
Missile Defense: More May Be Better—for China

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After President George W. Bush took office in January 2001, he repeatedly called for the United States to withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty to allow for the development of the types of extensive and advanced missile defenses prohibited by that treaty. These calls generated concern among arms control advocates worldwide. In the face of these policy declarations by the Bush administration, the People's Republic of China (PRC), among many other states, emphasized its opposition to U.S. plans to move aggressively to develop and deploy both advanced theater missile defense (TMD) and national missile defense (NDM) systems.

In December 2001, a year into the Bush administration, the United States formally announced its withdrawal from the ABM Treaty. Meanwhile, the Bush administration has abandoned the distinction between TMD and NMD in order to “aggressively” pursue “an effective, layered missile defense” based on technological “integration of land-, sea-, air-, and space-based platforms to counter ballistic missiles in all phases of their flight.”²

This article takes a careful look at China's position regarding U.S. missile defense planning and particularly fo-

cuses on U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty. The central argument is straightforward: the U.S. decision to withdraw from the ABM Treaty and pursue aggressive missile defense development may end up impinging on Chinese foreign policy and national security interests *less dramatically* than if the United States had pursued more modest missile defenses within the framework of the ABM Treaty. The article considers how U.S. pursuit of extensive missile defenses could lead to reactions by other states that increase Chinese capacity to effectively blunt the impact of U.S. missile defense on its security interests. In particular, aggressive U.S. missile defenses may not impinge Chinese security more than modest missile defenses would, while U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty may offer China opportunities to pursue its interests vis-à-vis the United States (especially through strategic cooperation with Russia) that China might not have had if the United States had remained a party to the ABM Treaty.

In short, more U.S. missile defense may be *better* for China. The point is not that U.S. missile defense is “good” for China. Rather, the point is that in certain important ways, *more* rather than *less* U.S. missile defense might create outcomes that are *less bad* for China than they might otherwise have been.

This argument is counterintuitive. It flies in the face of a basic presumption of ardent missile defense advocates in the United States: missile defense is good for U.S. security, and more missile defense is better. This argument also seemingly contradicts the publicly avowed Chinese opposition to U.S. missile defense development of any kind.

Reality is rarely so simple. Clearly, the United States enjoys great asymmetrical advantages in its relationship with China. Chinese choices are more sensitive to U.S. decisions than vice versa, and Chinese options sometimes range only between the bad and the worse. However, in the current global security environment, unlike in the simple bilateral structure of the Cold War, U.S. security actions create multiple independent reactions that may interact either positively or negatively in shaping ultimate outcomes. U.S. missile defense planning affects East Asian security relations in a variety of ways, and the interactions of these effects could lead to unpredictable and unintended long-term consequences adverse to broader U.S. security interests and foreign policy objectives.

The following argument is based on U.S. and Chinese statements concerning their key foreign policy concerns. However, the argument itself is speculative. It is not intended to present definitive claims to U.S. or Chinese strategic thinking or to make definitive predictions of future outcomes. Rather, the argument is intended to broaden the current debate over missile defenses by heightening awareness of the potential longer-term consequences of missile defense development.

The article begins by reviewing Chinese concerns about missile defense. It then considers how U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty affects these concerns, and concludes with a consideration of how the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, affect the logic of the preceding argument.

CHINESE CONCERNS ABOUT MISSILE DEFENSE

Chinese concerns about missile defenses, while differentiated and nuanced, fall generally into three categories: the Taiwan Strait, the East Asia region, and strategic relations with the United States. Because the development of Chinese missile capabilities at most ranges is intimately driven by Taiwan Strait concerns, and because U.S. proposals to deploy missile defenses at different levels are similarly mindful of potential Taiwan Strait applications,

these categories are closely linked. The Bush administration decision to abandon the distinction between TMD and NMD in favor of “layered missile defense” further integrates these categories.³

Taiwan Strait Missile Issues

Many in Beijing believe that only Chinese threats to respond with force deter an overt declaration of independence by Taiwan. At the same time, many Western analysts doubt China could successfully invade Taiwan to suppress independence.⁴ The official U.S. view is that Chinese numerical superiority in military aircraft is matched for the foreseeable future by the qualitative advantages held by the Taiwanese Air Force. Chinese amphibious assault capabilities remain very limited, rendering a blockade or an invasion as highly risky options that the PRC would only pursue as a last resort when faced with complete loss of Taiwan.⁵

However, China does maintain one clear capability against which Taiwan cannot defend: a short-range missile force. The United States views the expanding Chinese arsenal of short-range ballistic missiles and cruise missiles as intended for attacking critical Taiwanese facilities and undermining Taiwanese ability to conduct military operations.⁶ Reports indicate that as of April 2002, China may have as many as 350 improved-accuracy short-range missiles deployed against Taiwan.⁷ Many U.S. analysts are unconvinced by the Chinese distinction that the missile forces deployed against Taiwan are necessary to *deter* Taiwanese independence but not intended to *compel* reunification.

Deployment of missile defense in or near Taiwan would be intended to neutralize the Chinese short-range missile threat in two ways. First, by reducing the likely destructiveness of a Chinese missile attack, missile defense would render the threat of a Chinese missile attack less intimidating politically to Taiwanese leaders.⁸ Second, any U.S. role in deploying missile defenses in Taiwan would signal (to both Taipei and Beijing) greater likelihood of U.S. military support of Taiwan in the event of an overt conflict.⁹

China worries that both these effects would also bolster Taiwanese independence sentiments.¹⁰ Although disagreements as to the nature of “one China” persist, for decades the PRC and Taiwan shared one central premise: China includes Taiwan.¹¹ The United States, in the 1972 United States-China Shanghai Communiqué, initiating nor-

malization of relations with China, essentially accepted this position.¹² At the same time, however, the United States was unwilling—for both historical and strategic reasons—to abandon its interest in the security and relative autonomy of the Taipei government. Thus, the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979, adopted to accompany U.S. formal recognition of the PRC, stated that U.S. policy “rests upon the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means,” and that the United States would provide to Taiwan “defensive” arms “as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability.”¹³

U.S. policy on Taiwan since has entailed carefully balancing the tension in intentions between the Shanghai Communiqué and the Taiwan Relations Act, and maintaining a studied ambiguity with respect to U.S. intentions to actively support Taiwan in the event of an outbreak of hostilities.¹⁴ China has reluctantly learned to live with this U.S. position, although for many years China has claimed that the character of U.S. arms sales to Taiwan has violated U.S. pledges to limit such support.¹⁵ Stability in U.S.-Chinese relations has long depended upon careful management of the fragile balances of power across the Taiwan Strait on a day-to-day basis, which itself has rested upon the delicate consensus on Taiwan’s formal legal status.

