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**THE NATIONALIST IDEOLOGY
OF THE CHINESE MILITARY**

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**School of Law
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*Xiaoyu Chen***

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: THE PROBLEM STUDIED

Initiated in the late 1970s, the economic reforms of the People's Republic of China (PRC) have, for better or for worse, changed the country tremendously. Among other things, the Chinese have been transformed from communist ideologues into economic men. To be poor is no longer regarded as to be glorious; to be rich is. A popular saying "looking forward to making money (*xiang qian kan*)" represents a new trend of thought that characterizes the Chinese psychology of today.¹ The urge to make money is epidemic, turning China into a social Darwinian world of brutal struggle, exacerbated by the still-absent rule of law.

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1. In Chinese, money (*qian*) and future (*qian tu*) are homonyms. This pun mocks the political slogan "looking forward to the future."

Today, despite the astonishing economic progress it has made through economic reforms (the Chinese economy has grown at an average annual rate of 9 to 10 percent since 1979), China is also troubled by a variety of problems associated with the reforms. They include ideological confusion, corruption and the wide disparities between the poor and the newly rich. As some critics have pointed out, "something is rotten" in China, despite its economic improvement and rising stature in international politics.² Local government officials increasingly ignore the central government in Beijing; a spiritual malaise grips the Middle Kingdom; corruption is rife, especially in the most capitalist areas; the businessmen in big cities have made their fortunes, while over 70 million peasants still live on less than \$50 U.S. dollars a month; foreign imports increasingly dominate the market, and state enterprises border on collapse - their 100-million-plus workers threatened with unemployment and destitution.³ In order to overcome these problems, the Communist leadership has managed to invoke nationalism as a cohesive force to hold China together, since communist orthodoxy has become incompatible with China's on-going reforms. Indeed, as the single representative of the Chinese government, the Communist Party of China (CPC) finds it expedient to capitalize on nationalism to offset the elements of disturbance associated with its economic reforms.

Nationalism, however, is by no means a cure for social problems, but it does help divert the public's attention from these problems. In this sense, the deeper a country is in trouble, the more its government tends to stimulate nationalism to its own advantage. Nationalism, above all, is "a sentiment of unity" which "expresses itself in loyalty to the nation-state whatever the government," and it "requires. . . almost absolute devotion to and conformity with the will of the nation-state as this is expressed by the ruler or rulers (autocratic or democratic)."⁴ Since the CPC is ruling China and presenting itself as the Chinese government, it can always take advantage of nationalism and demand its people's loyalty to the Party in the name of national interest.

To understand Chinese nationalism, as well as its intent and purpose, it would be necessary to study the content of the PRC's nationalist ideology. Michael Mann, a scholar on nationalism, has

2. Matt Forney, "China's New Big 'Thought'," *World Press Review* (Feb. 1997), p. 38.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Boyd C. Shafer, *Nationalism: Myth & Reality*, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World Inc., 1995, p. 10.

identified three groups of people who are most susceptible to nationalist appeals. They are: 1) government employees who depend on the state for their livelihood; 2) the youth who have been educated by the state; and, 3) the armed forces. Mann observed that it is these three “bodies of men, and their families” who provide most of the “fervent nationalists” with “an exaggerated loyalty” to what they conceive to be the ideals of their nation-state.⁵ In the case of the People’s Republic, given its irredentist enthusiasm in the aftermath of Hong Kong’s return, the Chinese armed forces are clearly the most important of Mann’s three groups. Through their training and education, the young soldiers have been systematically imbued with the government’s world view and ideals.⁶ Given this, any study of contemporary Chinese nationalism would be remiss if it did not include a treatment of the nationalist ideology of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA), as revealed in PLA and related military publications.

An analysis of the nationalist ideology of China’s armed forces thus constitutes the primary focus of this dissertation. Through an account of the nationalist ideology of the PLA, this study hopes to provide a better understanding of the ideological content of contemporary Chinese nationalism on its worldview, beliefs, values and prescriptions. That understanding will be the subject of the next chapter.

5. Michael Mann, “A Political Theory of Nationalism and its Excesses,” in Sukumar Periwal ed., *Notions of Nationalism*, Budapest: Central European University Press, 1995, p. 55.

6. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER TWO

APPEAL TO NATIONALISM

For a single-party controlled government like Communist China, the CPC can easily utilize nationalism to its own advantage. Its common trick is to deliberately blend the concepts of nation-state, the party and the government into one, and adroitly channel a nationalist sentiment into an allegiance to the ruling elite. In order to unravel what has been twisted regarding nationalism, it is significant for us first to examine the conceptual distinctions between nation and state, between nationalism and patriotism, and, between nationalism in general and Chinese nationalism in particular; then, to discuss the significance of nationalism to the Communist regime in China.

Nationalism and its related concepts

The effort to define nationalism must begin with distinguishing a nation from a state. According to Max Weber, a nation is a community based on a sentiment of solidarity, while a state is an association developed consciously for specific purposes.⁷ However, the sentiment of solidarity alone cannot make a community a nation; what makes a particular community a nation is its intimate relation to statehood.

Specifically, statehood refers to a government that claims authority over a defined territory, while nationhood refers to a people who are not only having a common origin, tradition and language, but also are capable of forming a nation-state. A nation may live within one or more state boundaries, and a state may consist of one or more nations. A dialogue between Kossuth and Kostic over a century ago implicitly depicted the relations between a nation and a state:⁸

What do you understand by “nation”? inquired Kossuth.
A race which possesses its own language, customs and culture, was the Serb reply, and enough self-consciousness to preserve them.
A nation must also have its own government, objected Kossuth.

7. Maria Hsia Chang, *The Labors of Sisyphus: the Economic Development of Communist China*, Transaction Publishers, 1998, p. 200 (citing Kenneth Thompson, *Beliefs and Ideology*, Chichester, England: EllisHorwood Limited, 1986).

8. Anthony D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, NY: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1983, p. 177.

We do not go so far, Kostic explained, one nation can live under several different governments, and again several nations can form a single state.

A nation, however, can better secure its well-being if it has its own state - its own territory and government. By the same logic, a state can best survive if it harnesses the solidarity feelings of the national community in support of its powers. The more a state can associate itself with the nation and identify with national sentiment, the greater a state's reservoir of good will and legitimacy.⁹ The term "nation-state" explicitly indicates this symbiotic relationship between a nation and a state. Nation-state combines the characteristics of both, and is defined by Anthony Smith as "a nation with *de facto* territorial sovereignty."¹⁰

Nationalism is an ideology that is focused on the advancement and well-being of the national community. It refers to a feeling of community and solidarity, as well as identification with a particular group. The feeling that people have toward one another within a community, has thus become a distinctive attribute of nation. As an ideology, nationalism asserts the right of a group of people to form its own state and initiates a movement to obtain it. It emphasizes the collective interest of the nation, rather than the interest of people as individuals. The interest of the state, however, is often defined by those who reign over the state. In the case of the People's Republic of China, the interest of the state is defined by the CPC.

As John A. Hall has emphasized: "the belief in the primacy of a particular nation," and "the logic of this position tends. . . to entail popular mobilization."¹¹ In other words, nationalism manifests itself in mass movement and this mass movement can be politically motivated and manipulated by the ruling class. Hans Kohn, one of the most distinguished scholars in this field, once defined nationalism as such: "Nationalism is a political creed that underlies the cohesion of modern societies and legitimizes their claim to authority. Nationalism centers the supreme loyalty of the overwhelming majority of the people upon the nation-state, either existing or desired."¹²

9. Kenneth Thompson, *supra* note 7, p. 202.

10. Anthony D. Smith, *supra* note 8, p. 189.

11. John A. Hall, "Nationalisms, Classified and Explained" in Sukumar Periwal ed., *Notions of Nationalism*, Central European University Press, 1995, p. 9.

12. Eugene Kamenka, ed., *Nationalism: the nature and evolution of an idea*, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1976, p. 15.

Social cohesion and legitimation of authority are the concerns of the CPC in China whose official ideology and mandate of rule are being challenged in the wake of the global crisis of communism that began with the fall of the Berlin Wall. By riding the tide of Chinese nationalism, the CPC intends to extend the Chinese people's natural attachment to their country to a China under the CPC's leadership.

Patriotism

If nationalism refers to the sentiments of love, identification, loyalty and commitment to the people who constitute one's national group, then patriotism refers to the loyalty and commitment an individual gives to his government or state.¹³ In China, patriotism is used in political campaigns by the CPC to demand the Chinese people's allegiance to Communist leadership. The meaning of patriotism is thus extended from love for one's country to love for the CPC and for the unique brand of socialism that the CPC upholds.

Since Chinese patriotism is characterized by its advocacy of devotion to the CPC's leadership in China, rather than to the "nation-state," it is necessary to examine the nature of the party-state that the CPC has created for itself, before further examining Chinese patriotism.

The image of party-state

The CPC has turned China into a single-party state by consistently emphasizing the supremacy of the Party's leadership over the state. The CPC took control of mainland China in 1949, and consequently assumed leadership of the state. As the sole representative of the Chinese government, the CPC made itself both the voice and the symbol of China as a nation-state. A popular song of the 1950s called "without the Communist Party, without a new China" gave expression to the CPC's political indoctrinations that fused party and state into one. The lyrics read: "the Communist Party freed China from both foreign and domestic suppressions, it worked for the best interests of the Chinese people, and it was destined to continuously lead China towards greater successes."¹⁴ In other words,

13. Maria Hsia Chang, *supra* note 7, p. 201.

14. The theme "without the Communist Party, without the new China" has been played time and again since the 1950s. It was further highlighted in 1994 when the government launched a new round of patriotic campaigns.

the Chinese people could have achieved nothing without the CPC's leadership. In the 1950s, when Mao's Anti-Rightist campaign silenced all the voices that questioned the supremacy of the CPC's leadership, only such songs could become popular. They were effective supplements to the CPC's official indoctrinations.

Officially, the image of the party state in China was forged through political institutions and political education.

A) POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS: China's party-state bureaucracy is composed of three major components: the party, the government and the military. In theory, the National Party Congress is the highest organ of the CPC, and the highest state organ is the National People's Congress. But the real decision-making power is located in the CPC's Politburo which acts in the name of the party Central Committee, the highest organ between party congresses.¹⁵ The power of the Politburo is further concentrated in its smaller Standing Committee which supervises over and acts through the party Central Secretariat, the State Council, the party Central Military Affairs Commission and the party Central Discipline Inspection Commission. The Politburo's Standing Committee consists of the party chairman, the premier of the State Council, and the chief of the military. Altogether, they control the party organization, the governmental apparatus and the military.

