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–ROBERT D. BLACKWILL

U.S. Grand Strategy Toward China: Seventeen Policy Prescriptions

Robert D. Blackwill

“Any one of these systems of order bases itself on two components: a set of commonly accepted rules that define the limits of permissible action and a balance of power that enforces restraint where rules break down, preventing one political unit from subjugating all others.

“Yet today this ‘rules-based’ system faces challenges. The frequent exhortations for countries to do their fair share, play by twenty-first-century rules, or be responsible stakeholders in a common system reflect the fact that there is no shared definition of the system or understanding of what a fair contribution would be.

“None of the most important countries which must build a new world order have had any experience with the multistate system that is emerging. Never before has a new world order had to be assembled from so many different perceptions, or on so global a scale. Nor has any previous order had to combine the attributes of the historic balance-of-power systems with global democratic opinion and the exploding technology of the contemporary period.”

—Henry A. Kissinger, *World Order*

“You never see the end of things when you’re in them.”

—Joseph Kanon, *Leaving Berlin: A Novel*

Introduction¹

Both the U.S. and Chinese governments are currently striving for illusionary primacy in Asia: Washington having possessed primacy for many decades and Beijing wishing to acquire it.² Attractive as it may be in theory, Washington should accept that under foreseeable circumstances and given the many impressive dimensions of rising Chinese power, it no longer has the option of broadly based Asian primacy. At the same time, the United States certainly has the national and alliance resources if adequately deployed to prevent Chinese primacy in the Indo-Pacific. If both nations actively seek primacy in the region, the road will be open to sustained confrontation and perhaps even military conflict. As Henry Kissinger put it in his book *Diplomacy* regarding the period before World War I, “After the formation of the Triple Entente, the balance of power ceased to function. Tests of strength became the rule and not the exception. Diplomacy as the art of compromise ended. It was only a question of time before some crisis would drive events out of control.”³

China's Grand Strategy

The American national security elite have not entirely digested the profound implications of the rapid and extraordinary rise of Chinese power. To put it mildly, China is not just another of many major U.S. foreign policy problems. As Lee Kuan Yew observed, “The size of China’s displacement of the world balance is such that the world must find a new balance....It is not possible to pretend that this is just another big player. This is the biggest player in the history of the world.”⁴

In that context, Beijing seeks to:

- replace the United States as the primary power in Asia;
- weaken the U.S. alliance system in Asia;
- undermine the confidence of Asian nations in U.S. credibility, reliability, and staying power;
- use the People’s Republic of China’s (PRC) economic power to pull Asian nations closer to China’s geopolitical policy preferences;
- increase PRC military capability to strengthen deterrence against U.S. military intervention in the region;
- cast doubt on the U.S. economic, political, and societal model;
- ensure U.S. democratic values do not diminish the Chinese Communist Party’s hold on domestic power; and
- avoid a major confrontation with the United States in the next decade.

A Revised U.S. Grand Strategy Toward China

Lee Kuan Yew also emphasized this regarding China, “How could they not aspire to be number one in Asia, and in time the world?”⁵ He further remarked, “Why not? They have transformed a poor society by an economic miracle to become now the second-largest economy in the world—on track, as Goldman Sachs has predicted, to become the world’s largest economy....They have followed the American lead in putting people in space and shooting down satellites with missiles. There is a culture 4,000 years old with 1.3 billion people, many of great talent—a huge and very talented pool to draw from.”⁶ Put simply, “It is China’s intention to be the greatest power in the world.”⁷

Not recognizing the clarity of Lee’s analysis and conclusions, successive U.S. administrations spoke routinely about a strategic partnership with China and an “engage and hedge” strategy against Chinese misbehavior. This mistaken approach continued long after Beijing had seriously misbehaved and when that hedging should have changed into something much stronger and more decisive to counter China’s threats to vital U.S. national interests. History is filled with such miscalculations, going back to the Romans, the Greeks, the Egyptians, and the Chinese, among others.⁸

The necessity for a balancing strategy that seeks to limit China’s capacity to misuse its growing power, even as the United States and its allies continue to interact with China diplomatically and economically, is driven by the high likelihood of a long-term strategic rivalry between Beijing and Washington. China’s sustained economic success over the past thirty-odd years has enabled it to aggregate formidable power, making it the nation most capable of dominating the Asian continent and thus undermining the traditional U.S. geopolitical objective of ensuring that this arena remains free of hegemonic control. The meteoric growth of the Chinese economy, even as China’s per capita income remains behind that of the United States, has already provided Beijing with the resources necessary to challenge both the security of its Asian neighbors and Washington’s influence in Asia, with dangerous consequences.

