressing uncertainties, including the size and sophistication of the North's nuclear arsenal, Pyongyang's ability to manage multiple internal crises, whether China's interest in stability trumps concerns about nuclear dominoes in Northeast Asia, and possibly awkward endgames should the North ultimately fail to dismantle its nuclear weapons.

In part because of the administration's global review of U.S. military deployments, our alliances with Japan and South Korea are in the process of transition. Over the last decade Japan has slowly but steadily begun to transform both its institutions of governance and outlook on world affairs in ways that permit more cooperation with the U.S. as well as a greater degree of activism in international security affairs. It is vital as Tokyo and Washington strategize about alliance management issues that the U.S. recognize and support the evolving constitutional framework within which the Japanese operate internationally.

Likewise, as we reinvigorate the U.S.-ROK alliance through emphasis on mutual respect, common democratic values and shared interests in regional stability, Washington needs to become more understanding of the rapid economic, demographic, and political change taking place in Korean society.

The United States has deep and abiding economic, political, and security interests in Southeast Asia, a region that has often been labeled a "second front" in the campaign on terrorism. Extremist networks in Southeast Asia appear to be larger, more capable and more active than was previously believed. The challenge is especially acute for our Philippine allies, as well as in Indonesia, while in Thailand the mishandling of a violent

upsurge in separatist unrest could create fertile ground for Islamic militancy to take root.

While the threat is real, most of this dynamic region is at peace. Its large Muslim population is overwhelmingly moderate, tolerant, and opposed to radical Islam. The region is also hallmarked by stunning diversity, with the principal commonality being a desire for economic progress under accountable governance. Accordingly, Washington's dialogue with Southeast Asia cannot simply be a one-note affair.

Indonesia remains the single largest country in the world where the U.S. remains only tangentially involved. The nature of our policies in the Muslim world would make certain initiatives difficult, but if we are serious about democracy we must be serious about doing everything we can to see that the extraordinarily positive democratic elections held in 2004 in Indonesia produce effective governance.

Indonesia is poised to play an important role in world affairs and everything conceivable should be done to improve U.S. relations with this nascent democracy.

This has been a pivotal year for democratic institutions in Indonesia, the giant of Southeast Asia. That nation conducted three complex national elections in 2004—the largest single-day elections in the world, involving hundreds of millions of ballots. While Indonesia by populace is the third largest democracy in the world, by turnout it is now the second largest, behind India but ahead of America. The magnitude of this enthrallment with democracy becomes apparent when we recall that Indonesia emerged from authoritarianism only six years ago, during an extended period of acute economic and social turmoil. Only time will tell whether the elections will cause the creation of a mature and responsive government, but they are very welcome developments that were unforeseeable a decade ago.

Many observers (myself included) have high hopes for the new administration of President Yudhoyono. At the same time, it must be recognized that he has inherited a number of daunting challenges, which include promoting economic growth, peacefully resolving separatist and communal conflicts, combating terrorism, improving the implementation of decentralization and regional autonomy, and ensuring that the institutions that wield public power are fully accountable to the people. To this end, we should support efforts by the Indonesian government to expand and

deepen the process of “reformasi”—the reformation of public institutions away from the corruption, collusion, and nepotism that have weakened them in years past. Such reforms are integral to the future vitality of Indonesia, which is, in turn, integral to the vitality of Southeast Asia as a whole.

For many decades the Philippines have been challenged by multiple domestic insurgencies. The challenge for the Arroyo government as well as the Bush administration is to keep these insurgencies localized, immune from outside influences. Hopefully over time these indigenous revolutionary movements can be contained to such an extent that dissidents can be integrated into democratic processes.

America’s military involvement with Vietnam may have left certain scars on both countries, but the prospect of improving relations with Hanoi may be stronger than anywhere else in Asia, for economic as well as geostrategic reasons.

