

Heritage Lectures

No. 689

October 10, 2000

THE PROPER SCOPE, PURPOSE, AND UTILITY OF U.S. RELATIONS WITH CHINA'S MILITARY

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STEPHEN YATES: High-level visits to Beijing earlier this month by Undersecretary of State for Security and Arms Control John Holum and Secretary of Defense William Cohen signal the resumption of official dialogue with China's military and security establishment. Is this a good sign? What are the objectives of this strategic dialogue? How does such a dialogue serve American interests?

I believe that this is a topic in which we can have some influence over what is possible, practical, and advisable as we move forward in a relationship with China's military. Military relations with a country that is a potential threat to the United States draw a lot of controversy by their very nature but also under certain circumstances may be very necessary.

In a few months, there will be a new administration coming into office. No matter which way the election goes, there will be a new team facing some of these similar questions: How, under what circumstances, to what extent should we have relations with China's military? What is the purpose of these relations? What should the Chinese see? What should we see? How should this relationship be structured?

There are a lot of very basic questions that will be confronting policymakers in a new administration. In the interests of helping pave the way for a new

administration to be able to hit the ground running, we would like to get three different perspectives on this question.

Al Santoli has an extensive and multifaceted background, from veteran of the Vietnam War, to journalist, to Pulitzer Prize-nominated author, to being a distinguished staff member on Capitol Hill working for Congressman Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA). He also is the editor of the *China Reform Monitor*, published by the American Foreign Policy Council. I believe that Al can give us ample coverage of Capitol Hill's role in oversight and in articulating American interest in this relationship.

Randy Schriver formerly served in the office of the Secretary of Defense as a country director for the PRC and has experience in looking at what the Pentagon's interests were in moving forward with this kind of a relationship in the past. He is currently serving as a visiting fellow

HERITAGE FOUNDATION LECTURE
held July 27, 2000

Produced by the
Asian Studies Center

Published by
The Heritage Foundation
214 Massachusetts Ave., NE
Washington, DC
20002-4999
(202) 546-4400
<http://www.heritage.org>



ISSN 0272-1155

This paper, in its entirety, can be
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lecture/hl689.html](http://www.heritage.org/library/lecture/hl689.html)

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Dr. Larry Wortzel, the Director of our Asian Studies Center, twice served the U.S. Army in China—first as the Assistant Army Attaché and second as the Army Attaché. Larry can help enlighten our thinking on what has worked on the ground on that end in this military-to-military relationship and offer advice on how this kind of relationship should proceed.

Obviously, each of our panelists has a personal opinion on this issue, and we'd like to hear any advice they might have on answering some of these fundamental questions on the scope and nature of this relationship as a new administration takes office.

—Stephen J. Yates is Senior Policy Analyst in the Asian Studies Center at The Heritage Foundation.

AL SANTOLI: This is a very timely discussion as the United States is in the wake of a visit to Beijing by Secretary Cohen, who has re-initiated military-to-military contacts. We on Capitol Hill are still waiting to see what types of programs are being planned over the coming months. I would say, in addition to Stephen's perspective on an incoming U.S. administration, we from the oversight position on Capitol Hill also have to be mindful of what types of contacts and exchanges are being planned over the next four months before this administration leaves office.

Just a little background in terms of the involvement of the Congress and its concern, or selected Members' concern, regarding this program. We did not know about it in great detail until we got wind of the game plan for the year 1999. Of course, during the course of that year, after the incidents in Belgrade, the program was suspended.

But what got our concern was the number of exchanges of Chinese military personnel attending seminars, observing exercises, or visiting locations where critical tactical functions that would enhance their military modernization were taking place. The access they would have to American experts that would help facilitate their modernization was all

against the backdrop of tensions rising in the Taiwan Strait and the direct threat not only to our democratic friends in Taiwan, but also to U.S. military personnel who would have to respond to a military crisis in the Strait. That was our primary concern: our allies and also, most important, the lives of our own service members.

There is a factor that has developed since then that makes it more difficult when assessing China's military capabilities. China is now integrating acquired technologies from Russia into their various systems. It seems a steady stream of new military technology agreements between the Russians and the Chinese, including talks of a lease program where certain critical technologies, aircraft, and weapon systems could be acquired by the Chinese, would enable the Chinese to obtain equipment and technologies in a more timely fashion.