Only a fundamental collapse of the Chinese state would free Washington from the obligation of systematically balancing Beijing, because even the alternative of a modest Chinese stumble would not eliminate the dangers presented to the United States in Asia and beyond. Even as China’s overall gross domestic product (GDP) growth

slows considerably, its relative growth rates are likely to be higher than those of the United States for the foreseeable future, thus making the need to balance its rising power important. In any case, Washington should hardly pursue a grand strategy based on the expectation that Beijing's many domestic problems will render it incapable of contesting with the United States for leadership in Asia and beyond.⁹

Accordingly, the U.S. grand strategy toward China at its core would replace the central goal of integrating Beijing into the international system with that of consciously balancing its rise—as a means of protecting U.S. and allied security, reestablishing U.S. leadership in the global hierarchy, and promoting the strength of the liberal international order, which ultimately depends on the robustness of American relative power.

There is no better basis for analyzing and formulating U.S. grand strategy toward China than connecting that strategy directly to U.S. vital national interests, listed below, which are conditions that are strictly necessary to safeguard and enhance Americans' survival and well-being in a free and secure nation.¹⁰

(Note how exceedingly rigorous this definition of vital national interests is. Most foreign policy issues on the front page of the *New York Times* and in the media do not meet these definitional requirements. While others routinely claim that America has vital national interests from Yemen to Syria to Taiwan to Afghanistan to the South China Sea, only five vital U.S. national interests today are listed here, consistent with the austere definition above.)

U.S. vital national interests are as follows:

1. Prevent the use and deter and reduce the threat of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and catastrophic conventional terrorist or cyberattacks against the United States or its military forces abroad;
2. Prevent the use and slow the global spread of nuclear weapons, secure nuclear weapons and materials, and reduce further proliferation of intermediate- and long-range delivery systems for nuclear weapons;
3. Maintain a global and regional balance of power that promotes peace and stability through domestic American robustness, U.S. international power and influence, and the strength of the U.S. alliance systems;
4. Prevent the emergence of hostile major powers or failed states on U.S. borders; and
5. Ensure the viability and stability of major global systems (trade, financial markets, supplies of energy, and the environment).

Instrumentally, these vital interests will be enhanced and protected by promoting U.S. leadership, military and intelligence capabilities, credibility (including a reputation for adherence to clear commitments and evenhandedness in dealing with other states), and strengthening critical international institutions.

These U.S. vital national interests, which are meant to safeguard and enhance Americans' survival and well-being in a free and secure nation, would be potentially threatened by an Asia dominated by China.¹¹

The Critics

Experts critical of this proposed grand strategy toward China likely fall into at least seven categories.

First, some will argue that China has no grand strategy. Although there may be those in Beijing who disagree with Xi Jinping's current strategic approach, its dominating elements are not a mystery. Chinese officials insistently argue that the U.S. alliance system in Asia is a product of the Cold War and should be dismantled; that the United States' Asian allies and friends should loosen their U.S. ties and that failure to do so will inevitably produce a negative PRC reaction; that U.S. efforts to maintain its current presence and power in Asia are dimensions of an American attempt to contain China and therefore must be condemned and resisted; that U.S. military power projection in the region is dangerous and should be reduced (even as the People's Liberation Army continues to build up its military capabilities with the clear objective of reducing U.S. military options in the context of a U.S.-China confrontation); and that the

U.S. economic and political model is fundamentally exploitative and should have no application in Asia. To not take seriously official Chinese government statements along these lines is to not take China seriously. That Beijing does not hope to realize these policy goals in the short term does not reduce their potential undermining effect in the decades ahead. In short, if China were to achieve the policy objectives contained in these official statements, it would clearly replace the United States as Asia's leading power. If that does not represent a PRC grand strategy, what would?

Henry Kissinger in *A World Restored* may be helpful in this regard: "For powers long accustomed to tranquility and without experience with disaster, this is a hard lesson to come by. Lulled by a period of stability which had seemed permanent, they find it nearly impossible to take at face value the assertion of the revolutionary power that it means to smash the existing framework. The defenders of the status quo therefore tend to begin by treating the revolutionary power as if its protestations were merely tactical; as if it really accepted the existing legitimacy but overstated its case for bargaining purposes; as if it were motivated by specific grievances to be assuaged by limited concessions. Those who warn against the danger in time are considered alarmists; those who counsel adaptation to circumstance are considered balanced and sane, for they have all the good 'reasons' on their side: the arguments accepted as valid in the existing framework."¹²

Second, some may say that the analysis and policy recommendations are too pessimistic and are based on a worst-case appraisal of Chinese behavior. To the contrary, these conclusions are drawn from China's current actions regarding its internal and external security, its neighbors, and the U.S. presence in Asia. Nothing is projected that is not already apparent in China's present policies and strategic intentions. Nevertheless, this hardly represents the worst case if China began to behave like the Soviet Union, necessitating something a great deal more far-reaching and costly than an attempt to maintain balance.

