

Politics With Other Means: Aligning U.S. Military and Diplomatic Efforts in the Indo-Pacific Command Region

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ABSTRACT

This paper offers potential answers to the question, “How does the United States effectively align military and diplomatic efforts to deter the People’s Republic of China expansionism in the Indo-Pacific Command region?” A problem/solution method is used to address the question. The need for alignment is demonstrated by a thorough review of national-level policy documents, and the current gap in the alignment of military and diplomatic efforts is demonstrated through review and analysis of primary and secondary sources. An historical approach is taken throughout the work to provide background and context from Chinese and United States (U.S.) perspectives. An analysis is conducted to juxtapose eastern and western approaches to geopolitical competition and war. Historic examples of U.S. successes due to strategically aligned application of its Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic (DIME) Instruments of National Power (IOP) are analyzed, as well as historic failures due to dis-alignment. Structural options which facilitate the alignment of military and diplomatic efforts within Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) are outlined and compared, resulting in the author’s recommendation for implementation. Contrasting views are then addressed. Next, tailorable opportunities for global implementation of the recommended structural option are discussed. Lastly, an integrated Whole-of-Government (WOG) structural method is offered to support the oversight and achievement of national strategic objectives and provide the United States of America lasting and adaptable advantage across Great Power Competition (GPC) and beyond.

Keywords: Indo-Pacific, China, Geopolitical, Instruments of National Power, Great Power Competition

Política por otros medios: alinear los esfuerzos militares y diplomáticos de EE. UU. en la región de comando del Indo-Pacífico

RESUMEN

Este documento ofrece respuestas potenciales a la pregunta: “¿Cómo alinea Estados Unidos de manera efectiva los esfuerzos militares y diplomáticos para disuadir el expansionismo de la República Popular China en la región del Comando del Indo-Pacífico?” Se utiliza un método de problema/solución para abordar la pregunta. La necesidad de alineación se demuestra mediante una revisión exhaustiva de los documentos de política a nivel nacional, y la brecha actual en la alineación de los esfuerzos militares y diplomáticos se demuestra mediante la revisión y el análisis de fuentes primarias y secundarias. Se adopta un enfoque histórico a lo largo del trabajo para proporcionar antecedentes y contexto desde las perspectivas de China y Estados Unidos (EE. UU.). Se lleva a cabo un análisis para yuxtaponer los enfoques oriental y occidental de la competencia geopolítica y la guerra. Se analizan ejemplos históricos de éxitos de EE. UU. debido a la aplicación estratégicamente alineada de sus Instrumentos de Poder Nacional (IOP) diplomáticos, informativos, militares y económicos (DIME), así como fallas históricas debido a la desalineación. Se describen y comparan las opciones estructurales que facilitan la alineación de los esfuerzos militares y diplomáticos dentro del Comando del Indo-Pacífico (INDOPACOM), lo que da como resultado la recomendación del autor para su implementación. Luego se abordan los puntos de vista contrastantes. A continuación, se analizan las oportunidades adaptables para la implementación global de la opción estructural recomendada. Por último, se ofrece un método estructural integrado de todo el gobierno (WOG) para respaldar la supervisión y el logro de los objetivos estratégicos nacionales y proporcionar a los Estados Unidos de América una ventaja duradera y adaptable a través de Great Power Competition (GPC) y más allá.

Palabras clave: Indo-Pacífico, China, Geopolítica, Instrumentos de poder nacional, Gran competencia de poder

其他方式实现的政治：协调美国在印太司令部地区的军事和外交活动

摘要

本文为“美国如何有效协调军事和外交活动以阻止中华人民共和国在印太司令部地区的扩张主义”这一问题提供了可能的答案。使用问题/解决法应对该问题。对国家级政策文件的全面审视证明了这种协调的必要性，同时，对原始资料和次级资料的审视和分析表明了当前军事和外交活动在协调方面的不足。本文通篇采用历史方法，从中国和美国的视角提供背景和情境。采用一项分析，将东西方对地缘政治竞争和战争采取的方法进行了比较。分析了一系列关于美国成功的历史实例，其中通过对外交、信息、军事和经济（DIME）这四种国家实力工具（IOP）的战略性协调应用而取得成功；并分析了因协调不一致而导致历史性失败的例子。概述和比较了促进印太司令部（INDOPACOM）内军事和外交活动协调一致的结构选择，从而得出作者的实施建议。随后描述了不同的观点。然后探讨了如何将结构选择适用于全球其他地区。最后，提出了一种综合的全政府（WOG）结构方法，用于支持国家战略目标的监督和实现，并为美国在大国竞争（GPC）及其他领域提供持久且适应性强的优势。

关键词：印度-太平洋，中国，地缘政治，国家实力工具，大国竞争

Clarification of Perspective and Terms. It is paramount to state upfront that the perspective of this work is one of respect, compassion, and empathy for the people of China. Any perceived critique of bureaucratic policy or action is not directed at the people of any nation, but rather intended to shape the reader's understanding of the current geopolitical dynamic. From the perspective of the United States and its partners and allies, the *Chinese Communist Party (CCP)*, in the

form of the *People's Republic of China (PRC)*, may pose significant threats to national strategic objectives. However, the *people* of China are not a threat and should be valued and every effort should be made to secure and protect their individual and collective rights.

Here, the author uses the term *China* to refer to the commonly understood geographic region of Asia. It is also used when referring to claims of cultural identity, ethos, and achievement of groups collectively hailing from

that same geographic region, spanning ancient times to the present. It is used rarely and in the context of quotations to refer to the current Chinese central government. The term *CCP* is used to refer to the specific Chinese Communist political party in China prior to the establishment of the Communist-led *PRC* in 1949. When refereeing to the post 1949 Chinese central government, the terms *CCP* and *PRC* are largely used interchangeably.

Introduction

Over the last two decades, while the United States has focused on the Global War on Terror and countering insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan, Communist China has risen. The PRC has seized every opportunity to gain global economic preeminence, assert itself as a regional hegemony, build an assertive posture toward the U.S., and increase its military capability and capacity to project greater power and influence globally (Jones 2020, 1). The PRC has attempted to isolate, manipulate, and maliciously influence U.S. partners and allies across Asia while taking advantage of the goodwill and opportunity provided by U.S. policies and actions (Cordesman, Burke, & Molot 2019, 59). The PRC's actions directly undermine the standing rules-based international order, threaten U.S. interests, challenge U.S. allies and partners, and place the PRC in direct GPC with the United States of America (Cordesman, Burke, & Molot 2019, 50, 53). The United States must effectively deter PRC regional expansion and ag-

gression to ensure its national interests, maintain its geopolitical advantage, and support the international order and its Asian partners and allies.

The U.S. must take swift action to establish aligned organizational structure, focus, and policy implementation to deter PRC expansionism in the INDOPACOM region. At its disposal, the United States has DIME IOP to deter and counter the PRC's revisionist expansionism both regionally and globally (Henwood 2015, 2). This paper focuses regionally and asks the question "How does the United States effectively align military and diplomatic efforts to deter PRC expansionism in the INDOPACOM region?" Alignment of military and diplomatic IOP are key to achieving strategic objectives and drive follow-on informational and economic policies and actions to reach strategic end-states. Therefore, diplomatic and military IOP must be aligned first. Once this is achieved, informational and economic IOP can be aligned to enable diplomatic and military efforts regionally and globally. Analysis of current Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of State (DOS) policies will demonstrate an apparent gap in alignment and implementation of military and diplomatic efforts, even though the DOS's prioritized focus areas largely fall within traditional military areas of influence and responsibility (Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development 2018, 24-25, 27).

