

"China: Rising Challenge"

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Dr. Cole: Thank you.

At the National War College we're sometimes accused of worshipping Carl Von Clausewitz and the American Civil War, and in fact next week we're going to begin teaching the German guy on war, and we're also going to be teaching Sun Tzu [Sun Za-ph], the Chinese equivalent. Sun Tzu [Sun Sue-ph] as he's usually pronounced. The more I've studied these two folks the more I think that there's really very little difference between sort of the Western philosophy, if you will, of war, and the Chinese philosophy of war. In both cases I think what these authors are telling us is that before you use the military instrument of statecraft, and this sounds rather obvious, you should know why you're using it and you should decide when you're going to stop using it, and you should do so intelligently and consciously and repetitively as you engage in military action.

What I hope to be able to do today is to discuss what I think perhaps some of the considerations are that prevail in Beijing today, in China, as they regard the modernization of their military.

I'm not going to read the slides to you. This one I just found. I just found this quote yesterday talking about the importance of air and space power in China as appreciated by the Chinese. And as we go through my remarks -- First, please feel to interrupt at any time with questions or disagreements. I don't want to just stand up here and lecture. But I think as we go through we'll find some of the lessons learned that the Chinese military, and when I say the Chinese military I really mean the national security apparatus, if you will, in Beijing and throughout the country.

I like the phrase in that, using space and controlling space, which shows a certain amount of ambition.

Let me just note that China's a big place. That's easy to say. It's about the size of the United States but it's got at least 1.3 billion people in it. And one of the things you have to bear in mind -- two things. Number one, any time somebody stands up here in front of you and says this is what the Chinese think or this is what China's going to do, you need to take a mental step back and regard that individual with a certain amount of skepticism. Every time

I go to China I come away with far more questions than answers, and realize how much more there is to learn.

I really believe that the number one national security goal in China is simply keeping the Chinese communist party in power. I don't think this is cynical on their part. When we were in Nanjing at the, when General Dunn and I were over there in 2006 in Nanjing at the Army's Command and Staff College, we got engaged in a conversation with our two star host that went right along with this. There's a firm belief in China and in the military that the party is in command and needs to stay in command. And I'll just point out that the People's Liberation Army, which is the term with which the Chinese describe all their armed forces, is a party army. When you're commissioned in the PLA you don't sign an oath to China. Your loyalty is to the Chinese communist party.

I believe China also wants to be an East Asian power. I don't think they want to have bases around East Asia, per se, but the way I would describe this ambition is that Beijing doesn't want anything to happen in East Asia of which it does not approve. And the largest stumbling block to that ambition, of course, is the United States. Not just the United States military presence, but the still vast economic power wielded by the United States in East Asia.

Finally, China is a world power. Again, despite what we see currently with the small Chinese naval task groups operating in the Gulf of Aden, I don't believe China's ambition includes fleets steaming around the world or bases overseas, but it does mean that China feels it should have a vote any time an issue of world importance comes up, be it the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, anything of that order, they want to have a vote in it.

Obviously there are military concerns. And number one in the mind of the CCP in retaining its power I think is keeping the people of China satisfied, if you will. Domestic tranquility, domestic peace and progress. Primarily economic. But since China is a Confucian society, the idea about harmony and social order really prevails. Far more important than any Western concept of individual freedom.

Recently we've read about the unrest, violent unrest in Tibet and Shinjang. Both these areas were invaded by the Chinese military in 1950 after the People's Republic of China was established. The local people who are ethnically different than the majority of the Chinese were basically put down and suppressed and they remain that way today.

The Tibetan riots that broke out against the ethnic Chinese, the Han Chinese in the early part of this year were put down primarily by local People's Armed Police, assisted by People's Liberation Army troops. The outbreak in Shinjiang which is the far western province of China, a province initially inhabited primarily by an Islamic people known as the Uighurs, and if you meet a Uighur that individual looks more Western than he or she does Asian, this action is still ongoing. There are still violent incidents occurring between the native Uighurs and the Han Chinese who have been moved into the Shinjiang by Beijing. It's something that makes the folks in Beijing very nervous.