Third, others might argue that China's international behavior is "normal" for a rising power, that China is gradually being socialized into the international system, and that it is far too early for Washington to give up on comprehensive engagement and strategic reassurance toward Beijing. The issue here is how long the United States should pursue a policy toward China that is clearly not sufficiently protecting U.S. vital national interests. Kurt Campbell, former assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs in the Obama administration, has stressed, "We were always looking for deeper cooperation with China and attempts to have on-the-ground cooperation—for example, on aid or humanitarian support operations, we weren't able to bring about; in military-to-military relations, on the diplomatic agenda, on aid, we found it very difficult to get meaningful results."¹³

Fourth, some may assert that China's integration into the international system broadly serves important U.S. purposes, binds Beijing to a rules-based system, and increases the costs to the PRC of going against it and thus should transcend other Washington concerns about China's internal and external behavior. Attempts to integrate China into international institutions will continue, and the United States will accrue some benefits from that activity. However, basing U.S. grand strategy primarily on Chinese global integration ignores the strategic reality that China has made far greater relative gains through such processes than the United States has over the past three decades. China has increased its national power in ways that could deeply threaten U.S. national interests in the long term. The United States needs to understand and internalize this disturbing fact and respond to such PRC international assimilation with much more robust American policies and power projection into Asia.

Fifth, critics may also say that the United States' Asian allies and friends will never go along with the grand strategy outlined in this document. This concern seems to concentrate not on the merits of this strategic approach, but rather on its reception in the region. Our allies want to maintain ties with China, have increased U.S. capabilities in the region, have bolstered reassurance of American protection, and intensify Washington's support for their own economic growth and security. The grand strategy outlined here advances all of these objectives. Indeed, the worry across Asia today is not that the United States will pursue overly robust policies toward China; rather, it is that Washington may not be up to the challenge of consistently and effectively dealing with the rise of China over the long term.

Sixth, a familiar concern is that if the U.S. treats China as an enemy, China will become an enemy. A recent declaration by more than one hundred prominent China and other foreign policy experts warned against “U.S. efforts to treat China as an enemy....”¹⁴ This worry is difficult to understand. No U.S. administration in the past half-century, including the current one, has treated China as an “enemy.” Moreover, over a nearly twenty-year period wherein Washington sought a strategic partnership with China, Beijing has implemented a grand strategy designed to undermine U.S.-Asian alliances, which has accelerated under Xi Jinping; used geoeconomic tools to coerce its neighbors and others, including more recently through the Belt and Road Initiative; violated international commercial practices, including committing massive theft of U.S. intellectual property; manipulated its currency for trade benefits; threatened Taiwan with invasion; built up its military forces to push the United States beyond Japan and the Philippines; constructed and militarized artificial islands in the South China Sea in violation of international law; systemically and brutally violated the human rights of its own people; and patiently and incrementally built its power and influence with the strategic goal of replacing the United States as the primary power in Asia.¹⁵ Who is treating whom as an enemy, or at least as a strategic adversary?

Seventh, the question arises regarding how China will respond to the U.S. grand strategy recommended here. Are not the risks of pursuing this grand strategy too great? One could certainly expect a strong Chinese reaction. But it is likely that Beijing would continue to cooperate with the United States in areas that it thinks serve China’s national interests—on the global economy, international trade, climate change, counterterrorism, the Iranian nuclear weapons program, North Korea (which cannot be managed without Beijing’s agreement), and Afghanistan. Put differently, a fit of pique by the Chinese leadership—hardly in China’s strategic tradition—would act in ways that damage its policy purposes and its reputation around Asia. In short, this strategic course in U.S. policy toward China would certainly trigger a torrent of criticism from Beijing because it would begin to systemically address China’s goal of dominating Asia, but it would not end aspects of U.S.-China international collaboration based on compatible national interests. Although there are risks in following the course proposed here, as with most fundamental policy departures, such dangers are substantially smaller than those that are increasing because of an inadequate U.S. strategic response to the rise of Chinese power.