China’s rising concern for that delicate consensus is driven by its perception that Taiwanese independence sentiments have increased dramatically in recent years. Social and political changes in Taiwan, including generational transition and democratization, have diminished popular identification with China, replaced by the growth of indigenous Taiwanese nationalism. Some in Beijing perceive that these trends in Taiwan are diminishing desires for reunification and inducing growing sentiments for formal independence. Such perceptions cause increasing concern that time is no longer the mainland’s ally with respect to reunification. The Taiwanese national election on March 18, 2000, in which the victory of Chen Shui-bian cast the Kuomintang (KMT) out of power for the first time since 1949, particularly alarmed Beijing, reinforcing concern that sentiments in Taiwan favoring independence continue to grow.¹⁶

The subsequent flagging popularity of the Chen government, combined with difficult economic conditions (yielding Taiwan’s first negative growth rates in decades), have served to induce Beijing to perceive Taiwan’s do-

mestic difficulties as pushing aside separatist sentiments. Indeed, increasing economic interaction between Taiwan and the mainland also reinforces both sides’ stakes in preventing a precipitous decline in relations.¹⁷ However, the underlying political tensions between Taiwan and the mainland have not been resolved and could easily flare up again as conditions continue to evolve. Stern reactions by China to recent high-level U.S.-Taiwanese defense contacts,¹⁸ in the wake of gains by Chen’s Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in the December 2001 Taiwanese legislative elections, indicate Beijing’s ongoing sensitivity to this issue.

A critical aspect of Chinese concern over the prospect of eventual Taiwanese independence is the potential repercussions it could trigger in the rest of China. Populations in some regions of China, such as Tibet and Xinjiang, harbor separatist ambitions that Beijing worries would be unleashed by actual Taiwanese independence. The Beijing leadership has made Chinese territorial integrity a core principle of its own legitimacy. The fate of Taiwan is therefore embedded in the Beijing leadership’s perceptions of its prospects for sustaining its legitimacy to rule China at all.

Treating the Taiwan issue as simply a U.S.-Chinese bilateral matter obscures these Chinese domestic factors bolstering the commitment of the Beijing government to preserve its sovereign title to Taiwan. Military support for Taiwan aimed at *detering* Chinese military action must take into account this resolve. A decision in Beijing to use force to prevent Taiwanese independence might be based not on the practical prospects for reclaiming Taiwan militarily, but rather on the core prerequisite of regime survival. In this mindset, Beijing would be undeterred by the improbability of reclaiming Taiwan militarily or by the level of U.S. support Beijing expects Taiwan to receive.

Keith Payne’s assessment of the applicability of deterrence to a Taiwan crisis appropriately recognizes the importance of these motivations on Chinese resolve and their impact on the prospects for successful U.S. deterrence of a Chinese attack on Taiwan. As Payne notes: “Deterrence can fail or not apply when leaders are very highly motivated, perceive concession as intolerable, [and] are willing to absorb great cost or are unwilling/unable to count the expected cost...”¹⁹ Applying this factor to the likely Chinese view of a Taiwan crisis, Payne observes:

Subduing Taiwan following a declaration of independence would be a survival interest for Chinese leaders. Doing so would be the prior-

ity value, and China's freedom to conciliate on the issue would be very low. Its freedom to provoke Washington, in contrast, would be high, because Chinese leaders would likely be skeptical of a U.S. threat to take decisive military counteraction.²⁰

Importantly, Payne attributes this problem to insufficient demonstration of U.S. resolve, commenting that, "circumspect U.S. support for Taiwan and the conscious policy of 'strategic ambiguity' emphasized by the Clinton administration are unlikely to have communicated U.S. resolve to Chinese leaders." Thus, Payne asserts:

To establish a deterrence policy suited to these circumstances, the United States would have to make blatantly clear its will and capability to defeat Chinese conventional and WMD attacks against Taiwan and against its own power projection forces. ... The U.S. would need to be, and to be seen as being, capable of intervening decisively to prevent China from subduing Taiwan before U.S. forces could be brought to bear.²¹

To achieve a sufficiently bolstered deterrence threat in support of Taiwan, Payne calls for U.S. deterrence policy to focus on "denial," requiring "a combination of offensive and defensive capabilities, including missile defense." Payne concludes that this approach would, "if effective, provide the enormous benefit of preventing war in the Taiwan Strait as envisaged in the scenario."²²

The crucial element of this conclusion is the conditional clause: "if effective." Because deterrence takes place in the mind of the adversary, the key criterion of deterrence effectiveness is not the clarity and force of one's demonstration of resolve, but the reactions to that demonstration by one's adversary. Confidence in the effectiveness of this "demonstration" approach to deterrence, in this case, would require reliable and precise knowledge of the limits of the Chinese leadership's willingness to undertake any means to prevent Taiwanese independence. Yet, China's leaders themselves may not know these limits—if they exist at all. This approach also would require U.S. confidence in its anticipations of Chinese actions under the stress of crisis conditions whose precise configurations are unpredictable. Indeed, U.S. efforts to bolster its deterrence threat, rather than intimidating China's leadership, might instead strengthen its commitment by increasing its perceived costs of backing down. Finally,

this approach would require that U.S. confidence in its deterrence be maintained over the life of the policy. The United States would have to be prepared to continually bolster its deterrent threat to whatever level necessary to overcome any increases in the Chinese leadership's own intensity of commitment.

In short, if China's leaders are in fact sufficiently motivated by regime legitimacy concerns to use force to prevent Taiwanese independence—even if the prospects for success are dim—enhanced demonstrations of U.S. resolve to "intervene decisively" may have only marginal impact on Chinese decisionmaking. Robust confidence that bolstered threats would effectively deter Chinese leaders across all foreseeable Taiwan Strait encounters would be virtually unattainable, particularly for U.S. defense planners necessarily preparing for pessimistic scenarios. Without this level of confidence, U.S. decisionmakers could not be sure that bolstered deterrence threats exceed the limits of Chinese commitment to prevent Taiwanese independence. China might still remain undeterred, and U.S. decisionmakers would still have to consider the consequences of that prospect.

The kind of bolstered deterrence Payne prescribes could also yield consequences more pernicious than mere ineffectiveness. If missile defense deployment also worked to neutralize Taiwanese fears of possible Chinese reactions to independence, it could catalyze the very Taiwanese movement toward independence that might incite those reactions. If, at the same time, China remained prone to react to such a move militarily, regardless of the prospects for success of that reaction, the missile defense deployments would not only have failed to deter Chinese military action against Taiwan, they would also have *increased the likelihood* of that action.²³

Moreover, the unequivocal U.S. security guarantees Payne advocates to replace U.S. "strategic ambiguity" with respect to Taiwan would dramatically increase U.S. commitments to fulfill those guarantees, regardless of the circumstances of the moment. In the event of deterrence failure, U.S. leaders would feel an additional compulsion to make good on U.S. commitments to support Taiwan in order to ensure the credibility of such threats in other future contexts. This factor would intrude upon the exigencies of the crisis at hand in U.S. decisionmaking, and perhaps lead the United States into escalatory actions it would not have otherwise taken.²⁴

Thus, U.S. deployment of a missile defense system applicable to Taiwan (let alone missile defense deployment in Taiwan itself), as well as other U.S. actions seeking to bolster deterrence of Chinese military action against Taiwan, could instead both heighten the risks of a war in the Taiwan Strait and commit the United States to a reaction that would bring China and the United States into direct conflict.