If the U.S. does not align its military and diplomatic efforts now to counter and continue countering the

PRC's expansionism within INDOPACOM, it will rapidly lose regional influence, allies, security, and economic opportunity (Henwood 2015, 4). This outcome will degrade U.S. world standing, leave the U.S. vulnerable at home and abroad, and exacerbate economic challenges and political divisions within U.S. borders. First, this paper provides a comprehensive explanation of its analytical methodology and approach. Next, through a thorough literature review, this paper demonstrates the aforementioned alignment and implementation gap of U.S. military and diplomatic efforts across the DOD and DOS, and within INDOPACOM. Following that, a robust historical background of Chinese cultural identity, worldview, and interactions with the West is outlined to provide a baseline cultural context and perspective to the reader. Within this section, the rise of the CCP, establishment of the PRC, and U.S./PRC relations are outlined up to the current timeline to provide further context and perspective to better understand current expansionist efforts. Next, this paper analyses differences in eastern and western perspectives to provide illustrative examples of U.S. successes and failures due to IOP implementation and alignment and analyses the current state of U.S./PRC relations. This paper proposes and analyses two structural options for joint-interagency organizational constructs to effectively align military and diplomatic IOP within INDOPACOM and concludes with a recommendation. Implementation details of the recommended option are provided. Finally, future prospects for

larger-scale implementation of the recommended joint-interagency structure across multiple Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs) are discussed. Additionally, the author offers a potential joint-interagency global-level initiative which can enable the U.S. to gain and maintain geopolitical advantage worldwide through a WOG approach. This initiative enables regionally tailorable yet persistent alignment of all IOP across all GCCs to facilitate the achievement of strategic objectives and ensure the United States maintains geopolitical preeminence, supports its partners and allies, and gains and maintains a persistent advantage in Great Power Competition.

Methodology

This paper's analytical framework views the problem through the lens of GPC, leverages a problem/solution framework, maximizes a historical approach, and compares joint-interagency structural options to better align U.S. military and diplomatic IOP to deter Chinese expansionism within INDOPACOM.

To succeed in GPC, powers must be able to effectively operate in the "gray zone," influencing the actions of competitors and others below the threshold of armed conflict (Cordesman, Burke, & Molot 2019, 59). War is undesirable in a GPC construct; however, to effectively influence other actors with non-military IOP, Great Powers must maintain a credible military threat across the threshold of armed conflict to deter potentially malicious actors. If a credible

military threat does not exist across that threshold, then most other IOP efforts can largely be ignored by competitors and adversaries since a hard-power enforcement capability does not exist. Additionally, Great Powers must be able to take limited-scale military action, if required, to influence below the threshold or war within a GPC construct.

It is understanding this reality within GPC considerations that this paper leverages a problem/solution framework to provide options and recommendations on ways to more effectively align U.S. military and diplomatic efforts to deter PRC expansionism in the INDOPACOM region. Problematic is the apparent gap in the alignment of DOD and DOS efforts to counter PRC expansionism within INDOPACOM, which is demonstrated in the literature review. The solution is the establishment and implementation of a regionally focused joint-interagency team tasked specifically with aligning DOD and DOS efforts to counter PRC expansionism within INDOPACOM. Two options for the formation of such a team are discussed, evaluated, and a final recommendation is made.

A historical perspective is provided throughout the background to provide the reader an understanding of China's self-identity from ancient times through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. Further context to the current U.S. / PRC GPC dynamic is provided by again leveraging a historical perspective to succinctly highlight key shifts in the relationship between China and the U.S. from the

establishment of the PRC in the late 1940s through today. This is important because it highlights potential deltas in perspective, identity, and prime drivers between the PRC and the U.S., and offers insight into PRC's self-identity-based strategic objectives.

The importance of IOP alignment to achieve strategic objectives will be demonstrated many times over, driving home the point that alignment of military and diplomatic efforts enables coordinated strategic approaches. Which would in turn enable synchronized governmental operations and mutually supporting tactical-level engagements, resulting in a united DOD/DOS front within INDOPACOM to deter PRC expansionism. This analysis relies heavily on a qualitative approach but touches on quantitative metrics as well. The overall approach leverages a historical perspective to provide the reader examples of effective U.S. military/diplomatic alignment and the positive resultant outcomes. Additionally, key points where the U.S. has experienced setbacks and failures in international relations due to the dis-alignment of military and diplomatic efforts are highlighted.

Based on thorough analysis, two structural organizational options are offered, and associated recommendations are provided to more effectively align U.S. military and diplomatic efforts within INDOPACOM to counter PRC expansionism within INDOPACOM. These two options are compared/contrasted via a Course-of-Action-like comparison method tied to

criteria outlined in that section. Based on this comparison, a joint-interagency organizational option is recommended. The future prospects and conclusion portions demonstrate how this model could potentially be implemented as structural blueprints for similar IOP alignment across multiple State Department Regions/Bureaus and GCCs.

Literature Review— Demonstrating the Gap

This paper offers options which enable the U.S. Government to more effectively align military and diplomatic efforts to deter Chinese expansionism in the INDOPACOM region. To do so, the gap in alignment must be identified, addressed, and plans put in place to coordinate, synchronize, and align military and diplomatic efforts within INDOPACOM. The primary and secondary sources reviewed below demonstrate the existence of a gap and the validate the need for alignment in military and diplomatic strategic IOP alignment.

U.S./PRC GPC has been and remains a primary focus of the U.S. Office of the President. In his *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance* issued in March 2021, President Biden specifically addresses the PRC's aggressive actions and the U.S.'s duty to hold them accountable (Biden 2021, 10). President Biden specifically states: "I direct departments and agencies to align their actions with this guidance," which also implies the need for departments writ large to align strategic efforts laterally,

as well as vertically (Biden 2021, introduction). President Biden stresses "diplomacy as our tool of first resort" while ensuring "responsible use of our military," with the strategic objective of enabling the U.S. to "prevail in strategic competition with China" (Biden 2021, 12, 20). Even though this is interim guidance until the Administration publishes a new National Security Strategy (NSS), the need for strategic alignment across government departments and agencies and the currently existing gap in that alignment is clear.

Previous U.S. Presidents also recognized and prioritized U.S. GPC with the PRC. In the *National Security Strategy of the United States of America 2017* (2017 NSS), President Trump outlined priorities and engagement strategies with the PRC across the GPC continuum. GPC exists on a scale and ranges from cooperation to conflict, but rather maintaining U.S. leadership in the region to ensure markets and trade agreements remain open and profitable for U.S. economic endeavors and interests were top priorities of his administration as well. To effectively achieve these goals, the U.S. must maintain its international allies and partners across INDOPACOM. President Trump articulated that PRC military and economic expansionism are unfairly threatening the U.S. and regional nations' markets shares and specifically called on allied and partnered nations to support the U.S.-led efforts to counter the PRC in the political/diplomatic arena, the economic sector, and across the military and security sectors (Trump 2107, 45-46). The implied task in this strategy is

to align efforts across the instruments of national power to dis-allow and deter PRC expansionism.

Secretary of Defense (SecDef) Lloyd J. Austin specifically states the need for a “coordinated and synchronized” WOG approach; he has discussed his vision for the DOD to prioritize the PRC as the “number one pacing challenge” today (Austin 2021, 1). This statement is telling in that it clearly articulates the need for alignment, which does not currently exist. The SecDef’s vision of strategic IOP alignment and a WOG approach, where the military is *an* IOP and not *the* IOP, is indicative of the need for balanced and aligned strategic approaches across all IOP. This demonstrates the existing gap for which this paper provides analysis and corrective recommendations.

In the *Summary of the 2018 National Defense of Strategy of The United States of America: Sharpening the American Military’s Competitive Edge*, former SecDef James Mattis outlined his assessment of the competitive strategic environment and DOD objectives, nested in President Trump’s *2017 National Security Strategy*. He opens by stating that the DOD must reinforce “America’s traditional tools of diplomacy,” and even though the PRC “seeks Indo-Pacific regional hegemony in the near-term and displacement of the United States to achieve global preeminence in the future. The most far-reaching objective of this defense strategy is to set the military relationship between our two countries on a path of transparency and non-aggression” (Mattis 2018, 1-2).

Even though military and diplomatic alignment is an implied vice specified task in this statement, it is still very clear that the former SecDef intended to facilitate transparency and avoid escalations to the point of conflict. This can be best facilitated by the alignment of U.S. diplomatic and military IOP to enable effective strategic policy implementation in GPC with the PRC.

Nested under the *2018 National Defense Strategy*, the Joint Staff’s *Description of the National Military Strategy 2018* provided the Chairman’s of the Joint Chiefs of Staff “military advice for how the Joint Force implements the defense objectives in the NDS and the direction from the President and the Secretary of Defense” (The Joint Staff 2018, 1). This document acknowledges GPC with the PRC across all domains, highlights the need for allies and partners, and specifically outlines “Compete Below the Level of Armed Conflict (With a Military Dimension)” as a Mission Area, but stops short of specially stating a need for aligned military and diplomatic efforts (The Joint Staff 2018, 2-3). However, to operate successfully in GPC against a peer competitor, alignment of military and diplomatic efforts is critical. DOD/DOS alignment is an implied task in this document and remains a gap writ large.