U.S. Policy Prescriptions¹⁶

1. The United States should revitalize the sources of its own national power, including skillfully managing its economy, modernizing its basic infrastructure, reforming the immigration system and entitlement spending, and addressing the serious political, economic, and societal divisions within the country.¹⁷ With the U.S. contest with China over international power and influence likely to be decades long, a prosperous and well-functioning America is the first requirement to ensure that the United States is well positioned not to lose that competition.
2. The U.S. should protect the integrity of its democratic institutions, both for the good of the country and to offer a powerful alternative model to China’s authoritarian archetype.
3. Washington should, in a measured way and, at best, through a bipartisan consensus, educate the American people regarding the nature and long duration of China’s challenges to U.S. vital national interests and democratic values.
4. The United States should avoid being diverted from the China question by other problems around the globe and should consider, in making virtually every foreign policy decision, its effects on meeting the China challenge. Decisions based on diplomatic, economic, military, or regional stovepipes are particularly dangerous in the comprehensive context of the rise of Chinese power. Although, of course, the United States has vital national interests in other parts of the world, perhaps a large sign that says “Think China” should be placed on the wall

of the White House Situation Room. As Friedrich Nietzsche observed, “Forgetting our objectives is the most frequent of all acts of stupidity.”¹⁸

An American president who understood the China challenge would not pull the U.S. from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). An American president who understood the China challenge would not provoke trade dispute after trade dispute with the closest allies of the United States at a time when allied solidarity is an indispensable requirement to deal successfully and peacefully with a rising China. An American president who understood the China challenge would ask how NATO enlargement would likely affect Moscow’s interaction with Beijing and whether ever-closer Russia-China relations are consistent with U.S. national interests. An American president who understood the China challenge would wonder whether Washington should rush to impose long-term sanctions against Moscow when Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, thus helping drive Russia toward an alliance with China. An American president who understood the China challenge would ask if it is wise to continue the draining war in Afghanistan and U.S. military involvement in the Syrian civil war. And an American president who understood the China challenge would do everything possible to avoid attacking Iran and thus triggering America’s third long war since 2001.

5. Washington should intensify its diplomatic, economic, and military ties with its allies and partners across Asia. The United States cannot successfully compete with China over the long term as a solitary actor, as a unilateralist. Beijing recognizes that one of its great advantages in this strategic competition is how much time and attention Washington spends on challenges elsewhere. As China steps up its use of geoeconomic tools, its diplomatic reach and influence, and its military modernization, the price of U.S. absence or hesitance in Asia has never been higher.¹⁹
6. The United States should substantially strengthen its military power projection into Asia, shifting resources from the Middle East and European theaters to improve the capability of U.S. military forces to effectively project power along the Asian rimlands despite any Chinese opposition.²⁰ The United States needs more frequent and formidable naval activities, more robust air force deployments, and more capable expeditionary formations, as well as greater partner capacity, to reinforce its preeminent role in preserving peace and stability in Asia. This will allow it not only to conduct freedom of navigation transits, but also to seek to deter Chinese provocations, respond to regional crises, and reassure allies.
7. The United States should take the following steps in concert with its Asian allies and partners:

Japan. The United States should continue to work with Japan, America’s most important ally in the world, to enhance the operational capabilities of the Japan Self-Defense Forces. In addition, the United States should upgrade its ballistic missile defense (BMD) interaction with Japan, reinforce Japan’s cooperation with other Asian allies and partners, and regularly and resoundingly signal that the United States will come to Japan’s defense if Japan is attacked.

South Korea. The cornerstone of America’s relationship with South Korea is the shared commitment to defending the latter from North Korean aggression. In that regard, the United States should promote stability on the Korean peninsula by maintaining enough military forces there to deter provocative North Korean action, reaffirm its nuclear guarantees to South Korea, and enhance South Korea’s BMD capabilities.

Australia. Australia is a linchpin of America’s Indo-Pacific strategy. Canberra should host more, and more frequent, deployments of U.S. military assets in the region. The United States and Australia should boost their partnerships on BMD, cybersecurity, intelligence gathering, and naval operations.

India. Washington should greatly intensify technology transfers and enhance security cooperation with New Delhi. In particular, the United States should increase collaboration between the U.S. and Indian navies and continue to assist the Indian navy with modernization efforts to offset ambitious Chinese naval expansion.

