

U.S. Security Policies in the Asia-Pacific

by
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Force structure, bases, alliances and military exercises are secondary questions. The first question to ask is “how will the U.S. see its strategic interests in the Asia-Pacific?” And next, “where will the Asia-Pacific figure in America’s global strategic calculus?”

In the PACOM area, there are two big issues: how to manage the rise of China, and the growing risk of Islamic fundamentalism. These issues are connected, not least because the U.S. and China have important shared interests in opposing Islamic extremism.

Because Robert Kaplan’s article in *The Atlantic Monthly* of June 2005 entitled “How We Would Fight China” is attracting attention, let me first say why I think the notion of China as the USSR Redux is nonsense.

For starters, it is foolish to say, as Kaplan does, that “the Middle East is just a blip.” Some blip.

Centres of Global Strategic Gravity?

Oddly, while Kagan and Henry Kissinger differ profoundly about China, they agree that centre of global strategic gravity is shifting from the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific.

How can that be so, when President Bush has just kicked over every antheap in the Middle East and the outcome, not least in Iraq, remains in the balance?

Part of the strategic importance of the Middle East is of course economic, because it keeps the industrialized world supplied with oil. But the passions aroused by the Arab-Israel conflict are potent because of the political influence of America’s Jewish community and the consequences for the industrial world’s oil politics.

Moreover, the intractable character of the Israel-Arab dispute derives from the fact that no compromise seems possible. That’s because both sides want the same thing, but only one can have it. So each side really needs to see the other destroyed. Then there is the political and economic backwardness of much of the Arab world. That wouldn’t matter so much except that it affects all of us one way or another, not least by bringing in other Middle Eastern actors such as Iran and intensifying problems such as nuclear proliferation.

Radical Islam is an ancient political enemy, a fact mostly forgotten by us, but not by its proponents. So throughout the Middle East we are seeing order increasingly give way to the worst kinds of anarchy and criminal exercise of power by non-state actors. While there is nothing intrinsically wholesome about states, their existence imposes a kind of shape and order on international events. At a minimum there is someone to blame.

It is much harder when there is no state, only contenders for power that the claimants aim to seize and defend by force. Modern weapons reinforce primitive behavior by making it easier to kill large numbers of people.

Of course, much depends on how one defines “rationality.” Some of the anarchist ideas, such as restoring the Caliphate, are beyond our ken, though they surely promote the pursuit of power. In that sense, they are entirely rational.

Thus anarchy is growing in the Muslim world, just as East Asia moves towards economic growth and political rationality, as we understand it.

So a critical issue that remains unaddressed by either Kagan or Kissinger is whether these opposed trends are part of the same process, or whether they are in complete contradiction.

Containment of China?

In comparison with the Middle East, East Asia looks reassuringly “rational.” And even North Korea is not necessarily “irrational.”

True, it does not seem to make much sense for a small and poor state to develop costly WMD and missiles, and to behave in ways that seriously antagonize everyone, including the most powerful states. But it is hard to dismiss what North Korea is doing as “irrational.” Its interests in regime survival lie in threatening South Korea, and keeping the U.S. and China at each other’s throats. So what others see as “irrational” is not necessary so in relation to North Korea.

In East Asia, apart from the problems presented by North Korea’s dangerous nuclear brinkmanship, America’s essential task is to help bring a “rising” China peacefully into the international order, without making Japan feel insecure. That will be no easy job, but at least it is a game in which we know most of the rules.

We see two main processes working themselves out in East Asia — the consequences of the winning of the Cold War, and China’s turn to capitalism.

True, the strategic history of last century is not encouraging in relation to how the international system managed the rise of authoritarian great powers. To the contrary, there were three global wars, two hot and one cold. The essential cause of these wars were bids for hegemony over Eurasia, two by Germany and one by Russia.

Three times the United States was called upon to redress an imbalance of power in Eurasia. (Sometimes arriving more than a tad late for the comfort of the rest of us.)

Obviously, the “rise” of China raises some historical parallels. History does not repeat itself, but certain patterns are too striking to ignore. And the difficulties of managing the rise of any great power with an authoritarian system of government does entail the risk of war.¹

Of course, China is not making a bid for hegemony of the whole of Eurasia. But it does seem to be making a bid for hegemony over its Southeastern edge. That is a challenge that the United States as dominant maritime power cannot afford to ignore. And not just on its own account, but because it suits the United States to continue to underwrite Japan’s long-range maritime (and nuclear) security.