From top downward, the party organization at all levels coordinates with the government organization and plays a leading role. The central party and government organs, through provincial party organs, supervise provincial governments and control elections to provincial People's Congresses. The provincial governments and provincial party committees, through county party organs, supervise the county governments and control the elections to county-level People's Congresses. The party organization is even inserted into grass-roots organizations such as factories, schools and cooperatives. Party directives thus proceed from the Central Committee and are transmitted all the way down to the grass-roots levels of society. In an analysis of this party-state phenomenon, Zhengyuan Fu, the author of *Autocratic tradition and Chinese politics*, observed that, "one of the unique organizational arrangements of the Com-

15. According to the party statutes, the National Party Congress meets at least once every five years. Between party congresses, the party Central Committee is the highest organ and meets at least once every year. The main functions of the party Central Committee are to endorse policy initiated at the Center and to elect the general secretary. Members of the Central Committee are convened by the Politburo which acts in the name of the Central Committee when the latter is not in session.

munist political system is the subordination of government organs to the control of the party.”¹⁶

The party’s control of the government is guaranteed by the party’s power of personnel appointment, the establishment of the party organization within all government organs and the subjection of every government agency to the supervision of party organs.

Directly supervised by the party’s Central Military Affairs Commission, the military reports neither to the State Council nor the National People’s Congress. Mao’s instruction that the Party commands the gun, and the gun should never be allowed to command the Party, has become a tenet, which aptly describes the relations between the Party and the army.¹⁷ As Jeremy Paltiel has observed, “the explicit subordination of the armed forces to the Party is an effective index of Party domination of the state.”¹⁸

The party chairman is usually also the chairman of the state, and chairman of the Military Affairs Commission.¹⁹ Mao used to be the chairman of the party, the state and the military before 1962. This communist heritage is passed down to Jiang Zemin, who now holds all three titles.

Clearly, the party monopolizes the leading positions of all three branches of the party-state—the Party, the government and the military. The incumbents of these positions are filled by party members who are appointed by, and held ultimately responsible to, the Party center. Taking a lesson from the downfall of the former Soviet Union, the CPC has been insisting on the party’s leadership, and in particular, on the Party’s command over the military, in order to ensure political stability in China.²⁰

B) POLITICAL EDUCATION: Political education has been viewed as a leading force in directing the minds of people. “Every modern

16. Zhengyuan Fu, *Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics*, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 213.

17. See Stuart R. Schram’s *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, Praeger Publishers, 1970, chapter V.

18. Jeremy T. Paltiel, “PLA Allegiance on Parade: Civil-Military Relations in Transition,” *The China Quarterly*, No. 143 (September 1995), p. 786.

19. There was a time when Mao was the chairman of the party and the military, while Liu Shaoqi was the chairman of the state; there was also a time when Deng Xiaoping was the chairman of the military, while Hu Yaobang, followed by Zhao Ziyang, was the chairman of the party, and Li Xiannian, followed by Young Shangkun, was the chairman of the state.

20. See Liu Xiangwen & He Yongfang, eds., *The collapse of the Soviet regime: its reasons and its lessons* (sugong sangshi zhizhen diweide yuanyin jiqi jiaoxun), Beijing: Defence University Publishing House, 1996.

nation,” as Ronald Montaperto once commented, “places heavy dependence on education as a means for achieving its goals.”²¹ The goal of political education in Communist China is to teach the people to follow the leadership of the Communist Party.

The CPC has undertaken the ideological reconditioning of the nation as its primary educational task. The following lines may help demonstrate the political ambitions of the Communist Party in reconditioning the people’s mind:

The educational and cultural task of our country is a task of socialism. It is an instrument. . .for the Communist education of our people. The fundamental principle is that education and cultural work must serve proletarian politics and socialist economic construction. In order to accomplish this, education must be led by our Party.²²

Published over 37 years ago in the governmental newspaper, *People’s Daily*, the above message can still be considered to be descriptive of the present educational situation in China.

The CPC controls education in two ways. First, it popularizes education. Second, it limits the scope of education. By popularizing education, it makes everybody study Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, so as to secure the legitimacy and righteousness of the Party’s leadership.²³ By limiting the scope of education, it resorts to a ban of non-Marxist philosophies and ideologies, or at least restricts these to a small number of academicians.

Political education is not just the business of schools; it is the business of all social activities. Even music, paintings and children’s books are replete with political content which works for the single political aim of indoctrination: the Chinese Communist Party is the savior of China and it works for the best interest of the Chinese people.

The purpose of public education is to deliberately blur the conceptual distinction between the party and the state. The party and state has become synonymous, so a person’s allegiance to his state is equal to his allegiance to the Party. In so doing, the CPC is able

21. Ronald N. Montaperto & Jay Henderson, *China’s Schools in Flux*, M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1979, p. 42.

22. *People’s Daily*, June 2, 1960.

23. Party schools in China are already teaching Deng’s theory, which has been elevated to the same level as Mao’s thought. Since Jiang is regarded as theoretical heir to Deng, his “theory” is also studied as guidance for continuous economic reforms after Deng.

to channel patriotism from the Chinese people to its own advantage: that is, if you love your country, you have to love the Communist Party of China because it is this, and only this party that is qualified to lead China towards a promised future.

The fusion of party and state has created much confusion. An example was that of Zhang Jie, a contemporary Chinese writer, who once revealed a sentiment that illustrates this confusion. "I loved my country," she wrote in the introduction to her book *Heavy Wings*, "but my country did not love me." Zhang was labelled as a rightist by the Party in the 1950s and was forced to receive re-education in the countryside in the 1960s. She was not rehabilitated until the late 1970s, and, after a span of over 20 years, was finally allowed to write again.²⁴ Perhaps Zhang should rephrase her sentence as this: "I loved my country, but the Communist Party government did not love me." Zhang was not persecuted by her "country," but by those who ruled the country. Zhang's misidentification of the party for the country, like many others of her generation, resulted from an extensive exposure to this party-state image created by the party.

Needless to say, the CPC is the sole beneficiary of this conceptual confusion. By presenting itself as the state, the CPC can always take advantage of Chinese patriotism.

Resort to patriotism

In effect, contemporary Chinese nationalism is in reality an appeal to patriotism. This patriotic appeal is meant to invoke in the Chinese people a commitment to the CPC's leadership. As an example, the Party's chairman, Jiang Zemin, repeatedly has instructed young people to be patriotic. Addressing a National Youth Delegation, Jiang urged China's youth to "honor their responsibilities and duties to China."²⁵

Patriotic education has not just targeted the youth, but also included the entire population, especially after 1994, when the CPC's Propaganda Department issued the "fundamental Principles on Implementing a Patriotic Education" for all the people. A great deal of publications have been issued in China to define patriotism as giving allegiance to the CPC's leadership. Those publications argue

24. See Zhang Jie, "Introduction," in *Heavy Wings*, trans. Howard Goldblatt, NY: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989.

25. *Beijing Review*, July 23-29, 1990.

that China would not have made any progress, politically and economically, without the CPC's leadership.

A good illustration is provided by an article discussing the "characteristics of contemporary patriotism in China," in which the author emphasized five "consistencies." According to the author, patriotism, first of all, has to be consistent with socialism, for only socialism can save China. Second, patriotism has to be consistent with concrete actions devoted to the maintaining of national dignity, security and independence. Third, patriotism has to be consistent with national stability and national unity. In other words, patriotism requires the Chinese people to defend national integrity under the CPC's leadership. Fourth, patriotism has to be consistent with the pursuit of economic development and national prosperity. Fifth, patriotism has to be consistent with the current "open-door" policy, for China needs to learn from other countries.²⁶

According to publications of this kind, Chinese patriotism is equated with a devotion to Communist leadership and socialism. In another article, "Upholding the great banners of patriotism and national union," the theory of Deng Xiaoping's building socialism with Chinese characteristics is defined as "a scientific theory that combines socialism and patriotism." The theme of the article is to create a theoretical link between socialism and patriotism by asserting that socialism is indispensable for patriotism, because socialism provides a theoretical direction for patriotism; patriotism is also indispensable for socialism, because patriotism provides a profound ideological basis for socialism. In the end, the article bluntly concludes that "patriotism is to love socialist China under the CPC's leadership."²⁷

Clearly, patriotism in Communist China has been reinterpreted with emphasis as devotion to Communist leadership. As an author argued in his article "the theme of contemporary patriotism:" Chinese patriotism must demonstrate a confidence in the Communist leadership and socialist system. Without the Chinese Communist Party, according to the author, China would never have achieved independence and liberation, and would still suffer under imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism. Without the socialist system, China would not have made so much economic progress in so

26. Ying Wen & Mang Gan, "The characteristics of contemporary patriotism," *Jiefang junbao* (the PLA Daily), November 18, 1996, p. 4.

27. Lan Quanbin & Zheng Yuqin, "Upholding the great banners of patriotism and national union" (Gaoju aiguo zhuyi he minzu tuanjie de weida qizhi), *The Journal of the Central National University*, No. 1 (1997), p. 15.

short a period of time.²⁸ As for the economic difficulties that China experienced during Mao's years, the author dismissed them by asserting that China's national economy never stopped developing even during the chaotic years of the Cultural Revolution, although it encountered some setbacks.²⁹

Since economic reforms require certain conditions, such as political unity and social stability, to ensure continuing development. Many Chinese, especially young people, who are "not the generation who had agitated for democracy during the 1980s,"³⁰ now associate continuing Communist leadership with the maintenance of political stability, as well as the continuation of rapid economic development. Most of these young people have become earnest patriots, who believe that China should first build its economic strength, then concentrate on building democracy.³¹ By emphasizing the importance of political stability for China's economic development, the CPC is able to justify its control and suppression of political dissidents, as it did towards the 1989 Democracy Movement.

The patriotic movements launched by the CPC have not only targeted the Chinese people on the mainland, but the overseas Chinese, too. Deng Xiaoping himself once called on the ethnic Chinese across the world to love China and help develop it. He believed that all Chinese had a sense of pride in China, and that the international image of China and its future development depended on the continuous rule of the CPC on the mainland.³²

Nationalism does hold a special appeal to overseas Chinese, especially when the emphasis is laid on ethnic links and traditions. According to an article published in the *East Tribune*, all those who "speak Chinese, eat Chinese food, celebrate the 'Spring Festival,'" and "have a deep affection" for historical Chinese symbols such as the Great Wall and the Yellow River "must be acknowledged as "descendants of Chinese civilization," no matter where they are residing now.³³ As descendants of Chinese civilization, their attach-

28. Lei Zhengjin, "The Theme of Contemporary Patriotism (dangdai aiguo zhuyi de zhuxuangliu)," *National Defence*, No. 6 (1995), p. 18.

29. *Id.*, p. 19.

30. Maria H. Chang, *supra* note 7, p. 207.

31. Patrick E. Tyler, "China's Campus Model for the 90's: Earnest Patriot," *New York Times*, April 23, 1996, p. A4.

32. Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works, Vol. III*, Beijing: Foreign Languages, 1994, pp. 345-366.

33. Xu Ben, "Who are we?" *The East Tribune* (Dongfang luntan), No. 3, (October 1996), p. 46.

ment to their motherland is as natural and spontaneous as their attachment to their mothers," remarks the author.

In the author's words, "We love our mother not because she is more beautiful, more intelligent, and more powerful than others. We love her because it was she who gave us our lives and brought us up." The author goes on to argue that one's mother is not a matter of individual choice. Even if she is poor and ugly, she is still our mother and still deserves our love and respect.³⁴ In conclusion, the author once again emphasizes that a person's emotional attachment and cultural links to his motherland is as natural and spontaneous as he is attached to his mother.

