

Serious Second Thoughts: The Battlelines are Hardening at Sea in East Asia

by James Boutilier

East Asia is currently the subject of six interlocking phenomena: the continued growth of the Chinese economy; the relentless rise of Chinese naval power; perceptions of America's decline; the deterioration in the overall security environment; China's colonization of South-east Asia; and the projection of Chinese influence and power across the Indian Ocean and Eurasia by way of the Belt and Road Initiative.¹ Each of these phenomena has a maritime dimension; a reality which is the subject of this review. The Chinese economy, for example, is dependent upon and has stimulated the growth of a merchant marine and a world-class shipbuilding industry. The latter, in turn, has facilitated the appearance, over the past three decades, of a navy which, numerically speaking, at least, has come to surpass the United States Navy.² Still further, Chinese commercial and naval assets have made possible the highly ambitious maritime dimensions of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). These unprecedented developments have highlighted the alleged decline in American power in East Asian and Indian Ocean waters. There seems little doubt that the mercurial nature of the administration in Washington has reinforced this perception although the American maritime footprint remains, arguably, as powerful as ever.³

One phenomenon enumerated above was the general deterioration in the overall security environment in Asia. For several decades the Chinese pursued a "harmonious seas" (the maritime analog of the "peaceful rise") narrative designed to legitimize Chinese naval ambitions and reassure policymakers that there was nothing to fear from the steady

Dr. James A. Boutilier is the Special Advisor (Policy) at Canada's Maritime Forces Pacific Headquarters in Esquimalt, British Columbia. He is responsible for advising the Commander of Maritime Forces Pacific on matters of defence and foreign policy and maritime security in the Asia-Pacific region.

The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute or its members, or the policies of the Royal Canadian Navy or the Canadian Department of National Defence.

growth in the size and capability of the People's Liberation Army Navy. This, of course, was a Trojan Horse strategy; although, as the years went by, perceptive analysts began to argue that a naval arms race was taking place in East Asia. This involved not merely the modernization of existing fleets but the expansion and transformation of those fleets particularly with reference to submarines, missiles, and maritime airpower.⁴

It is worth pausing to reflect again on the fact that a navy larger than the United States Navy has made its appearance in East Asian waters over the past three decades. This is a truly astonishing development. While those in charge of China's historical narrative are quick to point to the remarkable accomplishments of Admiral Zheng He in the first half of the 15th century, Zheng's voyages were an anomaly without lasting effect. Subsequent dynasties ignored the sea and, thus, China's embrace of seapower towards the end of the 20th century was little short of revolutionary. Inherent in the growth of China's ocean-going or Blue Water navy was the evolution of a larger set of strategic considerations. To begin with, China has a very long coastline, open to attack. China's centre of industrial gravity lies along that coastline and is focused, dramatically, in the Pearl and Yangtze River Deltas. Beijing has constantly to calculate the potential role that the unincorporated island of Taiwan would play in the event of maritime hostilities. That uncertainty is multiplied by the presence of American allies like South Korea and Japan to the north and Australia and New Zealand, to the south.⁵

Looking outwards, the Chinese (and this view was captured by the perceptive Admiral Liu Huaqing in the 1980s) see two island chains that lie across the approaches to the Chinese coast. The first runs from Japan through the Ryukyus to the Philippines and beyond. The second, less well defined, runs farther to the east via Guam to the Solomon Islands and the Coral Sea. From the outset, Liu and his acolytes set their sights on pushing China's maritime boundary eastwards, ini-



Modern statue of Ming Admiral Zheng He in Melaka, Malaysia.

The production of SITREP is made possible in part by the generosity of the Langley Bequest, which is made in honour of Major Arthur J Langley CD and Lt (N/S) Edith F Groundwater Langley

tially to the First Island Chain and eventually to the Second Island Chain. At its simplest, the object was to hold American seapower at arm's length from the coast and create a defence in depth.⁶

During the Cold War the Russians exploited the strategic advantages conferred by the enclosed Sea of Okhotsk. The sea, lying between the Russian naval port of Petropavlovsk, on the Kamchatka Peninsula, and the eastern headquarters of the navy at Vladivostok, constituted a bastion in which Russian ballistic missile submarines could lurk. The American ambition, towards the end of the war, was to penetrate that bastion pre-emptively and eliminate the submarine threat; an undertaking that lay somewhere on the spectrum from daring to suicidal.

