ISLAND CHAINS AND SEA CONTROL:

China’s Maritime Strategy

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February 2014

These views are my own and do not represent those of the National War College or any other agency of the U.S. Government
Common Terms . . . .

• Brown Water – Green Water – Blue Water

• Open Ocean – High Seas – International Waters

• Near Seas / Middle Sea / Far Seas

• Island Chains

• Nine Dash Line

• Coastal Baseline

• Territorial Waters: 12 nm

• Contiguous Zone: 24 nm

• Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ): 200 nm

• Continental Shelf: 350 nm
STRATEGIC CONTEXT IN BEIJING

• The Burden of Governing
• Chinese Communist Party (CCP)
• Continental Power
• “100 Years of Humiliation”
• Revolutionary History
• Use of the Military Instrument of Statecraft
STRATEGIC GOALS

- Homeland Defense
- Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Retains Power
- Determinant Power in East Asia
- World Power / Regional Security
Missions

• Defense of the Homeland

• Defense of Claimed Territory

• Defense of Maritime Resources

• Defense of Citizens Abroad

• Defense of the Sea Lines of Communication

• Power Projection
GEOGRAPHY I

DISTANCES (nm) / TIME (@14 kts)

Shanghai to Singapore: 2,207 / 6.5 days
San Diego to Singapore: 7,736 / 23 days
Singapore to the Persian Gulf: 3,630 / 11 days
GEOGRAPHY II

Distances (nm) / Time @ 14 kts

• Chinese coast–First Island Chain:
  ~514 / 1.6 days

• Chinese coast – Second island Chain:
  ~1,800 / 5.4 days
People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN)

• Submarines: 5 SSN / 52 SS

• Surface Combatants: 10 DDG/7 DDG / 32 FFG / 60 PGM . . . . ~40 obsolete

• ~40 Helicopters

• RAS Ships: 6 - 7

• Aircraft Carriers: 1 (+ 3 ?)
Shang-class SSN
Chinese Luyang II-class
Chinese Carrier
Chinese LPD
MARITIME POLICY MAKING

• Domestic Concerns

• Interagency Process:
  National Security Commission

• Civil – (CCP) – Military (PLA)

• Self-Image: Central Kingdom
  - Paranoia (?)
  - Big Guy on the (Asian) Block....
Beijing’s Strategic Maritime Security Interests

• Three Seas: Yellow, East China, South China

• First Island Chain Sea Control: (2000) 2020

• Second Island Chain Sea Control: ((2020) 2050?)
WASHINGTON’S MARITIME VIEW OF EAST ASIA

• Security Treaties
  – South Korea
  – Japan
  – Philippines
  – Australia (and New Zealand)

• Special Relationships
  – Taiwan
  – Singapore
  – Thailand

• Friendly(er) Relations: Vietnam to Pakistan…
VIEW FROM BEIJING

• Require Peace and Stability for Continued Economic Growth
• World Context = “Peace and Stability,” but . . . . the U.S.
• Sovereignty Issues:
  - Taiwan
  - India
  - Korea
  - East China Sea (Japan)
  - South China Sea
DOMESTIC CONCERNS

• Internal Order: Avoid Chaos
• Social Concerns:
  – Economic Issues
  – Corruption
  – Natural Disaster and Environmental Issues
  – Religion
  – Ethnic and Demographic Issues
  – Civil – Military Relations
BEIJING’S VIEW OF WASHINGTON

• Hegemonistic . . .
  Preemptive Use of Military Force

• American Cultural Imperialism

• Supporting Independent Taiwan (Arms Sales)

• Trying to Contain and Surround China:
  – Pivot to Asia
  – Air-Sea Battle