The *Joint Strategic Plan FY 2018-2022* outlines the collaboration between DOS/U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the DOD in a few general categories but stops short of outlining a need for aligned objectives (Department of State and U.S. Agency

for International Development 2018, 24, 27, 29, 31, 60). Ironically, the first three DOS/USAID strategic objectives in the diplomatic *Joint Strategic Plan* are military-centric strategic objectives: “Strategic Objective 1.1: Counter the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and their Delivery System”; “Strategic Objective 1.2: Defeat ISIS, al-Qa’ida and other transnational terrorist organizations, and counter state-sponsored, regional, and local terrorist groups that threaten U.S. national security interests”; “Strategic Objective 1.3: Counter instability, transnational crime, and violence that threaten U.S. interests by strengthening citizen-responsive governance, security, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law” (Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development 2018, 24, 25, 27). The cross-boundary nature of these objectives further demonstrates the need for specified alignment between military and diplomatic IOP across the DOS and DOS writ large, specifically concerning the PRC’s expansionist efforts in the INDOPACOM region.

In his *Integrated Country Strategy – China*, the U.S. State Department Chief of Mission (COM) for China outlines mission priorities, strategic framework, mission goals and objectives, and management goals and objectives. The COM points out that even though we work in cooperation with the PRC on many fronts, our “core values contrast sharply,” resulting in conflicting interests (Chief of Mission 2018, 2). The COM outlines balanced trade as a top priority while denying PRC attempts to

illegally or maliciously acquire foreign or proprietary technology (Chief of Mission 2018, 2). With this baseline established upfront, the COM goes on to outline cooperative activities between the U.S. and the PRC which adhere to trade law and international norms. This DOS regional strategy does not mention U.S. military presence or efforts in the region, let alone a synchronized or aligned approach between the DOS Asian Bureaus or the INDOPACOM GCC. This continues to illustrate the gap in the alignment of strategy, plans, and implementation.

The Congressional Research Services report *Renewed Great Power Competition: Implications for Defense – Issues for Congress*, outlines assessed national defense issues and focus areas that will be affected by GPC. The report outlines the military drawdown post-Cold War, but given its comparison of the current situation to the Cold War, one could infer that the report is advocating for an increase in military size to effectively compete with other Great Powers; however, the report seems to stop short of making any overt recommendations (Congressional Research Services 2020). Again, no analysis is offered on how to align military and diplomatic operations as part of a holistic strategy.

Bruce Jones’ *China and the Return of Great Power Competition* offers a strategy for countering Chinese expansionism through military posturing, building alliances, or various types of deterrence. Jones even goes as far as suggesting a type of dual-globalization

factions, one led by the U.S. and the other by the PRC (Jones 2020, 9). However, Jones does not touch on how to align military and diplomatic efforts in his article, further demonstrating how this gap is largely overlooked when developing strategic approaches or translating them into operational coordination and tactical actions.

Jeffery Bader, former principal advisor to President Obama on U.S. policy in Asia, and now a senior fellow in the John L. Thornton China Center at the Brookings Institution continues to state the need for aligned strategic approaches and multi-lateral engagement, in *U.S.- China Relations: Is It Time to End the Engagement?* Bader advocates for multi-lateral international engagement with the PRC to open markets and ensure equity and obligations in the marketplace (Bader 2018, 5-6). This type of engagement would require a WOG approach on the part of the U.S. to gain other nations' support across this multilateral engagement, but Bader states that the U.S. must "put our own house in order" first (Bader 2018, 6). This requires strategic, operational, and tactical alignment of our military and diplomatic efforts within INDOPACOM, which currently does not exist at the level required for the U.S. to gain and maintain the advantage in a GPC construct with the PRC.

Across these sources, it becomes evident there is a need for strategic alignment of U.S. IOP. The implied task of IOP alignment across U.S. governmental departments is present in guidance and directives from current

and former U.S. Presidents, both of whom recognize that the U.S. is operating within a GPC construct with the PRC. These realities are echoed by current and former Secretaries of Defense, and within DOS/USAID Strategic Objectives, which mirror military objectives—further driving home the point of needed alignment (Department of State and US Agency for International Development 2018, 24, 25, 27). Refining focus into INDOPACOM, the gap in the alignment of efforts across military and diplomatic entities at the operational and tactical levels becomes even more glaring when examining the DOS *Integrated Country Strategy – China*. Every one of the sources reviewed, either explicitly or implicitly, demonstrates the gap in the alignment of military and diplomatic IOP at every level. If this gap is lessened by more effectively aligning military and diplomatic efforts based on the recommendations of this paper, then the U.S. can more effectively deter PRC expansionism within INDOPACOM.

Background

The Art of War is a seminal work attributed to the legendary Sun Tzu, which compiles ancient Eastern thoughts and perspectives on warfare strategy and philosophy. By understanding key tenets outlined therein, one may begin to understand prime motivators and drivers in the PRC's strategic approaches to GPC today. As articulated in *The Art of War*, to succeed one must know both their adversaries and oneself (Sun Tzu 2000, 11). Keeping this

in mind, the following background provides a deeper understating of China's historical identity; its influence across Asia and beyond; its past interactions with the western world; U.S./PRC relations from 1949-2000; and U.S./PRC relations from 2001-present. The historic approach sets the stage for effective analysis and provides a baseline from which to better understand the PRC's viewpoints and perspectives to more effectively leverage and align IOP to gain desired strategic outcomes.

China's Historical Identity

China's historical and cultural identities today are rooted in thousands of years of empire, innovation, and influence. China is Earth's oldest continuous civilization, and oral tradition tells of Emperor Yu establishing the Xia Dynasty which lasted from approximately 2100-1600 B.C. (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). This period was followed by the Shang Dynasty, from approximately 1600-1050 B.C., when advances in mathematics and astronomy marked the collective advancement of their people (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). Ancient Chinese history and oral tradition boast vast rising empires and advances in science and technology contemporary with the rise of ancient Babylonian and Egyptian dynasties in the Middle East. From 551-479 B.C., the globally renowned philosopher Confucius lived and worked across China developing schools, disciples, and concepts that are still central to the Chinese people and government today (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). The Qin Dynasty unified disparate war-

rior-ruled territories into what we now call China, and in the 200s B.C., standardized national scripts established an imperial academy, created the 500-mile long Strait Road, began the Great Wall, and built vast underground chambers and the associated famed terracotta warrior statues (History.com 2019, China: Timeline).

The Han Dynasty followed the Qin in the second century B.C. The Han Dynasty and its achievements became and remain the cultural touchpoint for Chinese self-identity and a key reference point of cultural heritage. The Han Dynasty established the Silk Road connecting East and West trade routes and promulgating wealth and influence from central Asia across the continent and into the Middle East—China's first Golden Age (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). At the beginning of the second century A.D., the Han developed paper and spread it across the empire resulting in the first Chinese dictionary and the first book of Chinese history (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). Modern China is aware of and confident in their ancient history and Han cultural identity, and currently uses these and other historic reference points across Han and other dynasties as motivating factors to drive a return to preeminence as a global Great Power in the 21st century.

In the later centuries A.D., China continued to lead the way in technology, scientific innovation, and empire-driven governmental structure. In the ninth century A.D., a Second Golden Age under the Tang Dynasty brought forth gunpowder and the

development of the first printing press in China, both of which are watershed inventions and were tipping points in human history (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). These achievements harkened back to Chinese greatness first experienced under the Han and reinforced traditional Han cultural identity across China. Across the next few centuries, the Tang Dynasty experienced periods of upheaval and limited stability. Specifically, the An Lushan Rebellion in the eighth century A.D. opened the door to the eventual downfall of the Tang Dynasty (Encyclopedia Britannica online, n.d., An Lushan Rebellion summary). This internal rebellion against the Tang Emperor, led by An Lushan, one of his own generals of non-Chinese origin, was eventually quelled but the Tang were greatly weakened and the door opened for following power grabs (Encyclopedia Britannica online, n.d., An Lushan Rebellion summary). In the centuries to come, China became fragmented by warlords and the rival overlapping dynasties of the Song, Liao, and Jin collectively spanning from the early 900s A.D. to roughly the mid-1200s A.D. (Encyclopedia Britannica online, n.d., The Song (960–1279), Liao (907–1125), and Jin (1115–1234) dynasties). Eventually these kingdoms gave way to the Mongol conquest of Genghis Khan across much of Asia; and Genghis' grandson Kublai Khan unified Mongolia and China, and whose influence spread to parts of the Middle East, Europe, and Siberia under the Chinese Yuan Dynasty (History.com 2019, China: Timeline).