A somewhat comparable challenge has begun to emerge in the western Pacific. The Chinese have three large fleet bases; at Qingdao in the north, Ningbo in the east near the mouth of the Yangtze, and Zhangjian on Hainan island in the south. The last mentioned faces onto the semi-enclosed South China Sea. The sea runs roughly from the Strait of Malacca, near Singapore in the south, to the approaches to the Taiwan Strait in the north. It is a supremely strategic body of water since huge amounts of maritime traffic (and vital energy shipments, in particular) flow through the narrow Strait of Malacca and move northeast towards markets in China, Japan, and South Korea.⁷

Complicating the matter inordinately is the fact that the 200-nautical mile exclusive economic zones of the states that ring the South China Sea overlap in a number of places and the heart of the sea is populated by dozens of reefs, shoals, and tiny islets that are claimed, in a salt and pepper fashion, by the adjacent nations. However, these geographic realities and legal niceties have not deterred the Chinese in the slightest. Prior to Xi Jinping's rise to power in 2012, the Chinese leadership pursued a fairly low-keyed approach to their claims in the SCS. This was a reflection of the great Deng Xiaoping's admonition to build one's power and keep a low profile (hence, among other things, the promotion of the Harmonious Seas concept). The low profile seems also to have been a reflection of the leadership personalities involved and the fact that after the Wall Street financial meltdown in 2007-08, Chinese leaders were focused on ensuring domestic economic stability.⁸

All that changed with Xi's accession to power. Xi was thrusting, confident, and ambitious. He and his senior naval colleagues saw the South China Sea as a vital bastion as well as an integral part of the coastal defence glacis that they needed to construct. Accordingly, orders went out to develop a number of key maritime features in the South China Sea to the degree that they could host airstrips, missiles, and support facilities for the PLAN. The Chinese turned to with a vengeance, dredging up colossal amounts of sand and coral and transforming hitherto submerged or partially submerged features into what the press generally, but imprecisely, called "islands." One has to be fastidious about the nomenclature in this case since a submerged feature enjoys no maritime territory (12 nautical

mile territorial sea, etc.) regardless of whether it is built up to be the size of Manhattan. It may be referred to as an island in news accounts but it enjoys none of the maritime attributes or privileges of a legally-defined island (as detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982).⁹

The Chinese have developed at least 16 features in a suitably impressive manner. Several of these features, like Fiery Cross, Mischief, and Subi reefs, have 10,000-foot runways capable of accommodating all of the various types of aircraft in the Chinese inventory. As well, despite firm assurances to the contrary from President Xi to President Obama during their Sunnylands, California, meeting in 2015, the Chinese have equipped these reclaimed features with an array of missiles, radar systems, and barracks for military personnel.¹⁰ The reality on the ground, in fact, is a light year away from the, soothing assurances originally proffered that reclamation work was intended to provide outposts for rescuing distressed fisherfolk and other mariners. One can, of course, argue that the new facilities are acutely vulnerable to attack should hostilities occur, but, for the moment, the Chinese, by carefully calibrating the passivity of the West, have pulled off a master coup; one that enables them to leap frog airpower from Hainan down across the SCS and hold all of the peripheral states to ransom should the latter wish to exploit their maritime resources.

Thus, over the past half-decade the Chinese have stripped away the word "South", and transformed the enclosed body of water into the "Chinese Sea." In the process they have completely ignored the International Court of Arbitration's July 2016 ruling that stated that Beijing's "historic" claims in the SCS were bogus and that the much heralded Nine-Dash Line (an ill-defined perimeter line that Beijing has never explained adequately and which has the effect of implying that 80 percent of the South China Sea belongs to China somehow) has no legal foundation whatsoever. These are merely irritating legal flourishes from China's perspective.¹¹

In the language of the day, China has changed the facts on the ground in much the same way that Russia did with its incorporation of the Crimea. What matters for Beijing, when the smoke of battle clears, is the fact that the South China Sea has been incorporated into China's maritime defensive structure and that Beijing is now in control of one of the great commercial conduits of Asia. This element of control is clearly contestable. The Strait of Malacca is not the only route available to mariners. Nevertheless, Chinese activities in the South China Sea do amount to a critical psychological victory and should a naval war ever occur between the Chinese and Americans, the Chinese presence in the SCS would render American calculations a great deal more daunting.

The South China Sea is a subset of a larger vector; the Chinese push south and west into Southeast Asia and beyond into the Indian Ocean.¹² Beijing's accomplishments in the South China Sea have been matched by a parallel campaign to draw more and more of the ten member states of ASEAN—the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—into China's orbit.