Now, some U.S. experts would say, "Well, sure, the Chinese military is acquiring these technologies, but it will take them time to integrate these new technologies, or they don't know how to integrate these systems. Therefore, we have a window of time before we need to be concerned of the modernization posing a real threat to the United States and its allies." Because of the level of knowledge that the Chinese would gain from these exchange programs, there was the danger in 1999 that the window of time for proficiency and integration of these technologies into their system was going to be reduced.

I'll give you an example, and this underscores the danger of private-sector involvement in these exchanges. The last exchange before the bombing of the embassy in Belgrade was a Chinese delegation that was brought here in a DOD private-sector partnership program to look at operations in civilian air space, operations out of remote air fields, and attack and remote air traffic control systems.

Some of the companies involved had economic interests in China and were hoping that access to certain programs, an introduction to certain dual-use technologies that dealt with air traffic control, would enhance their ability to gain an economic incentive or a leg up on their competitors in China. I am sure, as we look at what actually transpired

during this program, that the Chinese military used this desire of U.S. commercial entities to put pressure on our people in DOD to gain access to things that directly involved war-fighting capabilities. We can see this motive through the deceptive nature of the way that the personnel from China were introduced or identified in some documents as “Mister” rather than “Senior Colonel.”

So on all levels, there was something rotten in Denmark with this entire process. I have with me a copy of the briefing papers that the Chinese delegation received while visiting Luke Air Base and Edwards Air Base in California. At Luke, the briefing papers range from information about flights of F-16s from Luke in Arizona, to low-level training flights, to bombing ranges, to in-flight refueling, to a cross-country flight to an MOA, to IFR [instrument flight rules] practice approaches, to a civilian airport, to the return home.

Some of these discussions involved the integration of AWACS and in-flight refueling, and for those not familiar with the Chinese military, they are now trying to develop that capability and perfect their capacity for long-range flights. Discussions on TACAN [tactical aircraft navigation] systems are fine in terms that they are not on restricted lists; they are civilian technologies, dual-use technologies. But then there were discussions on combat readiness, stateside training in terms of using civilian airfields with air traffic control.

In recent weeks, for those of us who have been looking at the preparations in the Nanjing military region for possible aggression against Taiwan, the integration of civilian facilities and infrastructure is essential, and there have been numerous articles in the Chinese military and civilian newspapers underscoring the importance of utilizing civilian facilities. This type of exchange on the TACANs at Luke Air Base and at Edwards Air Base, as far as one can discern, gives them direct knowledge in how to better integrate the use of civilian infrastructure for combat missions. If you consider that from Fujian and some of the coastal air bases to Taipei is somewhere around 100 miles, this directly fits into the tactical needs that they would have.

Also, when you look at their access to our Navy, it is the same thing. Civilian infrastructure, such as the COSCO shipping line to civilian ports run by Hutchison Whampoa in Southern China, and other civilian transports and cargo ships, can be used for troops, for fire support, and intelligence collection. We have to be extremely mindful when involving Chinese delegations in any types of air-naval exchanges to make sure that there is nothing they could gain that would give them a tactical advantage in the Taiwan Strait, the South China Sea, or, as they are developing a stronger relationship with Burma, along the coast of the Andaman Sea and the Malacca Straits.

Speaking of Burma—and this again ties directly into our concerns about the 1999 game plan for exchanges—there was a series of open-source articles a couple of weeks ago talking about a military joint exercise in Burma with the PLA and the Burmese military that would involve airborne forces, seaborne forces, and ground logistics.

One of the things that were strongly requested by the PLA in 1999 was to watch U.S. 82nd Airborne forces conduct exercises. In fact, we also learned that they wanted more than just to sit in the bleachers and watch them come out of the airplanes; they also wanted more hands-on involvement during the course of the exercise. Again, if you look at their writings, not only for participating in exercises in Burma, but in terms of their preparatory exercises for any aggression against Taiwan, airborne forces are a big part of it.

Also, there is more and more writing now by the Chinese military on the special operations capacity of special forces, including naval and army special forces. Once again, some of the exchanges game plan of 1999 was the interaction of our special forces with visitors from China; and because of the whole range of tactical interaction that many in Congress felt would benefit the PLA while returning little to no benefit to the U.S. military, we had strong opposition—and we retain that strong opposition—to any future exchange programs.