And again, the economy is so terribly important to the people in Beijing because the CCP believes that key to retaining the loyalty of the Chinese people, key to maintaining social harmony if you will, is that the economy keep improving. And after the economic turn-down that was really worldwide in the fall of 2008, the government of Beijing did two things. First they put into effect a \$500 billion infrastructure stimulus package, if you will; and secondly, they increased the amount of credit available to Chinese business folks by over a trillion dollars.

Now this seems to be working in the short term. If you read the *Financial Times* or the *New York Times* or the *Wall Street Journal* today, the Chinese economy seems to have come out of this crisis pretty well. But it's really too soon to tell what the long term effects of these very significant economic steps are going to be.

I'll also notice energy. More and more of China's energy supply has to be imported. And this is important, but we always have to bear in mind when we read articles about China's energy shortage or increasing dependence on foreign energy sources that in fact on any given day more than 70 percent of China's daily energy requirements comes from indigenous coal, which is found in China. That's a pretty nice security blanket if you're worried about energy imports.

I'll talk more about these bullets under air space and sea space. Last week National Defense University had some discussions with our counterparts from Beijing. This is supposed to be an annual event. We've been doing it about every other year. Each delegation is headed by a major general and includes on the Chinese side a bunch of colonels and senior colonels. And on the U.S. side, some of us who are concerned with Chinese issues for National Defense University. It became very clear that the number one issue in Beijing, certainly in the national security arena, remains the status of Taiwan. Particularly the fact that we are still willing to sell arms to Taiwan. This really gets their attention in Beijing which is I think a good thing.

I'll also discuss here in a bit the East and South China Seas, long sea lines of communication, and the renewed or increased Chinese emphasis on space and space-based assets.

Taiwan briefly. If you've got an S-400 battery and sensor system on the Mainland you can pretty well cover Taiwan. Now there are a lot of shadow areas because of the mountain chains that run up and down the central part of the island, but the geography is pretty determinant there if you're a strategist on the island.

The hot button issue right now between China and the United States with respect to Taiwan is not the PAC-3 batteries we've agreed to sell to Taiwan, interestingly enough, but the Taiwan request for F-16CDs that has been languishing here in Washington for quite a while.

If that sale is approved, and I have no more sense of whether it will be or not than you do certainly, but if that F-16CD sale is approved, we'll see a real chilling off of the relationship between Beijing and the United States. No question about it.

In 1996 there was a crisis in the Taiwan Strait. Beijing fired some missiles off the northern and southern end of Taiwan in an effort to, an unsuccessful effort, to influence the presidential election on Taiwan. And in response, President Clinton dispatched two aircraft carrier battle groups to the area. The Chinese exercises and missile shoots stopped, partially for that reason, partially for other reasons. But I think the lesson learned in Beijing in 1996 was that if they wanted to use the military instrument, if they wanted to fly through the air or go over the sea with their Navy or Air Force, they needed U.S. acquiescence to do that.

So the U.S. is the only significant opposition faced by Beijing I think in the PLA's eyes. There's a historic enmity on China's part towards Japan, certainly. My impression is that China does not consider Japan to be a serious competitor, even though in economic terms the Japanese economy is still stronger, and from my perspective the Japanese Air Self Defense Force and Maritime Self Defense Force on any given day are still the most competent air and naval forces in East Asia. I'm not sure the PLA believes that, which could be dangerous.

Finally, there's historic competition between Russia and China. Right now and really for the last 15 years that's been a very positive relationship as Russia desperately needs the money from selling stuff to China, primarily energy supplies and weapons.

Interestingly enough, there have been no significant Russian weapon sales to China for almost a year now. And every once in a while in the open press we see articles by senior Russian military officers expressing reservations about the future relationship between Russia and China.

Finally, India. China is concerned about India at least for two reasons. Number one, because India is a nuclear power. I don't think they have any real concern for the Indian conventional forces. The Himalayas are quite a barrier. But they are concerned A, because India is a nuclear power; and B, because India's number one enemy, of course, is Pakistan and Pakistan and China have a special relationship, relatively close allies.