This is the latest variant on the celebrated Middle Kingdom construct. Sadly, the Association was completely impotent in the face of Chinese claims in the South China Sea. ASEAN leaders fulminated quietly and issued toothless bromides, but the Association, which ironically, was just about to celebrate its transition to community status, was irresolute when it came to challenging Beijing's claims. Subsequently, Beijing has moved to co-opt more and more of the smaller states, like Cambodia and Laos, with offers of developmental assistance. This is fair enough, in and of itself, but the result is that ASEAN solidarity has been fatally compromised. That is not to say that ASEAN has not done and continues to do good work, but the authority of ASEAN has become increasingly fictional.¹³

Many of the Chinese-funded projects in Southeast Asia (and elsewhere across Asia) fall within the rubric of the Belt and Road Initiative. There are many ways to look at this gargantuan undertaking. Is it simply a way in which China's excess capacity can be absorbed in huge civil engineering projects in the Indian Ocean region and the Eurasian land mass? Certainly, there is a well-documented need for infrastructure in these regions, but a growing body of analysts have come to question the financial viability of a number of the BRI projects (for example, the economies of trans-Eurasian rail shipments). Further, they have begun to query Chinese construction practices, with their heavy reliance on imported Chinese labour, and the potential for debt traps as weak economies like Pakistan's find themselves unable to repay Chinese loans. Other observers note that the BRI enables China to export China's vision of globalization and to facilitate the spread of Chinese influence via United Front operations.¹⁴

But what is most significant, in this instance, are the maritime dimensions of the BRI and, more specifically, Chinese naval ambitions in the Indian Ocean. Just as the Indian government, under the direction of Prime Minister Modi, is executing an Act East policy which sees New Delhi fostering ties with key Southeast Asian states as well as Australia, Beijing is moving resolutely in the opposite direction promoting the Maritime Silk Road aspect of the BRI.¹⁵ For all that the Chinese have achieved a commanding position in the South China Sea, they still harbour deep anxieties about a future enemy cutting off the Strait of Malacca.¹⁶ As a consequence, BRI and pre-BRI initiatives have been designed to allow Beijing to bypass the strait by developing port and pipeline links to the Indian Ocean that will enable vital energy supplies to reach China by overland routes across Myanmar and Pakistan. The former is operational, though at a sub-optimal level, while the latter, the highly ambitious China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, linking Gwadar with Kashgar, remains to be realized.¹⁷ Indian analysts tend to take a jaundiced view of these developments. Some years ago the evolution of a number of Chinese ports across the Indian Ocean was labelled the String of Pearls strategy. Many tended to dismiss this vision as being overblown, but no longer. While the label has largely disappeared from the strategic discourse, fears of potential Chinese naval ports in

the Indian Ocean continue to grow, particularly now that China has commissioned a military base at Djibouti, near the Horn of Africa. Moreover, China has been dispatching three-ship units to the northwest Indian Ocean for a decade now and these deployments have given the PLAN a good deal of long-range operational experience. In addition to submarine patrols in the Indian Ocean and strategic overtures to key Indian Ocean microstates, like the Maldives, the PLAN has moved through the Red Sea to the Mediterranean and even as far as the Baltic.¹⁸ These last mentioned destinations have given the PLAN the opportunity to exercise with the Russian Federation Navy; exercises in keeping with the burgeoning relationship between Beijing and Moscow.

At the end of the Second World War the security architecture in East Asia was described as a hub and spokes arrangement: the United States was the hub with spokes radiating outwards to American allies like Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, and Australia. Since the turn of the century a new spoke has been added in the form of the Washington-New Delhi axis. While Prime Minister Modi (and his immediate predecessors) has been coy about showing his hand too openly, the relationship between the Indian Navy and the United States Navy continues to grow in the face of mounting apprehensions about China's long-range ambitions.¹⁹