China, Missiles, and Regional Relations

Chinese concerns over Taiwan are closely linked to its views on regional relations. The sea-based, “upper-tier” Navy Theater Wide (NTW) missile defense system, under collaborative U.S.-Japanese development, has been of particular concern to China. The most often stated justification for this system is not the protection of Taiwan from China, but the protection of Japan, and U.S. forces in Japan, against missile threats from North Korea (DPRK). For most of the 1990s, Japan was more reluctant to pursue missile defense development than the United States. The DPRK missile test over Japan in August 1998 shifted Japanese thinking on the issue, facilitating an agreement with the United States in August 1999 on joint technological research and design of four key NTW components.²⁵

The U.S. justification for this approach flows from continuing U.S.-Japanese reliance on extended nuclear deterrence in upholding Japanese security—the “nuclear umbrella.” Advocates of joint U.S.-Japanese missile defense development often point to its crucial role in reaffirming the U.S. commitment to this alliance.²⁶ The United States and Japan formally articulated this conception of the relationship in the 1997 revision of the 1978 Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation.²⁷

Advocates of this viewpoint often conclude by observing that, in the absence of this U.S. commitment—including missile defense—Japan would be left to develop independent security capabilities, which could entail a considerable missile program and even a latent nuclear weapons option. However, others have found this logic unpersuasive, suggesting instead that U.S. denuclearization of its alliance relationship with Japan could induce momentum to denuclearize the region and thereby impede Japan from developing nuclear weapons of its own²⁸

Chinese analysts frequently charge that the United States exaggerates the current DPRK missile threat to justify missile defense plans actually intended to confront China.

Unfortunately, these protests avoid the point that it is the perceptions of the growth trajectory of the DPRK missile threat that matter to U.S. defense planners. For these reasons, the effect of the August 1998 DPRK missile test in galvanizing both Japanese and U.S. support for missile defense development was entirely predictable.

However, elements of the Japanese and U.S. positions lend credibility to Chinese concerns. Many missile defense supporters argue that Japan and the United States should proceed with missile defense development in East Asia even in the absence of a missile threat from the DPRK. Some of these supporters openly assert a U.S. interest in supporting Taiwan, confirming Chinese suspicions that U.S.-Japanese missile defense collaboration will free these countries from the constraints imposed by Chinese missile and nuclear capabilities. The conspicuous absence in the 1997 revision of the U.S.-Japanese Defense Guidelines of a definition of the region in which events could lead to joint U.S.-Japanese military operations²⁹ underscores this Chinese perception.³⁰

These Chinese concerns are directly linked to the Taiwan issue. The NTW system envisioned in U.S.-Japanese missile defense planning would be deployed on Aegis cruisers that could be moved near Taiwan in the event of a conflict there. Hence, for China, NTW deployment in Japan would provide implicit missile defense protection to Taiwan. Additionally, Chinese leaders worry that such a deployment, combined with the open-ended regional scope of the U.S.-Japanese defense guidelines, would open the door to direct Japanese involvement in a Taiwan conflict.

Thus, China perceives deployment of missile defense in East Asia as a challenge to its capabilities to pursue its legitimate interests in its immediate geographic region. This concern includes reunification with Taiwan, but not exclusively; if that issue were in some way resolved, China would still look upon regional missile defense development as a signal that U.S. and Japanese long-term intentions in East Asia are confrontational rather than collaborative, and as a portent of a U.S. “containment” policy aimed at China.

China, Strategic Missiles, and Missile Defense

China currently possesses a small arsenal of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) capable of carrying nuclear weapons to targets in the continental United States.³¹ U.S. intelligence services note that the current

Chinese strategic modernization program includes development of mobile, solid-fueled ICBMs to improve survivability, and estimate that “by 2015, the total number of Chinese strategic warheads will rise several-fold.” However, “Beijing’s future ICBM force deployed primarily against the United States... will remain considerably smaller and less capable than the strategic missile forces of Russia and the United States.”³² The United States would retain its massive retaliatory deterrent. Even in the event of direct U.S.-Chinese military conflict, the prospects of China launching nuclear missiles against the United States would remain slim. Accordingly, U.S. government reports do not portray Chinese missile and nuclear forces as an imminent threat to the United States.³³

However, U.S. intelligence analysts do perceive Chinese ICBMs as a latent and growing threat, observing that “Chinese strategic nuclear doctrine calls for a survivable long-range missile force that can hold a significant portion of the U.S. population at risk in a retaliatory strike.”³⁴ In this manner, Chinese nuclear capabilities *already* pose to U.S. analysts a *politically* meaningful coercive instrument—however remote the prospect, U.S. war planners must still reckon with the possible use by China of nuclear weapons directly against the United States.

U.S. deployment of defenses against ICBMs would act to counteract this *political* threat. Missile defense capability would probably add little to current U.S. deterrence of a Chinese launch of nuclear weapons against the United States, not least because of the options available to China to defeat such a system.³⁵ However, just as with regional missile defense, technical calculations of the effectiveness of such strategic missile defense are only loosely related to the political impacts of the *prospects* of its effectiveness. In this political context, while the United States cannot have complete confidence that strategic missile defenses will work, neither can China have complete confidence that it will be able to defeat or overwhelm those defenses. To the extent that missile defense deployment would inhibit Chinese psychological confidence in the deterrent value of its ICBM forces, even the *prospect* of its deployment works to moderate concerns among U.S. defense planners considering Taiwan intervention scenarios.

Hence, even *proposals* to develop strategic missile defense tend to add to U.S. perceptions of its policy flexibility with respect to ongoing diplomacy over the Taiwan issue. As missile defense comes closer to reality, China

may perceive its coercive influence over the United States diminishing, and the United States, accordingly, may perceive an expanding freedom of maneuver.³⁶ Strategic missile defense may, in particular, moderate U.S. defense planners’ concerns over escalation in the event of U.S. intervention in Taiwan or other U.S.-Chinese regional conflicts. This capability would add greatly to these planners’ perceptions of policy flexibility on Taiwan, and on many other issues. Thus, China fears that strategic missile defense deployment would give the United States unfettered confidence to intervene in Taiwan, and—perhaps more importantly—more confidence to behave on an ongoing basis *as though* it felt free to intervene.

CHINA, MISSILE DEFENSE, AND THE ABM TREATY: THE STRATEGIC EQUATION

For the reasons described above, China finds the prospect of the United States free to pursue missile defense very worrisome, and has opposed this prospect unequivocally. China sees U.S. missile defense plans as indicating a U.S. effort to rise above Cold War-era *mutual* deterrence and establish for itself “absolute security” against any threats by any other nations, in order to obtain complete freedom of action in international relations.³⁷ For China, this ambition signals a reduced U.S. commitment to arms control at the global level, a further commitment to alliance-based rather than multilateral approach to global security evolution, and a continued reliance on the political efficacy of nuclear capabilities.

At the same time, all U.S. missile defense plans do not equally affect Chinese core security interests focused on the Taiwan Strait. In particular, many of the grander missile defense aims that distinguish the Bush administration from its predecessor³⁸ may be only marginally more worrisome to Beijing because they would have less effect on Taiwan Strait concerns. Chinese strategists already perceive that limited strategic missile defense will undermine the coercive capabilities of their modest ICBM forces in the context of a Taiwan Strait conflict. U.S. development of more ambitious strategic missile defense systems is unlikely to greatly increase this specific, core concern.³⁹

However, more ambitious U.S. missile defense systems will still matter to China insofar as they affect the contextual environment within which a U.S.-Chinese conflict over Taiwan would play itself out. Here is where the disposition of the ABM Treaty is key. U.S. pursuit of ambitious missile defense plans coupled with withdrawal from

the ABM Treaty will shape future East Asian relationships in significantly different ways than U.S. pursuit of more limited missile defenses within the framework of a U.S.-Russian agreement retaining the ABM Treaty would have done.