Military personnel. About 2.3 million people. As you can see there, the PLA remains very army heavy and this is also evidenced by the fact that of the seven military regions in China -- China is divided into these seven military regions -- all the military region commanders are army guys, lieutenant generals or full generals. If you look at the hierarchy within the PLA headquarters -- General Staff Department, General Logistics Department, General Political Department, and so forth -- they're all army guys. If you look at the other very senior level organizations in the PLA with only one or two exceptions, again, they're commanded by army generals.

You can see the numbers there. The air force and navy, relatively small. 2nd Artillery is sort of analogous to the old Soviet Rocket Forces. They do stuff with ICBMs and space and nuclear weapons.

People's Armed Police is a national level, full time - - I'd say national guard, but really full time active police force. Very military in their orientation and equipment and training.

The reserve number is very soft. We don't have any really good idea how many reserve forces there are. The number there for militia is even softer. The vast majority of the militia is not trained particularly.

I always note the minor role for women. Whenever I take students to China, I always like to have an Air Force lieutenant colonel who's been a squadron commander. This year I've got an Air Force lieutenant colonel who is an F-16 pilot; or a Navy commander maybe who just finished commanding a ship. And whenever I introduce them at a particular venue in China, say if they're National Defense University, and the officer doing the translating, I always listen very carefully because they'll say, "Anne Smith, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force." I'm no, F-16 pilot,

U.S. Air Force. It's a mental thing with the Chinese. The vast majority of women I've met, in fact every women I've ever met in a PLA uniform has either been a PhD at one of the think tanks or serving tea.

Some of the events that I think go into the memory of today's leadership in the People's Liberation Army. In 1979 they executed a ten day plan to punish Vietnam for various problems, and the ten days turned into six weeks before they finally achieved their goals. Then they pulled out. They observed us and our allies in Desert Storm. I mentioned the Taiwan Strait crisis. They observed us in Kosovo. And the lessons they learned from this may or may not be accurate.

They decided that we were so reliant on space-based assets, and this goes all the way back to articles you can see in the open press in 1991, the Chinese decided if they could just take away our use of space they could defeat us in any given military conflict. Of course they did successfully do an ASAT shot of a relatively low technical capability, I believe, two years ago. But this was the result of a decade and a half trying.

They are continuing to concentrate on space. I'll mention the anti-ship ballistic missile program here in a bit. And I don't have a good feel for how far along they are. It's not an area in which I'm particularly knowledgeable.

They also believe that we rely extremely heavily on technology and this is something they're trying to emulate.

They have also come to the realization that they need a professional non-commissioned officer corps. It was only in 2008 that they finally passed a comprehensive national level set of regulations directing the PLA to develop a U.S.-style NCO Corps. That's not something you can do overnight, obviously.

A fascinating comment on this was made by the fellow who just finished being our Defense Attaché in Beijing, Brigadier General Chuck Hooper, U.S. Army, who's now the Deputy J5 at PACOM. And Hoop said at Carlisle last year, you know, they're trying to do this but when you're a second lieutenant or you're an ensign and you kind of sidled up to your E7 and said what are we really going to do today, he wonders if because of the Chinese culture, the idea about face and so forth, that any college graduate first lieutenant or captain is going to be able to do that to some relatively lower educated NCO. I don't know. It's an interesting view.

They are closely observing Afghanistan and Iraq. I'm sure they're delighted to see us tied up in those

obligations. Once again, I think they focus on our use of technology and our ability to operate with indigenous forces.

The bottom bullet is really very very important. China has no real threat to the national security today, other than something they themselves are concerned with such as the status of Taiwan. And because of their emphasis on the fact that the PLA is a People's Army, and thus must engage the loyalty of people, they place a great deal of emphasis on the military's ability to help in terms of natural disasters.

In 2008 we had snow storms, huge blizzards in southern China in places where it normally doesn't snow. Later in the spring of 2008 we had the huge earthquake in Sichuan Province in sort of central China. In both these cases the military was called out in full force.

What's interesting is the weaknesses that those call-ups demonstrated. The huge earthquakes in Sichuan, the U.S. was able to fly in assistance from long range before the PLA could get the transportation necessary to move their own equipment into the area. It really demonstrated some shortfalls.

Last month for the first time they conducted what's supposed to be a nationwide logistics exercise, the goal of which was simply to see if they could move heavy equipment from one military region to the other around the country.