China's meteoric rise has, not surprisingly, called into question American authority in the region. The Chinese are openly triumphalist about their newfound power, although, paradoxically, they are also the victims of a profound inferiority complex; harbouring deep paranoid anxieties about the way in which the world appears to be ranged against them. They have good reason to be concerned. While it is inarguable that the power of the United States has declined in absolute terms since the end of the Cold War, America remains enormously powerful in economic and military terms. The unpredictable nature of the administration in Washington tends, of course, to reinforce declinist arguments, but the United States can count on an impressive array of friends and allies (for all that they have been treated rather brusquely of late), while China has almost none.²⁰ Indeed, China not only finds itself surrounded by nations that look to Washington—nations like Japan, South Korea, Australia, and India—but these nations have begun to add new complexity to the hub and spoke model by collaborating among themselves. Thus, Prime Minister Abe, whom history will recognize as one of the great prime ministers of post-war Japan, has moved slowly, steadily, and effectively to build bridges with Australia and India and to materially assist those nations like Vietnam that entertain little love for the People's Republic of China.²¹ What is more, Abe has skilfully increased Japanese defence expenditures and orchestrated a much more active role for Japanese services like the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force. Thus, we see the Japanese helicopter carrier *Kaga*, operating with the American aircraft carrier USS *Ronald Reagan* in the South China Sea; a move viewed as the height of impertinence by the ultra-sensitive

Chinese.

It was Abe who, more than a decade ago, proposed the Quadrilateral or Quad for short. The Quad envisaged the Japanese, Americans, Australians, and Indians working together to ensure peace and good order in the Indo Pacific region. The Indians had already laid the groundwork for the Quad by promoting the multi-national Malabar naval exercises that brought the Indian Navy, United States Navy, and Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force together on occasion. Periodically, the Royal Australian Navy was included, although New Delhi was wary about China's perception, first of the Malabar arrangement and then of the Quad, and so was reluctant to bring the Australians on board. More recently, however, as Chinese actions have come to be seen as increasingly bullying and aggressive, Abe's Quad concept has begun to be quietly revived.²²

A revitalized Quad fuels Beijing's paranoia about Cold War style containment. The Quad, in fact, is part of a global pushback that has taken place against China over the past year or so. Right around the world, journalists, strategists, and policymakers have begun to question, as never before, the nature of China's end game. This is part of a larger phenomenon; the loss of faith in what was a fundamental tenet of western establishments. For many years, the argument prevailed that the West could contemplate a China that would become increasingly liberal in its outlook as it grew rich. The advent of the Xi regime, however, has disabused western analysts of this expectation totally. Rather than becoming more "reasonable" (that is to say, liberal-minded like the West as China's middle class grows), China has become more prickly, awkward, and difficult to deal with. At the same time, an array of issues have arisen that highlight the growing gap between Chinese and western visions of how the world should be ordered. Chinese espionage cases, Chinese theft of intellectual property, the dramatic deterioration of human rights standards in China, the equally dramatic curtailment of information flows, revelations about Chinese coercive tactics, via United Front organizations, Beijing's failure to honour international law, China's strong-armed tactics with supporters of Taiwan, and Chinese "salami" tactics in the East China Sea and the Himalayas have called into question, in stark and uncompromising terms, the nature of the Chinese regime and raised serious doubts about how to reconcile Western and Chinese narratives.²³

A good deal of this angst relates to the financial dimensions of the Belt and Road Initiative and, more particularly, the capacity of BRI projects to reduce recipient states to colonial status. While the Chinese had been extending loans to African states for some time, the opening shot in the great BRI re-evaluation was probably the fate of the Sri Lankan port of Hambantota. The Chinese invested heavily in Hambantota (and an ill-starred airport nearby as a vanity project for the then Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa) and the Sri Lankan authorities, unable to repay the loan, were obliged to lease most of the port for 99 years to the Chinese. This

event popularized the idea of debt traps and currently we see governments as diverse as Tonga's and Pakistan's struggling to calculate how they will repay China. Is this simply a question of poor planning on the part of the recipient regimes or is it an outcome sought after by the donor as a way of enhancing China's maritime prospects in the Indian and Pacific Oceans?²⁴

Ironically, the Chinese seem to have become aware of the self-fulfilling nature of many of these BRI undertakings only recently. The great Chinese leader, Deng Xiaoping, sagely recommended a hide and bide strategy in which China would build up its strength without alarming the rest of the world. Xi, however, has dispensed with this advice and the result has been predictable. From Xi's perspective, trumpeting China's remarkable achievements may be necessary in order to realize his millenarian "China Dream". However, China's current mood of triumphalism has served to alarm many nations around the globe; alarm which translates into the very posture of encirclement that the Chinese fear.

