

China US Japan and Russia in a Changing World

EDITED BY
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Preface

We are living in a changing world. In such a world, lots of new challenges are confronting us. Among them, one makes us concern most: whether we can live in a peaceful world in 21 century? The past century experienced two world wars with great number of people died. The Cold War brought us fierce confrontation between the two blocs led by two superpowers. The world was driven to such a dangerous end that nuclear warheads built up could even destroy the whole human beings though such war was not broken out, fortunately not.

Looking back the world history, it is easy to find out that big power's relations were always crucial in shaping the order of the region, as well as of the world. The wars either between big powers, or with the involvement of big powers were tended to spread to a larger region, or even turned into a world war. The ending of the Cold War has brought us the new hope that we could build a peaceful world order if big powers could make themselves into partners, rather than rivals. However, this is not an easy transition. The Cold War mentality is still prevailing and the relations between big powers are not stable. The US, as the only superpower in the world tends to build a uni - polar world order under its hegemony. In the Asia - Pacific region, both US and Japan want to have an order with their alliance as the core. The US - Russia relations have ended their honeymoon period, which was only shortly talked by their leaders after the Cold War, following NATO's "eastward expansion" and military intervention in Kosovo. China - US relationship has even more troubles, ranging from Lee Denghui's visit to the bombing of Chinese embassy in Belgrade by the US missiles. These trends make people worry that the world may be re - divided and a new cold war appeared. Globalization makes our world more integrated and interdependent, but the conflicting interests and strategy of the big powers seem to lead us to a different direction. What should we do in facing such a worrisome situation?

Fortunately, a structure of constructive relationship based on various kinds of

partnership among the big powers has been established which becomes the useful mechanism to prevent them from going too far to the confrontation. China plays a positive role in promoting a stable order through its initiatives for building the partnership among big powers. However, it seems that no an agreement has been made on this “ new relationship” among the big powers characterized by the partnership. The critical view insists that partnership is only a word, not an reality since the relations among big powers have not been improved, while the positive comments appreciate its role in creating a good structure for avoiding worst conflicts and seeking coordination and cooperation. The world is still in a transition from the old order to a new one. The debates on the nature and direction of the new order will continue. But opportunities are there for a better relationship and a better world, which requires both our good will and our great efforts.

A conference was held in Beijing in October of 1999 on “ world order and the big powers’ relations”. I invited scholars from China, the US, Russia, Japanese, Australia, as well as South Korea to Beijing to exchanges the views on this subject. Articles included in this book were written by the participants of this conference. Part one of the book is a general review of the current world order; Part two evaluates the nature and trend of the partnership among big powers, and Part three focuses on the relations and roles of big powers in the Asia – Pacific region. I hope this book gives comprehensive views on the subjects relating to the world order and big powers’ relations.

As the editor of the book, I would like to thank the authors for their cooperation in sending their revised papers timely. I gratefully acknowledge the kind help by Dr. Gaye Christoffersen for reading through the papers and Ms. Guo Weihong for her assistance in editing work. My Special thanks to Social Science Documentation Publishing House that made this publication possible.

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April 28, 2000

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PART 1

Post Cold War Order

Whither the World Order?¹

I . Introduction

The NATO bombing campaign in Serbia, especially the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade was a great shock to the Chinese since it was the first time that a regional organization attacked a sovereign state without the authorization of the United Nation and had made an embassy a military target. The fundamental principle of the UN and international relations in the post- World War Two period has been the sovereignty of states. Article 2 of the UN charter forbids member countries to use, or threaten to use force against another member. If this so-called collective intervention to a sovereign state becomes legitimated, "it provides a *catre blanche* to powerful countries to use force, or threaten to use force to make other countries change their domestic policies, their governments or their political systems."² The real goal of NATO's strike against Yugoslavia was as claimed by President Clinton to end "Europe's last dictatorship" and bring democracy to Serbia. China worries that what happened yesterday in Yugoslavia may occur tomorrow in Asia, especially in China, whose minority policy and human rights issue are always disagreed by the US and its allies.

The ending of the Cold War makes the US the only superpower. President George Bush promised a " new world order" immediately after the victory of the Gulf war against Iraq. But what does this new order mean ? A new order characterized by " Pax Americana" is not acceptable. The US-led NATO's military intervention against Yugoslavia is considered by China as " an important measure taken by the US to step up the implementation of its globalstrategy of seeking hegemony at the turn of the century, and a major

1 By Zhang Yunling, Director, professor of Institute of Asia-pacific Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

2 Frem Shankar Jha: Tragedy in the Balkans: NATO's monumental blunder, *World Affairs*, Vol.3, No.2, 1999.

indication of the new development of the US hegemonism .”¹ NATO’s action against Yugoslavia raises many questions so as to the legitimacy of waging war on a sovereign state, the principles of the international relations, and the credibility of the United Nations.