So despite all the hardware that the PLA is buying, and all the advances they're demonstrating, they've still got some pretty basic level problems.

Tibet and Shinjang I mentioned earlier.

Some of the lessons learned from these issues or these instances they've observed. I mentioned air power and space power. The importance of C4 -- that's probably an obsolete acronym. It seems every time I look at this somebody's added a letter or a number to it, but you know what it means. [Laughter].

The modernization that's been going on in the People's Liberation Army in the last decade and a half, and I'll talk more about this in a minute, I think is deliberately directed not to confront U.S. strengths. I think they believe this is what the Soviets tried to do during the Cold War and it didn't work.

Rather I think what China is doing is looking at specific issues like Taiwan, and saying here are the American strengths. How can we work around that?

You can call that asymmetry. I just prefer to call it one general looking at another general doing the smart thing, which is trying to find the opponent's weakness and going after them. And as I mentioned, they've really picked up recently on the importance of logistics. It seems like a very basic thing to us but it's taken them a while to really move in that direction on that.

Very quickly, the modernization we've observed in the last decade and a half, for the Navy it's been primarily submarines. I think this is connected directly with a possible Taiwan scenario. How do we slow the intervention of American naval forces? Well, deploy a couple of dozen submarines out there and make the U.S. carrier commanders worry about them.

Ballistic missiles, they've got a very active program, and trying to establish a capability to fire shore-based ballistic missiles against aircraft carriers. Obviously very significant targeting problems, but they've been working on that. I don't have a good feel for how much progress they've made.

Fighter and strike aircraft. They're in the continuing process of moving from their traditional reverse engineering of Soviet aircraft, or in the case of the J-10, I always get the J-10 and J-11 confused. I've got pictures here recently. Reverse engineering an F-16/Lavi. To being able to indigenously design and produce their own aircraft. They haven't been able to do it yet. Curiously, and I don't know why this is, the biggest area of weakness, it seems to me from what I've been reading has been in gas turbine technology. I'm not sure why that is. Whether it's for marine purposes or air purposes, they have had trouble with gas turbine engines.

A lot of writing about airlift and aerial refueling assets being increased in the People's Liberation Army Air Force, but very very moderately. Very slowly.

Logistics I mentioned.

Space-based assets I also mentioned.

As far as the Navy is concerned, these are some of the areas we see. The Navy is also subject, as the other services are, to needing a professional non-commissioned officer corps.

The fact that they've been able now to successfully deploy three three-ship task groups to the Gulf of Aden, the first long range operational deployments ever in China's history, at least since the 15th Century, is pretty

significant. And it's significant in the area I think of personnel and maintenance.

At this conference meeting I was at last week, I asked one of my Chinese counterparts, are you doing lessons learned from these long deployments? Taking the 1200 or 1100 sailors who are in each of these three-ship groups and trying to broadcast their knowledge or take advantage of their knowledge? I didn't get a very clear answer, frankly. The answer was yes, but I didn't have confidence that he really understood the issue.

That's the former would-be Soviet aircraft carrier Variag, which probably will be commissioned one of these days.

I'm something of an iconoclast when it comes to aircraft carriers, and I would be delighted to see China invest two-thirds of their defense budget in building large targets. [Laughter].

I like this picture, we all remember the EP-3 incident several years ago where a 26 year old fighter pilot misjudged and ran into an EP-3. This was the airplane, J-82. It's a 20-year old airframe, but it's still China's Navy's number one fighter, until they finally are allowed to get SU-27s by the Chinese Air Force.

That's a Navy attack.

The Army has copied us in reorganizing in the last decade or so, moving away from a division and corps base into smaller units with maneuver divisions and maneuver brigades and so forth. The striking thing to me every time I visit an Army unit in China is how poor they are in terms of helo assets. They just don't rely on helicopters the way we do. And the way most Western militaries do. And they have very professional apparently but small Special Operating Forces. These ships that are in the Gulf of Aden on these so-called counter-piracy patrols each carry a small Special Operating Forces Det with them.