Post-Yuan Dynasty, China's first attempt to build a large blue water navy

emerged under the Ming Dynasty and resulting in historic territorial claims to the South China Sea, which are still leveraged today (Gronewold, n.d.). The Ming Dynasty came to power in the mid-to-late 1300s A.D. and ruled China until northern Manchurian incursions resulted in the establishment of the Qing Dynasty in the late 1600s A.D. (Gronewold, n.d.). The Ming Emperor Zhu Di (the Yongle Emperor) desired to distinguish the Ming from the previous Mongolian Yuan rulers and ordered great sea expeditions to demonstrate Ming power (Gronewold, n.d.). Under the command of Admiral Zheng He, Ming "Treasure Ships" sailed from China to Southeast Asia, establishing Chinese hegemony across those regions and forming the basis for Chinese territorial claims still made today (Gronewold, n.d.).

Zheng He sailed on to India, the Persian Gulf, and Africa establishing nautical trade routes and outposts along the way (Gronewold, n.d.). For perspective, many of Zheng He's "Treasure Ships" were "sailing vessels over 400 hundred feet long, 160 feet wide, with several stories, nine masts and twelve sails, and luxurious staterooms complete with balconies. The likes of these ships had never before been seen in the world, and it would not be until World War I that such an armada would be assembled again" (Gronewold, n.d.). Contemporary European vessels paled in size and scope when compared to these feats of Chinese nautical engineering. These expeditions were comprised of tens of thousands of sailors and established China as the regional Great Power across Asia (Gronewold,

n.d.). Not only did the Ming spread Chinese influence across the eastern hemisphere and establish self-perceived cultural precedence for China as the regional hegemony, but they established historical roots for Chinese identity as a powerful sea-faring naval culture.

This again harkened back to the roots of historic Han cultural identity but also opened a new area, the South China Sea, for the reestablishment of a Chinese golden age. However, in 1557 A.D. the Ming Dynasty allowed a European trade presence in China, which changed the trajectory of the Asian continent, and Chinese power, forever (History.com 2019, China: Timeline).

China and Western Powers

Upon establishing permanent contact with the west, one could assert that China has experienced a relatively continuous wave of conflict and perceived exploitation. In 1683 A.D., the Ming Dynasty seized Dutch-controlled Taiwan, which was later claimed by the Manchurian Qing Dynasty once they supplanted the Ming (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). This dynamic was the beginning of the struggle over the control of Taiwan we still see driving geopolitical controversy today. This dynamic also continued to perpetuate the rise-and-fall cycle of Han cultural identity based on northern invasions and started a tumultuous relationship with the west. All of these factors shaped and continue to shape the Chinese perspective, objectives, and geopolitical actions today.

The Manchu Qing were invaders from the north, who encroached on the Han cultural identity of most Chinese people and disallowed the reestablishment of a New Chinese Golden Age under the Ming. Throughout Chinese history a repeated pattern occurs where Han cultural identity and leadership results in innovation and rise to Great Power status, only to be setback by invaders. Within this setback, the people of China harken back to Han identity and self-perceived destiny to reestablish regional power and hegemony. The rise of the Qing Dynasty in the mid-1600s is the invading/setback portion of this cycle. As will become self-evident upon further historical discussion, today China is attempting to rise again to New Golden Age in this cycle.

Under the Qing Dynasty, the United States first established loose diplomatic relations with China in 1784, but trade was largely dominated by European nations (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). In the 1830s, American Protestant missionaries arrived in China; by the mid to late 1840s, the U.S. and China had signed trade agreements and Chinese immigrant laborers began to travel to the U.S. (Office of the Historian, n.d.). Earlier in that same decade, the British Empire perpetuated an opium addiction crisis among the people of China to develop a market for Indian opium and gain advantage over the Qing Dynasty by disrupting their population base through drug addiction, which resulted in the Opium Wars and British control of Hong Kong through the end of the twentieth century (History.com 2019, China: Timeline).

The Taiping Rebellion, led by a Chinese self-proclaimed Christian prophet, took 20 million lives and challenged Qing control from the 1850s through the mid-1860s (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). This instability was largely perceived by the ruling Qing to be a direct result of contact with the west and western religion. The Taiping Rebellion was followed by the Second Opium War during which Britain and France demanded the legalization of opium which had been outlawed due to its atrocious effects on the population during the First Opium War (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). This war resulted in the ceding of more economic and territorial power by the Chinese to the Europeans (History.com 2019, China: Timeline).

Due largely to its loss of control of its own historically held territories to the Europeans, China's regional hegemony began to be challenged. The Japanese gained control of Taiwan in the First Sino-Japanese War, further degrading China's regional status (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). Due to concerns over potential geopolitical fragmentation in China due to western nations' overreach, in 1899 and 1900 U.S. Secretary of State John Hay, with the intent of bolstering Chinese stability and commerce, issued the Open Doors Notes to other foreign powers attempting to claim exclusive access to traditional Chinese spheres of influence (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d).

As a result of western interactions, at the turn of the century, the internal Boxer Rebellion strove to oust

western influence from China and drew combined military action from an eight-nation western coalition when the peasant rebels began attacking and killing Chinese Christians and Christian missionaries in response to a perceived threat to Chinese cultural identity (Plante 1999). This fragmented a previously unified Chinese governmental policy and split loyalties when Chinese "Authorities sometimes fought to protect foreigners and Christians and at other times chose to do nothing at all" (Plante 1999). By 1901, a formal peace treaty was signed, which favored western interests (Plante 1999).

China in the Early-to-Mid Twentieth Century

The factors which led to the rise of the CCP, the war between Chinese Communists and Nationalists, and the establishment of the PRC are many and complex and could singularly consume years of research and many volumes of text. Even though they resulted in the current form of government in China, they are still only a small portion of Chinese history and identity, and seem to be part of a larger overall cycle in the region. The intent of the brief coverage of these events within this paper is not to downplay their many factors or significance, but to offer a concise snapshot of their emergence which has led to the current state of play in U.S./PRC GPC.

Turmoil continued to emanate across China, which Communist scholars have ascribed to western ideas and cultural contact. Western-educated Sun

Yat-Sen led the Xinhin Revolution of 1911 and the following Wuchang Uprising where 15 provinces revolted against the Qing Dynasty (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). Sun took control of the government and declared The Republic of China in 1912 (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). Continued social and cultural unrest resulted in the establishment of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921 (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). The Chinese Communists endured the brutal Shanghai Massacre in 1927 at the hands of Chinese Nationalist Leader Chiang Kai-Shek, which eventually resulted in the Chinese Civil War from 1931 to 1949 (History.com 2019, China: Timeline).

During World War II, somewhat of an internal respite occurred between 1937-1945, when the CCP and the Nationalists formed a tense alliance against the Japanese called the Second United Front—the first having been from 1924-1927 when Sun Yat-sen allowed CCP members to ally with his Nationalists in exchange for Soviet military aide (Encyclopedia Britannica online, n.d., United Front; Chinese history [1937-1945]). Throughout World War II, the United States backed Chiang and his Chinese Nationalists against invading Japanese forces (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). However, in 1949, the CCP gained the advantage and Chiang and many of his Nationalist soldiers were exiled to Taiwan, where they continued to offer dissent and dispute the claims of the CCP. The CCP emerged victorious from the Civil War and Mao Zedong arose as the leader of the People's Republic of China, officially estab-

lished in 1949 (History.com 2019, China: Timeline).

Even though no strangers to perpetrating atrocities on their own people to gain and maintain political control, from both a power-based and socio-cultural perspective the PRC largely views western interactions with China as negative. The PRC views the western world order as a challenge to historic Chinese power claims. The PRC perceives historic western economic interactions as exploitation of the Chinese people and views western culture as a corruption to Chinese culture. The PRC's relationship with the U.S. began after the U.S. had already backed their enemy, Chiang Kai-Shek. In their view, the establishment of the PRC returned control of China to the Chinese people, if in name only. It is through these lenses that the PRC began its post-World War II relationship with the western world, especially with the United States of America. This fed the PRC's self-perception of heroically ending foreign control of China, perpetuated sociological reach-back to Han cultural identity, and commenced the portion of the historical cycle where Han culture can begin rebuilding what the invaders have setback.