Arthur Waldron, an author of several books including *Cultural Nationalism in East Asia*, participated in the Symposium on the Great Wall (*Changchen guoji xueshu yantao hui*) held in Beijing in September 1994. According to Waldron, the Symposium "afforded a remarkable insight into the way that the PRC is discovering a non-Communist past, and is defining patriotism in terms that have everything to do with culture and almost nothing to do with traditional Marxist politics."³⁵

An extensive restoration work on the Great Wall was accomplished between 1984 and 1987, and the Great Wall as a patriotic symbol was emphatically renewed and reinterpreted. For instance, Huang Hua, chairman of the Great Wall Society and a former Foreign Minister (1976-82), repeatedly stressed that Chinese culture was not simply Confucian culture, nor was China the product of only Han people. He warned that one must not take *zu* (*nation*) for *guo* (*state/country*), and must not think of the Great Wall as a product of the *Hanzu* and their culture alone, but rather of all the nationalities that constitute China.³⁶ As a symbol of national unification, the Great Wall must have meaning to all the nationalities in China, not just to the majority Han people.

The military function of the Great Wall is also reevaluated. As Waldron noticed, scholars from the Academy of Military Sciences provided modern interpretations of the Wall. The Wall was no longer regarded as a passive defense line, but rather as an integral component of a larger security system. In a word, with all its watch-towers, signalling schemes, reserve troops and so forth, the Wall

34. *Ibid.*

35. Arthur Waldron, "Scholarship and Patriotic Education: The Great Wall Conference, 1994," *The China Quarterly*, No. 143 (September 1995), p. 844.

36. *Id.*, p. 845.

becomes a model representing a general strategic concept that combined offensive and defensive approaches.³⁷

The Great Wall is just one of the national symbols used to provoke patriotism that is specifically bound to the present regime. Today, confronted with all the problems associated with economic reforms, the CPC, as Waldron observed, “would appear to be attempting to redefine patriotism in a way that will permit Communist rule to continue.”³⁸

Today, rather than labelling its political opponents as “class enemies” as it did during Mao’s years, the Chinese government now refers to them as “national enemies” who, in challenging Communist Party rule, have damaged China’s national interests. Political dissidents identified as “national enemies” are accused of collaborating with anti-PRC forces abroad. For example, prominent dissidents like Wei Jingsheng and Wang Dan were accused of leaking “state secrets” to foreigners and sentenced accordingly.

Conclusion

Chinese nationalism has been on the march since the suppression of the 1989 Democracy Movement. This results partly from the CPC’s manipulation, partly from the desire of the Chinese people who associate the CPC’s leadership with social stability and continuing economic development. The mandate of the CPC’s leadership was, for a short while, seriously challenged by the Democracy Movement of 1989, but regained its full strength after it cruelly suppressed the Movement by armed force. The indispensable relationship between the CPC’s leadership and its armed forces, or the CPC’s doctrine that the Party commands the gun, was once again demonstrated in this incident. The CPC’s real power has, both in history and at present, been based on its control of the military. In actuality, the establishment of a Communist regime in China, from the very beginning, was realized through a revolution fulfilled by its armed forces.

As part of its patriotic educational programs, the CPC has also launched patriotic campaigns in its military. In a time when Chinese nationalism is promoted by irredentism following the return of Hong Kong, the CPC’s patriotic appeals to its military have naturally alarmed its neighboring countries that have unresolved territo-

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Id.*, p. 848.

rial disputes with China. It is in this regard that the examination of the PLA's nationalism becomes significant.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NATIONALIST IDEOLOGY OF THE CHINESE MILITARY³⁹

History reveals that using nationalism to rally support from the Chinese people is not new to the CPC. As a matter of fact, the CPC appealed to the majority of the Chinese with its nationalist propaganda, rather than communism, before it took power in China in 1949. In particular, the communists exploited patriotic and anti-Japanese appeals in their propaganda since 1931, the year of the Manchurian Incident, when Japan invaded and brought under its control most of northeastern China.

Since the Anti-Japanese war broke out in 1937, the Communists, as Chalmers Johnson pointed out, even abandoned their old slogans of class warfare and violent redistribution of property, and concentrated solely on national salvation.⁴⁰ The CPC's nationalist propaganda made itself welcomed by almost all classes of the Chinese people who gave the CPC credit for forming a United Front against the Japanese. Urging Chiang Kai-shek's government to "fight the Japanese and stop the civil war," the CPC accorded well with the rising nationalism in China. In so doing, the CPC successfully turned the tides of the war in favor of its own development.

Many years later, Mao Zedong admitted to a Japanese delegation that the CPC's ascendance to power in China was, to a great extent, due to the Japanese invasion. While the Nationalists bore the brunt of Japanese military aggression, the Communists managed to expand their base and military forces in northern China's rural areas during the years of the war. According to Mao, between 1937 and 1945, the CPC was able to expand its army from a force of 25,000 to that of 1,200,000, and its base was extended in control of a population of over 100,000,000.⁴¹ All this was due to its dexterous manipulation of Chinese nationalism.

Chinese nationalism in a post-Deng era

Deng Xiaoping, the paramount leader of the CPC after Mao, died from complications of lung infections on February 19, 1997.

39. Much of this chapter had been published in *The Journal of Strategic Studies* (March 1998), as co-authored by Maria Hsia Chang and Xiaoyu Chen.

40. Chalmers A. Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power*, Stanford University Press, 1962, pp. 4-5.

41. Zhengyuan Fu, *Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 159.

Despite all the speculation on possible changes that might occur in China without Deng,⁴² China quietly entered into the post-Deng era. Neither Communist rule nor Jiang Zemin's succession confronted any great challenge.

The transition of power from Deng to Jiang gradually was completed during the past three years, when Deng's health prevented him from making public appearances. Jiang, however, did not consolidate his leadership without making compromises, especially with the military elite. It was reported that Jiang's political weaknesses forced him to accommodate the demands of the Chinese military for larger budgets and for a more bellicose posture toward Taiwan.⁴³ China's military exercises conducted off the coast of Taiwan in March 1996 demonstrated a determination to recover Taiwan by force if the latter attempted to declare itself an independent nation. Besides the issue of Taiwan, China also has disputes with some of its neighboring countries over the sovereignty of certain islands in the East and South China Seas. This might lead to conflicts between China and Japan, Vietnam, the Philippines, and other concerned countries who also claim sovereignty over these islands.

Considering the nature of irredentism and the rising tide of nationalism in China, John Faust and Judith Kornberg have already issued a caveat: "If this nationalism is combined with irredentism, the results could be dangerous to China's neighbors."⁴⁴

Deng's legacy: military modernization

One of Deng's legacies is the modernization of the PLA. During Mao's years, China was on constant military alert against all anti-China forces, in particular, its socialist neighbor, the former Soviet Union. In the 1960s and 70s, the emphasis of China's military strategy was on that of Mao's "People's War," which regarded "the masses of the people" as "the richest source of power to wage war."⁴⁵ The Sino-Vietnam border war of 1979, nevertheless, revealed all the weaknesses of the PLA: most of its military equip-

42. See Richard Baum, "China After Deng: Ten Scenarios in Search of Reality," *The China Quarterly*, No. 145 (March 1996).

43. Patrick E. Tyler, "Successors in Search of a New Mandate," *The New York Times* (February 20, 1997), p. A1.

44. John R. Faust & Judith F. Kornberg, *China in World Politics*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1995, p. 39.

45. Mao Zedong, "On Protracted War, May 1938 (Lun chijiu zhan)," in *Selected Works, Vol. II*, Beijing, People's Publishing House, 1960, p. 430.

ment was out of date; it was even short of field vehicles for transportation and its military communication systems were so poor that it had to depend heavily on orderlies to transmit commands and instructions. To China, the victory over the Vietnamese in the 1979 border war was a Pyrrhic victory indeed: it cost the Chinese army over 60-thousand casualties, many times more than what the Vietnamese army lost.⁴⁶ "[T]he PLA sought to teach Vietnam a lesson," as some analysts remarked, but "it learned more than did Hanoi."⁴⁷

Realizing that a modern war is dependent more upon advanced military technology and weaponry than upon the revolutionary zeal of the people, Deng proposed plans for military modernization in 1979, 1981 and 1983, respectively. The watershed event for the PLA took place in 1985, when Deng emphasized the necessity to turn the PLA into a "revolutionized," "regularized" and "modernized" army.⁴⁸

At a conference of the Central Military Commission held in 1985, Deng put forward the view that there was no imminent war threatening China and there was no possibility that a world war would happen in the immediate future, except for limited wars in limited areas. Under such a situation, China should focus its attention on economic development, and at the same time, on the regularization (*zhengguihua*) of its military forces. This "strategic transformation," in Deng's view, provided for China an opportunity to concentrate on economic construction and peacetime defense modernization.⁴⁹

One of Deng's contributions to the rebuilding of the PLA was his decision to demobilize at least one million service personnel between 1985 and 1987. This decision freed part of the PLA's budget that had been spent on personnel, so that it would have more money for research and development and the purchase of advanced weapons. By 1987 the PLA had been reduced from 4.238 million to 3.235 million. Further rounds of demobilizations in 1989, 1992 and

46. He Jie, et al., *I believe in China* (Wo xiangxin zhongguo), China City Publishing House, 1997, p. 155.

47. David Shambaugh, "China's Military in Transition: Politics, Professionalism, Procurement and Power Projection," *The China Quarterly*, No. 146 (June 1996), p. 279.

48. Li Fu-tao, "The PLA Embarks on the building of Legal Basis," *Mainland China Studies*, Taipei, Taiwan, Vol. 39, No. 11, p. 8.

49. Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works Vol. III*, Beijing: Foreign Languages, 1994, p. 126.

1994 reduced the PLA to about 2.93 million with a reserve and militia force of 1.2 million.⁵⁰

The ratio between soldiers and officers within the PLA was also very skewed before Deng's demobilization with many officers leading too few soldiers. Before 1985, for instance, the ratio of officers to soldiers in the PLA was 1:2.45, compared with 1:4.56 in the former U.S.S.R.; 1:6.15 in the United States; 1:10 in West Germany; and, 1:17 in France. Only after the first stage of demobilization at the end of 1987 was the ratio between officers and soldiers reduced to 1:3.3.⁵¹

As a result of the demobilization, the number of personnel in the three general departments of the PLA was reduced by nearly half, and eleven military regions were merged into seven through reorganization. At the same time, emphasis was given to acquire advanced military technology and modern tactics. Quite a few professional units have been established since 1985, such as land air units (*luqun hangkongbin*), marine corps (*haiqun luzhanbin*), and air missile units (*kongqun dikong daoden budui*).⁵²

Most importantly, 24 group armies (*jituan jun*) were formed. Each group army has about 50,000 ground force troops divided into three divisions that combine a variety of infantry, armor, engineering, anti-chemical and other corps. Since 1986, these group armies undertook numerous exercises. By 1994, the PLA successfully carried out its first large-scale tri-service exercises.⁵³

As part of its plan to modernize its military, China also resumed the rank system in the PLA in 1988. The PLA used to copy the rank system of the former Soviet Union, but this rank system, which started in 1955, was criticized in 1965 for being "remnants of capitalist influences" and was subsequently abolished. The abolition of ranks in the army was justified on the basis that officers and soldiers should be equal in a people's army and no one could enjoy privileges over others. The reintroduction of rank indicates that the CPC is no longer idealistic in army-building, but has become strictly realistic: in a modern army, the rank system is part of the tactics in army-building and commanders cannot proficiently perform their duties without it.⁵⁴

50. David Shambaugh, *supra* note 47, p. 282.

51. He Jie, *supra* note 46, p. 164.

52. *Ibid.*

53. David Shambaugh, *supra* note 47, p. 284.

54. He Jie, *supra* note 46, p. 154.

In order to build up his prestige in the army, Jiang Zemin also made remarks on the PLA's construction. Following Deng's suit, Jiang was heard many times talking about the necessity to modernize the military. Particularly, Jiang emphasized "regularization" as an objective requirement for establishing a modernized army. He demanded that, "the behaviors [sic] of the military troops must be disciplined by regulations."⁵⁵ However, the entire plan to build a modernized army was made by Deng and his military lieutenants.