For these reasons, the strategic future of China, even more than that of Russia, may have hung on the U.S. decision to abandon the ABM Treaty entirely. However, the prospective consequences to China of this decision are not straightforward. To illustrate the possible outcomes, it is useful to juxtapose potential consequences of U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and aggressive missile defense development to those consequences that might have ensued from a U.S. decision to reach agreement with Russia on a more limited missile defense program under the auspices of the treaty.

U.S. Withdrawal from the ABM Treaty

Although U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty to pursue ambitious missile defense development has been strenuously opposed by China, some analysts suggest that China could neutralize U.S. missile defense simply by increasing its strategic missile forces and/or equipping these forces with relatively simple countermeasures. Some U.S. missile defense critics suggest that these options would be less expensive for China than missile defense deployment would be for the United States. At one point, the Bush administration itself reportedly was considering dropping objections to a Chinese nuclear buildup, and even acquiescing to Chinese resumption of nuclear testing, to overcome Chinese opposition to U.S. missile defense plans.⁴⁰

However, responding to U.S. missile defense deployment by building up its own nuclear forces—whether by agreement or not—would have several disadvantages for China. Strategic force buildup beyond the current modernization already underway would impose absolute costs. Given that China has a smaller and less developed economy, these costs at the margins might even be *relatively* greater to China than U.S. missile defense costs. Additionally, such a buildup would concern regional neighbors, including Russia, Japan, and India, in ways China may not wish to encourage and to the detriment of Chinese regional security interests. Indeed, some Chinese military strategists are known to have cautioned their leadership to avoid being goaded into an arms race that would

derail the economic modernization of China and reinforce U.S. and Japanese military intentions.⁴¹

On the other hand, the prospect of aggressive U.S. missile defense development has also been worrisome to Russia and other states. Although the system proposed by the Clinton administration would not have realistically challenged the Russian strategic nuclear deterrent, the aggressive technological development the Bush administration envisions could lead to future generations of missile defense that genuinely neutralize Russian nuclear forces. Russian willingness to accept ABM modifications was driven in part by the desire to limit initial U.S. missile defense deployment to acceptable levels and circumvent future development with which Russia could not keep pace. Accordingly, Russia threatened to withdraw from the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, and both Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START I and START II), if the United States were to withdraw from the ABM Treaty. Expressing this concern, Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev dramatically warned, “The destruction of the ABM Treaty will result in the annihilation of the whole structure of strategic stability.”⁴²

For reasons discussed below, erosion of U.S.-Russian strategic relations has not followed from the U.S. ABM withdrawal. Should such circumstances come to pass, however, incentives for Russian-Chinese cooperation on a host of strategic issues would be high. Cooperation could include technical collaboration on offensive nuclear forces (nuclear warhead and missile designs) and on both missile defenses and missile defense countermeasures, some of which China might also be able to apply to defeat regional missile defense systems. Broader military cooperation could enable China to enhance its capabilities considerably.

Chinese-Russian political cooperation could include resistance to U.S. efforts to stem WMD and missile proliferation globally as well as direct opposition to U.S. military intervention. China and Russia strengthened bilateral ties under a new “Good Neighborly Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation” signed during PRC President Jiang Zemin’s July 2001 visit to Russia. Additionally, the “Shanghai Cooperation Organization,” bringing together Russia, China, and four other former Soviet republics over common concerns such as regional irredentist turmoil, offers a potential framework within which more robust Russian-Chinese cooperation could blossom.⁴³

The U.S.-Russian ABM Accord That Wasn't

The United States and Russia might have agreed to ABM Treaty modifications allowing the United States to go forward with more limited missile defense options, while also limiting future missile defense research and development, such as prohibiting deployment of weapons in space. Yet such an agreement would have been unlikely to serve Chinese direct security interests. Any U.S.-Russian agreement on ABM would not have limited regional missile defense, in which Russia is also interested for its own security purposes. Such an agreement likely would have limited strategic missile defense only to an extent preserving the credibility of the Russian nuclear deterrent—the United States, particularly under the Bush administration, has been determined to retain at least enough latitude to develop a system capable of undermining the deterrent quality of the modest Chinese intercontinental nuclear forces.

Thus, although China would have welcomed continued U.S. adherence to the ABM Treaty as a signal that the United States is not yet prepared to scuttle strategic arms control overtly, a U.S.-Russian agreement to retain the ABM Treaty would not have limited U.S. development of the missile defense capabilities most threatening to China. Moreover, the mere fact of such a deal would have raised the specter of a U.S.-Russian condominium of power, locking in bilateral mutual deterrence and locking out China through limited strategic missile defense. China would have found itself both politically and strategically isolated.⁴⁴

Russia, insofar as it perceives itself as a regional rather than a global power, had considerable incentives to accept such a deal. Russian President Vladimir Putin's acknowledgement that new ballistic missile threats exist marked a step away from Russian-Chinese solidarity in opposition to missile defenses, and a step toward U.S.-Russian coordination on the issue. With its nuclear deterrent capability vis-à-vis the United States stabilized, Russia could have more easily focused on regional security concerns, among which China ranks notably. Russia could have played on U.S. concerns in East Asia to continue building closer ties to NATO and to break new ground in U.S.-Russian defense cooperation, perhaps securing implicit U.S. support for Russian regional objectives and an independent Russian missile defense capability.⁴⁵

The United States-Russia-China Triangle

The juxtaposition of these two alternative courses of events—one now more likely, the other now merely speculative—underscores the conflicting implications for China of U.S. missile defense development. In particular, Chinese concerns that U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty removes fundamental impediments to U.S. missile defense development are muted, and perhaps balanced, by the prospect that the most ambitious U.S. missile defense plans will only marginally exacerbate Chinese strategic security concerns, while those same plans may prove considerably threatening to Russia and could thereby promote Russian-Chinese political and military cooperation.

These potential repercussions in Asia of U.S. missile defense ambitions should be of greater concern to U.S. policymakers than they are at present. So long as the strategic global role of China in the post-Cold War world continues to grow, Chinese reactions to U.S. actions will increasingly affect U.S. success in achieving the goals it intends by its actions.

In the past, U.S. policymakers have at times not taken prospective Chinese reactions sufficiently into account due to reluctance in some quarters to acknowledge China as a global strategic actor. For example, some U.S. defense planners assert that Chinese nuclear force modernization will proceed regardless of U.S. decisions on missile defense.⁴⁶ However, China has long had the capability to expand its nuclear forces far beyond their current levels, demonstrating that its nuclear weapons decisionmaking is guided less by material limitations than by security perceptions. Among the strongest factors shaping China's perceived security environment are the signals of U.S. intentions and capabilities it receives. Indeed, China's perceptions of U.S. intentions are likely *at least as important* in Beijing as perceptions of China's intentions are in Washington.