U.S./PRC Relations 1949-2000

Due to all of the factors outlined above, U.S./PRC relations were limited and cold from the start. Continued U.S. support to Chinese Nationalists, then occupying Taiwan, and the standing global geopolitical schism between nations claiming Capitalist or Communist economic systems exacerbated already

tense yet practically non-existent international relations (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). Relations were further chilled by the Korean War, where the Chinese and Soviet Communist governments backed communist North Korea and the U.S. fought alongside the South Korean, the Republic of Korea (ROK), forces. The 1953 Armistice Agreement halted open combat actions in the Korean War, though technically the war still has not ended; however, the following year the removal of U.S. naval blockades allowed Chiang Kai-Shek and his Nationalist troops to launch from Taiwan and seize disputed islands, causing the first Taiwan Strait Crisis (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). The PRC responded by indirect fire attacks on the seized islands, which drove the U.S. and Chiang into a mutual defense treaty (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). Hostilities ceased and Nationalist forces withdrew only after the U.S. threatened a nuclear attack on the PRC (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.).

Mao Zedong then began to focus internally on perceived threats to his power within the borders of the PRC. From 1958-1962, Mao's "Great Leap Forward" attempted to force industrial revolution across an agrarian-based society by mandating PRC-owned farming communes and outlawing private farming, resulting in nation-wide famine and approximately 59 million deaths (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). Mao continued to tighten his grip with the 1966 "Cultural Revolution," which intentionally removed traditional Chinese cultural influence and

any Capitalist undertones from society (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). This totalitarian crackdown began with Maoist ideological indoctrination in schools and the formation of units of school-aged Red Guards to violently attack "undesirable citizens" (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). However, it rapidly evolved into fear-based implementation of martial law, and CCP-wide internal purges resulting in approximately 1.5 million deaths within the PRC (History.com 2019, China: Timeline). These destructive policies, violent actions, and campaigns of terror against the Chinese people by their own government left them with nothing but fear of and distrust in that same government, even if they complied with its policies. From an international relations standpoint, Mao's actions further isolated the PRC from international engagements and exponentially increased tension across U.S./PRC relations.

Relations remained on razor's edge until 1969 when a Sino-Soviet border dispute resulted in a re-opening of U.S./PRC relations (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). This was followed by an invitation from the Chinese National Ping-Pong Team to the U.S. National Ping-Pong Team to visit China in 1971, as well as a secret visit that same year by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to begin opening internal relations (Lu, n.d.). As relations were gradually established, President Nixon visited the PRC in 1972 and signed the Shanghai Communiqué to establish an official geopolitical dialog, specifically concerning Taiwan, with the PRC (Lu, n.d.).

Relations slowly progressed over the next decade. However, confusion resulted in 1979 when President Carter officially recognized the PRC diplomatically, recognized their “One China” policy, and cut ties with Taiwan; but that same year the U.S. Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act to enable continued U.S./Taiwan relations and U.S. arms support to Taiwan (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.).

Shortly thereafter, President Reagan’s administration balanced U.S. interactions between the PRC and Taiwan in efforts to maintain stability in the region while countering Soviet expansionism. This resulted in “Six Assurances” to Taiwan, and a Third Joint Communiqué with Beijing, allowing U.S. arms sales to PRC (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). The Reagan Administration’s diplomatic efforts with the PRC opened the door to the U.S. market, enabled increased U.S. trade, and helped kick start the Chinese economy. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the PRC’s approach to internal domestic policy, human rights, and free speech were challenged and at times condemned by the West and the U.S. in particular. However, due to Reagan’s diplomatic outreach and special economic policies with the PRC, the nation developed an industrial base which grew into a manufacturing and economic powerhouse. However, the CCP violently resisted efforts from their own members to work towards a more democratic society, specifically demonstrated by policies of suppressing free speech and the tragic events of the Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989 (History.com 2020, Tiananmen

Square Protests). Chinese President Jiang Zemin and U.S. President Bill Clinton and both conducted diplomatic visits to each other’s nations in 1997 and 1998, respectively (Lu, n.d.). By the late 1990s, U.S./PRC relations appeared to be on a positive glide slope.

In 2000, the PRC and the U.S. officially normalized trade relations and the PRC joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). While the U.S. has worked with the PRC since the 1980s to increase opportunity and economic standing for all of China, once the PRC joined the WTO they began taking advantage of the U.S.’s and the global community’s good intentions. Since 2001, despite U.S.’s inclusive actions over the previous two decades, the PRC has taken aggressive strides towards the U.S. to establish itself as a regional hegemony and a force with which to be reckoned. While potentially surprising to the west, these actions are in line with Chinese self-perceived cultural identity, outlook, and regional objectives across history.

From the establishment of the PRC until around the year 2000, the PRC rebuilt Chinese diplomatic and economic capabilities through a nationalistic perspective, which can easily be equated to a Han cultural identity. This fits with the previously discussed historical cycle. The next logical steps are to build informational and military capabilities to enable power projection and the reestablishment of Chinese Great Power status and regional hegemony. This is the precursor in the his-

torical cycle to establishing a Han culturally-led New Golden Age in China and abroad.

U.S./PRC Relations 2000-Present —The Current Situation

Once the PRC rose to more international prestige, became more integrated into the western economic systems by joining the WTO, and was granted permanent trade status by U.S. president George W. Bush, they began to immediately leverage their influence in the international community (Lu, n.d.). In 2001, a U.S. military EP-3 reconnaissance aircraft collided with a Chinese interceptor aircraft, resulting in the death of the Chinese pilot and the forced landing of the U.S. aircraft in China (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). Given the death of the Chinese pilot and the sensitive nature of U.S. electronic equipment aboard the aircraft, a tense standoff occurred where 24 U.S. service members were detained by Chinese authorities (Monroe 2014). The U.S. service members were eventually released after 12 days of tense negotiations, but the PRC used this situation to increase their leverage over the U.S. and their standing in the international community.

In 2005-2006, the U.S. and the international community turned to the PRC as a regional moderating power and mediator between North Korea and the rest of the world, during nuclear talks and Pyongyang's first nuclear tests (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). This recognition validated the PRC's self-perception as a destined regional

hegemony and further emboldened the PRC to take the next logical steps in the cycle of reestablishing China's regional dominance. In 2007, the PRC increased their military spending by 18 percent, allocating over \$45 billion to increasing military build-up, capability, and capacity; all the while stating goals of peace, national security, and regional integrity (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). This thinly veiled excuse for military build-up portends aggressive expansionism, in line with historical cycles under Han cultural identities. In 2008, the PRC continued to gain leverage over the U.S. by becoming the largest U.S. creditor in the world—holding approximately \$600 Billion in American debt (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.).

The PRC continued to rise and became the world's second-largest economy with a 2010 GDP of \$5.88 trillion (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). This gained the attention of President Obama's administration, to the point that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton outlined a U.S. "pivot to the Pacific" to counter the PRC's explosive expansionism, resulting in plans for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreements between the U.S. and eight other nations (Monroe 2014). Tension in U.S./PRC trade relations continued to rise based on increasing deficits favoring the PRC and currency manipulations driven by the PRC (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). In late 2012, Xi Jinping assumed the duties of President of the PRC, among other titles, and began diplomatic conversations with the Obama Administration while apparently allowing his government to

simultaneously conduct malicious cyber operations against the U.S., even after agreeing to cease such operations (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). Concurrently, the PRC's holding of U.S. debt increased to \$1.3 trillion in 2013, demonstrating the PRC continued to maneuver against the U.S. by their leveraging of economic and informational IOP (Monroe 2014).

In 2014, the U.S. indicted five PLA-associated Chinese hackers allegedly behind technology theft from U.S. companies and major data theft from U.S. government offices (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). Throughout this period, the PRC continued their military build-up and territorial claims in the South China Sea through the construction of artificial islands to extend territorial claims into formerly open waters—attempting to extend their hegemonic control into areas previously non-contested (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). While the PRC claimed civilian purposes, U.S. surveillance determined otherwise and the U.S. openly warned the PRC against further militarization of these international spaces (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.).