The upshot of these concerns is that these nations have begun looking to their own defences. Canberra and Wellington, for example, are renewing their commitment to their Pacific Island neighbours in the face of greater levels of Chinese activity across Oceania. New Delhi and Washington are deepening their defence relationship as are Hanoi and Washington. Japan has provided patrol craft to Vietnam and the Philippines and a number of countries like Australia, France, and the United Kingdom have begun undertaking increased naval patrols in the South China Sea and elsewhere in the Indo Pacific region.²⁵

Generally speaking, the battle lines are hardening. The Chinese have continued to militarize the reclaimed features that they control in the South China Sea. They continue, as well, to build up the size and sophistication of the PLAN, launching 19 warships of various types in the first eight months of 2018. They are also hard at work on their third aircraft carrier, one which promises to be a good deal larger and more capable than their first two *Kuznetsov*-class vessels.²⁶

The Americans have responded in kind, rolling out their largest defence budget to date; one that includes an additional *Ford*-class aircraft carrier, although it is unlikely that this vessel will enter service much before the late 2020s. Washington expressed its disenchantment with Chinese activities in the South China Sea by disinviting the PLAN from the huge Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) multinational naval exercises in Hawaii in 2018. The Chinese, for their part, have engaged more and more openly with the Russians, taking part in very large military exercises—Vostok 18—near Mongolia and exercising regularly at sea with elements of the Russian Federation Navy.²⁷ Putin has been unable to realize his grandiose plans to revitalize the Russian Navy but Russian shipyards are producing frigates and corvettes that carry inventories of powerful missiles. China has been launching Type 055 destroyers that displace upwards of 13,000 tons. This makes them the largest non-carrier warships entering service

in Asian waters. Of particular concern is the fact that the 055 carries over 100 vertical launch missiles and there seems every likelihood that the Chinese have embraced the Soviet “battle of the first salvo” doctrine. Whatever the case, the approaches to the Chinese coast are increasingly missile-rich, to use an old Pentagon expression. This reality is captured in the form of the much-vaunted Dong Feng-21D, a land-based intermediate range missile that can reach the waters off Guam and is reputed, thanks to a manoeuvrable warhead, to be able to strike American aircraft carriers.²⁸

The DF21D is a critical part of the Chinese area denial strategy. Unable to exercise sea control for the time being, Beijing has opted for a sea denial strategy designed to keep American naval units well away from the Chinese coast. In keeping with this strategy, they have developed an impressive array of missiles—cruise, hypersonic, air and submarine launched, and ballistic. Some analysts argue that the United States Navy has lagged far behind China in making itself ready for the battle of the first salvo. If full-blown hostilities should erupt at sea, much will depend on the role played by allies like Japan, Australia, and Canada; much will depend on the part played by Taiwan; and much will depend on all of those other battlespace elements like satellites, cyber, reconnaissance, intelligence, and so forth.²⁹

None of the players want a war at sea, but the inventories continue to grow, the room for manoeuvre continues to shrink, and great power relations continue to deteriorate.

These sobering realities place a premium on knowing the future battlespace, knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the contestants, and knowing, without a hint of wishful thinking, one’s own capabilities. The canvas is vast and the laws of physics and geography are unrelenting. Sadly, Vegetius was right; if you want peace, prepare for war. If war comes, the protagonists will struggle to confine it to the maritime realm. The monumental scale of that realm, its complexity, and the number of players will make hostilities at sea almost without historical parallel. ✦

NOTES

1 Richard Ghiasy, Fei Su, and Lora Saalman, “The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road,” Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2018.

2 Steven Lee Meyers, “China, Shoring up Its Navy, Muscles into Pacific,” *New York Times*, 29 August 2018. <https://www.wral.com/china-shoring-up-its-navy-muscles-into-pacific/17803020/>

3 Graham Allison, “The Truth About the Liberal Order,” <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2018-08-28/truth-about-liberal-order>

4 Tuneer Mukherjee, “China’s Naval Power and National Prestige,” *Raisina Debates*, 08 March 2018. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/china-naval-power-national-prestige/>

5 Lasanda Kurukulasuriya, “Japan Eyes Sri Lanka’s Deep Water Port of Trincomalee,” 31 August 2018. <https://thediplomat.com/2018/08/japan-eyes-sri-lankas-deep-water-port-of-trincomalee/>

6 Steven Lee Meyers, “With Ships and Missiles, China is ready to Challenge US Navy in Pacific,” *The New York Times*, 29 August 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/29/world/asia/china-navy-aircraft-carrier-pacific.html>

7 Gabriel Collins, “A Maritime Oil Blockade Against China—Tactically Tempting but Strategically Flawed,” *Naval War College Review*, vol. 71, no. 2, Spring 2018.

8 Bill Hayton, *The South China Sea: The Struggle for Power in Asia*. Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2014, pp 79ff.