8. Since strict reciprocity should encompass all dimensions of U.S.-China relations, Washington should continue to confront Beijing on its trade violations, which have been enduring and significant. China subsidizes state-owned industries, including its steel and aluminum companies, and the resulting overcapacity dramatically undercuts metals prices.²¹ It refuses to grant market access to U.S. and other firms across most of its economy.²² It steals U.S. intellectual property and advanced technology. It forces foreign tech firms that want to operate and sell goods in the country to work directly with Chinese firms and give them access to their secrets.²³ It steals new technology from foreign firms inside China using cyber tools. According to the cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike, China was “the most prolific nation-state threat actor during the first half of 2018” and “made targeted intrusion attempts against multiple sectors of the economy, including biotech, defense, mining, pharmaceutical, professional services, transportation, and more.”²⁴ These attacks have continued into 2019.²⁵

Only the immediate fear of stringent U.S. retaliation will persuade Beijing to begin to cease and desist with its trade violations; as is obvious from more than two decades of policy failure, urbane U.S. diplomatic dialogue behind closed doors or public shaming on trade issues will not achieve what is necessary. As Kurt Campbell has stressed, “President Trump has basically received and gotten more Chinese leverage...by this brutal approach than we got by treating China as a partner and with deep respect.”²⁶
9. Washington should launch a national private and public effort regarding advanced machine reasoning, learning, and problem solving, which could define the future balance of authoritarian and democratic power, to ensure that the U.S. does not lose the artificial intelligence (AI) race to China and thus allow Beijing to shape AI ethical norms and technical standards.²⁷
10. Washington should recognize that neither its public rebukes nor its private entreaties are likely to change China’s domestic policies and practices, including its brutal human rights record, and fruitlessly advocating regime change in China is a recipe that would sharply accelerate the downward spiral in U.S.-China relations. Getting the right balance in responding to China’s pervasive human rights abuses is not easy given American values. Henry Kissinger observes in *Diplomacy* that, “No nation has ever imposed the moral demands on itself that America has. And no country has so tormented itself over the gap between its moral values, which are by definition absolute, and the imperfection inherent in the concrete situations to which they must be applied.”²⁸ That torment regarding human rights and China will continue.
11. The United States should respond to Chinese cyberattacks with offensive cyber operations and stiff economic sanctions. China presents a persistent cyber espionage threat and an increasing attack threat to U.S. core military and critical infrastructure systems, such as power grids and financial networks, as well as to the American private sector. It must pay a serious price for these brazen cyber activities.²⁹ Regarding the latter, so far, “U.S. policy still lacks a coherent approach to protecting critical digital assets outside of the government and, in most cases, relies on the voluntary participation of private industry.”³⁰
12. The United States should not seek a China-first approach to the region. Such a G2 bilateral focus would suggest a great power condominium that puts China at the center of U.S. strategy in Asia. Instead, the United States should embed its China policy within a larger Asia-wide framework, intensifying every one of Washington’s other bilateral relationships in the region. Deepening and diversifying contacts throughout Asia will allow the United States greater influence in the region’s affairs and greater capacity to shape China’s external choices.
13. The United States should work with its Asian alliance members and other partners to devise a set of policies to deal with China’s coercive geoeconomic pressures. This is especially important because for the next decade, the China challenge is most likely to be geoeconomic rather than military.³¹ Currently, Beijing pays no price for using its economic instruments to bully nations to acquiesce to its external objectives. To counter this, the U.S. should join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), formerly known as the TPP, and launch a comprehensive campaign against such coercive Chinese policies, including those in the Belt and Road Initiative.

14. The United States should marshal its diplomacy with nations within the region, as well as those outside it (e.g., European countries that favor rules-based approaches, although this will require awakening Europe from its strategic stupor), to make progress on priorities such as world order, climate, free trade, regional security, and freedom of navigation.
15. The U.S. should attempt to initiate an extended conversation with Vladimir Putin and the Russian government on world order and the security of Europe and Asia. In analyzing threats to American security, Zbigniew Brzezinski warned that “the most dangerous scenario” would be “a grand coalition of China and Russia... united not by ideology but by complementary grievances.”³² Thus, the increasing Russian embrace of China is clearly not in the U.S. national interest, and it would be useful to introduce in Beijing the idea that Russia’s current bear hug may not be permanent. In that context, NATO enlargement should be over and done, and the U.S. should incrementally lift its sanctions against Russia regarding its annexation of Crimea in return for the end of Moscow’s interference in eastern Ukraine. Since it is inconceivable that Moscow will ever withdraw from Crimea, do enthusiasts for those sanctions want them to stay in place in perpetuity?
16. The United States, even as it looks for areas of cooperation with the PRC, should make clear to Beijing that any Chinese attempt to challenge fundamental U.S. national interests in Asia will be met by resolute resistance and will not advance Chinese grand strategy.
17. Washington, as it implements policies to deal with the threatening aspects of the rise of Chinese power, should construct a plausible path of classic diplomacy with Beijing that would seek to ameliorate the growing tension between the two countries.³³ A supreme effort by both sides is necessary to avoid a situation of permanent confrontation, which could eventually lead to war, in particular over the issue of Taiwan, where tensions between Beijing and Taipei are on the rise.³⁴