In the future, Chinese strategic policy choices may come to have more influence than Russian ones over the outcomes the United States seeks to affect by its actions.⁴⁷ Hence, anticipation of Chinese reactions to U.S. actions is highly relevant to U.S. success in achieving long-term goals. To base U.S. strategic policy on the weak assumption that China is not sensitive to U.S. actions and that Chinese actions are only incidental to core U.S. concerns risks both rendering U.S. actions counterproductive and missing opportunities for mutually beneficial accommodation.⁴⁸ Treating China as an implicit "rogue" state dan-

generously overlooks China's capacities to frustrate U.S. strategic goals if its security interests so dictate. On the missile defense issue alone, the opportunities that cooperation with China might offer to Russia illustrate this potential. Thus, treating China as a strategic actor is a prerequisite to ensuring that U.S. strategic decisions do not both undermine U.S. interests and increase regional instability.

Adopting such a viewpoint would not preclude U.S. missile defense deployment. However, it would require reckoning with issues currently marginal to missile defense debates, and providing strategic reasoning with considerably more nuance and long-term perspective than missile defense advocates typically offer.

THE AFTERMATH OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

The September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States have fundamentally shifted world perspectives on global security issues. To be sure, much of the hyperbole of a "completely changed world" after September 11 reflected more shock than thought. Indeed, one of the striking features of the September 11 attacks is in fact how much consistency they displayed.⁴⁹ The attacks themselves, while a wake-up call to many, did not themselves change the world.

What has changed the world is the character of the U.S. response to the attacks. The Bush administration has declared the United States "at war" not just with the network of agents responsible for the attacks, but with the entire phenomenon of global terrorism. The effect of this U.S. response on world politics has been transformational, due to two unusual circumstances. First, the rapidity with which the U.S. government reoriented its core national interests in reaction to the attacks is rare. Governments, especially governments of major states, do not tend to overhaul their core foreign policy orientations overnight. Second, the scope of impact of this reorientation is truly global. Current U.S. preeminence is unprecedented historically and means that choices the United States makes for its role in world politics define major features of the global political environment, becoming "givens" to which other states must react as though they were features of the international system.⁵⁰

Consequently, the fundamental reorientation of U.S. international priorities in the wake of the September 11 attacks has meant that many other countries now face, to varying degrees, a transformed set of constraints and op-

portunities. As "anti-terrorism" shows signs of coming to play the same defining role in U.S. foreign policy that anti-communism did during the Cold War era, U.S. policymakers seem increasingly inclined to measure their relationships with other countries on their willingness to join the U.S. counter-terrorism campaign.

Whether anti-terrorism will *endure* as the defining focus of the U.S. approach to the world remains to be seen. However, anti-terrorism likely will shape the Bush administration's approach to its international relations for the remainder of its current term in office. This fact is already having significant effects on U.S. relations with a host of other major global states and on its views of major global issues.

The U.S. approach to missile defense and the ABM Treaty is an important representative example. Prior to September 11, President Bush had made an ambitious program of missile defense a cornerstone of his administration's defense policy. President Bush's May 1, 2001, speech at the National Defense University outlined a sweeping vision in which U.S. nuclear policy would break dramatically from Cold War characteristics:

Cold War deterrence is no longer enough to maintain peace, to protect our citizens and our own allies and friends. We must seek security based on more than the grim premise that we can destroy those who seek to destroy us.⁵¹

The speech expressed the Bush administration's intent to break from the Cold War predication of the inescapability of "mutually assured destruction" through deep U.S. cuts in offensive nuclear weapons in tandem with expansive missile defense deployment.⁵² This ambition to reformulate U.S. nuclear deterrence policy was driven by the administration's fervent desire to escape the shackles of bilateral and multilateral arms control, particularly the constraints imposed by the ABM Treaty on expansive missile defense research, development, and deployment.

Subsequently, the U.S. commitment to abandoning the ABM Treaty overshadowed its evolving relations with both Russia and China. Despite considerable activity in U.S.-Russian relations, U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty was widely regarded as inevitable as the end of 2001 approached. As noted earlier, Russia and China responded by tightening their relationship, strengthening bilateral ties under a new Good Neighborly Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation and reaffirming their commitment to the

Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Some observers perceived these developments as expressions of other underlying factors pushing Russia and China closer (such as leadership initiative, opportunities for defense cooperation, and shared desires to resist U.S. power), and hence as possible harbingers of an eventual anti-U.S. alliance.⁵³

September 11 changed these dynamics. President Putin's early decision to allow U.S. planes to use Russian airspace for military and humanitarian missions in Afghanistan, his endorsement of the deployment of U.S. forces at military bases in the former Soviet republics of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and his sharing of Russian intelligence information garnered during the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, all suggested a fulsome Russian commitment to the U.S. cause. Many U.S. officials came to view Russian support after September 11 as a watershed in U.S.-Russian relations. The U.S. decision to postpone an October 2001 missile defense test that could have been interpreted as a violation of the ABM Treaty was, at the time, tangible evidence that the Bush administration was prioritizing its relationship with Russia in the context of the anti-terrorism campaign.⁵⁴ More tangibly, in May 2002, the momentum of improving U.S.-Russian relations produced new agreements on nuclear weapons reductions and Russian-NATO cooperation.⁵⁵

The shifted tenor of U.S.-Russian relations after September 11 inevitably altered the implications of U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty. However, the character of this effect was counterintuitive. On the surface, one might easily have expected improved U.S.-Russian relations to make a U.S.-Russian accord on modifying the ABM Treaty more likely. Yet the Bush administration proceeded to announce the U.S. intention to withdraw from the ABM Treaty. Even more surprisingly, improved U.S.-Russian relations have easily weathered this move. Several factors may account for this result.

First, September 11 apparently boosted the Bush administration's missile defense ambitions, while increased U.S. domestic support for greater defense preparedness constrained domestic opposition to missile defense. In his first post-September 11 press conference, President Bush reiterated his commitment to missile defense, suggesting that the attacks demonstrated the need to increase U.S. security against threats by missiles armed with weapons of mass destruction. The Bush administration may have been so determined to withdraw from the treaty that heightened need for Russian cooperation was insufficient to impede this move.

Second, the Russian bargaining position vis-à-vis the United States is much weaker than during the Cold War, and continues to decline. The May 2002 nuclear arms agreement signed in Moscow calls for reductions in U.S. forces already anticipated in the January 2002 Nuclear Posture Review, and will not require the United States to destroy any of the nuclear warheads or delivery systems removed from deployment, preserving U.S. flexibility. President Putin's willingness to accept U.S. terms on strategic relations likely reflects his shift of priorities to security and economic concerns much closer to home, and his recognition that U.S. beneficence is a prerequisite to building Russian links to the West and fostering integration into the world community.

At a deeper level, and more ironically, improved U.S.-Russian relations following September 11 may have actually facilitated U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, rather than impeded it. The war on terrorism provided a basis for U.S.-Russian security cooperation within which Russia could make meaningful contributions. Crucially, as the core of the U.S.-Russian relationship shifted toward anti-terrorism cooperation, missile defense became less of a touchstone for the broader relationship. Russia could have more confidence in the staying power of U.S. benevolence, regardless of its missile defense decisions, which in turn freed the Bush administration to pursue its missile defense ambitions with less concern about Russian reactions.

U.S. relations with China also improved in the post-September 11 world. In exchange for diplomatic support and intelligence sharing, China moved from "strategic competitor" to anti-terrorism "partner" in the Bush administration's eyes. However, improvement in U.S.-Chinese relations has not matched the improvement in U.S.-Russian relations, as was evinced in the differential results of President Bush's meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Jiang Zemin at the October 2001 APEC meetings in Shanghai.⁵⁶ The reason China has risen less than Russia in the post-September 11 eyes of the United States is simple: China has less to offer in support of the new U.S. prioritization of its anti-terrorism campaign.