2nd Artillery. These are some of the missiles that are sort of on the front line right now. The DF-21 is the one they're apparently attempting to adapt, a medium range ballistic missile, attempting to adapt to be used against aircraft carriers. DF-31 is their basic ICBM. 31A is the extended range ICBM which theoretically will be able to range the United States.

These things are in production, but again at a very slow rate. China's nuclear posture apparently remains one of sort of minimal deterrence. The old idea that if they can put one nuclear weapon on Los Angeles or San Francisco,

that will be enough to deter Washington from using nuclear weapons against them.

Still using the old B-5. The fighters, as indicated up there, except for the F-16 rip-off, all Soviet models. The Soviets right now are extremely annoyed at the Chinese because the J-11 is apparently a rip-off of the SU-27 and China violated all kinds of agreements when they began constructing that thing. That's one of the reasons Russian arms shipments have slowed to a crawl or an absolute stop is annoyance by the Russian military at that rip-off.

Some helicopters.

Basic transports. Note the IL-76 and the IL-78. The IL-78 is supposed to be the refueler, and here again, they have some of them but very few in number.

And the AWACS which they're finally getting. The AWACS program was set back dramatically about a year and a half ago when their first fully operational AWACS with a bunch of engineers and developmental personnel on board went down with the loss of everybody on board.

I think that's the 27. 30. That's the 10. 11. And the AWACS they've been using.

What's much more important to me than hardware is what's happened in the last decade or maybe even less than that for the Navy since the loss of one of their submarines in 2003 in terms of training and personnel acquisition. Officer acquisition and training and education; and enlisted acquisition and training and education.

China has a two year conscription requirement. It's a very corrupt system, but it's basically two years. Then when they get these kids in they try to then inveigle them into reenlisting.

As far as officers are concerned, they have a goal of now acquiring 60 percent of their officers from their military academies and 40 percent from ROTC-like programs. This applies across all the services. So what we're seeing, I think again, more significant than hardware, is what they're doing with their personnel.

For the Air Force they've increased flight hours dramatically in the last decade. Ten years ago I would have stood up here and told you that an F/A-2 pilot was going to get 105 hours a year. I think you know better than I that means every time a guy takes off he's basically teaching himself what he's doing again. Now it's probably much closer to 150, 160 hours a year.

Everything I'm saying here is unclassified, by the way.

They now have more coordinated ops with Naval Aviation. When you look at the defense setup along the coast of China, the Air Force is in charge, but there are certain coastal sectors that are assigned to Naval Air for defense. More ops at low altitude, more ops over the sea. Again, 10-15 years ago you just did not see Air Force aircraft flying over the water in China. Now they do it routinely. More IFR ops. And on the Navy's perspective, more, but again at a very moderate pace, more shipboard operations particularly with helos, and also attempted coordinated ops between surface ships and fixed wing aircraft, both Air Force and Navy.

From an engagement question, right now as I mentioned earlier, I think the PLA is focused on Taiwan. Since the change of administrations in Taiwan a little over a year ago, the situation between the Mainland and Taiwan has been relatively quiet and really improving both from Taipei's and especially Beijing's perspective. So if I were a PLA planner in Beijing I'd be thinking man, how do I justify continuing these nice budget increases I've gotten for the last decade and a half? What's on my mission after Taiwan peacefully reunites with the Mainland? Which I think it's going to.

Border defense, Russia and India. There are some concerns, but nothing certainly timely. Nothing dramatic. Central Asia. China has border agreements with all the Central Asian bubbas right now. East and South China Sea, there are disputes with Japan over seabed resources in East China Sea and some uninhabited rocks in that part of the world. And there are concerns about the long sea lines of communications to the Middle East. But here again, what's the threat? The pirates are not a threat. Terrorists are not an active threat. And we've got the U.S. Navy and Air Force going back and forth across the Indian Ocean periodically, keeping things secure.

So I think they're going to face a question as to continuing what their next missions are going to be.

What we're saying in sum here, is increased budget and better platforms. Now the budgets are increasing in total terms, but not as a percentage of China's national budget, if you will. China's national budget's increasing because the economy's improving so much, so the military's getting more money. But I don't think the military is getting a larger percentage of the national budget.