If Washington and Beijing do not stop the downward turn in the bilateral relationship and lurch into prolonged intense confrontation or even conflict, the American and Chinese people would be the first to pay the price of this policy failure. Most of the rest of the world would soon join the suffering. Consequences would emerge for the United States’ and China’s formidable domestic challenges and national economies. Effects on the global economy would be devastating. Tension would dramatically increase throughout Asia, since no country in that vast region wants to have to choose between the United States and China. The effect on potential U.S.-China collaboration on climate change and other issues of global governance would be corrosive. Attempts to deal with the nuclear weapons program of North Korea and potentially that of Iran would fall apart.

In restricted private exchanges, U.S. and Chinese leaders should, first, candidly address how the application of their countries’ perceived national interests could be circumscribed and restrained to avoid U.S.-China confrontation. In what ways should world order be rebalanced, and with what set of mutually accepted international rules and practices?³⁵ To be blunt, it is unrealistic to believe that in such a bilateral agreement only China would be required to make concessions. Without this sustained strategic dialogue to discuss what sorts of restraint are required, the future relationship between the United States and China looks exceedingly bleak, and a restoration of a stable world order seems highly unlikely. Although such extended high-level exchanges between Washington and Beijing will not end the strategic competition between the two, which will last for decades, they could help avoid worst-case outcomes. At this writing, there is reason to doubt that either side at present is capable of mounting a serious strategic dialogue, but what is the alternative to giving it a try?

However, for an intensified high-level bilateral dialogue between Washington and Beijing to be fruitful, the United States should first clearly establish that it is enhancing its military, diplomatic, and economic power projection into Asia, intensifying interaction with allies and friends and helping to build up allies’ military

strength—not just making speeches about U.S.-China strategic competition. Nothing less will convince Beijing that it has reasons, based on its national interests, to negotiate seriously with the United States. This will take some time, for Beijing will wait to see if Washington becomes distracted and diverts its attention to other lesser issues in the daily headlines, as is its wont.

Many of these suggested policy proposals are familiar and have been debated in public discourse in recent years. Thus, prescriptive familiarity is not the problem with respect to U.S. policies toward China and Asia writ large. Rather, it is that most such efforts have seen too little policy intensity and too little policy follow-through. As Leonardo da Vinci stressed, “I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do.”³⁶

Yes, Leonardo, with respect to the rise of Chinese power, we must do.

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¹ This essay draws on Robert D. Blackwill, “Managing the U.S.-China Great Power Relationship” (presentation, World Cultural Forum, Shanghai, June 18, 2014), <http://belfercenter.org/publication/managing-us-china-great-power-relationship>; Robert D. Blackwill, “Indo-Pacific Strategy in an Era of Geoeconomics” (speech, Tokyo, July 31, 2018), <http://cfrd8-files.cfr.org/sites/default/files/pdf/8-20%20Tokyo%20Presentation.pdf>; Robert D. Blackwill, *Trump’s Foreign Policies Are Better Than They Seem* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2019), <http://cfr.org/report/trumps-foreign-policies-are-better-they-seem>; Robert D. Blackwill and Kurt M. Campbell, *Xi Jinping on the Global Stage* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2016), <http://cfr.org/report/xi-jinping-global-stage>; Robert D. Blackwill and Jennifer M. Harris, *War by Other Means: Geoeconomics and Statecraft* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016); Robert D. Blackwill and Ashley J. Tellis, “The India Dividend: New Delhi Remains Washington’s Best Hope in Asia,” *Foreign Affairs* 98, no. 5 (September/October 2019): 173-183; Robert D. Blackwill and Ashley J. Tellis, *Revising U.S. Grand Strategy Toward China* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2015), <http://cfr.org/report/revising-us-grand-strategy-toward-china>. However, the author is solely responsible for the substance of this text.

² See Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides’s Trap?* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017).

³ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 182.