Another area that right now is critical in terms of development of Chinese military operations, whether it is internal or abroad, is logistics. The

1999 game plan included a number of visits to very sophisticated high-level American logistical bases, seminars, and interaction among experts. Because technologies are now being delivered to China by the Russians, we have to be very careful about how much logistical contact we have in terms of helping them become more proficient in this area.

One action that Congress will probably take—I know that Congressman Rohrabacher is going to have a letter to the Secretary of Defense within the next couple of weeks—is to scrutinize any game plan that is being made for military exchanges during the coming months, the next six months. It is something we feel we have to watch very carefully because there has been a cavalier attitude by both the civilian and military planners, and whether there will be any crisis in Taiwan during that period is immaterial.

We have to think in the long term and make sure we are not supporting any type of aggression because of the kinds of knowledge that the other side will benefit from in these exchanges.

RANDY SCHRIVER: I want to congratulate Steve and Heritage for putting on this forum. It struck me, as I sat down to think about what I wanted to say, that I've been around just long enough to see several swings in the relationship, several ups and downs; and it seems to me the way that the administration approached these is, in down time, you planned your next step, created your lists, got everything in queue just waiting for the opportunity to resume things without ever stepping back and fundamentally reassessing these very important questions.

So I think this is an excellent forum. It's a privilege to address this topic before such a distinguished group.

I want to talk, number one, about the Clinton Administration's policies and approach toward China; for the purposes of discussion, it is important to get this out there. Second, I want to address what I think worked well and what didn't; third, what I think the major difficulties and challenges are for the next steps; and fourth, try to answer as directly as I can the question posed: What should

be the proper scope and purpose of the military relationship? And I want to speak both to substance and process.

First of all, with regard to the Administration's policy, I do support conducting a military relationship with the Chinese, and I think it is very important. In terms of the objectives, on paper, what the Administration has tried to do with China is right on the mark for the most part. DOD is not only supporting the Administration's engagement efforts overall, but I believe there are institutional parochial objectives that are important for U.S. security interests.

I think the primary objective is to establish clear lines of communication between senior leaders, and I think this is just a matter of faith. I believe dialogue is good. I believe it is helpful. It reduces the chances of miscommunication and miscalculation. The quality of dialogue has been uneven, but on balance I think it has been good.

The second objective has been to pursue meaningful confidence-building measures in the operational realm. What I mean by meaningful is actually doing things that will increase the safety of your own military operations. If it is becoming increasingly dangerous to operate in proximity to one another, I think it is important to take steps to address that.

A third objective has been to demonstrate U.S. capabilities in the event that the relationship goes in the direction that no one wants, towards an adversarial one. Arguably, it is important that the Chinese know what can be brought to bear upon the situation, and this is what the Administration hopes would be a deterrent effect.

Fourth, through the military contacts, the Administration hopes to have a window on PLA modernization as it unfolds. This is something Larry will probably talk much more about, but through the contacts and exchanges, it is hoped that you get a picture of what is happening within the PLA during this important period of their modernization.

Fifth, there is the hope that you can shape, at least on the margins—these aren't grand expecta-

tions—PRC behavior and try to influence it to become a more constructive participant in regional affairs.

Finally, encouraging PLA participation in regional fora will reduce not only their own anxieties about what is happening if they don't participate in what the United States is doing with allies and others in the region, but force them to think about issues through a regional perspective rather than bilateralize everything, which is what they tend to want to do.

The way the Administration pursues this is through a four-pillar strategy: high-level visits, professional and functional exchanges, confidence-building activities, and multilateral fora.

Let me get into what I think works, what has been successful and what hasn't. I believe the dialogue at the senior level has been on balance helpful. It is obviously a mixed bag; some things have not been as good. But there should be no confusion. This isn't real dialogue; these aren't real exchanges; they are not real discussions. This is an exchange of talking points. It's an exchange of "here is what we think about something" and "here's what they think about something." But just in doing that, there is value.

I think some of the results we have seen in North Korea have been a result of us pounding away at issues that we were concerned about, and issues that the Chinese had a hand in. I think subtly they were able to work behind the scenes to create some outcomes that were favorable to us, no doubt because they saw it to be in their own interest. I am not saying this is a favor to us in any way; but in this regard, the dialogue was helpful.