Indigenous capabilities are improving, most significantly I think in shipbuilding in terms of Army equipment like armored vehicles and tracked vehicles of

various sorts, small arms, obviously. Not in terms of sophisticated aircraft from everything we've seen in the open press. The Chinese are still struggling to develop this part of their indigenous capability.

The goal, again, they don't want things happening in East Asia of which they don't approve.

I'll be happy to take any questions. I think we've got almost 15 minutes left.

Moderator: Let me start off with one question.

The country that uses the AFA web site more than anybody else is China. At least that's what my experts tell me. Also they're involved in using the Pentagon's web site more than anybody. Can you comment on their cyber capabilities, and look out in the future, what you expect in that area. It seems to me that fits into their normal descriptive of going asymmetric against [U.S. abilities].

Dr. Cole: Thank you, General. I think this is another area, a lesson learned they think they've picked up from watching our operations over the last decade and a half. I mentioned our reliance on space-based assets. A lot that's in the area of command and control and using the internet. The old days of sitting at your desk in PACOM and fiddling with the TPFDL, messing with the TPFDL, now it's all internet. The Chinese understand that and I know the fellow who's done some studies on this issue for PACOM, the Chinese are deliberately trying to develop the capability to get into our networks, screw with the TPFDL as well as other more operational level electronic systems.

I don't have a good feel for their capability right now. Part of the problem, of course, is when you try to assess China's capability you don't know often whether you're dealing with the headquarters building near [Jang Dun Hai] in Beijing or whether you're dealing with some high school hacker in Baltimore. In fact I do know there was one case back in '96 where they were hacking into one of our systems, and it turned out to be coming through Baltimore. It was initiating in Beijing but they were actually using routers and so forth and coming through Baltimore to get us.

They're continuing to work on this. Another part of this problem is is it the Chinese, is it the Russians, is it the French? I think it's very difficult to tell. It's simply a new challenge, new to old guys like me anyway, probably not to a lot of you, but a new challenge that we have to face on a military basis as well as an economic basis and even social basis.

Question: What you seem to be outlining here looks like what Colonels Lang and Quang Su wrote about ten years ago, almost identically. And yet in my encounters with the Chinese they deny that [unrestricted] warfare is part of their doctrine, but that's what you just outlined. Have you met these guys? How do they think?

Dr. Cole: These two Air Force colonels were public affairs officers who were authorized to write this book on unrestricted warfare, and then except for one appearance about 2003 or 2004, have disappeared from sight back in the PAO whatever.

Basically what unrestricted warfare said was that if China gets in a conflict it should use every means, it should not be limited to traditional military means in fighting for China's survival.

I would not classify information warfare as a form of unrestricted warfare. I think information warfare, as the United States and frankly the Air Force led the way in this, as the United States military establishment has finally decided, is simply a new area of warfare -- a 21st Century, late 20th, early 21st Century area of warfare that we have to become proficient in. Just as land warfare, air warfare, oceanic warfare, and so forth.

Question: Can you talk about China's relations with North Korea?

Dr. Cole: I took one of General Dunn's predecessors in 1994 to China, this was the first such visit. The CG of China's NDU at that point was a Lieutenant General Mah, an Army guy, who had fought in Korea as an infantry private. Lieutenant General Paul Surgeon, U.S. Army, was our president at that point. And General Surgeon asked General Mah what did he think about the North Korea situation. And pardon my language, but General Mah said, "Goddamn Koreans, you give them what they want and they ask for more; you don't give them what they want and they go off and sulk."

So on a personal sort of social level there's no love lost between the Chinese and the Koreans. But more importantly, at the national security level I believe they still think of North Korea as an important buffer state. And I think there's perhaps a rather subtle difference in the U.S. and the Chinese attitude towards the Korean Peninsula. Both nations want to see a peaceful resolution and want to see a non-nuclear Korean Peninsula, but from the U.S. perspective I think our number one goal is the non-nuclear part. From Beijing's perspective I think the number one goal is peace and peace requires that the North Korean regime not implode and not go down.

So I think China is willing to help to the extent it believes necessary to keep things peaceful, but not necessarily to the extent necessary to denuclearize the Peninsula.