⁴ Graham Allison and Robert D. Blackwill, *Lee Kuan Yew: The Grand Master’s Insights on China, the United States, and the World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013), 42; Nicholas D. Kristof, “The Rise of China,” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 5 (November/December 1993): 74.

⁵ Graham Allison and Robert D. Blackwill, *Lee Kuan Yew: The Grand Master’s Insights on China, the United States, and the World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013), 2.

⁶ Lee Kuan Yew, quoted in Graham Allison and Robert D. Blackwill, *Lee Kuan Yew: The Grand Master’s Insights on China, the United States, and the World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013), 2.

⁷ Lee Kuan Yew, “China’s Growing Might and the Consequences,” *Forbes*, March 28, 2011.

⁸ Pharaoh clearly did not sufficiently take into account Moses’s strategic and tactical assets, in this case his God, as he led the Israelites out of captivity in Egypt and into the land of Canaan. The Egyptian intelligence community’s failure regarding collection, collation, evaluation, analysis, integration, and interpretation reportedly cost Pharaoh his entire army and all its equipment in the Red Sea.

⁹ For an explanation of China’s many domestic problems, see Lee Kuan Yew’s enumeration in Graham Allison and Robert D. Blackwill, *Lee Kuan Yew: The Grand Master’s Insights on China, the United States, and the World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013), 7-11. Also see James T. Areddy, “China’s Economy Shows Fresh Signs of Weakness,” *Wall Street Journal*, June 16, 2019, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/chinas-economy-shows-fresh-signs-of-weakness-11560512903>; Keith Bradsher, “China’s Economic Growth Slows as Trade War With U.S. Deepens,” *New York Times*, July 14, 2019, <http://nytimes.com/2019/07/14/business/china-economy-growth-gdp-trade-war.html>; Chris Buckley, “2019 Is a Sensitive Year for China. Xi Is Nervous.”

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¹⁰ This rigorous definition of U.S. national interests has been developed over twenty years in an enduring conversation and partnership with Graham Allison.

¹¹ The list of U.S. vital national interests draws on Graham Allison and Robert Blackwill, *America's National Interests, Commission on America's National Interests*, July 2000, <http://belfercenter.org/files/amernatinter.pdf>.

¹² Henry Kissinger, *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace, 1812-1822* (London: Phoenix Press, 2000), 2–3.

¹³ James Massola, "Barack Obama's China Policy Has Not Been Successful, Says US Official," *Sydney Morning Herald*, November 2, 2014.

¹⁴ M. Taylor Fravel et al., "China Is Not an Enemy," *Washington Post*, July 3, 2019, http://washingtonpost.com/opinions/making-china-a-us-enemy-is-counterproductive/2019/07/02/647d49d0-9bfa-11e9-b27f-ed2942f73d70_story.html?utm_term=.e1a207ec8cf2.

¹⁵ Lily Kuo, "'Divide and Conquer': China Puts the Pressure on U.S. Allies," *Guardian*, February 2, 2019, <http://theguardian.com/world/2019/feb/02/divide-and-conquer-china-puts-the-pressure-on-us-allies>; Robert D. Blackwill and Jennifer M. Harris, *War by Other Means: Geoeconomics and Statecraft* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 93–151; Robert D. Blackwill, "Indo-Pacific Strategy in an Era of Geoeconomics" (speech, Tokyo, July 31, 2018), <http://cfr8-files.cfr.org/sites/default/files/pdf/8-20%20Tokyo%20Presentation.pdf>; Robert D. Blackwill and Ashley J. Tellis, *Revising U.S. Grand Strategy Toward China* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2015), <http://cfr.org/report/revising-us-grand-strategy-toward-china>. See also the Commission on the Theft of American Intellectual Property, *Update to the IP Commission Report: The Theft of American Intellectual Property; Reassessments of the Challenge and United States Policy* (Washington, DC: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2017), http://ipcommission.org/report/IP_Commission_Report_Update_2017.pdf; Gerry Shih, "Xi Offers Promises and Threats as He Calls China's Unification With Taiwan Inevitable," *Washington Post*, January 2, 2019, http://washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/xi-offers-promises-and-threats-as-he-calls-chinas-unification-with-taiwan-inevitable/2019/01/02/85ae5ece-0e82-11e9-92b8-6dd99e2d80e1_story.html; "Advance Policy Questions for Admiral Philip Davidson, USN, Expected Nominee for Commander, U.S. Pacific Command," U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services, April 17, 2018, http://armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Davidson_APQs_04-17-18.pdf; Robert D. Blackwill and Kurt M. Campbell, *Xi Jinping on the Global Stage* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2016), <http://cfr.org/report/xi-jinping-global-stage>; "China," in *World Report 2019, Human Rights Watch*, <http://hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/china-and-tibet>; Anne Applebaum, "'Never Again?' It's Already Happening," *Washington Post*, February 15, 2019, http://washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/the-west-ignored-crimes-against-humanity-in-the-1930s-its-happening-again-now/2019/02/15/d17d4998-3130-11e9-813a-0ab2f17e305b_story.html.