When President Trump was elected in 2016, he immediately took a more aggressive approach to limit Chinese expansionism, while attempting to maintain open diplomatic dialogue. The Trump administration affirmed the PRC's "One China" policy and hosted President Xi numerous times, but imposed tariffs against the PRC to mitigate the U.S. trade deficit (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). President Trump's

2017 NSS specifically states that the U.S. is in "competition" with the PRC, vice previous administrations' leaning toward cooperation (Trump 2017, 2). Tensions rose between the U.S. and the PRC because of trade wars, rhetoric, and Chinese governmental maneuvering via Chinese telecommunications company Huawei and other PRC controlled companies (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). However, a preliminary trade deal was signed between the U.S. and the PRC in early 2020, in which the U.S. offered to lessened tariffs and the PRC promised to more strictly enforce intellectual property regulations; however, events soon to follow would overcome the preliminary agreements leaving no official trade agreement solidified, intellectual property issues still at hand, and tensions rising between two Great Powers (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.).

Tensions rapidly re-escalated with President Trump attributing responsibility for the emergence and the global spread of COVID-19 to the PRC (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). The PRC responded by expelling U.S. journalists in mid-2020, shortly after which a U.S. Executive Order was issued ending Hong Kong's preferred trade status with the U.S., and the U.S. ordered the PRC to close its Huston, Texas, consulate on claims of espionage (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). Negative relations culminated in July 2020 when Secretary of State Pompeo claimed that in a speech that the U.S. "era of engagement with the Chinese Communist Party is over" due to their unfair actions in trade, intellectual

property theft, human rights violations, and “aggressive moves in the East and South China Seas” (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.).

On President Trump’s last day in office, Secretary Pompeo declared that the PRC’s actions against the Uyghur Chinese Muslim ethnic group constituted genocide, the same term President Biden used to describe the PRC’s actions towards the Uyghurs during his 2020 presidential campaign (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.). If President Biden continues to make claims of genocide against the PRC, then U.S./PRC relations and China’s global standing could take a steep and rapid downturn. Currently, under the Biden Administration, *Interim National Security Guidance* outlines the U.S./PRC strategic competition dynamic, but a specific policy has yet to emerge at the time of the writing of this paper (Biden 2021, 10).

While the western world may be frustrated or baffled at the PRC’s actions, they should not be. From a Han Chinese cultural perspective, once the invading Qing Dynasty fell in the early 1900s, and internal power struggles settled with the PRC emerging victorious, they began the reconstruction/rebuilding portion of their historic geopolitical cycle. From 1949 to approximately 2000, the PRC worked tirelessly to establish diplomatic and economic strength and continue to do so through power projection and infrastructure domestically and abroad. Once that was achieved, they turned their attention to military expansion and information dominance. This is demonstrated by

their over-the-top increases in military spending, building, and acquisitions as well as their increase in malicious cyber-operations, hacking, and espionage. For the last 70 years, the PRC has systematically rebuilt their entire DIME IOP infrastructure and capabilities to regain their self-perceived historic destiny as a Great Power through CCP-driven unrestricted warfare approach to establish a CCP-based state-led civilization. These actions are in line with historically demonstrated expansionism, resistance to foreign influence, and a desire to regain historically held territories and power in pursuit of reestablishing a Chinese Golden Age. This is rooted in Han cultural identity as a self-perceived and destined birthright. To effectively counter Chinese expansionism within INDOPACOM, the U.S. must understand this reality and align their IOP at the regional and national level to deter continued actions. This begins with U.S. military and diplomatic alignment within INDOPACOM.

Analysis

To establish a baseline understanding for discussion of joint-interagency structures by which to align IOP, the following analysis focuses on three major areas. The first portion focuses on the delta in eastern and western strategic approaches to war. The second offers illustrative historical examples of U.S. strategic success when military and diplomatic efforts have been aligned and failures when they are not aligned. The third section uses facts and assumptions of

the current state of U.S./PRC relations to further demonstrate the need for aligned IOP to counter Chinese expansionism.

Eastern and Western Perspectives

U.S. diplomatic and military leaders must understand the differences between the PRC perspective and the U.S. perspective. The PRC's perspective is largely informed via a hybrid strategic-philosophical approach, with focus on furthering a CCP-led civilization. Much of this approach is captured in *The Art of War*, a compilation of strategic-philosophical writings attributed to Sun Tzu, but likely pulled from many ancient Chinese warrior-philosophers. The western approach to war is largely based on the writings of 18th century Prussian General Carl Von Clausewitz and his seminal work *On War*. When compared, similarities certainly exist but sharp contrasts emerge in overall approaches to strategy and warfare writ large. While both *The Art of War* and *On War* touch on operational and tactical level discussions, the most glaring difference in their approaches is their differentiating concepts of the aim of war. The eastern perspective advocates that "In war, then, let your great objective be victory, not lengthy campaigns" (Sun Tzu 2000, 7). Juxtaposing that to Clausewitz's assertion that "the aim of all War is to disarm the enemy" illustrates the differences in scope and perspective of each side's driving philosophy (Clausewitz 2019, 26).

While for millennia Chinese strategists have aimed for total victo-

ry above all, since the 18th century the west has simply tried to use violence to disarm opponents to gain acquiescence to the victors' political will. From these perspectives, the direct correlation between the eastern perspective focusing on overall strategy and the western perspective focusing on military operations and tactical-level victories becomes clear. To the Chinese and many eastern cultures, the aim of war is total victory over an opponent (Sun Tzu 2000, 7). This drives them to plan with a long-term strategic perspective and leverage every means and method at their disposal to achieve absolute victory, not stove-pipe political and military functions. Using Clausewitz as a baseline for planning, the U.S. limits itself largely to hard-power military options focused on operational-level maneuver to achieve tactical-level victories. This harkens back to Clausewitzian aims of disarming adversaries to gain limited political acquiescence and may win battles, but not wars.

Ironically, since per *The Art of War* "all warfare is based on deception," once the U.S. or west writ large think they have gained political acquiescence from eastern powers, they are surprised to find that their adversaries are not abiding by the agreed-upon terms (Sun Tzu 2000, 3). The west becomes upset because they have been deceived. This very dynamic has been evidenced time and time again, most recently post 2020 U.S./PRC preliminary trade agreement where the PRC was accused of failing to uphold agreed-upon intellectual property standards. While the west does not consider war to exist unless sanctioned

violence has commenced or political bodies have declared war, the eastern perspective considers war to be perpetual competition within a political continuum. Therefore, deception is perfectly acceptable in an eastern consideration of politics or open war, since they are the same thing. The eastern perspective does not limit war to the notion of a “duel on an extensive scale,” as Clausewitz does (Clausewitz 2019, 26).

The all-in unrestricted eastern approach to warfare and even GPC, results in more focused and influential actions, which the U.S. can achieve if they more effectively align military and diplomatic efforts in INDOPACOM. Historically, when the U.S. has adopted a total victory approach, such as World War II, and effectively aligned military and diplomatic IOP they have succeeded. When the U.S. has not aligned these IOP, such as in Vietnam or Afghanistan, long-drawn-out conflicts and little to no achievement of strategic objectives have resulted.

Illustrative Examples

World War II is an example of success due to the effective alignment of IOP from the top down. During World War II, the U.S. government took not only a WOG approach to warfare but a Whole of Nation approach. The war had clear and measurable objectives—to win. The definition of winning was straightforward—unconditional surrender. Strategy leveraged an Allied approach to defeat existential threats to the free world. The U.S. government-aligned all IOP to defeat the Axis powers. Diplo-

matic actions and alliances were made clear and unambiguous. The U.S. Government and news agencies partnered to inform the American people in ways that inspired and garnered support for the U.S. and Allied troops at home and overseas. Information was leveraged against the Axis powers to deceive them at the operational level and degrade resolve. A national draft supported the military machine. The military itself focused troop training on necessary and effective skillsets to defeat the Axis powers. The economy shifted as private companies partnered, voluntarily or due to government mandate, with the government and military to shift civilian manufacturing centers to military production hubs. When military personnel shipped overseas, citizens previously not in the workforce joined the workforce to takeover necessary war-time industry jobs. Alignment across all IOP via a WOG approach garnered the support of the American people, caused active nationwide backing of war efforts, and resulted in a rapid, decisive, and successful victory in both European and Pacific theaters.

The Vietnam Conflict is an example of failure due in part to and certainly magnified by the non-alignment of IOP. During the Vietnam conflict, the war was largely driven by faulty assumptions which caused a broken and dissociative approach that lacked holistic strategy and did not align IOP (Herring 1981). President Johnson’s fear of open involvement of Soviet Russian or Chinese Communists kept him from taking a committed approach to defeating North Vietnam (Herring 1981).