Question: Can you discuss the SCO? Is it anything more than just a means of exerting its influence, or is it a new NATO? What's your view on it?

Dr. Cole: The Shanghai Cooperative Organization was formed in 1996 primarily by Russia and China and it now includes those two nations and most of the Stan brothers there in Central Asia, and India and Pakistan, Afghanistan, Mongolia have all requested observer status, and Iran, have all requested observer status but have not achieved it.

The SCO was originally formed as an economic body, then it very quickly became, after 9/11 announced it was an anti-terrorist body. They have an anti-terrorism headquarters in Bishkek and the headquarters of the organization itself is in Shanghai. It is called the Shanghai Cooperative Organization. It was originally called the Shanghai Five.

I think what the SCO really represents is an unspoken contest between Moscow and Beijing as to who's going to control Central Asia. I don't think that Putin or any of the other Russian leaders would really be willing to agree that those former Soviet state republics are no longer under Moscow's aegis. I don't know how that's going to develop. It's only been in the last few years the U.S. has really been attempting to send observers to SCO meetings and really get in there and get involved in addition to our normal diplomatic presence in the capitols of those countries, and try to exert some influence in the Central Asian republics.

Question: My question is kind of an ideological one. Does China view us as a threat that must be continually thwarted, put on its side? Or a long term enemy that has to be eventually destroyed?

Dr. Cole: I don't believe the latter applies at all. I do believe, as I indicated earlier, that from a Chinese military perspective, they believe the U.S. military is the only one that can prevent them from accomplishing what they want on any given day in any given situation.

On an economic basis, I think the Chinese are becoming more and more confident about their own ability to compete with the United States. Almost every time I go to China it's with some sort of official delegation so people are generally being relatively polite. It takes somebody like

General Dunn to really pull the chain in the right place to get a more honest reaction. [Laughter].

But when I have gone over there sort of by myself, and most recently this past May I gave a paper at an energy conference in Beijing, and it was a different attitude. There was no quarter given in terms of just sort of the conversational interaction. The Chinese were much more arrogant, much more self confident. I believe they think that the U.S. is there, they need to get better than the U.S. That's goal. But that was the Soviet goal as well.

I don't think there's any concern about long term destruction or international communist conspiracy or anything like that at all.

Question: A much more narrow question here, but are you aware of any reactions, official or unofficial, to the impending U.S. termination of the Raptor program? Or potential sales to Japan? And what would your analysis be of how that affects the balance of forces --

Dr. Cole: I'm sorry, termination of what program?

Question: The F-22 program.

Dr. Cole: I think the Chinese are awed by the F-22. I think they probably appreciate the capabilities of the aircraft. I know the Taiwans do. The Taiwans simply can't afford it. The Chinese, there have been two articles in the [Jei Phung Jung Baun], the primary Chinese military paper in the last couple of weeks following Secretary Gates' decision on the F-22. And they weren't sure how to react. The articles both started off, and of course these are articles that have been translated into English so there's always the problems of translation, but they seem to me to both start off by expressing satisfaction that the Obama administration had kanked the F-22 buy or reduced the F-22 buy, but then finished up by saying that that still doesn't mean that the United States is well intentioned. They're still developing all these other systems and so forth.

So I'm not sure they understand it yet. They haven't drawn a firm conclusion yet as to what it's going to mean.

Question: I was wondering if you could speak about the capabilities of the JF-17 that they've developed with Pakistan, and also any concerns you have about the transfer of technology from Pakistan to China, specifically U.S. technology.

Dr. Cole: I'm not sure what we've sold to Pakistan frankly. I guess F-16s. I'm not sure we've given them

anything much more advanced than that. The Chinese I think have had access to F-16 technology for quite a while.

Speaking very frankly, my view has been that if we give systems to Taiwan we should assume those systems are going to the Mainland, that there's enough of a flow of information between Taiwan and the Mainland.

As far as the 17 is concerned, I forget exactly what old Soviet design this thing is based on, but the Chinese Air Force didn't want it. It was built as an export fighter. I think the Pakistanis have taken it because they don't have much other option of any other source of aircraft. I don't think it's, I'm not familiar offhand here with the capabilities of the 17, but I don't think it's something to be particularly concerned about.

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