9 Hayton, pp 112-113.

10 Tom Phillips, “Photos show Beijing’s militarisation of South China Sea in new detail,” *The Guardian*, 06 February 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/06/photos-beijings-militarisation-south-china-sea-philippines>.

11 Full Text of Statement from China’s Foreign Minister on Award of South China Sea Arbitration Initiated by Philippines. *Xinhua*, 12 July 2016. http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-07/12/c_135507744.htm.

12 “China’s Empire of Money is Reshaping Global Trade,” *Bloomberg News*, 01 August 2018. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2018-08-01/china-s-empire-of-money-is-reshaping-lives-across-new-silk-road>.

13 Mervyn Piesse, “China and the Mekong River: Dominance or Collaboration?” *Future Directions International*, 04 April 2018. <http://www.futuredirections.org.au/publication/china-mekong-river-dominance-collaboration/>

14 Andreea Brinza, “China’s Continent-Spanning Trains are running half empty,” *Foreign Policy*, 05 June 2017. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/05/chinas-continent-spanning-trains-are-running-half-empty-one-belt-one-road-bri/> and John Garnaut, “Australia’s China Reset.” 06 August 2018. <https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2018/august/1533045600/john-garnaut/australia-s-china-reset>

15 “India, Myanmar kick off first Bilateral Naval Exercise,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, 26 March 2018.

16 Collins, *ibid*.

17 David Brewster, “China’s New Network of Indian Ocean Bases,” *The Interpreter*, 30 January 2018. <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/china-new-network-indian-ocean-bases>

18 Vinayak Bhat, “China Gets Closer to Its Dream of a Blue Water Navy with Rapid Expansion of African Base,” 10 September 2018. <https://theprint.in/security/china-gets-closer-to-its-dream-of-a-blue-water-navy-with-rapid-expansion-of-african-base/113987/>

19 “US and India: Limited Progress on Military Ties in 2018-2022,” *The Economist Intelligence Unit*, 27 March 2018.

20 Max Boot, “America’s Weakness in the Pacific is Major Danger to World Peace,” 12 November 2014. <https://www.commentarymagazine.com/2011/11/14/america-weakness-pacific-china/> and Mark Lander, “A New Era of Gunboat Diplomacy,” *New York Times*, 13 November 2011. <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/13/sunday-review/a-new-era-of-gunboat-diplomacy.html>

21 Matthew P. Goodman, “An Uneasy Japan Steps Up,” *Global Economics Monthly Newsletter*, vol. vii, issue 4, April 2018.

22 “India stays away from US-led trilateral Initiative Countering China in Indo-Pacific Region,” *Economic Times of India*, 07 August 2018, and Balaji Chandramohan, “Quadrilateral Security Initiative 2.0: Second Attempt at Indo-Pacific Maritime Alliance,” *Future Directions International*, 01 March 2018. <http://www.futuredirections.org.au/publication/quadrilateral-security-initiative-2-0-second-attempt-indo-pacific-maritime-alliance/>

23 Stephanie Saul, “On Campuses far from China, still under Beijing’s Watchful Eye,” *New York Times*, 04 May 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/04/us/chinese-students-western-campuses-china-influence.html> and Alex Joske, “Beijing is Silencing Chinese-Australians,” 06 February 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/06/.../beijing-chinese-australians-censorship.html>

24 “Myanmar scales back Chinese-backed port project due to debt fears—Official,” *Reuters*, 02 August 2018, and “China ups OBOR game in Africa: Taking lambs for a ride,” *New Delhi Times*, 10 September 2018. <https://www.newdelhitimes.com/china-ups-obor-game-in-africa-taking-lambs-for-a-ride/>

25 Colin Packham, “To Counter China, West plans bigger footprint in Pacific: Sources,” *Reuters*, 30 August 2018.

26 “Image emerges showing possible design of China’s third aircraft carrier,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, 21 June 2018. <https://www.janes.com/article/81249/image-emerges-showing-possible-design-of-china-s-third-aircraft-carrier>

27 Christopher Woody, “Russia may be telling ‘true lies’ about its ‘unprecedented’ war games with China — and it wouldn’t be the first time,” *Business Insider*, 13 September 2018, <https://www.businessinsider.com/russia-telling-true-lies-about-unprecedented-war-games-with-china-2018-9>

28 Meyers.

29 Ryan Pickrell, “The US Air Force is asking for hypersonic weapon ideas as a news arms race with China and Russia heats up,” *Business Insider*, 04 September 2018. <https://www.businessinsider.com/the-us-air-force-asking-for-hypersonic-weapon-ideas-2018-9>.