Still, predictions of a “new Cold War” against China risk making false comparisons, as well as self-fulfilling prophecies. War between China and the United States is far from inevitable.

China does not present anything like the threat once posed by the USSR, when it possessed immense military power and stretched across Eurasia, threatening U.S. allies at both ends. It is

utter nonsense for Robert Kaplan to say that China will be a more formidable adversary than Russia ever was. (Few seem to remember now that in the late 1970s, Moscow —and its allies such as India —thought the “correlation of forces” had turned irrevocably in the USSR’s favour.)

Talk about the “inevitability” of war between the U.S. and China will merely play into China’s hands by making it easy for China to blame everything on “hardliners” in Washington. That will add to the success China is enjoying in relation to soft power and its growing economy. Look at the inroads China is making in the Philippines, for example.

China not only has its burgeoning economy as its instrument, but a corps of highly capable Western-trained diplomats who have been running rings around Japan and just about everyone else in Southeast Asia.

Military exercises have an important role to play, as Robert Kaplan rightly points out. But we need diplomats too, and not just for cleaning up messes. Bob Zoellick is off to a good start as Deputy Secretary of State. Still, even though the ARF is just another talking shop, it would be a mistake for Condi Rice not to attend its next ARF meeting in Mongolia. As it is, ASEAN has already a vehicle for accommodating China, despite the efforts of regional hardheads such as Singapore.

In East Asia, there are some bright spots, notable in relation to Japan. With strategic tensions with China rising, despite growing economic interdependence, Japan has few options other than to strengthen its alliance with the U.S. — still it is not all smooth sailing, bases/force structure issues remain, and the risk exists that Japan would seek to defect in another North Korean nuclear crisis.

There are no bright spots in relation to South Korea. To the contrary, it has been apparent for some time that South Korea is China’s quasi ally and thus cannot be America’s ally as well. For the United States post Cold War, the value of alliance with the ROK is as a point of geopolitical pressure on China. South Korea is now unwilling to play this role.

Is it not blindingly obvious that Roh’s government has no interest in being a U.S. ‘lily pad’, especially for contingencies that might involve China? Roh’s declared pursuit of a ‘balancer’ role for South Korea tells us all we need to know.

Even as North Korea engages in ever more dangerous nuclear brinkmanship, South Korea continues to appease and bribe the North, out of fear of its WMD and fear of the costs of reunification.

Kaplan tells us that “some Pacific based officers” take a “reunified Korean peninsula for granted, and their main concern is whether the country will be ‘Finlandized’ by China or will be secure within an American-Japanese sphere of influence.”

Well, whoever they are, these “Pacific-based officers” are smoking something. For starters, any analogy between the two Koreas and the erstwhile two Germanys is false. The DDR was never anything other than Moscow’s creature. But North Korea was able to prosper during the Cold War by playing off Beijing against Moscow. Then it became an orphan of the Cold War. Thus North Korea developed missiles, WMD and conventional weapons for purposes of blackmail, intimidation and extortion. Not least in relation to Seoul, this has worked wonderfully well.

China is now the *de facto* ally of both Koreas, and it’s hard to see how any reunification process is going to occur unless Beijing agrees to it. And if reunification ever does take place, the new

country won't be small and it is likely to be highly nationalistic. The best we can probably hope for is that China will remain strong enough to prevent disagreeable behavior, not least in relation to nuclear weapons. Even now, it's hardly a secret that many in Seoul would like to inherit the North's nuclear weapons program and point it at Japan.

Currently, the strategic conclusion to be drawn from the way the Cold War ice is melting around the Korean peninsula is this — the reduced importance of the Korean peninsula in American thinking is narrowing U.S. options, so making them more dependent on nuclear weapons. Part of the problem for China and everyone else is whether the direction of events is stabilizing, and whether it presents opportunities.

Under these circumstances, it is hard to believe that the U.S. would willingly “sacrifice New York for Seoul”. And it also means that it is more likely that Japan will have to be defended with nuclear weapons. (If there is anyone in Japan thinking through that one, there is no indication of it in the media.)

Still, both China and the U.S. have a strategic imperative in avoiding war, especially with nuclear weapons as part of the equation. As primary contestants, they both want strategic stability.

The problem for them (and everyone else) is that each wants it on a basis that leaves it free to maximize its own interests. The risk is that doing the latter is likely to bring them into conflict.

But before we think about “containment” strategies, let's not forget that such a strategy cannot possibly work without support from allies. That is one of the lessons to be drawn from how the Cold War was won.