As part of the nationwide patriotic education campaign, the PLA has launched its own campaigns to educate its soldiers with patriotism. Because of its irredentist characteristics, the PLA's nationalism has aroused concerns among political analysts in the West. For, as Michael Mann pointed out, young military men can be easily turned into fervent nationalists and patriots.⁵⁶

The PLA's Nationalist Ideology

The function of nationalism: The Chinese military is fully cognizant of the utility of promoting nationalism in a society plagued by the disruptive forces of rapid development. As an example, an article in *National Defense (Guofang)* admitted that nationalism could provide cohesion for China by overcoming and combatting the many deleterious effects of economic reform.⁵⁷ In other words, the Chinese government tends to use the issue of nationalism to counteract those problems inherent in its political system.

The importance of culture: To promote nationalism is to promote the "spirit" (*jingsheng*) of that nation, and vice versa, as some have argued.⁵⁸ The Chinese nation is bound together by its "spirit," which is the product of fivethousand years of civilization comprised of China's millennial culture, traditions and morality. Certain parts of Chinese traditional morality are believed to be especially representative of the national "spirit." They include patriotism, industriousness, perseverance, achievement, collectivism and "revolutionary enthusiasm." Other traits conventionally considered to be part of traditional Chinese culture, such as the low esteem for

55. Ding Xiangrong, "the Core of the Regularization Is Legalization (zhengguihua de hexin shi faizhihua), *The PLA Daily* (June 30, 1996), p. 3.

56. Michael Mann, *supra* note 5, p. 55.

57. Li Hongjun & Zheng Shan, "Greatly Promote the Spirit of Chinese Nationalism (Dali hongyoung zhonghua mingzu jingshen)," *National Defence*, Beijing: Military Affairs and Learning Periodicals, No. 9 (1993), p. 15.

58. *Id.*, p. 16.

trade and entrepreneurship, are not representative of “mainstream” culture and should not be considered part of the Chinese “spirit.”⁵⁹

In particular, China’s national “spirit” is defined by the people’s loyalty, selflessness, hardwork, dedication and courage. Although these appear to be politically neutral attributes, they are now identified by the PLA to be uniquely “communist sentiments and principles” (*gongchan zhuyi qingcao*).⁶⁰ Other attributes of the Chinese “spirit” are redefined to better suit the regime’s purpose. For instance, patriotism that was traditionally understood to mean loyalty to the emperor is now redefined by the PLA to mean loyalty not just to China, but to the current regime of “socialism with Chinese characteristics.” It is asserted that only the present regime of “socialism with Chinese characteristics” truly represents the collective interests of Chinese people.⁶¹

China’s historical achievements: Nationalism promotes a sense of national pride. This sense of national pride, in return, serves as a catalyst to stimulate nationalism. Those writing in Chinese military publications tended to exploit China’s historical achievements to promote such national pride.

As an example, an article in *National Defense* entitled “Beloved Motherland, Great Nation,” provided a detailed account of ancient China’s many and unique contributions to world civilization. That article was part of the journal’s series of “Seminars in Patriotic Education” (*aiguo zhuyi jiaoyu jiangzuo*).⁶²

The article began by reminding the reader that China was responsible not just for the “four great inventions” of the compass, paper, gunpowder and printing, but also for countless other innovations. It is claimed that the Chinese once took the lead in mathematics. They were the first to calculate the square root and the cube root; Chinese mathematician Qin Jiushao first formulated mathematical equations and another Chinese scientist, Zu Chongzhi, understood the mathematical concept of *pi* to be the ratio of a circle’s circumference to its diameter some 1100 hundred years before the ancient Greeks.⁶³ The point here is that, since mathematics is the

59. *Id.*, pp. 15-16.

60. Yao Bolin, “A Careful Study of the Morality of Communists” (*Nianhao gongchangdangren de daodejing*), *The PLA Daily*, November 20, 1996, p. 4.

61. Li & Zheng, *supra* note 57, p. 17.

62. Luo Guoliang, “Beloved Motherland, Great Nation (Ke’ai de zuguo, weida de minzu),” *National Defence*, No. 2 (September 1995), pp. 17-19.

63. *Id.*, p. 18.

basis of modern science, the contributions of ancient China to modern science should not be underestimated.

The Great Chinese Empire: The greatness of a Chinese empire in the old days is also described with nostalgia. As revealed in another article, Tibet, Qinghai, Xinjiang and “the region to the west of Xinjiang” belonged to the great Chinese empire as early as A.D. 73, during the Han dynasty. (The “region to the west of Xinjiang” can only mean eastern Kazakhstan). Taiwan and the Ryukyu Islands belonged to China since the late sixth century of the Sui dynasty. Beginning in 618, Jilin, Heilongjiang, southern Siberia and Mongolia became “subjects” (*chenfu*) of the Tang dynasty. By 627, the rule of the Tang dynasty extended to west Korean Bay, Bohai, Lake Baikal, the Gobi Desert, western Siberia, Mongolia, the Altay Mountains, Lake Balkhash, and the Yenisey River. During the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), China’s borders extended to the Sea of Japan; Tibet came under Chinese rule through the system of monk-officialdom (*sengguan zhidu*), and tributary relations (*zongfan guanxi*) were established with Korea and Vietnam.⁶⁴

The Qing dynasty, which replaced the Ming in 1644, further expended China’s territory around the turn of the 18th century. At its apogee, the Qing empire stretched across some 13 million square kilometers, reaching the Pamirs Plateau in the west, Lake Balkhash in the northwest, Siberia in the north, the Xing’an Mountains and Lake Khanka (Ku’ye) in the northeast, the Pacific Ocean in the east, Taiwan, Diaoyutai and other islands in the southeast, and the South China Sea in the south.⁶⁵

More than that, until the 19th century, China was the undisputed hegemonic power in Asia, without peer or rival. The relationship between China and other Asian states, such as Korea, Nepal, Bhutan, Burma, Laos and Vietnam, was that between a suzerain and its vassals. The Chinese emperor provided protection and conferred legitimacy upon the rulers of the vassal states. In return, the latter would recognize China’s superiority with homage and tributes. The tributary states in effect functioned as buffers for the Chinese empire. As one author put it, “With the Ryukyu islands guarding the Southeast, Korea guarding the Northeast, Mongolia

64. Mao Yuanyou, “Formation and Changes in the Map of China (Zhongguo bantu di xingcheng yu bianqian),” *National Defence*, No. 3 (1994), pp. 33-34.

65. *Id.*, p. 34.

the Northwest, and Vietnam the Southwest, the Qing empire's borders were secured."⁶⁶

The Fall from Greatness: If patriotism can be promoted by arousing a nostalgia among the people for a nation's ancient glories, it can also be stimulated by revealing national humiliations once inflicted upon China by foreign powers. The Chinese empire started to decline into its humbleness since the Opium War of 1840-42, in which China was ignominiously defeated by the British. Since then, China's floodgates were opened to the thorough exploitation by the imperialist powers who ruthlessly dismembered China. For instance, Great Britain "coveted" (*jiyu*) and "encroached" (*canshi*) on parts of Tibet, and occupied (*gezhan*) Hong Kong, after it seized Malaysia and India. France seized Vietnam and encroached on China's Yunnan province. Japan, having defeated its former suzerain in the 1894-95 war, "illegally occupied" (*feifa gezhan*) Chinese territories that included Taiwan and Diaoyutai.⁶⁷

As for Russia, its "usurpation" (*qinzhan*) of Chinese land began under the Czar who took from the Qing dynasty more than 1.5 million square kilometers of land in northeastern and northwestern China through a series of "unequal treaties" (*bu pingdeng tiaoyue*). This directly violated treaty agreements made between the two countries in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Nibuchu (Nerchinsk) Treaty of 1689 and the Bulianqisi (Kiakhta) Treaty of 1727 had demarcated the Sino-Russian border with the Er'guna River and the Shabinayi Mountains, as well as determined that Chinese sovereignty began south of the outer Xing'an Mountains and extended eastward from the Gorbitsa and Argun Rivers to the Pacific Ocean, to include the basins of the Heilong(jiang) and Ussuri Rivers.⁶⁸

Russian imperialism was continued by the Soviet Union which, in 1942, "at the most difficult point in China's war of resistance against the Japanese" and "without even the pretense of an international treaty," took more than 170,000 sq. km. of land in northern China. This was followed by Moscow's machinations to wrestle Outer Mongolia from Chinese control by proposing at the 1945 Yalta Conference that the autonomy of "the Mongolian People's Republic be maintained." The following year in January, the Chi-

66. *Ibid.* Chinese historical chronicles often referred to Japan as *Liuqiu* (Ryukyu). Thus, the reference here could either be to the Ryukyu islands or to Japan.

67. *Id.*, p. 34.

68. Du Renhuai, "Emperors Kangxi and Qianlong's Border Defense at the Height of the Qing Dynasty (Kang Zian shengshi shiqi de bianfang)," *National Defense*, No. 7 (1994), pp. 33-34.

nese Nationalist regime “recognized Outer Mongolia’s independence” when it signed a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union. “In this manner, another 1.5 million sq. km. of land was carved from the map of China.”⁶⁹

The cumulative result of the series of territorial losses to the various imperialist powers was a substantial reduction in the size of the Chinese empire: it was reduced to three-quarters its former size within a century. From the acme of the Qing dynasty, China was systematically diminished by 3.4 million sq. km. to the present 9.6 million sq. km. of the People’s Republic.⁷⁰

The Importance of Patriotism: In ancient China, patriotism produced a motivation for the Chinese people to bind together for a common interest in national defense. Today, patriotism’s primary objective and concern are still those of national unification and defense. Animated by “the consciousness of national defense” (*guofang yishi*), the patriot is ever ready to fight for the independence, integrity and unification of the ancestral homeland.⁷¹ Thus, the great patriots in Chinese history were those who most contributed to China’s unification and expansion, and included Emperor Qin Shihuang who unified China, as well as the Mongol warrior Genghis Khan who conquered China, along with Russia and most of Asia and Europe.⁷² Such patriots are particularly needed today because the historic mission of national unification is still unfinished and remains a task to be completed in the 21st century. However, the defense and reunification of China must rely on more than the Chinese people’s patriotism. China’s national interests can only be secured by a powerful military equipped with a “new type of patriotism.”⁷³

The PLA and “new patriotism”: This “new patriotism” distinguishes itself from conventional patriotism by its political bond to China’s communist regime. Conventional patriotism binds the soldier’s fate to that of his country by demanding his total loyalty and devotion, including his life if necessary, for the defense of the homeland. The “new patriotism,” in contrast, requires the PLA to

69. Mao Yuanyou, *supra* note 64, p. 34.

70. *Ibid.*

71. Xiang Wenrong, “Consciousness of national defense and patriotism (Guofang yishi yu aiguo zhuyi),” *National Defense*, No. 9 (1996), p. 32.

