

4. US Power Seen from Military Perspective

State power consists of political, economic, diplomatic and military elements. Until now, Japan has tried to avoid consideration of one of the four; military power. Looking forward, however, the country needs to employ a broad spectrum of ideas, encompassing the military element.

To compare military power, we can use ten indexes. To consider US military power, the followings indexes are necessary: (1) military expenditure (amount of national defense budget), (2) manpower (number of military personnel), (3) material power (amount of equipment), (4) quality of military personnel (degree of sophistication of training, potential of military personnel), (5) technical capability (performance quality of equipment, ability to collect and analyze data), (6) information capability (ability to collect and analyze data), (7) strategy and tactics (know-how of combat), (8) legal authority (domestic positioning of military power), (9) alliance (framework for collective defense), and (10) geopolitical position (difficulty in defending the nation from a geographical perspective). Based on these indexes, one can determine the military capability of various countries.

Perspectives of military capability include the following: Instability multiplied by capability is danger. Then danger multiplied by intention is threat. Next, threat multiplied by excuse is crisis. US military power has been constructed based on these perspectives. Now, however, its excuse is being questioned and thus leading the country into a difficult situation.

To estimate threat, two points must be taken into account, which are the time axis (focal length of the lens) to estimate the threat, and the attitude to see only the military capability of the object (capability oriented). Being capability oriented means not considering the intention or excuse of the object. Focusing on a single item, we see different images, depending on the focal length of the tool we use to see it. Then, we must consider four dimensions. The first dimension is the threat that exists here and now. The second is an estimate in the span of five to ten years, which can be thought of as programming. We must use this lens to observe budget estimates and defense buildup plans. The third dimension is an estimate in the span of 20 to 30 years, a time scale in which to observe research and development, and equipment systems. The fourth dimension is a super long-term estimate in the span of 30 to 50 years. This corresponds to strategic planning, which addresses national security strategy and national values.

The US considers that military power in the new era must first of all allow for involvement in times of peace. This includes civil exchange activities with military personnel and humanitarian relief activities. Next, the US considers that military power must also serve to promote safety, which includes proliferation security initiatives (PSI) of narcotics and weapons of mass destruction, peace-keeping operations, (PKO) and confidence-building measures (CBM). The third issue is nuclear deterrence. The fourth is fighting against and repelling invasions.

US military power has eight characteristics. The first characteristic is that US military power holds the global-top scale of nuclear force, and that it maintains the nuclear triad. The second is that it has the strongest conventional forces in the world, with balance maintained not only among the branches (army, navy, air force and marines), but also within each of the branches. The third characteristic is that it enjoys the most advanced technologies in the world. The fourth

characteristic is that since the country is constantly waging war, it is always developing strategic doctrines. The fifth is that the country is developing its military power on a global scale. The sixth is that the US has a high capability to address states of emergency. The seventh characteristic is that even though the country holds massive military power, it does not become a militaristic state, but instead maintains thoroughly civilian priorities. Finally the eighth characteristic is that the country strives to cooperate with its allies.

The transformation of the US military has two major elements. One is the reform of military power by means of new technologies and the other is the global realignment.

The three major elements of combat capability were traditionally referred to as firepower, mobility and defensive capabilities. While these remain important, future defense requires the following: (1) intelligence collection, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR); (2) precision force consisting of long-range, high-speed and highly precise destructive power (firepower and mobility); and (3) advanced C4I, which stands for high-levels of command, control, communication, computers, and intelligence processing. Ultimately, computer-centric capability is required. Again, that does not mean that firepower, mobility and defensive capabilities are no longer necessary, but rather their weights have decreased comparatively.

The following points draw attention to the realignment of the US's global defense posture. The first is the transformation of its relations with Russia, which includes initiatives such as the doctrine of mutually assured destruction (MAD), exclusion of the outdated Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM), agreement on the reduction of nuclear weapons and NATO's enlargement to the east. The second point is the transformation of its allies, which includes the expansion of NATO's capabilities and the execution of missions outside its area; and progress in terms of the bilateral alliances the US maintains with Japan, Australia and South Korea. The third point is the transformation of the dispositions, which includes the abolition of tripwires that are expected to combat in the areas they are stationed, their transformation into units that project power to distant battle fields, the acquisition of the ability to mobilize as many units as required at the necessary time and place, an emphasis on force capabilities instead of force levels, maintenance of high response capability against the backdrop of numerous strategic uncertainties of the world, and a gradual shift of the US military presence. The fourth point is the transformation of the roles of US allies, which includes securing mutual management, sharing information; taking a dual stance of the US to aid its allies (in the case of East Timor) and to be aided by its allies (in the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq), and efforts toward joint military reform among the allies. The fifth point is that there are growing interests not only in individual regions but also among regions. The US military forces have a total of six regional Unified Combatant Commands (UCC), and the borders between them are becoming blurred. The sixth point is base realignment and closure, or BRAC 2005. In particular, plans are actively underway to make Guam the primary Pacific base. More specifically, the plans include the deployment of aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines, and the transfer of the Marine Corps from Okinawa to Guam.

As for Japan-US Security Arrangements of the new era, the US is considering a transformation of Japan from the status of a base to a partner to collaborate in the Asian region. That means Japan can be expected to play the role of an honest broker to assist the US military forces in their forward deployment in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan is the only country that completely fulfills

the six condition to establish the forward presence of the US military forces: base facilities, financial support, maintenance and technological abilities, high-quality labor force, national consensus, and the welcoming attitude or understanding of neighboring countries toward the US. I suggest that Japan change from a country that sticks to the right of individual self-defense to one that exercises the right of collective self-defense to cooperate in the stabilization of the Asia-Pacific region.

Toward China, the US is considering long-term strategies. If China were to stand in the way of the US, what action would the US take towards China? This does not necessarily imply war, but instead suggests the length of the range the US employs to consider its military power. Looking at the history of wars the US has fought, we observe that the country sees military power in a long range of about 30 years. Currently the US is planning to make Guam its primary base, with Okinawa and Taiwan as outposts, which undoubtedly means a shift toward China.