It is in Burma where the government is most problematic and where the dissidents demand the most respect. The long train of abuses perpetrated by the military regime has left the U.S. and other countries with few ethical alternatives except to embrace an array of policy options designed to isolate the regime until democratic processes are restored.

In the western Pacific, our nation has shared a close and mutually beneficial relationship with the peoples of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands for the past half-century. This is particularly apparent in the unique relationship of Free Association that both the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) entered into with the U.S. shortly after becoming independent. Because key provisions of the original Compact of Free Association were set to expire, the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific held extensive hearings early this Congress and worked with the administration and other congressional committees to craft the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act, which became public law. By extending and refining the original Compact agreements, the legislation advances relations with our stalwart friends in the FSM and RMI, promotes their economic development, and protects key U.S. strategic interests in the western Pacific for the next twenty years, and beyond.

As we all understand, discussions about international affairs today tend to revolve around far-reaching questions about the threat of terrorism,

the use of force, weapons of mass destruction, the nature of sovereignty and the right to intervene.

Yet it is also important to understand that the scope of national security has expanded to include not only the traditional concerns of protecting and promoting American well-being from direct threats abroad, but the new challenges of a globalized world, including the threat of diseases like HIV/AIDS, sustainable development and hunger, environmental degradation, population growth and migration, as well as economic competitiveness.

In particular, AIDS is the biggest public challenge and foreign policy issue of our time. On the plus side, on a bipartisan and bi-institutional basis the U.S. government has provided more than one-half of AIDS assistance to the world; on the minus side, it is probably one-tenth of what is necessary. With the rate of infections rising in heavily populated Asia, complacency is not an option.

Out of a sense of self-preservation for mankind itself, if not simply a humanitarian concern for those currently affected, this disease must be eradicated, whatever the cost.

Perhaps it is the dreadfulness of disease that holds the clue for making it clear and the glue for making it possible to come to a universal understanding that despite our differences, the many nations of the earth are composed of individuals with the same vulnerabilities. Working together simply provides more hope than going it alone.

In this context, the fundamental basis for American engagement in international affairs demands reassessment in the second term of this presidency in transition. For a number of reasons, principally relating to the galvanizing attack on our shores, the first term has been characterized by national security decisions which have flown in the face of world opinion. But presidencies are difficult to assess before they fully unfold.

Many of our closest allies in the region are uncomfortable with the manner in which the administration has exercised America's extraordinary primacy in world affairs, so much so that one can imagine a range of scenarios in which even our friends in Asia resist future Washington initiatives. To forestall such an eventuality, the second Bush administration needs to be more sensitive to the views of others; it also needs to inspire.

Good policy demands good timing and America has seldom been in such an important race with time. The kind of second term presidency

about to commence will in part be determined by events outside of Washington's control. If the Israeli-Palestinian peace process can be put back on track; if Iraq can be stabilized this winter and elections held in January, troop draw-downs may commence as early as this spring. If, on the other hand, al Qaeda-led violence continues to escalate and spread to other parts of the world, including again in the United States, the nature of America's response and thus of the second term of this president is likely to be quite assertive.

But, as an optimist, I do not rule out the possibility that just as Ronald Reagan after his reelection shifted gears from antagonism to arms control to advocacy of steep nuclear warhead cuts, the second term foreign policy approach of George Bush 43 could come to more closely resemble that of George Bush 41. While the neo-cons suggest that a bully-boy Teddy Roosevelt model is in order, my sense is that the country and the world are crying out for a return to Eisenhower—an emphasis on atoms for peace and peace itself in the Middle and Far East.

TIMELINE

January 20, 2001

George W. Bush is inaugurated 43rd president of the United States.

January 20, 2001

Philippine President Estrada is ejected through “people power” and replaced by vice president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Washington expresses relief at peaceful resolution of the crisis.

February 9, 2001

Nine Japanese die when nuclear submarine USS Greeneville accidentally sinks the *Ehime Maru*, a Japanese fisheries training ship, off the coast of Hawaii.