72. Gu Jieshan, “China’s traditional patriotism Part I (Zhongguo gudai de aiguo zhuyi),” *National Defense*, No. 4 (1995), p. 23.

73. Weng Shiping, *Introduction to soldier’s Morality* (Junren meide daolun), Beijing: Institute of Military Science, 1996, p. 86.

give its allegiance to the Communist leadership.⁷⁴ Apparently, the “new patriotism” does not result just from one’s natural attachment to one’s country; it must be inculcated into the soldier through political education. The PLA is required to be dedicated not just to the defense of the nation-state, but also to defend and protect the current regime of “socialism” and its “four cardinal principles.” In other words, the PLA must always align itself with the CPC’s policies and interests and must willingly submit itself to the Communist leadership.⁷⁵ In effect, the PLA has become an appendage and instrument of the Communist Party. As Deng Xiaoping had emphasized, “The army is the most important instrument for the proletarian dictatorship,” and it “must always be controlled by those whose loyalty to the party. . . is beyond question.”⁷⁶

The PLA and National Defense: Deng regarded the world today as no different from the social Darwinian world of the 19th and early-20th centuries that witnessed the depredation of China. As in the past, advanced industrial “hegemonist” and “imperialist” powers still “bully” less developed nations like China, “interfering” in their economic development and political independence.⁷⁷ Although the Second World War ended more than 50 years ago, the world continues to be a battlefield where small- and medium-sized wars are regular occurrences. Conflict, instead of cooperation, defines contemporary international relations.⁷⁸ In a difficult and hostile world, nations remain the basic units that could ensure the collective well-being of peoples. The priority of each nation-state must be the defense of its own interests and the enhancement of its own development. With such an understanding of today’s world, Deng concluded that, like any other nation-state, China must protect its own interests, sovereignty and territorial integrity.⁷⁹

China’s national defense is understood as the preservation and maintenance of its territorial integrity. Specifically, this means that the minority nationalities in the autonomous regions of Tibet and Xinjiang must be deterred from seceding and “splitting” the Peo-

74. Gu Jieshan, “China’s traditional patriotism Part II (Zhongguo gudai de aiguo zhuyi),” *National Defense*, No. 4 (1994), p. 25.

75. Weng Shiping, *supra* note 73, pp. 88-89.

76. Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works of Deng (1975-1982)*, Beijing: Foreign Languages, 1994, p. 193.

77. Deng Xiaoping, “Maintain the Tradition of Hard Struggle (March 23, 1989),” in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*, Beijing: Foreign Languages, 1994, p. 283.

78. Xiang Wenrong, *supra* note 71, p. 33.

79. Deng Xiaoping, *supra* note 32, pp. 316-318.

ple's Republic. Both Tibetan and Xinjiang (Uyghur) separatists reportedly have their organizations based in, among other countries, the United States. Encouraged by the winning of independence by the former Soviet Central Asian republics in 1991, the Uyghur separatists wanted to make Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region an independent Turkestan.⁸⁰ Dalai Lama's "ambitions" for an independent Tibet are also believed to be "stimulated" by some foreign countries, particularly the United States.⁸¹ To the extent that the government and people of the United States support the cause of Tibetan sovereignty and independence, the United States will be perceived by the Chinese as a national security threat.

According to China's official voice, China's territorial integrity cannot be fully accomplished until it "reunifies" with Taiwan, and "resumes" its sovereignty over the Diaoyutai islands and the Spratly islands in the East and South China Seas. Although the Beijing government proposes "peaceful solutions," it cannot persuade the other countries to give up their claims peacefully. As China is acquiring the political, economic and military power to reassert its self-defined traditional Middle Kingdom role in Asia, it will bring more pressure to bear on those countries which have territorial disputes with China.⁸²

Indeed, China's "national defense" in the post-Cold War world means the modernization and upgrading of its military capabilities to those of a regional power or beyond. Already the largest in the world in manpower (3 million men) and the world's third largest in nuclear arsenal, China's military power, both quantitatively and qualitatively, is still growing. Chinese leaders, "bereft of their vaunted geopolitical swing value," are believed to have shifted from the pretense of being a global power to becoming the dominant regional military power in Asia.⁸³

Despite its acknowledgment that China is enjoying the best external security environment in the 1990s, the Beijing government has continued to increase its defense budget at double-digit rates and beef up its military power projection capabilities. China's an-

80. Dru C. Gladney, "Rumblings from the Uyghur," *Current History*, Vol. 96, No. 611 (September 1997), p. 288.

81. Cui Hongjian, Li Hong, et. al., *Containing China: Mythology and Reality*, Beijing: Yenshi Publishing House, 1996, p. 118.

82. Allen S. Whiting, "The PLA and China's Threat Perceptions," *The China Quarterly*, No. 146 (June 1996), p. 615.

83. Samuel S. Kim, "China as a Great Power," *Current History*, Vol. 96, No. 611 (September 1997), p. 248.

nounced defense budget for the 1996-97 fiscal year stands at 9.72 billion US dollars. The actual amount is estimated to be four to five times greater than the official defense budget.⁸⁴ This means that China's total military spending for the 1996-97 fiscal year is between 38.6 billion and 48.25 billion US dollars.⁸⁵ At least part of the budget increases went to military purchases that have significantly upgraded China's military capabilities. Those purchases include air refuelling kits from Iran, as well as Su-27s, Su-24s, Mig-29s, Hind assault helicopters and most recently, Sovremenny-class missile destroyers from Russia.⁸⁶

In addition to its arms purchases, the PLA's efforts to modernize and upgrade its capabilities are focused in two other areas. Anticipating that post-Cold War conflicts will increasingly be in the arena of regional limited warfare, best epitomized by Desert Storm, the PLA has assiduously worked at developing its rapid reaction force and has increased it tenfold to 200,000 troops. At the same time, the PLA is transforming its navy from a coastal force into a blue-water navy. As indicative of a policy shift in national defense, Chinese strategists now discuss the need for *shengcun kongjian* (living space) and for strategic frontiers that extend into the Indian Ocean, the South China Sea and East China Sea, and even into outer space.⁸⁷ Accordingly, China's naval military doctrine has shifted from the coastal defense of the mainland to an active defense of maritime economic and strategic interests.

The "second national territory": A new concept, "*haiyang guotu guan* (sea as national territory)" has emerged in China and been emphatically discussed in its military publications. The focus of the discussion is not just on the economic and strategic significance of the oceans to China's future development, but also on an "unpleasant fact that it is China's maritime interests that have been encroached on in recent years."⁸⁸ China's call to protect its maritime interests and regain the control of its lost maritime territories is regarded as a response both to its rising nationalism and to its anxiety in advancing its economic development. Some have observed that China's Southeast Asian neighbors are perplexed and

84. *Id.*, p. 247.

85. *Ibid.* Due to the PRC's lack of budget transparency, it is impossible to give an accurate and universally accepted figure.

86. Richard D. Fisher, "Dangerous Moves: Russia's Sale of Missile Destroyers to China," *Heritage Foundation Background Series* (February 20, 1997), p. 1.

87. Samuel S. Kim, *supra* note 83, p. 248.

88. *Ibid.*

irritated by China's approach to disputes in the South China Sea.⁸⁹ In a recent internal document, the Chinese government referred to the disputed island groups in the South China Sea as "lebensraum" for the Chinese people.⁹⁰ The truth is, whoever has control over these disputed island groups can enjoy free passage of shipping and eventually exploit the rich deposits of oil and natural gas in this area. China's naval exercises and maritime expansionism have extended outside coastal waters in the 1990s.⁹¹

Since the oceans can provide "lebensraum," they are now referred to as China's "second national territory (*di'er guotu*),⁹² or "maritime national territory" (*haiyang guotu*) which is defined as "the maritime portion of any land and space belonging to or under the jurisdiction of a coastal country."⁹³ As an article in *National Defense* in 1995 emphasized, due to rapid increases in population and dwindling land and resources, "national territory" must mean more than "land territory" (*lingtu*) as it was defined in the past, but should include "territorial waters" (*linghai*). This has led to nations turning to the oceans, most of which are still "virgin territory," for new "living space."⁹⁴

China's "second national territory" includes 12 territorial waters (*linghai*), 24 "maritime adjacent regions" (*haili pilian qu*), 200 maritime economic exclusive zones and continental shelves, totaling more than 3 million sq. km. that amount to one-third of China's land mass.⁹⁵ Now, more than 1.2 million square kilometers of China's maritime "living space" are in dispute. Among it, 70 thousand square kilometers are in the Yellow Sea, 300 thousand square kilometers in the East China Sea, and 800 thousand square kilometers in the South China Sea. This accounts for 10 per cent of China's total territorial waters, 8 to 9 times bigger than the disputed area on China's land mass.⁹⁶

89. David B. H. Denoon & Wendy Frieman, "China's Security Strategy: the view from Beijing, ASEAN, and Washington," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (April 1996), p. 423.

90. Samuel S. Kim, *supra* note 83, p. 248.

91. *Ibid.*

92. Song Yan, "Our Second National Territory (Wo'men di di'er guotu)," *National Defence*, No. 10 (1995), p. 4.

93. Wu Xiangshun and Wang Shengyong, "Oceans, Oceanic perspective, oceanic great wall (Haiyang, haiyang guan, haishang changcheng)," *National Defence*, No. 10 (1995) p. 4.

94. *Ibid.*

95. Song Yan, *supra* note 92, p. 41.

96. *Ibid.*

A 1994 military document further emphasized the significance in defending China's maritime interests. It made it clear that when all the countries along the coastal line are vying for maritime resources and marching into the high seas for more "living space," China must not be left behind.⁹⁷

As an example, it tells of a story about a tiny island owned by Japan. The island, known as "Chongniao Island," is only 4.7 meters long from east to west when tide rises, but is off the shore of Kyoto over 16 hundred miles. There are neither mineral resources, nor animals, nor residents on the island. It provides no military and economic values. However, the Japanese government spared no money or effort to protect it from being swallowed by the rising tides.