Thus, while the United States muted its criticism of Chinese suppression of Muslim Uighurs in Xinjiang Province and appeared less likely to provoke Beijing with dramatic new arms sales to Taiwan, in both the U.S. administration and on Capitol Hill there remained deep

mistrust of Beijing's intentions, and the Bush administration seemed unlikely to make significant concessions to China on defense issues or modify its commitment to defend Taiwan with the use of force.⁵⁷ As one China expert advocates:

Beijing hopes that by backing the war against terrorism, Washington will be more sympathetic and accommodating to Chinese aspirations for reunifying the Mainland with Taiwan. The Chinese would like to see a reduction in U.S. arms sales to Taiwan and U.S. pressure on Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian to accept Beijing's "one-China principle" and to enter into negotiations with the Mainland. Trade-offs involving Taiwan's security must not be entered into. The United States should remain firm in its commitment to assist Taiwan in maintaining a sufficient self-defense capability.⁵⁸

Because the post-September 11 improvement in U.S.-Chinese relations has been more muted, and because Chinese concerns with U.S. missile defense planning are more immediate, the post-September 11 displacement of missile defense issues in U.S.-Russian ties has not been replicated in U.S.-Chinese relations. Hence, despite U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, the near-term effects in U.S.-Russian-Chinese triangular relations has been similar to what would have been anticipated had there been a U.S.-Russian ABM accord. For example, U.S. enlistment of Russian support for a leading U.S. role in global anti-terrorism, combined with the military action in Afghanistan to depose the Taliban regime, has undercut Chinese enlistment of Russian support for similar purposes through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.⁵⁹

This outcome is the worst of both worlds for China. However, international politics in the aftermath of September 11 are more volatile and unpredictable than before. Further dramatic events may reverse some of these effects of the September 11 attacks, particularly as the Bush administration encounters new obstacles to its intentions to rally the support of principal states for advancing the war on terrorism beyond Afghanistan. Over time, as the impact of the events of September 11 wanes and aggressive U.S. missile defense development proceeds, missile defense issues may reclaim more of their previous centrality to global strategic relationships.

Certainly, China will feel a compulsion to react as U.S. missile defense plans go forward. However, these reac-

tions are unlikely to be limited to military counter-actions. China will also likely take advantage of whatever other diplomatic and political opportunities present themselves. If an ambitious U.S. pursuit of missile defense serves to alienate the United States in Asia and worldwide, China will find those opportunities to be more abundant.

In this context, the future course of U.S.-Russian relations will remain crucial to China. September 11 altered the impact of U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty by providing alternate grounds for sustained U.S.-Russian political relations, thereby depriving China of the benefits of Russian antipathy to U.S. strategic plans that it might otherwise have enjoyed. However, the recent sunny climate in U.S.-Russian relations may darken over time if the benefits of post-September 11 cooperation wane while U.S. missile defense development emerges as a true threat to Russian strategic capabilities.⁶⁰ In these circumstances, the incentives for increased strategic cooperation between China and Russia would reemerge (as would incentives for the United States to moderate its missile defense ambitions to avoid these negative consequences).

Hence, various outcomes in Asian regional relations, and many different long-term dispositions of missile defense issues, are still plausible. In particular, there remains a strong prospect that the U.S. ABM withdrawal and aggressive missile defense development may cause political repercussions that will buffer the military impact of missile defense on Chinese strategic interests, leading to long-term outcomes more favorable to those interests than might have come to pass under a more restrained U.S. approach to missile defense.

CONCLUSION

For many in Washington, the principal lesson of the Cold War is that U.S. military power eventually compelled an odious regime into submission and collapse. Even if this diagnosis were true,⁶¹ to apply it to the post-Cold War era would be to make the classic error of "fighting the previous war." U.S. preeminence makes its position today fundamentally different than during the Cold War. This preeminence is even more evident after September 11, to the extent that U.S. unilateral policy change fundamentally shifted the terrain of international politics.

Preeminence confers on the United States an unprecedented role of world leadership. The United States has overtly assumed this leadership on the issue of terrorism. However, the United States also exercises this leadership

on other strategic issues, including nuclear weapons non-proliferation and arms control, whether it seeks to do so or not. The United States still has in its hands a host of choices on current strategic issues, and the choices it makes will decisively influence the reactions of many other states.

At the same time, September 11 revealed that the United States is in some ways more vulnerable than it was at any time during the Cold War. Both supporters and critics of U.S. foreign policies over the past decade, who often took U.S. global power for granted, must now reconsider viewpoints built on this premise.

Vulnerability has awakened the United States to the priority of homeland defense, but this priority does not conflict with responsibility for world leadership. Rather, September 11 demonstrates that U.S. global actions have homeland consequences. This tangible link to U.S. domestic security underscores the need for the United States to build a far-sighted and comprehensive conception of its global role.

The “war on terrorism” has opened certain new opportunities in this regard. The need to enlist support of like-minded states—and global civil society—in a campaign against terrorism demonstrates the need for and value of multilateral approaches to security issues. Already, the Bush administration has agreed to codify bilateral U.S.-Russian nuclear weapons reductions in the May 2002 agreement signed in Moscow. Over time, the administration may come to see even the missile defense issue as embedded in a broader matrix of issues, and to see missile defense deployment as a choice contingent on broader ends, rather than as an end in itself.

Such a shift of focus would benefit U.S. security interests as well as the prospects for global stability. The central purpose of the preceding analysis has been to demonstrate that, even before September 11, U.S. choices on missile defense were not as simple as many portrayed them, and that enhancement of U.S. security would not follow in a linear fashion from deployment of ever more missile defense. For states such as China, India, and Pakistan, and even Russia, the dramatic asymmetries of nuclear capabilities make cuts in U.S. offensive nuclear forces of marginal relevance, while U.S. missile defenses fundamentally threaten to undercut their own deterrent capabilities (at least vis-à-vis the United States). Hence, U.S. missile defense planning risks undermining much of the arms control effect of the promised unilateral deep cuts in U.S. nuclear weapons levels, while also empha-

sizing the political efficacy of strategic weapons and thereby encouraging other states to respond with strategic build-ups of their own.

If, on the other hand, the September 11 attacks encourage U.S. policymakers and analysts to think more comprehensively about vital strategic choices, such as those on missile defense, there is a prospect that this terrible tragedy could spark a new era in U.S. global leadership. This new era would be marked by a coupling of the campaign against terrorism with a genuine effort push for improvements in the conditions of repression and poverty throughout the world that fuel so many global problems, including terrorist extremism. In this new era, the United States would take the lead not only in a war on terrorism, but also in construction of the peace that must follow any war. Building this peace would require the United States to promote new concepts of a global order better informed by the multilateral and non-military features defining the post-Cold War world. Taking on such a role would not only promote global peace and stability, but also serve more effectively than military defense alone to protect the U.S. domestic population against the new threats that the September 11 attacks revealed.

¹ I am grateful for the innumerable helpful comments and suggestions on early drafts of this article from many colleagues, and for the invaluable constructive critiques from the anonymous reviews.