March 7, 2001

President Bush meets with South Korean President Kim Dae Jung and offers lukewarm endorsement of South Korea’s “sunshine” engagement policy with the North.

April 1, 2001

The accidental collision of a U.S. Navy EP-3 surveillance aircraft with a Chinese fighter jet sixty miles from China’s coastline triggers an 11-day diplomatic deadlock between the two countries before the U.S. aircrew is released.

April 22–24, 2001

The White House approves an arms package for Taiwan totaling approximately \$5 billion; and President Bush pledges the United States to do “whatever it took” to help Taiwan defend itself.

April 23, 2001

Koizumi Junichiro wins an upset victory to become Liberal Democratic Party president and prime minister of Japan, ushering in a new era of cooperative U.S.–Japan relations.

Timeline

June 6, 2001	After announcing results of the North Korea policy review, President Bush directs his team to undertake “serious negotiations” with Pyongyang. He calls for North Korea to respond “affirmatively” on such issues as implementation of the Agreed Framework, verifiable missile-program constraints, a missile export ban, and “a less threatening conventional military posture.”
September 3–5, 2001	PRC President Jiang Zemin visits Pyongyang for the first time in more than 10 years, symbolically restoring relations to normal status.
September 11, 2001	Al Qaeda launches attacks on New York and Washington, radically altering U.S. foreign policy priorities and goals, and galvanizing a worldwide counter-terrorism effort.
October 7, 2001	United States launches war against al Qaeda forces based in Afghanistan.
October 19, 2001	Presidents Bush and Jiang meet for the first time at the APEC meeting in Shanghai. In a discussion lasting more than three hours, Bush thanks Jiang for support in the fight against terrorism.
October 29, 2001	Japan enacts an anti-terrorism law, allowing its Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to provide logistic and other noncombatant support to the U.S.-led multinational force in Afghanistan.
November 10–11, 2001	The World Trade Organization approves the admission of China and Taiwan.
December 13, 2001	Amid criticism of “unilateralism,” President Bush announces U.S. intention to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty.

January 2002	The United States begins to deploy troops, including Special Forces, to advise and train Philippine soldiers in counter-terrorism efforts against Abu Sayyaf.
January 5, 2002	Singapore announces the December arrest of 15 members of an Islamic terror cell, accusing them of plotting to bomb Western embassies and U.S. military personnel.
January 29, 2002	President Bush includes North Korea in the “axis of evil” in his State of the Union address in Washington.
February 17–19, 2002	President Bush makes Tokyo the first stop of his three-nation Asian tour, reaffirming the strength of U.S.–Japan relations and his friendship with Prime Minister Koizumi.
February 20, 2002	In Seoul, President Bush tries to allay concerns over his “axis of evil” speech.
February 21, 2002	In Beijing, President Bush and President Jiang declare their commitment to a “constructive, cooperative” relationship.
March 2002	FBI Director Robert Mueller visits Southeast Asia to discuss al Qaeda operations and to affirm U.S. intentions to assist ASEAN governments in counter-terrorism efforts.
March 5, 2002	President Bush announces tariffs of up to 30 percent on steel imports, prompting threats of retaliation from Japan and Europe.
March 9, 2002	The <i>Los Angeles Times</i> discloses the Pentagon’s Nuclear Posture Review’s “hit list,” angering China and Russia. Both countries are included in the Gang of Seven? possible targets of small, fourth-generation nuclear weapons.