According to the maritime rights stipulated by the United Nations, Japan can possess 1500 square kilometers of territorial waters and another 400,000 square kilometers as a maritime economic exclusive zone as long as that island exists. Apparently, the value of this tiny island is not in the land mass, but in the vast territorial waters around it. Most importantly, if Japan could obtain UN approval, it would also be able to exploit the undersea resources in that area. Thus, to keep the island afloat is of significance to Japan's national interests.⁹⁸ Here, the implication is clear: China must hold onto its rights of sovereignty over these islands in the South China Sea despite the claims of other countries.

Such publications tend to depict China as the victim of intensified international maritime struggles: its maritime rights have been challenged by some countries with or without any pretexts. These countries, by taking advantage of China's good will for peace and its preoccupation with economic reforms, have brazenly invaded some of China's islands and stolen from China its maritime resources.

As a response, some vehement patriots have argued that the Chinese government must not tolerate such aggressive actions and must fight for its own rights: "We have no other choice but get there ahead . . . We must fight for our maritime interests whenever we have to."⁹⁹ In early 1997, Tang Jiaxuan, vice minister of Chinese Foreign Ministry, warned his visiting counterpart from the Philippines that the Philippine government must immediately stop violat-

97. Li Zhishun, "Cross Century's Reports on National Defense," *National Defense*, No. 12 (1994), p. 32.

98. *Ibid.*

99. *Id.*, p. 34.

ing China's sovereignty over the *Huangyan Islands* in the South China Sea. At the same time, the Chinese Foreign Ministry issued a note of protest to the Philippine government, demanding an immediate release of 21 Chinese fishermen who were arrested by the Philippine naval force when they were fishing around those islands.¹⁰⁰

In order to protect its maritime interests, China must establish a deterrent force of defense, as Luo Jueru, the former head of the PRC's Ocean Bureau, remarked. Luo regarded China's future development as whether or not it could make good use of its maritime resources when its land resources became less and less exploitable. Since the oceans have been considered the last frontier on the earth, China should not be hesitant to exploit the frontiers.¹⁰¹

Shi Yunsheng, a high-ranking official of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), described a blueprint for the development of China's navy early this year. According to Shi, the development of China's navy has entered into a positive cycle, that is, to import new equipment in the beginning, then to reduplicate, and then to manufacture the equipment all by itself. This indicates that China's navy is capable of absorbing, digesting and mastering advanced technology that is applied to modern weaponry. With an advanced technology, and with an open door policy to continue attracting foreign investment in China, China does not have to depend on a single country for its military supplies.¹⁰² China's determination in developing its naval force may trigger a new round in the arms race in the Asia-Pacific region.

Conclusion

The PLA has become the guardian of Chinese sovereignty and nationalism, and the performance of the PLAN will become particularly crucial in the near future because most of China's disputed territories are located in the South China Sea.

Nationalism in the PLA is further promoted by a feeling of antagonism against the United States, which is seen as the main obstacle to China's reunification with Taiwan, and to China's maritime expansionism in the South China Sea. In May 1993, the National Defence University and Academy of Military Sciences jointly held a conference on Chinese foreign policy and Taiwan. The focus

100. *China News Digest* (Huaxia Wenzhai), April 27, 1997, p. 1.

101. Wu Xiangshun & Wang Shengyong, *supra* note 93, pp. 4-5.

102. *Wide Angle* (Guang jiaojing), No. 3 (1997), p. 21.

of the conference was to urge the Chinese government to take counter-measures against American weapons sales to Taiwan, American intervention in China's Olympic bid and the provocative U.S. policy on Tibet. They demanded that China should not bow to the United States in exchange for so-called normal Sino-U.S. relations.¹⁰³

The nationalist ideology of the PLA characterizes itself as assertive, if not aggressive. It reflects the trend of nationalism that is swaying China. The young authors of *China Can Say No*, a best seller of 1996, openly declared that China "should not be afraid of being a superpower," and "should not be hesitant to fight for its national interests." They suggest that "the United States should build a bigger Memorial Wall for its own sake, if, in [sic] some day, it forces China to fight with it over the Taiwan issue."¹⁰⁴ The nationalism expressed by these young patriots can be defined as both reactive and irredentist.

103. Lo Ping, "CPC military attacks Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Zhonggong junfeng qianze waijiaobu)", *Zhengming* (July 1, 1994), p. 68.

104. Song Qiang, et al., *China Can Say No* (Zhongguo keyi shuobu), Beijing: Industrial & Commercial Publishing Co., 1996, pp. 41-42.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHINESE NATIONALISM

In the name of national interest, the Chinese government calls its people to unite under the CPC's leadership. As a party-state, the CPC and the government are one and the same in China. If the Chinese youth in the 1980s still called for political reforms and democracy, the Chinese youth in the '90s has become content with the economic achievements China has made in the past two decades, and now exhibits a strong sense of patriotism.¹⁰⁵

This new Chinese nationalism not only troubles those concerned with the decline of democratic movements in China, but also those concerned with Chinese nationalism's reactive and irredentist tendencies. Chinese nationalism, as Maria Chang has summarized, is "a volatile mixture comprised of memories of past humiliation; the conviction that the People's Republic is presently being thwarted from achieving greatness by the established powers; and an irredentist resolve to reclaim lost territories."¹⁰⁶

Reactive nationalism

The decade-long political campaign for patriotic education that was launched by the Beijing government since the suppression of the Democracy Movement of 1989 put special emphasis on China's past humiliations by western powers, an alleged international conspiracy against China, and the necessity to strengthen Communist leadership in China. Some have observed that the campaign is meant to send a message to the Chinese people: calls for democracy and human rights will only bring disunity and disorder to China, thus opening the door to foreign aggression and new humiliation.¹⁰⁷ In so doing, the Chinese government has managed to channel its people's attention to potential foreign threats rather than to domestic problems.

Many Chinese are convinced that the United States is leading a systematic effort to contain China, because it does not want to see China grow into a great power capable of competing with America. A national sentiment against the United States is rising in China: it is aroused by the Chinese government, finds particular resonance

105. Patrick E. Tyler, *supra* note 31.

106. See Maria Hsia Chang's "Chinese Irredentist Nationalism: The Magician's Last Trick," *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (February 1998).

107. Nayan Chanda and Kari Huus, "China: The New Nationalism," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Nov. 9, 1995), p. 21.

among the youth, and is further stimulated by certain young intellectuals whose recent publications demonstrate a strong sense of reactive nationalism.

China Can Say No is one example. The book accuses the United States of trying to organize an "Anti-China Club" to contain China. To organize an anti-China club, the United States looks for allies among those countries that fear China's growing power and its irredentist claims. As the book asserts, the United States has been attempting to strike "a wedge of distrust" between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Particularly, the United States has managed to "kill three birds with one stone" with its Asian policies. First, it can keep making profits in arms sales to Southeast Asia to strengthen the latter's defensive capabilities against China. Secondly, ASEAN countries will have no choice but to continue to attach themselves to the United States to form a strategic encirclement around China. Third, the United States can further justify its continued military presence in this area. In defiance of this U.S.-led encirclement, *China Can Say No* calls on the United States not to meddle in Asian affairs. "Asia belongs to the Asians," as the book claims, "and the United States should return to where they [sic] came from."¹⁰⁸

Depicted as the host and organizer of an anti-China club, the United States is regarded as the main obstacle to the unification of China. *Containing China*, which appeared in print in October 1996 and immediately became another best seller following *China Can Say No*, accuses the United States not only of military support to the Kuomintang (KMT) government in Taiwan, but also of engaging in a "conspiracy" with Taiwan's major opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which openly advocates Taiwan's independence.

Containing China traces the beginnings of America's ambitions for Taiwan to the 19th century, and accuses the United States of using Taiwan to contain and split China (*Yihua zhihua, fenhua zhongguo*).¹⁰⁹ As early as 1857, when American ambassador Peter Peck came to China to renew the Treaty of Wangxia, he realized the strategic significance of Taiwan for U.S. interests in the Far East. In his referendum to the State Department, Peck pointed out that Taiwan's coal resources were crucial for ships traveling between Cali-

108. Song Qiang, et al., *supra* note 104, pp. 82-92.

109. Sun Keqin, Cui Hongjian, Lin Hong, et al., *Containing China: Myth and Reality* (Ezhi zhongguo: shenghua yu xianshi), Beijing: zhongguo yanshi, 1996, pp. 234-236.

fornia, Japan and China, and suggested that the United States should take possession of Taiwan if the island were to politically separate itself in the future. In Peck's opinion, "it would be to America's advantage to possess Taiwan."¹¹⁰ From then on, *Containing China* asserts, every American government had attempted to separate Taiwan from China. In 1860, along with Great Britain and Russia, the United States forced the Qing court to sign the Treaty of Beijing that opened two of Taiwan's ports, Danshui and Tainan, to trade with the West. During World War II, a member of the "Far East Strategy Group," founded by the Pentagon, presented a memorandum to the American government, suggesting that the United States should commit Taiwan to its trust when the war was over and then make permanent its separation from mainland China by helping the people establish a Republic of Taiwan.

During and after China's civil war in the late 1940s, the United States sided with the KMT and did all it could to prevent Taiwan from falling into the hands of the Communists on the mainland. Even in 1972, when the United States finally recognized the People's Republic of China and acknowledged that Taiwan is part of China, it still "tacitly avoided the question of the PRC's sovereignty over Taiwan."¹¹¹ In other words, the United States did not want to see Taiwan reunite with the mainland, even if it failed to possess Taiwan for itself.

The nationalism that is revealed in books like *Containing China* and *China Can Say No* is characterized as reactive nationalism, which resonates to the official voice of the Chinese government and its military. For instance, the PLA has maintained that these books "reflect the opinion of the Chinese youth who are tired of America's hegemonic activities around the world and despise America's blatant interferences in China's domestic affairs."¹¹² According to a poll conducted by the *China Youth Daily* (*Zhongguo qingnian bao*) in July 1995, 87.1 percent of Chinese youth regarded America as the most unfriendly towards the PRC.¹¹³ Books like *China Can Say No* fan Chinese nationalism by calling on the Chinese government to "react accordingly" to America's containment

110. *Ibid.*

111. *Id.*, p. 240.

112. Jiao Long, "Why is 'China Can Say No' an international hit ('Zhongguo keyi shuobu' hongdong shijie de qianqian houhou)," *The People's Liberation Army Life*, No. 141 (Nov. 1996), pp. 40-41.

113. *World Journal*, (July 1, 1996), p. A10.

of China with a “long-term strategy” of “counter-containing the United States.”¹¹⁴

Some even argue that not only should China say “no” to America, the world’s other countries who similarly loathe America’s dominance should do the same.¹¹⁵ In his speech to the United Nations on October 24, 1995, Jiang Zemin strongly criticized “a certain big country” for “its unreasonable interferences in other countries’ internal affairs.”¹¹⁶ According to Jiang, “this certain big country” has continued making trouble around the world by “violating other countries’ sovereignty, interfering in other countries’ internal affairs, and undermining other countries’ unity and unification with the excuse of defending ‘freedom,’ ‘democracy,’ and ‘human rights.’”¹¹⁷

A PRC sociologist, Yang Dazhou, described America’s foreign policy as the product of a “superpower mentality.” According to Yang, the United States has appointed itself “a global leader” and has tried hard to “maintain its global leadership.” Yang questioned the legitimacy of America’s global leadership and insisted that China would never yield to America’s intimidations.¹¹⁸

Irredentist Nationalism

The new Chinese rationalism is more than reactive, it is also irredentist.