I think the confidence-building measures have been relatively successful, in particular the Military Maritime Cooperative Agreement. This is an agreement we pursued after a near accident on the high seas in which we felt it was advantageous to have a dialogue, at least to talk about safety issues, rules of the road, communication protocols, so that as the PLA modernized, particularly the PLA Navy, and operated further and further from its own shores, the chance of bumping into one another and creat-

ing an accident that escalated into something nobody wanted would be reduced.

I think the multilateral fora have been on balance effective, if for no other reason so that they understand what it is we talk about with other countries, both friends and others, in multilateral settings. I think it is by and large positive to have the PLA participate in that.

I would say that we haven't necessarily shaped their behavior, but we have shaped their impressions in some positive ways, particularly within the younger generation PLA. When you see them come to the United States and experience things—not so much the military facilities they visit, but just American culture and American society—you can literally see a lot of their preconceived notions about the United States being stripped away before your eyes. I think this is actually beneficial.

I think there are some notable weaknesses and some failures in this approach as well. Going back to that list of objectives, having a window on the modernization has failed miserably. We've had problems in terms of gaining access. Trying to pound away at reciprocity on these exchanges of delegations has been another failure. It strikes at the core of the Chinese concept of deterrence, which isn't ours. Ours is "Here is everything we have, and here's how we can hurt you in so many different ways." The Chinese concept is "You have no idea of what we have, and you have no idea either how bad or how good we are," and that's their deterrent effect. They are not going to open up, and I think only marginal benefit has come through these exchanges in terms of having a window on modernization.

In terms of shaping behavior, I think it has failed not only at tactical levels, but at strategic levels as well. If anything, I think our exchanges with the Chinese have shaped our own behavior and policies more dramatically.

I saw a great quote about George Shultz from Jim Mann's book that I think captured this thought. What he said is that when the geostrategic importance of China became the conceptual prism through which Sino-American relations were

viewed, it was almost inevitable that American policymakers became oversolicitous of Chinese interests, concerns, and sensitivities. As a result, much of the history of Sino–American relations since normalization could be described as a series of Chinese-defined obstacles, such as Taiwan, tech transfer, and trade, that the United States has been asked to overcome in order to preserve the overall relationship. This is what I observed firsthand in our dealings with the PLA. They set the agenda, and the agenda was mostly about obstacles and problems that they have.

I think deterrence has also not been extremely effective. If anything, it has whetted their appetite. They talk about American power, American capabilities, but on balance what it has truly done is help them incorporate the American factor into their planning, their doctrine, and their strategy, particularly when related to Taiwan.

So that's where I think we've done well and where we haven't done well. As we go forward, there are significant challenges in front of us.

Number one, there continue to be clashing institutional objectives. I outlined what the Clinton Administration's and DOD's objectives were. The Chinese have their own set, and they are very much at odds with what the Americans are interested in. On top of that list is technology transfer, gaining know-how, et cetera, and they approach every one of these exchanges ruthlessly to try to find that angle. Out of everything they do with us, they want to extract that angle.

Number two, there is an increasingly divergent view on regional security and what are the keys to stability. The Chinese have said openly in a defense white paper about wanting U.S. forces out of the region and an end to bilateral alliances. The United States says clearly that their regional security strategy is underpinned by U.S. forward-deployed forces and sustaining their bilateral alliances. I don't think you have to go much further than that to realize that when you are headed in two different directions and are increasingly diverging, you are going to be pretty far apart as time unfolds. I think that is a serious problem.

Third is a lack of discipline on the U.S. side. Our engagement has been extremely inconsistent, the result of a diffuse and noncentralized system of planning and implementation. The Chinese are very good at identifying who the ardent suitors are in our system and gearing their relationship toward these people.

Fourth is the extremely poor communication that has existed between the Administration and the Congress, and I've got to say I was very disappointed to hear Al describe how difficult it is for you to get information from the Administration on these contacts.

I used to hand over the list of proposed contacts well before we ever shared it with the Chinese, and I asked for inputs. I felt it was a more collaborative approach. Congressional staff used to tell me point-blank what the things were that raised concerns, and I took them out or said, "Give me another chance to give you some more information why I think this one is important." More often than not, I took it out, and I think they identified some good areas, logistics and communications, that I just don't see any reason for.

Most important, I think that given these observations, a military-to-military relationship in the future should be very limited in scope. It should be more focused on high-level dialogue, some limited confidence-building measures where there is real payoff; the Military Maritime Cooperative Agreement is one of these areas, and some limited-participation multilateral fora.