Timeline

March 12, 2002	U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly meet informally with Taiwan's Defense Minister Tang Yiau-ming and Taiwan's Chief of the General Staff Li Chieh at a Florida business gathering.
March 14–18, 2002	An “underground railroad” of NGO activists helps 25 North Koreans request asylum at the Spanish embassy in Beijing, thereby highlighting poor conditions in North Korea and challenging the PRC policy of not recognizing refugees.
April 5, 2002	DPRK leader Kim Jong Il meets with South Korea's Special Presidential Envoy Lim Dong Won and agrees to resume bilateral negotiations with Washington and North-South economic meetings and family reunions.
May 1, 2002	President Bush hosts PRC Vice President Hu Jintao, China's future “fourth generation” leader, at the White House.
May 8, 2002	Chinese officials are videotaped forcibly expelling five DPRK asylum-seekers from the Japanese consulate in Shenyang, China.
June 1, 2002	In a West Point address, President Bush signals a more proactive strategy in the war on terrorism, including a preemptive-war policy.
June 13, 2002	A U.S. military vehicle accidentally kills two teenage girls in Uijongbu, north of Seoul, fueling large protests against the U.S. military presence in South Korea.
June 29, 2002	The DPRK sinks a South Korean patrol boat, killing five, dealing a major blow to Kim Dae Jung's Sunshine Policy.

August 2, 2002

Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian asserts that there is “one country on each side” of the Taiwan Strait, a statement that is at odds with the U.S. one-China policy.

September 11, 2002

The UN Security Council’s Taliban/Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee adds the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, a separatist group in China’s Xinjiang, to its list of terrorist groups linked to al Qaeda. The addition followed Washington’s freezing of the organization’s assets.

September 17, 2002

Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi meets DPRK leader Kim Jong Il in Pyongyang, leading to Kim’s admission that North Korea had abducted Japanese nationals in the 1970s and 1980s.

September 20, 2002

President Bush releases a new national security strategy that emphasizes pre-emptive strikes against hostile states and terrorist groups, essentially abandoning concepts of deterrence.

October 3–5, 2002

Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly visits North Korea and confronts Pyongyang with U.S. knowledge of North Korea’s enriched uranium program.

October 12, 2002

Two terrorist bombs kill more than 200 people at a nightclub in Bali popular with Westerners.

October 16, 2002

The U.S. State Department reveals that Pyongyang admitted to a secret uranium enrichment program.

October 26, 2002

Leaders of the United States, Japan and Korea issue a joint statement at the APEC Leaders’ Meeting in Los Cabos, Mexico, reaffirming commitment to a nuclear weapons-free Korean peninsula.

Timeline

November 8, 2002	The United Nations approves adoption of Resolution 1441, which threatens “serious consequences” if Iraq remains in “material breach of its obligations under relevant resolutions.”
December 3, 2002	Okinawa police issue a warrant for the arrest of a U.S. Marine on the charge of attempted rape. The incident fuels controversy over who has jurisdiction over U.S. military personnel in Japan.
December 12, 2002	North Korea announces intentions to reactivate its Yongbyon nuclear reactor and calls on International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to remove monitoring devices from all North Korea nuclear facilities.
December 19, 2002	Roh Moo Hyun, the ruling Millennium Democratic Party (MDP) candidate, is elected president of South Korea.
December 31, 2002	Pyongyang expels UN inspectors from its nuclear facilities.
January 7, 2003	Washington announces its approach—no bilateral negotiations with the DPRK unless Pyongyang verifiably shuts down its nuclear program—at the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) meeting with Japan and South Korea.
January 10, 2003	Pyongyang announces its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).
February 12, 2003	The IAEA declares the DPRK in violation of its nonproliferation commitments and refers the matter to the Security Council.