Hong Kong: Chinese irredentism is conceived to have begun with the recent return of Hong Kong. At the hand-over ceremony of July 1, the PRC chairman Jiang Zemin called the return of Hong Kong “a grand victory for peace and justice.”¹¹⁹ In a TV documentary series made by the Chinese Central TV Station (CCTV), the narrator quoted the late Deng Xiaoping that if China had to choose between sovereignty (i.e., the return of Hong Kong) and prosperity, China would choose sovereignty. Even if it must choose a hundred times, the choice would still be sovereignty over prosperity.¹²⁰ For

114. Song Qiang, et al., *supra* note 104, pp. 61-67.

115. Jiao Long, *supra* note 112, p. 41.

116. Yang Fang, *Storm Waves Strike the Shores* (Jingtao Po'an), China: Haixia wenyi chubanshe, 1997, p. 239.

117. *Id.*, p. 240.

118. Yang Dazhou, “Hegemony: wherever it shows off its force, it confronts resistance (Baquan zhuyi: sichu yongqiang, sichu penbi),” *The PLA Daily* (Jiefengjun bao), December 11, 1996, p. 5.

119. *People’s Daily* (Renmin ribao), July 1, 1997, p. 1.

120. CCTV’s “*Vicissitudes of Hong Kong*,” July 1, 1997.

many Chinese, the return of Hong Kong symbolizes the “cleansing of a hundred-year humiliation,” and the “revival of China.”¹²¹

Macao: The return of Hong Kong will be followed by the return of Macao on December 20, 1999, as a result of diplomatic negotiations between Beijing and Lisbon in 1987. In accordance with the principle of “one country, two systems,” Macao, like Hong Kong, will become a special administrative region “enjoying a high degree of autonomy” and governed by the local inhabitants. The current economic and social systems, lifestyle and laws, including those protecting individual and political rights and liberties, will presumably remain unchanged for at least 50 years following the transfer of government.¹²²

Unlike Hong Kong and Macao, the return of China’s other “lost territories” will not be as easy. They include the resistance from the Republic of China on Taiwan over Taiwan’s reunification with the mainland; from Japan over the sovereignty of Diaoyutai Islands; and from other countries, particularly Vietnam and the Philippines, over the various island groups in the South China Sea. The territorial and sovereignty disputes between China and these countries have become tense and tangible. This will not only disturb the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region in the near future, but also “poses vexing dilemmas for U.S. policymakers in Washington.”¹²³

Taiwan: Since the Nationalist government lost the civil war to the Chinese Communists and relocated itself on Taiwan in 1949, the official connections between the two rivals were severed. Since then, there are two *de facto* Chinese regimes: the People’s Republic of China (PRC) on the mainland, and the Republic of China on Taiwan (ROC). Although both sides of the Taiwan Straits maintain that there is only one China, when and how the two parts can be reunited remains unsettled. In fact, since Taiwan lost its seat in the United Nations in 1971, it has reluctantly accepted the title of Taipei, China, in order to participate in international activities.

Diplomatic setbacks, however, have not prevented Taiwan’s development. The ROC has survived and prospered in the world community, becoming industrialized and democratized. Its position is that “China is divided, with a separate political entity governing

121. Cao Jun, “Effects on the developing relations across the Taiwan Strait (Dui haixia liangan fazhan di yingxiang),” *Reunification Forum* (Tongyi luntan zhazhi), No. 6 (1996), p. 17.

122. Jonathan Porter, “Macao 1999,” *Current History* (September 1997), pp. 282-286.

123. Maria Hsia Chang, *supra* note 106, p. 1.

each part.”¹²⁴ Accordingly, Taipei proposes that Beijing put aside the vexing sovereignty (*zhuquan*) question, and that each side must respect the other’s jurisdiction (*guanxiaquan*).¹²⁵

Deng’s formula of “one country, two systems” for Taiwan’s reunification with the mainland requires Taiwan to accept the PRC as the only legitimate government of China while Taiwan becomes one of China’s Special Administrative Zones. Although Taiwan is allowed to retain its political and economic status quo, the very suggestion that Taiwan should be subordinated to Beijing is not acceptable to Taipei, because it sees Beijing’s “two systems” as “one system represents the center and the other the local authority.” Taipei will not “accept. . .the system prescribed by the CPC regime.”¹²⁶

While proposing a peaceful solution on the issue of Taiwan, Beijing has not renounced the use of force against Taiwan if Taiwan seeks national independence. Beijing has stipulated three conditions under which it would resort to force: a declaration of national independence by the Taiwan authorities; foreign “intervention” in Taiwan; and, social “chaos” on the island.¹²⁷

In the past three years, the Taiwan Straits have witnessed three “military exercises” conducted by Beijing to intimidate Taiwan and prevent it from trying to seek national independence. The first two military exercises were conducted in July and August 1995, as a reaction to Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui’s private visit to the United States in June 1995. Beijing regarded President Lee’s visit to the United States as a dangerous step towards *de jure* independence, so that it sent a message to Taiwan with two rounds of ballistic missiles to demonstrate its determination to recover its “renegade province.”

Beijing organized its third military exercise against Taiwan in mid-March 1996 before Taiwan was to hold its first direct presidential elections. Beijing’s aggression not only alarmed Taiwan, but also the United States which, according to the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979, is responsible for Taiwan’s peace and security. It was reported that the military exercises of mid-March 1996 were the

124. Ralph N. Clough, “The Enguring Influence of the Republic of China on Taiwan Today,” *The China Quarterly*, No. 148 (December 1996), p. 1054.

125. Jean-Pierre Cabestan, “Taiwan’s Mainland Policy: Normalization, Yes; Reunification, Later,” *The China Quarterly*, No. 148 (December 1996), p. 1263.

126. *Ibid.*

127. David Shambaugh, “Taiwan’s Security: Maintaining Deterrence Amid Political Accountability,” *The China Quarterly*, No. 148 (December 1996), p. 1284.

largest the PLA ever undertook in the Taiwan Straits and adjacent military regions. Up to 150,000 troops were deployed in that area, including a large naval armada.

The most demonstrable show of force was the firing of four M-9 medium-range ballistic missiles, which fell into the waters barely 20 miles away from Taiwan's biggest ports of Keelung in the north and Kaohsiung in the south. Beijing did not halt its military exercise until the intervention of two U.S. aircraft carrier battle groups, dispatched to the waters near Taiwan to demonstrate American concern for regional stability.¹²⁸

Beijing's military intimidation may have produced the opposite effect on Taiwan from that which Beijing intended. For the people in Taiwan, Beijing's threats to use force against the ROC put their lives in danger and made the idea of Taiwan's unification with the mainland even more unappealing. According to public opinion polls on Taiwan, more than 99 percent of the population does not want to live under Communist rule.¹²⁹ A recent public opinion poll conducted in July 1997 revealed for the first time in Taiwan's history that a majority would support an independent Taiwan rather than reunification.¹³⁰ For Taiwan, its economic success has led its people to desire to preserve the status quo and avoid armed conflict.¹³¹ On the other hand, Taiwan has also developed into a democratic society. If the majority of Taiwanese are opposed to any unification with the PRC, the Taipei government will have no choice but to represent and defend the people's wishes.¹³²

On the other side of the Taiwan Straits, however, irredentist nationalism more and more impels the people of the mainland towards unification with Taiwan at any cost. Beijing's military maneuvers had overwhelming public support on the mainland, and the United States' intervention was not only regarded as interference in "China's internal affairs," but also as a form of "terrorism."¹³³

South China Sea: China's irredentism has already reached the South China Sea, a region comprised of over 180 islands, rocks and shoals that the Chinese call the *Nansha* (Spratlys), *Xisha* (Paracels),

128. *Id.*, p. 1287

129. John F. Copper, *The Taiwan Political Miracle*, NY: University Press of America, Inc., 1997, p. 108.

130. *China News Digest*, October 3, 1997.

131. John F. Copper, *supra* note 129, p. 534.

132. Jean-Pierre Cabestan, *supra* note 125, p. 1261.

133. Song Qiang, et al., *supra* note 104, p. 248.

Zhongsha and *Dongsha* island groups.¹³⁴ Because the region is potentially rich in oil and natural gas, it is claimed as sovereign territory not only by Beijing and Taipei, but also by Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei.

It is estimated that the Spratlys alone have potential deposits of 4 to 5 billion tons of oil and over 10 billion tons of natural gas. There are also countless minerals as well as rich varieties of fish and other seafood.¹³⁵ According to Liu Huaqing, the PLA Navy commander, China must develop itself into both a continental and a maritime power. For the PRC, the "vast expanses" of its seas not only are "natural barriers" of national security but constitute the "living space" that could ensure China's development and survival.¹³⁶ The PLA Navy Deputy Commander Zhang Xusan in a talk on naval strategy in 1992 stated that the time had come "for China to alter its naval strategy to reclaim the rich natural resources of the South China Sea."¹³⁷

China's claim over the South China Sea is based on historical claims and *ad hoc* prior occupation, which, in the international community, is open to legal challenge. The Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Straits maintain that China has brought the South China Sea under its control since ancient times. It is claimed that the Spratly archipelago was "discovered" by the Chinese during Han dynasty Emperor Wudi's reign (140-86 BC). By the time of the Song dynasty (AD 420), China had "declared authority over" the islands; Chinese fishermen fished in the Sea and used its islands for rest and repair. Maps of Yuan dynasty (1206-1368) China included the Spratlys and the Paracels.¹³⁸ During the reign of Ming dynasty Emperor Chengzu (1403-1425), when Zheng Ho undertook seven naval expeditions that reached India, Persia and the eastern shores of Africa, the Spratlys were included within China's naval defense perimeter.

In the early years of the Qing dynasty, the Chinese navy regularly patrolled the Sea. By 1733, during the reign of Emperor Yongzheng, the nations bordering on the south China Sea recognized it to be Chinese sovereign territory within the jurisdiction of

134. Ding Zongyu, "On the territorial disputes between communist China and the countries bordering on the south China Sea (Lun zhonggong yu nanhai zhoubian guojia lingtu di fenzheng)," *Studies in Communism*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (April 1995), p. 39.

135. Sun Keqin & Cui Hongjian, *supra* note 109, p. 741.

136. 1995 *Zhonggong nianbao* (1995 CHINA YEARBOOK), Taipei, section 6, p. 41.