² U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense Agency, “The Ballistic Missile Defense System,” <<http://www.acq.osd.mil/bmdo/bmdolink/html/system.html>>. The decision to abandon this distinction was motivated by a desire to placate U.S. allies, particularly in NATO, who feared exclusion from the benefits of U.S. “national” missile defense while simultaneously bearing the brunt of adversaries’ reactions to these defenses. See Anthony H. Cordesman, “China and the US: National Missile Defenses and Chinese Nuclear Modernization,” Center for Strategic and International Studies Background Paper, Washington DC, July 2000, pp. 15-16.

³ Ironically, the overt integration of missile defense systems reinforces earlier charges by some Chinese analysts that TMD and NMD already were integrated systems. See Li Bin, “BMD and the Missile Technology Control Regime,” paper presented at the Conference on East Asian Regional Security Futures: Theater Missile Defense Implications, The United Nations University, Tokyo, Japan, June 24-25, 2000, <<http://www.nautilus.org/nukepolicy/TMD-Conference/LiBinpaper.html>>.

⁴ Michael O’Hanlon, “Why China Cannot Conquer Taiwan,” *International Security* 25 (Fall 2000), pp. 51-86.

⁵ William S. Cohen, “The Security Situation in the Taiwan Strait,” Report to Congress Pursuant to the FY 1999 Appropriations Bill, Washington, DC, February 26, 1999, cited in O’Hanlon, “Why China Cannot Successfully Invade Taiwan,” p. 52.

⁶ William S. Cohen, “The Security Situation in the Taiwan Strait.”

⁷ The U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency now reportedly estimates that the Chinese People’s Liberation Army force of CSS-6 and CSS-7 short-range ballistic missiles near Taiwan, numbering fewer than 50 in 1997, will grow to as many as 650 by 2005. Bill Gertz, “Chinese Missiles Concern Pentagon,” *Washington Times*, April 3, 2002.

⁸ U.S. defense planners acknowledge this Chinese concern. See U.S. Department of Defense, "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China," Report Pursuant to the FY2000 National Defense Authorization Act, Washington, DC, June 2000.

⁹ Kenneth W. Allen, et al., "Theater Missile Defenses in the Asia-Pacific Region," Henry L. Stimson Center Working Group Report No. 34, Washington, DC, June 2000, pp. 46-47, <<http://www.stimson.org/japan/pdf/TMDReport.pdf>>.

¹⁰ See Sha Zukang, "Some Thoughts on Non-Proliferation," Presentation at the Seventh Annual Carnegie International Peace Non-Proliferation Conference, Washington, DC, January 12, 1999, <<http://www.ceip.org/files/events/Conf99Sha.asp?p=8&EventID=156>>.

¹¹ See "The Taiwan Question and Reunification of China," Taiwan Affairs Office and Information Office, PRC State Council, August 1993, <<http://English.peopledaily.com.cn/whitepaper/7.html>>. For a good compilation of PRC statements, see Federation of American Scientists, "Beijing Claims 'China Has Sovereignty over Taiwan,'" <<http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/ops/docs/99/890910-1.htm>>.

¹² The Shanghai Communiqué states: "The United States Government does not challenge" that "there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China." Joint United States-China Communiqué, Shanghai, China, February 27, 1972.

¹³ *Taiwan Relations Act*, U.S. Public Law 96-8, 96th Cong., 1st session, April 10, 1979.

¹⁴ President Bush's April 2001 declaration of U.S. intentions to defend Taiwan appeared to abandon his predecessors' policy of ambiguity on this question. White House aides, however, quickly backpedaled and stressed that there was no change in U.S. policy and that the United States has no legal treaty commitment to defend Taiwan. See Edwin Chen and Henry Chu, "Bush Remarks On Taiwan Defense Cause a Furor Over U.S. Policy," *Los Angeles Times*, April 26, 2001. Recent critiques of the U.S. policy of ambiguity are considered below.

¹⁵ For a recent reiteration of this charge, see Ambassador Sha Zukang, "U.S. Missile Defence Plans: China's View," *Disarmament Diplomacy* No. 43 (January/February 2000), <<http://www.acronym.org.uk/dd/dd43/43usnmd.htm>>.

¹⁶ See Phillip C. Saunders, "Project Strait Talk: Security and Stability in the Taiwan Strait," Seminar Report, Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey, CA, July 27, 2000, <<http://cns.miis.edu/cns/projects/eanp/research/strait/index.htm>>.

¹⁷ U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific, Committee on International Relations, "Testimony by Bonnie S. Glaser on U.S.-China Relations and the Taiwan Strait in the Aftermath of September 11," 107th Congress, 1st Session, November 15, 2001.

¹⁸ "China Says US-Taiwan Defense Meeting Harms Ties," Reuters, March 14, 2002. The meeting between Taiwanese Defense Minister Tang Yiau-ming and U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz at a private conference in Florida on March 11, 2002 focusing on U.S. arms sales to Taiwan was the highest-level documented U.S.-Taiwanese defense talks in at least 22 years.

¹⁹ Keith B. Payne, "Post-Cold War Deterrence and a Taiwan Crisis," *China Brief* 1 (September 12, 2001), <http://china.jamestown.org/pubs/view/cwe_001_005_003.htm>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Only if China reacted by developing missile forces to overwhelm or defeat these defenses, and both Chinese and Taiwanese leaders perceived that Chinese reaction to be effective, would this catalytic effect be muted. In such a case, the effect would be "merely" an arms race.

²⁴ This problem of commitment constraints in uncertain future circumstances is significantly reduced, but not fully solved, under Thomas Christensen's proposal to replace strategic ambiguity with a much more conditional commitment to Taiwan. See Thomas Christensen, "Clarity on Taiwan: Correcting Misperceptions on Both Sides of the Strait," *Washington Post*, March 20, 2000.

²⁵ U.S. Department of Defense, "Background Briefing for Trip by U.S. Secretary of Defense to the Far East," October 27, 1998, <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Oct1998/x10281998_x027bkg_.html>; National Institute of Defense Studies (Japan), *East Asian Strategic Review 2000* (Tokyo: The National Institute

of Defense Studies, 2000), Chapter 20; Robert Wall, "U.S., Japan Agree on Cooperative Missile Defense," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, August 23, 1999; Yukiya Amano, "A Japanese View on Nuclear Disarmament," *Nonproliferation Review* 9 (Spring 2002), pp. 143-44.

²⁶ National Institute of Defense Studies, *East Asian Strategic Review 2000*.

²⁷ Security Consultative Committee, "Completion of the Review of the Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation," New York, NY, September 23, 1997.

²⁸ Morton Halperin, "The Nuclear Dimension of the U.S.-Japan Alliance," Paper prepared for the Nautilus Institute, Berkeley, CA, July 9, 1999, <<http://www.nautilus.org/nukepolicy/Halperin/index.html>>. For an alternative conception of Japan's potential role in promoting a nuclear-free East Asia, see Kumao Kaneko, "Japan Needs No Umbrella," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 52 (March/April 1996), pp. 46-51, <<http://www.thebulletin.org/issues/1996/ma96/ma96kaneko.html>>.

²⁹ Security Consultative Committee, "Completion of the Review of the Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation." There are informal indications that some Japanese officials consider the new regional scope of the guidelines to include Taiwan.