I would like to see more efforts to bring younger Chinese officers over to the United States not to do military things. I wouldn't even bother to bring them to a military facility; rather, I think exposing them to American culture and society in the long run is a good thing.

I think there needs to be strict adherence to a set of parameters. No contacts that contribute substantially to offensive capabilities should be made until they renounce the use of force against Taiwan, or until the point where we are much more comfortable with what their strategy and intentions are.

There should be no military contacts that can't stand the light of day. This should not be a relationship conducted in secrecy or in an opaque way. This should be very open and public, and this probably has some implications for the kind of contacts you can have.

Professional exchange where we derive concrete benefits and a window on their modernization is not enough. What they learn from our logistics systems versus what we learn is not a good trade.

There are some modest areas—military medicine, for example—where we can actually derive benefit from an exchange with the Chinese. The Chinese do things we don't—for example, high-altitude medicine in Tibet. There are some infectious diseases they deal with in some of the areas they train in that we don't deal with.

We also need strong, ruthless centralized management of the military-to-military relationship. We used to have a memo. We called it the Al Haig memo because it said “we are in charge” at OSD. But the truth is, we weren't always in charge. It requires very senior-level attention, ASD or higher, to get into the minutiae, to be in the weeds on the military-to-military relationship with China, and to make sure that there are consequences within the military, within the JCS PACOM, for not adhering to the guidelines set forth by the Secretary.

Finally, this has to be done with Congress, not in a manner playing against Congress. Again, if there is a way to do this in a collaborative approach, I think Congress should be written into the process of how we determine the game plan. There should be feedback and a mechanism for the Congress to say “These are the things we don't like; take it out or explain it to us better.” I think that would help the process tremendously.

LARRY WORTZEL: I want to try to explain what it is like to be on the receiving end of Randy's tight control and the fire hose of every general and admiral who wants to have some Peking duck, walk on the Great Wall, fly an SU-27, or stand on the bridge of Chinese destroyer, because the expectations of these senior U.S. military officers create a little bit of tension.

In the field, people are really trying to do a hard job as a military attaché and actually represent United States policies as written in the national military strategy and national security strategy. At the same time, as a military attaché, I had to act as the eyes on the ground: to observe, collect legally, and report on developments in the Chinese military. That's what diplomats and military attachés do, and it is very interesting. But there was always a stream of generals that wanted Peking duck and would discuss just about anything to get it.

It is the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2000, Title 7, Subtitle A, Section 1201, that restricted what the Department of Defense can do with the Chinese military. These restrictions are the best thing that ever could have happened as far as I am concerned. I thought it was superb legislation that was absolutely necessary in a sense because of this “ardent suitor” problem that Randy talked about.

“Ardent suitor” is a great description. Everybody has, at one time or another, been in love with or sought after something or someone to where you would do anything to get closer, nearer to that object of desire, and then that person or thing would set the terms of how you would relate to it, move the goal post, move a little further away. You'd go a little closer, give more gifts, put out some more puppy chow, you name it.

In a sense, that is what went on and goes on—the ardent suitor simply forgets the United States national interest and seeks contact with China under China's terms. A certain romanticism enters into U.S.–China relations. Even the use of the term “relationship” belies this, as though the articulation of national interest was about *When Harry Met Sally*. We must avoid this romanticism and focus on the national interest.

Now, through military-to-military contacts with China, we did learn some things. I want to address this issue of the 82nd Airborne Division. When I was in China the first time, before the Tiananmen Square massacre, things were great. The United States was selling the Chinese technology and equipment. The Chinese military, for its part, was very up-front about what they wanted from Amer-

ica. Military contacts with the United States had one purpose for them, and that was gaining new military technology. They told us that.

And the United States was very up-front. The United States told the Chinese military that “We are happy to sell equipment to you. We don’t care if you put it on the Soviet border because we don’t like the Soviets, or if you put it on the Vietnamese border because we don’t much like them either, just as long as you shoot it at Russians and Vietnamese.” That was the deal.

Under these conditions, when things were going well, you could walk in and say, “I’d really like to jump out of one of your airborne division’s air-planes with a rifle squad or an airborne squad and see how good your people are.” And I did, just like that, spend a couple of days down there. This provided some real insight into how well the People’s Liberation Army’s airborne forces are trained—and they are very well-trained—as well as how they do their equipment checks. These were wonderful direct insights.