February 14, 2003	Outgoing South Korean President Kim apologizes regarding Hyundai's transfer of \$500 million to North Korea just before the June 2000 summit.
February 26, 2003	The first recognized victim of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) is admitted to a Hanoi hospital. During the next six months, more than 8000 people become sick and more than 750 die of the disease, mostly in Asia.
February 27, 2003	The United States reports that North Korea has restarted its 5-megawatt Yongbyon reactor.
March 16, 2003	PRC President Jiang steps down at the National People's Congress in Beijing and is succeeded by Hu Jintao.
March 20, 2003	United States launches war against Iraq.
March 28, 2003	Japan launches its first two military intelligence satellites.
April 1, 2003	ROK National Assembly approves dispatch of Korean troops to Iraq as part of U.S.-led coalition.
April 23, 2003	North Korean, Chinese, and U.S. diplomats meet in Beijing for multilateral dialogue on the North Korean nuclear program, but talks end inconclusively.
May 14, 2003	Bush hosts newly installed ROK President Roh. North Korean nuclear ambitions dominate the meeting.
May 22, 2003	Bush rewards Japan's solid support of U.S. policy in Iraq by hosting Prime Minister Koizumi at his Crawford ranch.

Timeline

May 30, 2003	Myanmar's military junta imprisons Aung San Suu Kyi and other leaders of the National League for Democracy after her convoy is attacked by a pro-government gang.
July 1, 2003	Hong Kong is rocked by half a million demonstrators, forcing the PRC-backed government to back down from adopting an internal security law.
July 25, 2003	Japan's parliament passes the Iraq reconstruction assistance bill, allowing the first deployment of Japanese troops overseas without UN authorization since World War II.
August 5, 2003	A car bomb outside a Marriott hotel in Jakarta kills 12 and injures more than 100.
August 14, 2003	Hambali, Southeast Asia's most wanted fugitive and the top strategist for al Qaeda, is apprehended in Thailand, with involvement of U.S. intelligence. Washington subsequently refuses access by Southeast Asian states.
August 27–29, 2003	Six-party talks are held in Beijing, including a bilateral meeting between the United States and North Korea. A second round of talks is tentatively agreed to.
September 28, 2003	Taiwanese President Chen announces his party will push for a new constitution in 2006 to make Taiwan a normal state, thereby threatening to disturb the delicate status quo across the Taiwan Strait.
October 15, 2003	China successfully launches its first man into space and returns him to earth amid an outpouring of national pride.

October 20–21, 2003	Bush attends the APEC summit and subsequently visits Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore, and Indonesia, emphasizing counter-terrorism in addition to trade issues.
October 31, 2003	Abdullah Badawi becomes prime minister of Malaysia; Mahathir Mohamad steps down after 22 years in power.
December 4, 2003	Bush lifts steel tariffs, averting a threatened trade war with Europe and Japan.
December 4, 2003	The United States and Vietnam authorize direct flights between the two countries for the first time since the end of the Vietnam War.
December 9, 2003	Bush tells visiting PRC Premier Wen Jiabao that the United States opposes any unilateral decision by the PRC or Taiwan to change the status quo, thereby rebuking “comments and actions made by the leader of Taiwan.”
February 13, 2004	Seoul approves sending more than 3,000 troops to Iraq, making the contingent of South Korean forces the third largest after the United States and Great Britain.
February 25–28, 2004	Six-party talks on the North Korean nuclear program are held in Beijing. In the face of U.S. accusations, North Korea denies military nuclear activity.
March 18, 2004	The United States is the first country to file a WTO case against China, claiming that China’s tax policies discriminate against foreign makers of semiconductor chips.
March 20, 2004	Taiwanese President Chen narrowly wins reelection, prompting uneasiness in the United States and the PRC about his possible pro-independence agenda.

Timeline

April 26, 2004	The PRC rules out direct elections in Hong Kong for chief executive in 2007 and for all legislators in 2008.
May 18, 2004	The United States and Australia sign a free-trade agreement, slashing tariffs on manufactured goods.
June 18, 2004	U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta announces an agreement to expand commercial aviation services between the United States and the PRC. Mineta points out that U.S.-PRC trade has increased by more than 35 times since 1970.
June 23–26, 2004	A third round of six-party talks are held in Beijing, again producing few if any results.
June 28, 2004	An OECD report ranks the PRC as the largest recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2003, surpassing the United States.
July 12–13, 2004	Against U.S. protests, Philippine President Arroyo decides to withdraw 51 peacekeepers from Iraq earlier than planned to save the life of a Filipino hostage held by Iraqi insurgents.
August 13, 2004	The United States completes the redeployment of 3,500 combat troops from South Korea to Iraq
August 16, 2004	President Bush announces a plan to “bring home” 60,000–70,000 troops from overseas in the next 10 years. This follows previous announcements that the United States hopes to remove roughly a third of the 37,000 troops on the Korean peninsula (including the troops transferred to Iraq) and to relocate U.S. military bases southward, away from the DMZ.