Peace in the new century will rests on maintaining international rules and laws passed by the UN members with respecting state sovereignty and equality. These rules and laws are not old. The danger of the “new interventionism” based on power may lead to more violence and new arms race, thus a unstable and dangerous world. Now it is the time for the international community to discuss seriously the principles and ways to safe guard the security of the new century.

II . China’s Views on Kosovo crisis

The public views in China before NATO’s air strike on Yugoslavia about the post Cold War world order used to be relatively optimistic though with some reservations. An article published in China just before the bombing on an official press was still considered “ the international situation tends to have relaxed generally.” As a result, “ interdependence between powers has intensified, regardless of the contradictions and conflicts that have occurred. Against this background, dialogue and cooperation have become a principal trend in the power relations.”² NATO’s bombing was really a great shock to the Chinese since they could not believe a regional organization like NATO could wage a war to a sovereign state, who is not a member of NATO and made no threat to it at all.

From the very beginning, China insisted a peaceful solution of the Kosovo crisis through negotiations on the basis of respecting Yugoslavian sovereignty and territorial integrity, though this did not mean that China neglected the problems there. So that China very strongly opposed NATO’s air strike since it “ considered NATO’s air strike unjust and inhuman”.³ Chinese leaders called for “a fare and reasonable solution of the Kosovo problem through negotiations”, and “stop of NATO’s military intervention, thus the issue back

1 *Beijing Review*, Vol. 42, No. 24, 1999, p. 7.

2 Yang Xiyue: Power relations in today’s world, *Beijing Review*, Vol. 42, No. 9 – 10, March 1, 1999, p. 6 – 7.

3 “ Behind the bombing of the Chinese embassy”, *Beijing Review*, Vol. 42, No. 21, 1999, p. 5.

to political solution.”¹

The bombing of Chinese embassy in Belgrade added fuel on to the fire. The Chinese did not believe it was an accident, rather as “ a premeditated scheme.” Angry students and citizens all over China went on to the streets for demonstrations against the bombing and believed US barbarous action. In fact, what the bombing caused is not just anger, but also the distrust. People’s view of the US has been changed. Growing number of people in China started to think that a US dominated world order will not give a fare place and chance for China to develop and become strong. Zhu Muzhi, president of the China Society for Human Rights, believed that “ the United States considers China as a barrier to the exercise of hegemonism. So it will surely look for a chance to threaten China.”² The Chinese are particularly anxious about what US actions in the Balkans presage for future US actions in Asia. The US may establish a new alliance to attack China on the excuse of humanitarianism or protection of the minority in the future. This made the Chinese change a perspective of the future world from a more “benign one ” to a more “hostile one ”. To put it simply, a “worst scenario” is considered and prepared after the bombing, a overturn of a “best perspective” prevailed before the crisis.

However, the anger and suspicion of Chinese people did not bring about a fundamental change of China’s overall policy. In his speech after US missile attack onto Chinese embassy, Vice President Hu Jingtao still stated that China “ will uphold the policy of reform and opening to the outside world” and warned people not to take “over-reaction”.³ Jiang Zemin noted again in his speech at the meeting welcoming back Chinese diplomatists in Belgrade that China “will further expand opening to the outside world, continue to conduct economic and technological exchange and cooperation with other countries.”⁴ An editorial in the official People’s Daily on June 3, 1999 re-emphasized “peace and development as the two outstanding issues of the day”, and made it clear that “upholding the independent foreign policy of peace also covers promoting friendly cooperation with Western countries, including the US.”

Fortunately, Kosovo issue finally returned to the United Nations with the

1 *People’s Daily*, March 30, 1999.

2 Zhu Muzhi: NATO lifts its mask of humanitarianism, *Beijing Review*, Vol. 42, No. 21, 1999, p. 14.

3 *Beijing Review*, Vol. 42, No. 21, 1999, p. 7.

4 *Foreign Affairs Journal*, No. 52, 1999, Beijing , p. 32.

ending of NATO's bombing though the way to solve it is still very long and tortuous. But the challenge to China is how to make a balance between "a changed perspective" and "a unchanged ambitious goal of modernization".