The Cold War started as a consequence of the way the Second World War ended. Although America's instinct was to withdraw from Europe, the Western Europeans were so terrified of Stalin's tank armies that they clamoured for American protection. Then the United States decided that it was in its own interests to provide such protection — the origins of the U.S. “consensual empire”.

Today's circumstances in East Asia are very different. This is mostly a maritime theatre, and most U.S. allies do not feel a palpable threat from a China that lacks even a green water navy. Even Australia, part of the “Anglosphere,” will not currently support a “containment of China” strategy. Thus when Rich Armitage stumped around Australia in 1999, saying that we had no choice but to fight for Taiwan, that it was entirely counterproductive. And I do not speak as a member of the pre-emptive capitulation school of Australian diplomacy.

Moreover, the PRC has a growing grip on Australia because of the burgeoning resource trade, as well a shrewd ambassador in Canberra, Madame Fu Ying. She learned her trade at the feet of Deng Xiaoping himself (as his interpreter) and was highly effective as PRC ambassador to the Philippines — where she had considerable success in undermining support for strengthening security ties between Manila and Washington.

It is true, as Kagan says, that Singapore offers the only facility in the region where US aircraft carriers can be serviced. It is also true that Singapore trains most of its airforce in Australia. Singapore, like Australia and Japan, has also supported the Proliferation Security Initiative.

Moreover, especially in light of former Indonesian President Habibie's comments that Singapore is a "red dot in a green sea", Singapore knows that it would be dangerous to give the impression that it might benefit from a rising China.

But let's not forget that Singapore put up the white flag on Taiwan years ago, when Lee Kuan Yew famously said at an IISS conference in Singapore that the balance of power in the Taiwan Strait was of no consequence to ASEAN.

Moreover, Taiwan's raucous democracy, the first in the long history of the Chinese people, finds few admirers in the Singapore elite. It will be unlikely to do so as long as Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew remains on the scene. And that is yet another reminder of the importance of domestic politics.

Thus in East Asia today, if most U.S. friends and allies are not willing to contemplate a "containment" strategy, what is the point of talking about a "new Cold War" between the U.S. and China? That will be entirely counterproductive.

And let's not forget that if left to their own devices, militaries everywhere are tempted to create budgetary enemies in order to justify defence spending and force structure. Recall for example that the U.S. Navy wanted to build against the Royal Navy after the first world war, but the politicians on both sides wisely decreed otherwise.

Hence the imperative to think strategically.

Moreover, Kaplan professes to have been studying East Asia for three years. Yet his article is full of howlers, such as China's "literate peasantry." And Kaplan complains that Bush has lacked the "nuance and self-restraint of Bismarck." Can this be the same Robert Kaplan, who along with William Kristol, was accusing Bush in 2002 (in the pages of the *Weekly Standard*) of going wobbly on Iraq? A reminder that Google etc can easily "out" the pundits these days.

Thus I would advocate a more nuanced approach which is likely to find support in the region. And without support from friends and allies, such a policy is unlikely to sustain support at home.

China: trying to square the circle

The U.S.-China nexus will drive strategic developments in East Asia. And while the United States will see its strategic interests in global terms, China's strategic interests are more regionally concentrated.

Moreover, China is attempting to do what cannot be done — to build up its wealth and power by securing the benefits of immersion in the global economy, while retaining party control. Of course, Deng Xiaoping set China on this path because he understood that the Soviet model was failing. And the United States greatly encouraged Deng to embark on this new path.

The USSR's only real power in the international system was its ability to intimidate. But its command economy could not provide the resources to underpin vast military spending, especially after President Reagan raised the stakes and China proved to be an enormous strategic distraction. All this Deng understood. Yet Deng, as the veteran Long Marcher and political commissar, had an authority that cannot be replicated by his cautious bureaucratic successors. He insisted, for example, that military modernization be the fourth of his "Four Modernizations".

Those who project China's current economic growth rates into the distant future also risk making the same mistakes that were made in relation to Japan. Recall all those who used to predict "Japan as Number One"? And on the basis of that kind of exaggeration, at the end of the Cold War we had hyper-realists predicting the "coming war" between the U.S. and Japan.² This sort of stuff sells books and magazines, but is not conducive to sensible strategic thought. Political stability in China is far from assured, environmental limits to growth are already obvious, financial system remains fragile, and China may well become the first country to grow old before it gets rich. Currently, China's economic managers have their work cut out for them.