This approach resulted in a policy of containment which drove diplomatic efforts that did not align with military campaigns on the ground. When operational and tactical military success resulted in gaps that could be exploited by the U.S. Government across the DIME spectrum, little was done to exploit those gaps due to the dis-alignment of agencies responsible for IOP implementation. The U.S. Government's and military's general lack of understanding of Vietnamese culture and their adversary's prime motivators resulted in little to no impact across information campaigns during the conflict (Herring 1981). From an economic perspective, the U.S. claimed to support South Vietnam but destroyed their economic capability and social fabric, further contradicting and discrediting any positive information messaging that may have been preached (Herring 1981). Inside the U.S., the war saw some sustained support across the American population even in the face of televised protests and dissent (Herring 1981). However, the U.S. Government did not effectively partner with the media as it had in World War II to communicate messages that would instill confidence and garner support across the American population. While the military units may have been successful in battle, the U.S. lost the war both at home and abroad due to a lack of consistent, effective, and strategically aligned IOP.

By briefly examining World War II and Vietnam, the importance of IOP alignment is strikingly clear. Even though this discussion is just a brief snapshot of complex and dy-

namic situations, these illustrative examples demonstrate how historic successes have been driven by strategically aligned IOP and catastrophic failures have resulted from dis-alignment. The U.S. must heed these lessons as it presses into GPC with the PRC in the INDOPACOM region.

Analysis of the Current Situation

The following facts and assumptions are based on that assessment and establish a level baseline from which the U.S. can move forward for strategic alignment of military and diplomatic IOP to deter Chinese expansionism within INDOPACOM.

The following statements are facts concerning U.S./PRC relations. First, the U.S. and the PRC are currently in strategic GPC with each other. This fact is specially stated in both President Trump's 2017 NSS and President Biden's *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance* (Trump 2017, 27 and Biden 2021, 10). Second, to succeed in GPC a nation must be able to effectively operate and influence below the threshold of hostility and across a wide variety of interactions but maintain the military capability to effectively defend their interests and enforce their stances (Trump 2017, 3). Third, to effectively compete in such a manner a WOG approach is ideal, in which strategically aligned IOP are necessary for success (Austin 2021, 1). Fourth, a gap currently exists between strategic alignments of U.S. military and diplomatic IOP within INDOPACOM. This fact has been effectively demonstrated by

analysis of multiple source documents in the literature review.

Planning assumptions include the following. First, the U.S. and the PRC will remain in GPC. Second, the PRC will continue military growth and territorial expansionism within INDOPACOM (Cordesman, Burke and Molot 2019, 54). Third, the U.S. will continue to seek to deter PRC expansionism in INDOPACOM. Fourth, the U.S. Government recognizes the importance of strategic IOP alignment to that end and seeks effective solutions to do so.

Analysis of these facts and assumptions drives the conclusion that the U.S. Government must take action now to effectively deter Chinese expansionism within INDOPACOM. This requires strategic alignment initially of military and diplomatic IOP in INDOPACOM, but it will eventually require alignment across the DIME spectrum. To do so effectively, personnel and resources must be dedicated to these ends. This can be done in one of two ways, both of which require joint-interagency approaches.

Discussion of Options

This paper provides two options. The first option combines the existing regional structure within the DOS and aligns that combined structure to the DOD-led INDOPACOM GCC to facilitate diplomatic and military IOP alignment. A second option leverages a proven structure to establish a Joint-Interagency Task Force (JIATF) with a singular GPC focus to

holistically align efforts within INDOPACOM.

Option 1 – Combine & Align

The Combine & Align approach directs the combining of the DOS's Bureau of South Asia Affairs and Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs into one new Bureau of Asian and Pacific Affairs. The new combined Bureau is then aligned to the INDOPACOM GCC. The reason for this merger of the two DOS bureaus into one is to create a singular DOS entity in the INDOPACOM region to coordinate, synchronize, and align strategic planning and follow-on actions, across the DOS and DOD at every level within INDOPACOM.

This first option meets the requirement to facilitate military and diplomatic IOP alignment within INDOPACOM. It also ensures an economy of force option by streamlining two DOS bureaus into one. However, combining both DOS bureaus may limit diplomatic bandwidth in very dynamic regions, and meet with significant pushback from DOS leadership due to a potentially perceived diplomatic draw-down. Also, combining two DOS bureaus and aligning them to a GCC may give the impression of forcing diplomatic actions into subordination to military actions within GPC. This is not the desired perception. When considering future application of the "combine and align" option across other regions, it may not be easily duplicated in other theaters because of differences and overlaps across other GCCs and DOS regions, as well as specific and infor-

mational and economic considerations across other regions. Therefore, the “combine and align” option holds limited repeatability to as an organizational construct across a global enterprise.

Option 2 – A New Joint Interagency Task Force West with a GPC Focus

A second option establishes a new Joint-Interagency Task Force West within INDOPACOM focused on GPC (JIATF-W II GPC) with the PRC which is specifically tasked with aligning diplomatic and military efforts to deter PRC expansionism within INDOPACOM. This new GPC focused JIATF-W, JIATF-W II GPC will be separate and distinct from the current JIATF-W, which focuses on counter-drug operations; however, the two can plan and operate in mutually supporting manners.

The JIATF-W II GPC option meets the requirement to facilitate military and diplomatic IOP alignment within INDOPACOM. While not as economical in personnel staffing numbers, due to an increased requirement for representatives across multiple Departments, it contains many benefits above and beyond the first option discussed. The proposed JIATF structure allows DOS and DOD to maintain or increase current personnel numbers and therefore is more likely to be an acceptable option to each department. Second, it utilizes a JIAFT structure which has proven to be very effective when aligning IOP across multiple government agencies and leveraging a WOG approach (Munsing and Lamb 2011, 1). Additionally, the JIATF structure does

not necessarily give the impression of placing one department as subordinate to another, which is desirable for inter-agency collaboration. A GPC-focused JIATF structure within INDOPACOM allows for flexibility and ready integration of other IOP-focused departments (information and economic) once diplomatic and military IOP are aligned. The JIATF structure also enables the integration of allies and partners in a Combined JIATF (CJIATF) framework. This is key since a partnered approach is essential in deterring Chinese expansionism within INDOPACOM (Biden 2021, 8).

The only potential drawback to the JIATF-W II GPC option is the required increase in personnel. While this may be a detractor to some, it will likely gain support from DOS and DOD leadership since it gives a viable and tangible reason for personnel increases tied directly to national-level strategic directives. The establishment of JIATF-W II GPC enables effective talent management of personnel within DOD by leveraging the expertise of personnel with experience and training in foreign and regional affairs. Many U.S. military services train officers and enlisted personnel in certain regionally specific programs. However, this expertise is not always effectively leveraged due to competing requirements and legacy perspectives for military career advancement. This JIATF-W II GPC structure offers a venue for useful and real-time utilization of military-trained, regionally specific subject matter experts.

The JIATF-W II GPC structure can also be replicated and tailored across other GCCs to effectively and strategically align U.S. IOP implementation in multiple global regions. This idea will be discussed more in-depth in Future Prospects.

Comparison of Options

Based on the discussion of the two options outlined above, the option comparison chart below assists in determining the most acceptable for decision-makers. Evaluation Criteria are

listed, and options are assessed to either meet the criteria or not meet the criteria. Meeting one criterion warrants a single mark. Marks are tabulated and options are scored accordingly. Across the nine criteria listed in the table below, Combine & Align (Option 1) received a score of two; and JIATF-W II GPC (Option 2) received a score of seven. Based on these criteria and this decision-matrix tool, JIATF-W II GPC (Option 2) emerges as the preferred option for facilitating military and diplomatic IOP alignment within INDOPACOM.

Evaluation Criteria	Option 1- Combine & Align	Option 2- JIATF-W II GPC
Facilitates effective alignment of military and diplomatic IOP to deter Chinese expansionism in INDOPACOM within GPC construct	X	X
Provides a flexible structure to integrate other IOP when ready		X
Provides a flexible structure to integrate other allies and partnered nations if applicable		X
Is a proven joint-interagency structure that facilitates a WOG approach		X
Maximizes economy of personnel (requires less personnel)	X	
Maximizes talent of personnel (the right person for the job)		X
Likely to be accepted by DOS and DOD leadership		X
Easily replicated and tailored across other regions		X
Total	2	7

Figure 1

Recommendations for Implementation

Based on the analysis outlined above, this paper recommends that the Executive Branch of the

U.S. Government direct the establishment of a JIATF-W II GPC within INDOPACOM. It is recommended that the JIATF-W II GPC be specifically tasked and staffed to focus on GPC with the PRC by effectively aligning diplomatic

and military IOP to deter Chinese expansionism within INDOPACOM. It is recommended that DOS and DOD personnel assigned to staff these positions be specially screened and evaluated to ensure the right person is selected as team members and leaders of JIATF-W II GPC. In-depth personnel selection criteria are beyond the scope of this paper; however, international relations study and training, Asian-Pacific regional/cultural specialization, understanding of DIME and IOP implementation writ large, and understanding of strategic and operational level Joint Warfare should be highly sought-after qualities across personnel selected for duty with JIATF-W II GPC. It is recommended that JIATF-W II GPC be established, staffed, and fully operational as soon as possible to effectively deter aggressive PRC actions occurring within INDOPACOM.