The leaders of the Chinese military came to the United States and stated, “We’d sure like to see an airborne mass tactical parachute jump.” “That’s fine,” the Department of Defense said. “We’ll show it to you.” However, that was a different time. Then we were happy to show it to them because we thought maybe they would use whatever they learned somewhere against the Soviets. Times change. There was Tiananmen, and the Soviet Union collapsed. Things are different today.

To address what I would call the dumb things related to romanticism that go on underneath this strategic relationship, it is to prevent these excesses of romanticism that Al Santoli needed to help draft the legislation and Randy Schriver needed what he described as “the Al Haig memo” (a reference to Secretary Haig’s statement “I’m in charge” after the shooting of President Ronald Reagan), the memo from the Office of the Secretary of Defense that places that office in charge of all U.S.–China military-to-military contacts.

A four-star general came out to China some years ago and decided he was going to hand out “candy”

to turn the Chinese into great friends. To do this, he gave the PLA the simulation and software for how to run a brigade and division integrated attack. At that time, I was only a major in the Army. I would sit down and say, “General, this really isn’t a good thing. You just don’t want to do this.” But he did what he wanted, based on some romantic view of making the PLA over along American lines.

About nine years later, I visited their army command college, and there’s that software, simulating attacks across the Taiwan Strait modified and improved by the PLA. Folks, we don’t want to make the PLA more effective, especially against Taiwan.

At another time, I escorted another delegation that was very useful. We were sitting down at the U.S. Army’s Training and Doctrine Command, and one of the Chinese generals, who had never been to the U.S. before, pulls out a list of 19 field manuals. After a long discourse on Sino–U.S. friendship, including an invitation to the U.S. general to visit Beijing to see the Great Wall, he says to the host, “What’s the chance of getting these field manuals?” He hands the list of what he wants to the American general, who says, “Oh, no problem, we will take care of it.”

So I said, “General, can I look at that?” What the PLA officer had requested were U.S. manuals on electronic warfare, electronic countermeasures and countermeasure evasion, and information operations. I asked the Chinese officer how the list was compiled, and he said that these were the only manuals he couldn’t get off the Internet.

And, of course, the American general ordered somebody to get the manuals and hand them over to the Chinese guest. I stopped him and I said, “No, you don’t want to do this, General. If you want to do anything, send them to me in China and I will exchange them one for one if the PLA comes up with similar manuals. But do not give it to them.”

Part of the reason U.S. military leaders give away too much is naiveté, not disloyalty. Part of the explanation for such actions is this romantic sense of wanting to give China something in the hopes of developing a friendship. But people do really dumb things.

Another interesting example of American naiveté was in responding to the PLA orders for parts when the U.S. Department of Defense sold them artillery-locating radars. The lowest parts use rate in a TPQ-37 artillery-locating radar worldwide, regardless of climate, were the cathode ray tubes and map drums. The Chinese, however, were ordering cathode ray tubes at an extraordinary rate, and the U.S. Army was sending them in response to the orders. A year later, the PLA remanufactured or reverse-engineered the AN/TPQ-37 and manufactured a version of it, the Type 704 radar, that they sell to Libya and Pakistan and Iran and Iraq. Sitting by and watching this happen was patently dumb. Any program with the PLA requires good oversight.

Many senior U.S. officers argue that there is great deterrence in transparency. They seem to believe that if the U.S. military shows China everything it has, deterrence will be enhanced. My response to that concept is that the United States showed the PLA everything it needed to see about the quality of American power and deterrence in the Gulf War. The United States also did a pretty decent job of showing the PLA how the U.S. military works in Sudan and Afghanistan where factories associated with Osama bin Laden were attacked. The U.S. didn't do a bad job showing the PLA a little deterrence when U.S. ships struck Iraqi radar sites with Tomahawk missiles from 1,500 miles away.

You don't have to show the PLA Navy exactly how a U.S. ship works to demonstrate deterrence. And if you choose to let the PLA Navy visit the ship, you don't need to explain how to construct or operate it.

My disagreement with military-to-military contacts as I saw them conducted was that the admirals, with all due respect, show the PLA Navy how things work and then tell the PLA how to make their own operations more efficient. American military officers tend to look at something and, if they perceive it to be wrong, suggest how to make it better. This is a colossal mistake. The U.S. has no business making the Chinese People's Liberation Army a more effective fighting force or improving its weaponry.