³⁰ The guidelines explicitly aim to "create a solid basis for more effective and credible U.S.-Japan cooperation...in situations in areas surrounding Japan," and pointedly note, "the concept, situations in areas surrounding Japan, is not geographic but situational." Security Consultative Committee, "Completion of the Review of the Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation." For a typical Chinese view of this issue, see Zukang, "U.S. Missile Defence Plans: China's View." U.S. defense planners recognize this perception; see Department of Defense, "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China," Pursuant to the FY2000 National Defense Authorization Act, June 2000.

³¹ The United States considers China to have "about 20" deployed single-warhead silo-based ICBMs; see National Intelligence Council, "Foreign Missile Developments and the Ballistic Missile Threat Through 2015," December 2001, <http://www.cia.gov/nic/pubs/other_products/Unclassified_ballisticmissilefinal.htm> or <<http://www.fas.org/irp/nic/bmthreat-2015.htm>>. Other estimates range from seven to 24.

³² U.S. intelligence estimates for 2015 range "from about 75 to 100 warheads deployed primarily against the United States. MIRVing and missile defense counter-measures would be factors in the ultimate size of the force." National Intelligence Council, "Foreign Missile Developments and the Ballistic Missile Threat Through 2015," December 2001.

³³ Department of Defense, "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China," Pursuant to the FY2000 National Defense Authorization Act, June 2000.

³⁴ National Intelligence Council, "Foreign Missile Developments and the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States Through 2015," September 2000, <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/nie/nie99msl.html>>.

³⁵ See Andrew M. Sessler, et al., *Countermeasures: A Technical Evaluation of the Operational Effectiveness of the Planned U.S. National Missile Defense System*, (Cambridge: Union of Concerned Scientists, April 2000); see also George Lewis, et al., "National Missile Defense: An Indefensible System," *Foreign Policy*, No. 117 (Winter 1999-2000), pp. 124-28.

³⁶ See Cordesman, "China and the US: National Missile Defenses," pp.12-13. Cordesman notes that, interestingly, the recent U.S. Defense Department assessment of the Taiwan Straits situation conspicuously avoids discussing the U.S.-Chinese strategic nuclear relationship in this regard. See Cohen, "The Security Situation in the Taiwan Strait."

³⁷ See Zukang, "U.S. Missile Defence Plans."

³⁸ See Michael Sirak, "BMD Takes Shape," *Jane's Defense Weekly*, April 18, 2001.

³⁹ Only if China comes to perceive itself as able to overcome modest U.S. strategic missile defenses, while still unable to overcome more extensive strategic missile defenses, would the more extensive defenses become strategically meaningful in U.S.-Chinese interaction. However, Chinese strategists are unlikely to perceive such sharp qualitative distinctions between different levels of U.S. missile defense due to the uncertainties of the technologies involved, the option to match more extensive defenses with greater offensive and/or countermeasure development, and the fungibility in the political implications of missile defense development at any level.

⁴⁰ See David E. Sanger, "U.S. To Tell China It Will Not Object To Missile Buildup," *New York Times*, September 2, 2001; and Mike Allen, "U.S. To Give Details Of Shield Tests To China," *Washington Post*, September 2, 2001. Administration spokespersons later pulled back somewhat from this public position.

⁴¹ See U.S. Department of Defense, "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China," Pursuant to the FY2000 National Defense Authorization Act, June 2000.

⁴² "Russia Says U.S. Antimissile Plan Means an Arms Race," *New York Times*, February 6, 2001.

⁴³ See Zhang Mo, "Birth of Shanghai Cooperation Organization," *Jiefang Daily* (Shanghai), June 16, 2001, p. 5; and Vladimir Isachenkov, "China Leader: Security Is Treaty Goal," *The Associated Press* (Moscow), July 17, 2001. See also Sherman Garnett, "Challenges of the Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership," *Washington Quarterly* 24 (Autumn, 2001).

⁴⁴ Isolating China in this manner was also an explicit intention of the original ABM Treaty. See Patrick E. Tyler, "Behind the Shield, a 3-Sided Rivalry," *New York Times*, May 6, 2001.

⁴⁵ The U.S.-Russian accord to begin direct military collaboration on early warning is a potential harbinger of such an outcome.

⁴⁶ For a good review of this issue, see Cordesman, "China and the US: National Missile Defenses."

⁴⁷ Robert Manning, et al., *China, Nuclear Weapons, and Arms Control: A Preliminary Assessment* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2000), p. 1.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴⁹ The destruction of the World Trade Center towers with massive loss of life was first attempted in 1993. Osama bin Laden has been a known organizer of anti-U.S. terrorist attacks for nearly as long, and declared "war" on the United States several years ago. The potential use of jetliners as missiles had already come to the attention of Western intelligence agencies, and would not have been as shocking if the attacks had not succeeded (if, for example, plans for the attacks had been discovered and circumvented).

⁵⁰ Space and context prevent a full consideration of whether, and to what extent, "unipolarity" can constitute a structural change in the terms of "neorealist" theory, as discussed in Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

⁵¹ George W. Bush, Speech at the National Defense University, May 1, 2001.

⁵² Note that Bush's speech called not to *replace* deterrence with security concepts grounded in eliminating the threat of nuclear war in its entirety, but rather to *supplement* deterrence with "new concepts" including "a broad strategy of active nonproliferation, counterproliferation, and defenses." Many of the "new concepts" in fact build on central elements of longstanding U.S. missile defense ambitions, such as President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative of 1983.

⁵³ Sherman Garnett, "Challenges of the Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership," *Washington Quarterly* 24:4, Autumn, 2001, p. 41

⁵⁴ Steven Mufson, "Postponement Shows Shift in Priorities," *Washington Post*, October 26, 2001.

⁵⁵ David E. Sanger, "Bush and Putin to Sign Treaty to Cut Nuclear Warheads," *The New York Times*, May 14, 2002; and Todd S. Purdum, "NATO Countries Approve Pact Giving Russia Role of a Partner," *The New York Times*, May 15, 2002.

⁵⁶ Gerald Baker, "Old Alliances Provide Warmest Enthusiasts for New World Order," *Financial Times*, October 22, 2001.

⁵⁷ Gerard Baker and James Kynge, "A recast relationship with Beijing," *Financial Times*, October 19, 2001.

⁵⁸ Bonnie S. Glaser, "Testimony on U.S. China Relations and the Taiwan Strait in the Aftermath of September 11," Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific and Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, November 15, 2001.

⁵⁹ Uzbekistan, another country whose relationship with the United States has improved through cooperation on the war in Afghanistan, failed to send any representative to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's most recent meeting. Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "'Beijing's NATO' Hits Stumbling Block," *CNN.com*, May 16, 2002.

⁶⁰ President Vladimir Putin's desires for U.S. support in improving Russian economic conditions encourages him to downplay security differences with the United States in order to maintain good relations. However, this position might not be sustainable politically in Russia unless U.S. economic support is tangible and meaningful, particularly if an aggressive U.S. nuclear weapons and missile defense posture is also accompanied by further NATO expansion.

⁶¹ For an alternative formulation, see Wade Huntley, "Who Won the Cold War?" in Timothy Breen, ed., *The Power of Words: Documents in American History* (New York: Harper Collins, 1995).