¹⁶ Virtually every one of these policy prescriptions would be more effective if they were done in concert with America's allies and friends. It is also clear that much of the analysis and many of the policy proposals in this essay are unlikely to be accepted by the current administration.

¹⁷ See Richard N. Haass's encompassing *Foreign Policy Begins at Home: The Case for Putting America's House in Order* (New York: Basic Books, 2013).

¹⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 360.

¹⁹ In my book with Jennifer M. Harris, *War by Other Means*, we define geoeconomics as "the use of economic instruments to promote and defend national interests and to produce beneficial geopolitical results, and the effects of other nations' economic actions on a country's geopolitical goals."

²⁰ See Salvatore Babones, "America Must Pivot Toward China and Away from the Middle East," *The National Interest*, May 1, 2019, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/america-must-pivot-toward-china-and-away-middle-east-55302>; Hal Brands, "New U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy Isn't Going to Scare China," *Bloomberg*, June 18, 2019, <http://bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2019-06-18/u-s-indo-pacific-strategy-isn-t-going-to-scare-china>; Robert W. Merry, "The Great Power Game Is On and China Is Winning," *The American Conservative*, May 22, 2019, <http://theamericanconservative.com/articles/the-great-power-game-is-on-and-china-is-winning>; Mark Montgomery and Eric Sayers, "Addressing America's Operational Shortfall in the Pacific," *War on the Rocks*, June 18, 2019, <http://warontherocks.com/2019/06/addressing-americas-operational-shortfall-in-the-pacific>; Will Saetren and Hunter Marston, "Washington Must Own Up to Superpower Competition With China," *The Diplomat*, March 8, 2018, <http://thediplomat.com/2018/03/washington-must-own-up-to-superpower-competition-with-china>.

²¹ Jim Zarroli, "China Churns Out Half the World's Steel, and Other Steelmakers Feel Pinched," *NPR*, March 8, 2018, <http://npr.org/2018/03/08/591637097/china-churns-out-half-the-worlds-steel-and-other-steelmakers-feel-pinched>.

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- ²⁷ See Henry A. Kissinger, “How the Enlightenment Ends,” *The Atlantic*, June 2018, <http://theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/06/henry-kissinger-ai-could-mean-the-end-of-human-history/559124>; Henry A. Kissinger, Eric Schmidt, and Daniel Huttenlocher, “The Metamorphosis,” *The Atlantic*, August 2019, <http://theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/08/henry-kissinger-the-metamorphosis-ai/592771>; Kaveh Waddell, “The Global Race between China and U.S. to Set the Rules for AI,” *Axios*, July 14, 2019, <http://axios.com/artificial-intelligence-china-united-states-5bea5020-c5c6-4527-8d25-7bf0036f6384.html>.
- ²⁸ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 22-23.
- ²⁹ There is no better public source on cyber issues than David Sanger’s frequent revelations on the front page of the *New York Times*.
- ³⁰ Jonathan Masters, “Confronting the Cyber Threat,” Council on Foreign Relations, May 23, 2011, <http://cfr.org/backgrounder/confronting-cyber-threat>. For compelling conceptual examinations of cyber issues, see Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “Deterrence and Dissuasion in Cyberspace,” *International Security* 41, no. 3 (Winter 2016/2017): 44-71; Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “The World Needs New Norms on Cyberwarfare,” *Washington Post*, October 1, 2015, http://washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-world-needs-an-arms-control-treaty-for-cybersecurity/2015/10/01/20c3e970-66dd-11e5-9223-70cb36460919_story.html; Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “Cyberspace Wars,” *New York Times*, February 27, 2011, <http://nytimes.com/2011/02/28/opinion/28iht-ednye28.html>.
- ³¹ Robert D. Blackwill and Jennifer M. Harris, *War by Other Means: Geoeconomics and Statecraft* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 110.
- ³² Graham Allison, “China and Russia: A Strategic Alliance in the Making,” *The National Interest*, December 14, 2018, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/china-and-russia-strategic-alliance-making-38727>.
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