137. Ding Zongyu, *supra* note 134, p. 43.

138. Sun Keqin & Cui Hongjian, *supra* note 109, pp. 741-743.

Guangdong province's Huizhou prefecture. From that time "until the twentieth century, no country raised any questions regarding China's sovereign rights over the Spratlys."¹³⁹

In regard to the ASEAN countries' claims of sovereignty over the Spratlys, China sees itself as a "victim" of these countries' aggression and encroachment. Initially taking advantage of China's turbulent domestic politics and its preoccupation with the superpowers, Vietnam and the Philippines occupied China's islands and reefs, carved up its sea areas and looted its marine resources.¹⁴⁰

Despite Beijing's sovereignty claims over the South China Sea, some have argued that although the Chinese have a long history of trade and fishing in the area, so do the other regional countries.¹⁴¹ For instance, Vietnamese claims to the islands date back to the mid-17th century, when cartographic surveys of the South China Sea showed the islands to be part of Vietnam. The Philippines' claims date back to the early 20th century, when Manila tried to invite Japan for a joint venture.¹⁴²

China, however, does not just argue its sovereignty rights over these islands on the negotiation table. It will resort to force if it has to. In January 1974, Chinese forces drove South Vietnamese naval forces out of the Paracel Islands after a sharp clash. Chinese and Vietnamese forces skirmished a second time in the South China Sea in March 1988. This time the two navies fought over the disputed Johnson Reef in the Spratly islands. Chinese forces sank three Vietnamese supply ships, killed seventy-two Vietnamese and captured nine. By the end of 1988, the Chinese had occupied six atolls in the Spratly Islands.¹⁴³

In February 1992, the South China Sea was formally designated as part of the People's Republic when the National People's Congress passed a Territorial Waters Act (TWA) declaring that China's "sovereign territory" includes all the territorial and maritime space adjacent to the Chinese mainland, including the airspace above. Specifically named territories include Taiwan, Diaoyutai, Penghu, the Spratlys, the Paracels, as well as the *Dongsha* and *Zhongsha* island groups. Article 14 of the TWA specifies that the

139. Ding Zongyu, *supra* note 134, p. 48.

140. Chen Jie, "China's Spratly Policy," *Asian Survey*, No. 10 (October 1994), p. 893.

141. David B.H. Denoon & Wendy Frieman, "China's Security Strategy: the View from Beijing, ASEAN, and Washington," *Asian Survey*, No. 4 (April 1996), p. 428.

142. Michael G. Gallagher, "China's Illusory Threat to the South China Sea," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994), p. 173.

143. *Id.*, p. 172.

PLA Navy has the right to pursue and dispel any foreign vessels found within Chinese territorial waters.¹⁴⁴ The first step that the PLA Navy took after 1992 was to set up a garrison on Mischief Reef inside the Philippines' 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone.¹⁴⁵ And in March 1997, a Chinese oil rig drilled in Vietnamese waters.¹⁴⁶

The controversy over disputed areas in the South China Sea will be a challenge to China's irredentism. So far, according to the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, Vietnam occupies 21 islands, islets, or reefs; China 8; the Philippines 8; Malaysia 4; and, Taiwan 1.¹⁴⁷ Although neither Brunei nor Indonesia occupies any island, their economic maritime zones overlap with China's by some 40,000 square kilometers.¹⁴⁸

In 1992, PRC Premier Li Peng proposed that all parties set aside their rival claims to the Spratly Islands and that China would participate in cooperative explorations of South China Sea's resources. But this proposal has been regarded as "paradoxical," because, despite its rhetoric, China has repeatedly acted unilaterally to strengthen its claims.¹⁴⁹

Diaoyutai: In addition to Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia, China also has disputes with Japan over the ownership of some tiny islands in the East China Sea which the Chinese call Diaoyutai and the Japanese the Senkaku. Comprised of eight tiny rocky, uninhabited islands, the Diaoyutai islands group is located approximately 125 miles northeast of Taiwan, 180 miles west of Ryukyu (Okinawa Prefecture, Japan) and 250 miles east of the Chinese mainland.¹⁵⁰ Though uninhabited, the islands are reportedly surrounded by rich fish stocks and potentially large gas and oil deposits.¹⁵¹

144. "The People's Republic of China's Territorial Waters and Adjacent Territories Act (zhonghua renmin gongheguo linghai ji pilianqu fa)," contained in 1955 CHINA YEARBOOK, Section 6, pp. 36-37.

145. Nayan Chanda, et al., "Territorial Imperative," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (February 23, 1995), p. 14.

146. William J. Dobson & M. Taylor Fravel, "Red Herring Hegemon: China in the South China Sea," *Current History*, Vol. 96, No. 611 (September 1997), p. 259.

147. *Id.*, p. 258.

148. Ding Zongyu, *supra* note 134, p. 39.

149. Dobson & Fravel, *supra* note 146, p. 260.

150. Unryu Suganuma, "Diaoyu or Senkaku Islands under Pax Sinica: Chinese National Defense during the Ming Times," *American Journal of Chinese Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (April 1997), p. 74.

151. *World Journal*, September 24, 1996, p. A13.

China claims that its sovereignty over Diaoyutai can be traced back as early as the Sui dynasty (561-618) when the Emperor Sui Youngdi sent an envoy to Liuqiu (Rkuyku) for the latter's submission.¹⁵² Not until the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) did Liuqiu formally submit itself to the Ming and become a Chinese tributary state. Since the Diaoyutai islands are located between the Chinese mainland and the Liuqiu Kingdom, all Ming documents, maps and other publications, clearly indicated that the Diaoyutai islands were part of Ming territory.¹⁵³

Since Tokyo extended its exclusive economic zone over the islands in July 1996, many Chinese nationalists urged Beijing to take Diaoyutai back by force. They argued that the Japanese occupation of these islands would encourage the ambitions of other countries who also have territorial disputes with China.¹⁵⁴ Yen Jiaqi, a famous dissident who fled Communist China in 1989, criticized the Chinese government for being too "soft" on Japan's expansionism. Yen compared the emerging Japanese militarism to a "silkworm," and warned that China should not let this "silkworm" grow into a "moth." In other words, Japanese expansionism and militarism must be checked and contained before it is too late.¹⁵⁵

In 1978, when a Friendship Treaty was signed between China and Japan, Deng Xiaoping had proposed to put the issue of sovereignty over Diaoyutai on the shelf, and leave the problem to be resolved by the next generation. Today, Deng's proposal is compared with that of Li Hongzhang, the premier of the Qing dynasty, who once pacified Japanese aggression by ceding Liuqiu to Japan.¹⁵⁶

Other disputed areas: For now, explicit Chinese irredentist resolve is confined to Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, Diaoyutai and the South China Sea. But there is no logical reason why Chinese irredentist ambitions should remain restricted to these areas. As the authors of *China Can Still Say No* put it, "We reserve the right to pursue" the loss of Chinese territories since 1662.¹⁵⁷ China's post-

152. Yen Hua, "Diaoyutai: China's threshold to the next century (Diaoyutai: zhongguo jingru xiashiji di menkan)," *China Spring*, No. 157 (October 1996), p. 6.

153. Unryu Suganuma, *supra* note 150, p. 81.

154. Yen Hua, *supra* note 152, p. 6.

155. Yen Jiaqi, "Check the 'Japanese silkworm's movements (Zhizhi 'Ribencan' de chundong)," *China Spring* (Zhongguo zhichun), No. 157 (October 1996), p. 3.

156. Yen Hua, *supra* note 152, p. 8.

157. Song Qiang, Zhang Zangzang, Qiao Bian, Yang Zhengyu, and Gu Qingsheng, *China Can Still Say No* (zhongguo haishi neng shuobu), Beijing: zhongguo wenlian, 1996, p. 356.

Cold War military strategy and objectives were reviewed by the CPC Military Affairs Commission in 1993, which concluded that, although a new world war was unlikely, medium- and small-scale limited wars were unavoidable. China's military objectives in the future, in order of importance, were to secure "First, eastern and southern China's coastal waters; second, the south China Sea; third, the Sino-Indian border."¹⁵⁸

According to a report that appeared in *National Defense*, the People's Republic, by the end of 1994, still had over 100 pieces of land (totalling 160,000 sq km.) and more than 2,000 km. of land borders under dispute with Russia, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Tajikistan, India, Vietnam and Bhutan, in addition to its unresolved maritime border issues concerning the South China Sea islands, continental shelves, exclusive zones, and ocean rights with North and South Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia and Vietnam.¹⁵⁹

158. Ding Zongyu, *supra* note 134, p. 47.

159. Mao Yuanyou, *supra* note 64, p. 34.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The essence of Chinese nationalism is patriotism. That patriotism is emphasized by the CPC as an allegiance to the Party-state. In order to ideologically justify its political dominance, the CPC has replaced a defunct Marxism with its self-concocted theory of “building socialism with Chinese characteristics.” But “building socialism with Chinese characteristics” is in reality nothing more than patriotic nationalism.

Chinese nationalism is characterized by its assertiveness. Assertive nationalism tends to target alleged “national enemies” who oppose the CPC’s leadership in China.¹⁶⁰ Without the CPC’s leadership, according to the CPC itself, China would fall into chaos and become prey to predator nations which do not want to see China grow into a power that would compete with them. Those “national enemies” can be either foreign or domestic. Foreign enemies include the Western powers, Japan and Taiwan, as well as Vietnam and the Philippines. Domestic enemies are those who challenge the CPC’s leadership. Those who are advocating Tibet’s independence and Taiwan’s statehood are also China’s “national enemies.”¹⁶¹ Among China’s “national enemies,” the United States is identified as the main threat to China’s security and well-being.

Chinese nationalism is also characterized by its irredentism. Not only has China demonstrated a resolve to recover Taiwan by force if the latter seeks independence, China has already fought twice with Vietnam over the control of the Paracels Islands, and confronted with the Philippines over the latter’s establishment of a garrison on Mischief Reef.

Any future conflict between the PRC and Taiwan, or between the PRC and Japan over Diaoyutai, could involve the United States. The United States, through the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, has committed itself to the maintenance of Taiwan’s peace and security. As for Japan, the recently renewed U.S.-Japan Security Treaty obligates the United States to come to Tokyo’s aid should military conflicts erupt between Beijing and Tokyo over Diaoyutai.

All of this has provoked a raging debate on China policy among American pundits and in Washington. A common view of

160. Ming Juzhen, “The CPC cannot use nationalism to create enemies (Zhonggong bukeyi yong minzu zhuyi zhizao kiren),” *Exchange* (Jiaoliu), No. 26 (March 1996), p. 22.

161. *Id.*, p. 33.

China in the past was that China's integration into the world economy would make it more moderate and cautious in its foreign policy and more open and democratic at home. But the opposite may be true: China's increasingly aggressive behavior of the last five years is a result of its growing economic and military strength. China's economic development has given the Communist regime the power to enhance its authoritarianism at home, resist criticism of its human rights abuses by the West, and expand its power and prestige abroad in ways hostile to American interests.¹⁶² This may force America to reconsider the validity of its policy of constructive engagement with China, which has been extant since 1979.

China's spectacular economic growth not only provides a foundation for its military modernization and territorial expansion, but also nurtures Chinese nationalism. Nationalism, in turn, justifies China's military modernization and promotes its request for territorial expansion. Therefore, an understanding of China's rising nationalism, particularly the PLA's nationalist ideology, is critical to a better understanding of Beijing's present behavior and the anticipation of its future movements.

162. Richard Bernstein & Ross H. Munro, "The Coming Conflict with America," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 1997), p. 22.

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