Nor is China monolithic. True, there are powerful interests opposed to the U.S., notably in the PLA. And proliferation, supported *sotto voce* by the PLA, is the worst thing that China does.

No one should think that Hu Jintao, the former *Gauleiter* of Tibet, is a closet liberal. China's human rights record is getting worse, not better. But Hu presumably does understand that China cannot hope to build up its wealth and power, and keep the lid on tensions at home, if it collides with the United States.

And there are interests, notably in South China, that are much less hostile to the U.S. And, although there are huge problems with counterfeiting and so on, China's economy is far more open to foreign investment than Japan's ever was.

Moreover, there are those in China asking the question of how it was that the Kaiser, wanting too much too soon, plunged the world into global war. That could lead to some hard thinking about whether China's vaunted "string of pearls" strategy in the Indian Ocean could turn out to be a "choker".

In the absence of sea control, what use are isolated bases? What did the Kaiser get out of his naval base on China's Shandong peninsula, other than to help promote the formation of a balancing coalition that soon presented Germany with the credible threat of two-front war?

Moreover, during the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese war, the Russians discovered that there was little use in having isolated bases at Port Arthur and Vladivostok with Admiral Togo in between.

Today, those who think that China could easily link up future bases on the Indian Ocean with strategic roads and railways from Xinjiang had better have a look at a relief map. The Karakoram Highway, for example, is the world's highest and most dangerous road. And in attempting to build the port at Gwadar (where many think China intends to operate a submarine base in future) China has rediscovered what most people knew already — that no one, including the Raj, has ever been able to control Baluchistan.³

Moreover, China has land borders with twelve other states, few of which it can call a friend.⁴ Mahan, in his study of why Britain was able to get the better of France during their many global wars of the eighteenth century, noted that a sea power (provided that it was attentive to the fundamentals of its own security) had decided advantages when competing at sea with a state that had the distraction of land frontiers. And as a consequence of the war in Afghanistan, the United States now has strategic footholds in Central Asia, to the chagrin of both China and Russia.

Besides, the U.S. and China do have some shared interests. Among them are the need to avoid war, to see oil flowing on the sea routes from the Gulf, and to avoid the nuclearization of the Korean peninsula. They also have shared interests in relation to the threat of political Islam, not least because of China's concerns about Uighur separatists in the vast territory of Xinjiang.

In the southern Philippines, for example, growing anarchy provides a breeding ground for Islamic terrorists that could potentially threaten Beijing's interests as much as Washington's. Thus while the support each gives to the (extremely weak) Philippine military is obviously competitive in relation to traditional issues of great power competition, there are also shared interests. This is not a simple zero sum game, as Kaplan seems to think.

And in relation to China's quasi ally Thailand, Thaksin may well have lit a fire on Malaysia's northern frontier. That might not be in China's interests either, if it helps fan the flames of Islamic radicalism in Southeast Asia.⁵

Thus China and the United States have far more shared interests than the superpowers had during the Cold War, when their shared interests consisted mainly of avoiding a head to head collision, and in slowing the pace of nuclear proliferation.

China is certainly no longer the "strategic partner" that it was in the latter days of the Cold War. Nor is it the USSR redux.

In 1972, China and the U.S. struck strategic accommodation as a consequence of policy failure on both sides — Johnson had bogged the U.S. down in Vietnam, and Mao's mad provocations had brought China to the brink of nuclear war with Moscow. Is it unthinkable that circumstances might arise in future where both sides see the need to reach strategic accommodation?

And in economic terms, the consequence of changes in the global economy over the last couple of decades is that China and the United States are two scorpions in a bottle. Neither can sting the other without mortal risk to itself.

Still, misperceptions can matter when a conflict of strategic interest already exists. Consider China's recent policies towards Latin America. Most likely, China thinks that its latest strategic steps are mere tit for tat. It probably believes that it is only reciprocating in a small way what the U.S. has been doing for so long in China's neighborhood — Vietnam, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Okinawa and so on.

Thus China could fail to appreciate that the U.S. is likely to interpret China's action in the light of its own experience, where previous contenders for hegemony over Eurasia have sought to make trouble for the United States in its own back yard. Or even if China does understand things this way, the risk is that it will care little.

So the challenge for the U.S. in relation to China is to deter the bad guys and encourage the good guys. Easy to say, hard to do. In particular, the Chinese need to be encouraged to think about what might happen if they managed to sink a U.S. aircraft carrier and kill 5,000 U.S. sailors.