III . A Changed Perspective

As indicated above, the Chinese tended to believe that the ending of the Cold War would bring the world into a new order with less ideological and military confrontation and more integration and cooperation. So that, it was asserted that "peace and development" are two major trends in our present and future world, thus China enjoys a long peaceful environment for its development and modernization. But more than 70 days air strike on Yugoslavia by the US-led NATO made a big shift of the views of the Chinese on the future world order. Leading scholars, not few, in China have seen the world from a new perspective. Wang Yizhou, a specialist on international politics in Beijing took NATO's action as a "warning at the turn of the century". From a global perspective, he summarized it as five long term possible impacts on the future international relations: (1) The UN will be made a mere figurehead, thus the role the Security Council trampled; (2) The US and its allies will expand the role of the NATO, which bring about a dangerous trend of "globalization of the NATO"; (3) The new arms race will be strengthened; (4) The ethnic conflicts will be intensified; (5) The principles of the international relations will be changed.¹ While Hu Shicun from Shanghai concluded 10 major influences. Among the others aside from those similar to Wang's above points, he noted specially the danger of a US hegemony in the future world order, a confronting relations among big powers, a new threat of high-tech military war, as well as a more complex and insecure environment for China. He warned the possibility for the US to "poke its nose into China's surrounding regional affairs and directly intervene China's internal affairs."² Their views are shared by many others though they are not necessary represent the majority of the Chinese scholars.

The ending of the Cold War left the US the only superpower in the world. The US is "the sole state with preeminence in every domain of power-

1 Wang Yizhou: Warning at the end of the Century, *World Affairs*, Vol. 1271, No. 10, 1999, Beijing, p. 8 - 9.

2 Hu Shicun: Ten major influences of Kosovo war, *World Outlook*, No. 13, 1999, Shanghai, p. 11 - 13.

economic, military, diplomatic, ideological, technological and cultural-with the reach and capabilities to promote its interests in virtually every part of the world." By this superiority, the US "would clearly prefer a uni-polar system in which it would be the hegemon". The danger of this uni-polar world order is that it makes the US impose its will on the other countries. Among other things, it has unilaterally attempted to "pressure other countries to adopt American values and practices regarding human rights and democracy, prevent other countries from acquiring military capabilities that could counter American conventional superiority; enforce American law extra-territorially in other societies; grade countries according to their adherence to American standards on human rights, drugs, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, missile proliferation, and now religious freedom, apply sanctions against countries that do not meet American standards on these issues and categorize certain countries as "rogue states", excluding them from global institutions because they refuse to kowtow to American wishes."¹ In launching air strike on Yugoslavia, US-led NATO acted without the authority of the UN, which set a very bad precedent in interfering the internal affairs of a sovereign state. The aim of NATO's strike is "to end "Europe's last dictatorship" as claimed by president Clinton since it cannot "make the region safe for the long term while a dictator remains at the heart of it "as stated by British prime minister Tony Blair.² As we have seen during the air strike that the final victory of the war against Serbs became vital to "the credibility of NATO", rather than the others. The problem of this "pre-emption" of using force by strong power(or powers) against the weak one (or ones) based on its or their own "value" will only create disorder. It is reasonably to ask who can prevent the US or US-led alliance from doing the same to the other countries in the future if the authority and legitimacy of the UN ignored and sidelined. China worries that NATO's action on Yugoslavia may become an important step for the US to seek a global hegemonism.

China supports a multi-polar world order. It is considered that "the collapse of the bipolar pattern in the Cold War period was followed by a multi-polarization trend," and "the trend towards multipolarity serves the interests of world peace and development."³ Only in a multi-polar world, the US

1 Samuel P. Huntington: The lonely superpower, *Foreign Affairs*, March/April, 1999, p. 35 - 36.

2 "A new moral Crusade", *Newsweek*, June 14, 1999, p.35.

3 Jiang Zemin: Develop China-Europe Cooperation and Promote the establishment of a new world order, *Beijing Review*, Vol.42, No.15, 1999, p.8.

“arrogance and unilateralism” can be restrained by other powers and international organizations (the UN in particular). NATO’s air strike on Yugoslavia, led by the US, severely obstructed this trend.

While the structure of the multipolarity is characterized by “ one superpower and multiple powers”(or a uni-multipolar system¹), China does not want to challenge or compete with the US superiority, but rejects a US domination, or hegemonism. As a superpower, the US security is not threatened. What it fights for is actually values , not security. This is actually considered to be the root of the “power politics”. As Kissinger pointed out. “ the paradox is that a country that thinks of itself as acting in the name of universal values is seen by too many others as acting arbitrarily, or inexplicably, or arrogantly.”² This value- driven policy can only lead to re-division of the world community and new conflicts.

The “Cold War thinking” in the US is still very strong (the Cox report as an example). A rising socialist China is usually considered as a “threat” to the US interest. It is natural for China to worry that the US will intervene in China’s internal affairs, especially the Taiwan issue if its hegemonism succeeds.