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September 9, 2004 A truck bomb explodes at the Australian embassy in Jakarta, killing eight and injuring about 100.

October 5, 2004 Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono becomes the first popularly elected president of Indonesia.

October 6, 2004 The United States agrees to slow the withdrawal of 12,500 troops based in South Korea, after complaints from Seoul.

October 18, 2004 President Bush signs the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 into law, after the bill unanimously passes the U.S. House and Senate. The law states that persecuted North Koreans are of special humanitarian concern to the United States—sending a signal to Beijing about U.S. concern for North Korean refugees. It also provides almost \$24 million a year to organizations reaching out to ordinary North Koreans to promote human rights and a market economy.

October 19, 2004 Burma's military junta ousts Prime Minister Gen. Khin Nyunt. A few days later, a U.S. State Department spokesman directly blames the new prime minister, Lt. Gen. So Win, for the May 2003 attack on democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi's convoy.

October 22–26, 2004 U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell visits Japan, China and South Korea, drumming up support for the American-inspired Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and other counter-proliferation programs. He states clearly that Taiwan is not a sovereign or independent nation, thereby sending a warning signal to Taipei.

Timeline

October 28, 2004	Indonesian government reopens trial of Abubakar Basyir, the leader of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI).
November 4, 2004	President Bush is re-elected.
November 9, 2004	Quoting a high-ranking U.S. government official, Japan's <i>Yomiuri Shimbun</i> reports that the Bush administration has set as its "red line" attempts by North Korea to transfer nuclear materials to a third party.
November 12, 2004	In a Los Angeles speech, President Roh rules out sanctions and any military option for dealing with North Korea's nuclear ambitions. A U.S. hard line could have "grave consequences," he declares.
November 26, 2004	The IAEA criticizes South Korea's failure to report scientific experiments, in 1982 and 2000, with weapons-grade plutonium and uranium. However, the Agency spares Seoul the possibility of sanctions by not sending the matter to the UN Security Council.
November 20–21, 2004	Bush meets with other APEC leaders meeting in Santiago, Chile.
November 29, 2004	The PRC and ASEAN agree to speed implementation of a free trade area at the 10th ASEAN summit in Laos, continuing the trend of improved PRC–ASEAN relations. The agreement prompts Japan and South Korea to move toward their own free trade deals with ASEAN.
November 29, 2004	An official from the World Health Organization declares that bird flu, which has killed 32 people in Thailand and Vietnam in 2003, could reach pandemic proportions and kill as many as 20–50 million people.

December 10, 2004

Japan issues the fourth revision of its defense guidelines, identifying North Korea as a major threat and expressing explicit concern about China's military modernization. The guidelines emphasize cooperation with the United States, and propose loosening the Japanese ban on weapons exports to facilitate the joint development of ballistic missile defense.

December 11, 2004

Taiwan holds a parliamentary election and the Pan-Blue (Kuomintang and the People First Party) maintains a modest majority of seats, slowing down the movement toward Taiwan's independence endorsed by President Chen's ruling party.

December 26, 2004

Tsunamis devastate coastal communities surrounding the Indian Ocean, as the result of an earthquake topping 9.0 on the Richter scale off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia. More than 280,000 eventually die or are missing and presumed dead in 13 countries. The U.S. military plays a leading role in relief efforts.