And of course it is critical to maintain a favourable force balance in the Taiwan Strait. China's politburo, far more calculating than Japan in 1941, will not authorize a war unless it can be reasonably confident of success. China's leaders know that a failure could bring down the regime in Beijing, as happened in Argentina as a consequence of miscalculating re Thatcher's resolve in the Falklands War.

Thus while it would be foolish to be naïve about China, it would be equally foolish to invent an enemy.

Democracy as panacea

It may be true that stable democracies do not go to war against one other. The problem is getting to that point. Countries in the process of making a democratic transition are often volatile, and seek refuge in nationalism in order to distract attention from problems at home.

Moreover, the overthrow of the Shah of Iran in 1979 pointed to the risk that in many parts of the world, undermining an authoritarian regime will provide opportunities for Islamic radicals.

Thus I would also argue against seeing democracy as a panacea for strategic problems. U.S. problems in relation to Uzbekistan, at the moment, illustrate the point. Uzbekistan is an important piece of real estate in relation to the Great Game with China, Russia, India, Pakistan and Iran. Indeed, a critical part of the “strategic hinterland” of East Asia.

Isolating Karimov if he refuses to reform (as he undoubtedly will) — the recommendation of the Usual Suspects — would merely play into the hands of Russia and China.⁶ Still, with Uzbekistan already on the verge of being a failed state, it is hard to believe that Karimov has done other than light a fire in the Fergana valley that he will be unable to put out.

After all, Stalin was not only Commissar for Nationalities in 1924, but a Georgian. Understanding the potential of nationalist forces being unleashed when multiethnic empires collapse, as had just happened with the collapse of the vast empire of the Tsar, Stalin pursued ruthless divide and rule policies. Thus he divided up the Fergana valley among what is now Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgystan. We have already seen what happened in the Balkans as the Soviet empire unraveled. It may not be far-fetched to think that a similar fate awaits Central Asia, which was colonized by Russia only in the mid nineteenth century. And who can be sure that radical Islamists could not emerge as the victors from such chaos?

In Iraq, the sweeping victory of largely Islamicist Shia alliance in the January elections also illustrates the point that democracy is not a panacea. And it makes even more glaring the U.S. error in dismantling the predominantly Sunni Iraqi army, even if there seemed good reasons for doing so at the time. Thus the insurgents have moved to a strategy of fomenting a Shia-Sunni civil war.

Nor has democracy proved to be a panacea in relation to the Taiwan problem. And those who encourage Taiwan to think that the U.S. is obliged to support Taiwan whatever it does are playing a dangerous game. Taiwan has demanded that the U.S. sell it modern weapons, then has been unable to vote the money. If Taiwan’s leaders were to think they could fight to the last American, they could be in for a nasty surprise.

The U.S. vital interest is the preservation of Taiwan’s *de facto* independence. Certainly, America needs to help Taiwan defend itself, otherwise China will take it by force. But no U.S. government will allow any government on Taiwan, however democratic, to determine whether the U.S. goes to war with nuclear-armed China.

Getting it wrong: the disjunctive nature of perceptions

Strategic disjunctions lie at the heart of strategic assessment. We ignore them at our peril.

Consider all the errors made recently in relation to Iraq, not just Cheney’s infamous prediction that invading U.S. forces would be met with “sweets and flowers”. (Now he’s telling us that the insurgency in Iraq is in its “last throes”!)

Did anyone fully understand how Saddam Hussein saw his interests? I certainly did not, and I see no evidence that anyone else did either, even though it was staring us all in the face. (Even Hans Blix says in his book *Disarming Iraq* that he believed even early in 2003 that Iraq was still concealing WMD.⁷)

Yet we now know that Saddam Hussein had moved on from developing WMD by 9/11, just when US concerns about it became acute.

He had not abandoned the idea, but postponed it, preferring to concentrate on the UN Oil for Food program as a means of regime survival. And what has so far come to light from his interrogation suggests that the Iranians were his big problem, plus the craven way that some Gulf states supported them. While of course we need to be sceptical about what Saddam will now say, this does make some sense.

And it underlines how differently states interpret the same facts.

In Saddam's case, his perceptions led to disastrous underestimation of the way that the U.S. could knock over his regime if it chose to do so — and it did choose to do so when the strategic landscape shifted after 9/11. But because the U.S. had opted not to take Baghdad in 1991, when it had the forces in place to do so, after 9/11 Saddam got it wrong.

Among the most critical issues of international security at the moment are the nuclear ambitions of Iran and North Korea. No one sensible expects the “international community” to be up to the job. Since Iran is not in the PACOM area, let's focus on North Korea.