Other parts of transparency that Randy talked about are inviting PLA officers to see U.S. military exercises. I believe that the U.S. should insist on reciprocity but should also decide what is in the national interest. In 1988, I brought a major general, the director of the PLA operations department, to the U.S. to visit Fort Benning and Fort Bragg. This was a time when Sino-U.S. relations were oriented on the Soviet threat. We showed him how things worked, and he showed us a few things in return back in China. After 1989, however, because the U.S. suspended military programs with China, he showed us nothing.

In 1997, there was another PLA visit to the U.S. This time, the Chinese leaders only viewed open public events. We showed him Fort Benning, Georgia's Airborne 5000, a demonstration that goes on publicly for everybody, and the Victory Pond Ranger demonstration. Personally, I think that's fair. I have been to the 6th Tank Division of the People's Liberation Army so many times that I have my own drinking cup. They know me. I know them.

The guy who was the operations officer when I first went there is now the division commander. He laughs, we drink, he shows the U.S. nothing, and that's the end of it. The PLA should be treated the same way unless there is some clear benefit to the U.S. for doing otherwise.

I don't know how many might be familiar with Colonel David Barrett, a former U.S. military attaché to China and the Dixie Mission. If you follow what went on with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in 1944 when the OSS went up to deal with the Communists, one could say that Barrett was a little bit sympathetic to the Communist cause. He thought they were less corrupt as a military force than the Nationalists and better led.

He decided a good idea would be to turn the Communists into allies, arm them as best you can, and use them against the Japanese. He perhaps exceeded his orders and may have forgotten that after the war was about over, the Communists would go on to prosecute their civil war. The U.S. commander in China, General [Albert C.] Wedemeyer, relieved him. But it's not that Barrett was dis-

loyal to the U.S. He had a romantic view of what the Communists might do if they were in power.

Today, a very strange American tendency is that when military staffs prepare an engagement plan on how the U.S. military should engage with foreign militaries—this is a real engagement plan at a major command—it's a mechanical thing. It doesn't necessarily distinguish between friends and allies and potential competitors.

The same person who approaches the engagement plan for Malaysia, for instance, with the idea of improving the efficiency of the Malaysian armed forces, or the South Koreans, who are our allies, often does the China plan. And in working on a mechanism for military contacts with China, the same guy does the engagement plan with the same approach. The objective becomes making the PLA better so that perhaps the U.S. and China can be ready to fight alongside each other. This is a huge error.

Right now, the PLA is more likely to crush democratic activists than threats to the peace and stability of the world. So, like Randy, I come down to a few simple criteria for military relations with the Chinese armed forces: Do nothing to improve the PLA's capability to wage war against Taiwan or U.S. friends and allies, do nothing to improve the PLA's ability to project force, and do nothing to improve the PLA's ability to further repress the Chinese people—three simple criteria. It leaves a lot of room for things to do, and I think things do need to be done.

Secretary of Defense William Cohen just made a trip to China. On this trip, he just about hit everything that I recommended in the *Heritage Backgrounder* from November 1999 concerning his

agenda. I think Secretary Cohen could have been more forceful in defense of the American press in his response to a question at the National Defense University, but he hit the major points on U.S.–China military relations the right way.

In closing, when my friend Bates Gill testified a couple of weeks ago in front of the House Armed Services Committee, he had a great throwaway line about all the Chinese arms purchases from the Russians. He said you could give him a \$5,000 set of golf clubs, and that doesn't make him Tiger Woods because he doesn't know how to use them. Thus, the clubs are of no intrinsic value.

If it was a debate instead of testimony, and I could have responded to Bates. I'd have said, "Bates, if the club was made with a sensor so that the sweet spot always hit the ball no matter what you did, and the ball had a sensor that could detect the signature of the hole and always go in the hole, you don't have to be Tiger Woods." I'll leave it at that.

STEPHEN YATES: Thank you, Larry, and thanks to Al Santoli and Randy Schriver for joining us today to address this very important topic. We've benefited greatly from your willingness to share your experience and perspective.

From the perspective of congressional oversight, Defense Department management, and embassy implementation, it is clear that we have a long way to go in setting proper parameters for the conduct of military-to-military exchanges with China. The concerns and recommendations offered by each of our panelists merit the careful consideration of those in our government charged with carrying out these duties.