NATO’s action in Kosovo is supported by a doctrine of “ new interventionism”. The new interventionism is based on a “ new justice” that “the major threats to stability and well being now come from internal violence”, and “intervention has been deemed appropriate where the humanitarian costs of failing to intervene are too high.”³ The first problem of this new doctrine is that who makes the judgment on “the cost of violence”, and who conducts the intervention and in what kind of way? The UN charter forbids member countries to use, or threaten to use force against another member(except when sanctioned by the UN under chapter 7 of the charter). But NATO launched air strike on Yugoslavia by its own judgment(“ethnic cleansing”) and conducted by itself(no authorization of the UN). If the world accepts this, it would become a much more dangerous place since the strong countries can gang up on weak ones. By military intervening to a sovereign state, US-led NATO tried hard to rewrite the international law based on its own rules and values, which is not accepted by China, and Russia, as well as many others. Even Michael J. Glennon, who advocates a

1 Huntington, p.36.

2 Henry A. Kissinger: New world disorder, *Newsweek*, May 31,1999.

3 Michael J. Glennon: The new interventionism-the search for a just international law, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.78, No.3, 1999, p.4.

new interventionism also worries that it is “ dangerous for NATO unilaterally rewrite the rules by intervening in domestic conflicts on an irregular case-by case basis,” and “ justice, it turns out, requires legitimacy, without widespread acceptance of intervention as part of a formal justice system, the new interventionism will appear to be built on neither law nor justice, but on power alone.”¹ Tony Blare promised “ to build a new internationalism based on values and the rule of law”, and “ embark on a newmoral crusade to rebuild the Balkans without Slobdan Milosevic”.² This enforced order does not ensure the peace in the region.

As a matter of fact, interventionism is not at all “new”. The Chinese are easily linked this “humanitarian intervention” with their past and consider it as the tool that was often used by the advanced countries to conquer so called “ barbarous ones” and imposed “civilized standards” on them. In fact, lots of so called “humanitarian interventions” done by powers have their clear political background or strategic interest, which are “no more than a cover, or a pretext for them”.³ Many Chinese tend to believe that NATO’s major concern is strategic importance of the Balkans.

It is clear that China, as a rising power, worries a US domination, or hegemony, and as a socialist country, is anxious about a possible Western imposed values backed by their “collective intervention”.

IV . What Does China really worry?

The end of the Cold War made China out of the shadow of the superpowers’ confrontation and has adopted an independent foreign policy. China expects that “cooperation, instead of confrontation” will become the main character of the international relations. There have been many positive developments in this direction. For examples, the role of the UN in peacekeeping and in controlling and managing the internal conflicts has been recognized and strengthened. The relations of the big powers have been improved based on various kinds of “partnership”. Economic cooperation and integration are more emphasized and supported. With its success of economic reform and opening policy, China is on rising and has become more active and confident

1 Glennon, p.6 - 7.

2 *Newsweek*, June 14, 1999, p.35.

3 ZhenYan: Humanitarian intervention is against the law, *People’s Daily*, June 21, 1999, p.6.

in regional , as well as international participation and cooperation. “ On the whole, the international situation continues to move toward relaxation. The forces for peace and stability keep growing”, as confirmed by Jiang Zemin, president of China, even after the NATO started bombing Yugoslavia. But at the same he warned that “ the world is still not tranquil place.” “ The Cold War mentality still lingers an and hegemonism and power politics manifest themselves from time to time. The tendency towards closer military alliances is on the rise. New forms of gunboat policy are rampant.”¹ In opposing NATO’s unilateral bombing, there is China’s real worrisome behind.

What makes China worries most is the situation of the Asia-Pacific region where China locates. China is mostly worries about a US-led coalition in Asia against China. Although China has established a “new relationship” named “partnership” between China and US (constructively strategic partnership), and also between China and Japan (cooperative partnership for peace and development), but the real trust among them is not built up. The new guidelines designed for future US and Japan security cooperation “change fundamentally the feature and content of the US-Japan security treaty.” By defining the “neighboring situation” as “situations that would have an important influence on Japan’s security, it really includes Taiwan Strait into its “neighboring area”, which makes the pretext to intervene for their own judgment. What makes China anxious more is that this Japan’s “new acts” was passed by Japan’s Diet (parliament) when NATO was launching the air strikes on Yugoslavia. China worries that a strengthened and expanded US-Japan security alliance may play a role as a “Asia’s NATO” since there is the idea that “Japan can gain the initiative by striking foreign bases first” if it is considered to have a threat of its security. What is more is that US and Japan decided to develop the Theater Missile Defense (TMD) system, which targeting China as “a potential threat”.² TMD will greatly enhance the overall offensive and defensive level of the US-Japan military alliance and surely leaves China both no offensive and defensive capability. TMD, though it is argued as a purely defensive system, will create strategic imbalance. Especially, when Taiwan is included into the TMD program, China has not choice but to reject and strongly react.

The US-led NATO’s military action in Balkans re-alarmed China that the real danger for its security is there. Looking around the region, China

1 Jiang Zemin, “Develop China-Europe Cooperation” p.8 – 9.

2 Liu Jiangyong: Partnership in international relations and its challenges, *Journal of Contemporary International Relations*, No. 4, 1999, Beijing, p. 3.