What can be learned from recent “strategic disjuncture” in relation to North Korea?

It seems safe to assume that Kim Jong Il will be preoccupied not only with the survival of his odious regime, but with how to transfer power. It also seems safe to assume that he will be far more calculating than Saddam Hussein, who invaded Kuwait before his nuclear weapons program was complete.

So I would suggest we forget about useless “political science” and study some history.

We know that Kim Jong Il is a close student of Hitler and Stalin, as indeed was Saddam Hussein. But will Kim prove cautious like Stalin, who made huge mistakes, murdered millions, but still managed to die in his bed in his seventies? Or will the Dear Leader be a risk-taker like Hitler who ended up a charred corpse in the hellfires of Berlin?

And in looking at all this, let's think also about how China sees its interests.

Although the U.S. could long afford to ignore China's interests in a Korean settlement, and had good reason to do so, today that is much harder. That is because of the more favourable direction of China's policies, including its turn to capitalism, and the fact that the ROK (which the US has defended in the interests of Japan's security) has now turned toward China.

China has created a Frankenstein's Monster in North Korea. Beijing is unable to control North Korea, or stop it behaving in ways that injure China's own interests, not least in relation to Japan. The sense of palpable threat from North Korea is leading Japan not only to strengthen its alliance with the U.S., but to acquire military capabilities that might one day be used against China.

But it is wishful thinking to hope that the U.S. can harness China to help in relation to North Korea.

It helps to look at a patch of recent history. North Korea is not the only vile regime that China has dealt with. Kampuchea under the Khmer Rouge was every bit as bad, even if it didn't have missiles and WMD. Even now, we don't know exactly how far China's influence extended with the KR. And its excesses threatened China's interests — for example by raiding across the border into Thailand, at a time when China was bent on increasing its influence in ASEAN. But even if the Chinese were embarrassed by KR excesses, they certainly did not show it at the time, and continue to cover it up to this day.

Consider also the case of China's alliance with Pakistan. States do not usually help others to acquire nuclear weapons, but this was an important exception. And Pakistan has done things that displease China, for example by helping to install the Taliban in Kabul. But China occupies the high ground in Tibet (something the Raj understood only too well) and China and Pakistan have strong shared interests in helping keep a permanent lid on Indian ambition. Thus U.S. missionary efforts to drive a wedge between China and Pakistan are unlikely to get anywhere.

True, as has been noted, Pyongyang is doing things contrary to China's interests, as did the Khmer Rouge in its day. But North Korea's simply continuing to exist is a huge asset for China.

So we need to approach all this with a globe in one hand and a good history book in another. And keep asking ourselves how do these states really see their interests, allowing for the possibility that leaders (especially authoritarian ones) do not think as we think they should.

Rumsfeld's known unknowns.

¹ True, the way the UK accommodated the rise of the US is the "hegemonic war that didn't happen". There were many reasons that Britain decided not to go to war over Venezuela in 1895. Among them were imperial weakness as shown by the Boer War; the fact that the US held Canada hostage; and the rising threat of German naval power in home waters which made soon made imperative a British strategic accommodation with Russia. But the fact that Britain had a liberal form of government was also important, as well as cultural and linguistic affinities between the two countries. Britain was also adept at balance of power politics on a global scale, which was why the French complained about "Perfidious Albion".

² George and Meredith Friedman, *The Coming War with Japan*. The Friedmans subsequently founded Stratfor.

³ The awful heat of Baluchistan's cities led one Englishman to exclaim, "Oh God, when thou hadst created Sibi and Dadhar, what object was there in conceiving hell?", Mahnaz Z. Isphani, *Roads and Rivals: The Political Use of Access in the Borderlands of Asia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989), p.35.

⁴ North Korea, Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Burma, Laos, Vietnam

⁵ Of course, the situation on the Thai-Malaysian border has always been tricky. In fact, the four southern provinces of Thailand are really part of the Patani sultanate that should be in Malaysia. Moreover, some other changes haven't helped, such as the self-liquidation of the armed Malayan Communist Party in the Betong salient, which helped Malaysia's security more than it did Thailand's. And increased Malay restlessness in the four southern provinces of Thailand led up to the probably accidental but stupid killings of Malay prisoners by the Thai police.

⁶ International Crisis Group, "Uzbekistan: The Andijon Uprising", Asia Briefing no 38, 25 May 2005, p.

⁷ "The watchdog who refused to bark", *Financial Times* 20 May 2005, p.8

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