This can be implemented in multi-phased approach. Initially, the JIATF-W II GPC must be established with members of the DOD and DOS to align U.S. military and diplomatic efforts within INDOPACOM. Next, the addition of informational and economic experts to the JIATF-W II GPC should occur to facilitate alignment across all IOP within INDOPACOM. This will bring an aligned WOG approach where all IOP are leveraged to deter and counter the PRC's expansionist efforts. Finally, once U.S. efforts are aligned and internal process established, representatives from U.S. regional partners and allies may be added to the JIATF-W II GPC resulting in a Combined JIATF-W II GPC (CJIATF-W II GPC).

This demonstrates U.S. leadership and international consensus in countering the PRC's efforts, as well as re-enforces international norms and the standing international order which the PRC is trying to challenge.

Potentially Contrasting Views

Some may oppose the JIATF-W II GPC recommendation or suggest that bureaucratic government entities are too self-focused or that policy and funding lines are too rigid for this construct to work. However, these are not sufficient reasons to excuse failure to adapt in dynamic competitive environments or cede free-trade sea-lanes and international influence to the PRC. Successful alignment precedence exists within the JIAFT construct. Specifically, in JIATF-South where exponential gains in countering illegal narcotics and other trafficking have been achieved by taking a unified approach and establishing comprehensive performance variables across the organization, team, and individual (Munsing and Lamb 2011, 32-35). Additionally, if U.S. leaders, thinkers, and decision-makers desire to gain and maintain the advantage in GPC against the PRC's current comprehensive implementation of IOP, they must be willing to overcome organizational bias and adopt a collaborative perspective to synchronize and align military and diplomatic efforts for maximum effect in the INDOPACOM region (Locher 2010, 31, 44). The JIATF-W II GPC approach can be established and refined in INDOPACOM, but then implemented across multiple

GCCs and tailored for the unique requirements of each global region.

Future Prospects

Should the status quo remain, and the demonstrated gap across the strategic and operational alignment of military, diplomatic, and other IOP within INDOPACOM be allowed to persist, the PRC's aggressive expansionism will continue, and the U.S. will rapidly lose regional influence, security, allies and partners, and economic opportunity in the region (Henwood 2015, 4). This could rapidly foment a global geopolitical precedent resulting in decreased U.S. influence regionally and globally. Just as China once lost its regional influence with the rise of western powers in the east, if left unchecked the PRC could now turn the tables and limit U.S. influence across INDOPACOM. However, if U.S. policy and decision-makers heed the analysis and recommendations of this paper, the recommended JIATF construct can be used to effectively align military and diplomatic efforts within INDOPACOM to deter PRC expansionism. The recommended JIATF construct provides flexibility for inclusion of partners and allies in an expanded CJIATF formation, should that be desired. It also provides an exportable and tailorable organizational model for use in other theaters across the world, within GPC and beyond.

The new INDOPACOM JIATF-W II GPC can be used as a template for other GPC centric IOP alignment efforts globally. Based on lessons

learned, the JIATF-W II GPC construct can be expanded to multiple GCCs and specifically tailored for regional needs. As the concept evolves, eventually information (via DOS and DOD) and economic (via Department of Commerce) representatives can be added to the teams to effectively align all IOP across all GCCs. This will enable alignment across Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic IOP within all GCCs to meet regional and corresponding national strategic objectives.

As the JIATF GPC construct begins spreading across multiple regions and GCCs, the initiative will require a centralized joint-interagency management office at the national level to resource, equip, and direct forward stationed JIATFs within different GCC regions. This will ensure that organizational infrastructure exists and is postured to manage emergent GPC focused JIATFs across multiple GCCs as they are established. This national office can be specifically tasked to oversee the achievement of cross-functional national and regional objectives which require multiple departments to synchronize and align strategic implementation of U.S. IOP. This national-level office will focus on aligning all aspects of IOP, which should be extensions of diplomatic policy, via forward-deployed JIATFs. This concept may appear to impact organizational hierarchy, but it does not have to. If implemented properly, this national-level office would benefit all Departments by serving as a Joint Interagency integrator and clearing-house to align and synchronize multiple Departments' initiatives toward overarching

national strategic end states. This office would serve as a national-level strategic integrator and shape strategies and plans to align the implementation of all U.S. IOP towards the achievement of national strategic goals. The forward deployed JIATFs would serve as the expeditionary arm of this office, but still be aligned and forward deployed with the appropriate GCC and DoS Region. This construct results in multi-aspect reporting chains, but similar reporting constructs already exist at many echelons of military and diplomatic operations.

An appropriate name for this centralized national office is the Joint Interagency Expeditionary Diplomatic Initiative (JIEDI). This office can serve as the baseline for building, managing and implementing a new type of governmental operative essential in GPC. These personnel must be grounded in, but not limited by, foundations already trained within the DOD. This hybrid strategic thinker-actor must be well versed in government and politics, region and culture, information warfare, military action, and economic systems. This type of strategic influencer must understand how to use IOP to inspire and leverage adversaries and allies alike to achieve U.S. objectives. This new JIEDI office can establish and operationalize a new breed of American soldier-statesman—the warrior-diplomat—within and from its forward stationed JIATFs. This human-based capability will provide the U.S. a relevant and lasting advantage across multiple domains in and beyond Great Power Competition.

Conclusion

The rise of the PRC, and its efforts to establish itself as a regional and global force have thrust it and the U.S. into a GPC dynamic. The PRC has leveraged historic Han-Chinese identity, as many Chinese leaders have across history, to provide a driving force for cultural unification of their populations to expansionist ends. Since these expansionist ends currently challenge the established the standing rules-based international order, threaten U.S. interests, harass U.S. partners and allies, and limit global economic opportunity, the U.S. has a duty and obligation to counter and deter the PRC's expansionist efforts.

This paper has reiterated the gap in U.S. IOP alignment, specifically across military and diplomatic efforts, as well as the necessity for strategic and operational alignment of these efforts. Chinese historical and cultural context has provided a deeper understanding of root-level Chinese cultural prime drivers and motivations to U.S. decision-makers. Examples of U.S. success and failures based on IOP alignment or dis-alignment have illustrated the paramount importance of holistically aligned efforts. Analysis has provided a baseline from which to consider joint-interagency options to align IOP. Joint-interagency options have been discussed and compared, with the JIATF-W II GPC emerging as a logical and proven structure to align U.S. military and diplomatic efforts to deter Chinese expansionism within IN-DOPACOM. The JIATF-W II GPC not

only allows the U.S. to “put our own house in order,” but when the organization is ready, the construct allows for upgrading to a Combined approach with U.S. allies and partners via growth into a CJIATF (Bader 2018, 6). The recommendations in this paper provide Whole-of-Government vehicles for the U.S. to effectively align military and diplomatic efforts to deter Chinese expansionism within INDOPACOM.

Furthermore, the analysis and assessments in this document have resulted in a repeatable and regionally tailorable JIAFT GPC structure, which can be implemented across any GCC to effectively align all IOP in pursuit of regional and national strategic objectives. The benefit of a national-level collaborative JIEDI program to resource and oversee the network of multiple

forward JIATFs focused on IOP alignment has been outlined and advocated. If established and properly resourced, the capability of the JIEDI program to identify, grow, equip, and employ teams of new highly skilled soldier-statesmen—warrior-diplomats—will give the U.S. a sustained, repeatable, and adaptable advantage within and beyond Great Power Competition. If implemented properly, the structural vehicles proposed in this paper will enable the U.S. to coordinate, synchronize, and align a strategic Whole-of-Government approach and operationalize highly trained warrior-diplomats to implement this strategy. This will enable the achievement of regional and national strategic objectives resulting in security and opportunity, peace and prosperity for the people of the United States and those of its partners and allies.

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