Session Ⅰ - 1
"How Should Countries Deal with New Threats and Adapt to the Revolution in Military Affairs?"

Adapting To New Threats and To the So-Called RMA

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This essay examines a number of unlikely but still entirely plausible military scenarios that the United States and many of its key allies may have to face in the coming years or decades. The Pentagon has recently shifted from "threat-based analysis" to "capabilities-based analysis," meaning that instead of focusing on specific threatening countries such as Iraq and North Korea it will emphasize the U.S. military capabilities that may be needed for future warfare more generally. Part of the purpose of this approach is to broaden our horizons beyond the so-called rogue states in defense planning. Part of the purpose is to be able to discuss sensitive scenarios involving China (or even Pakistan or other states) without having to mention the countries by name. But even the latter approach clearly requires some sense of the size and nature and location of plausible American opponents.

The following discussion begins with the Taiwan Strait, which it considers in some detail (clearly contingencies in Korea remain of concern, but they have been analyzed in greater depth than Taiwan scenarios in the past, and space constraints force me to choose). The essay then gives an overview of other scenarios that have received less attention to date. The goal is not to conduct a detailed analysis but rather to sketch out plausible scenarios and corresponding rough U.S. and allied force requirements.

The overall themes of these analyses are:

1) a wide range of military scenarios are plausible in the future
2) the role for high technology could be substantial; so could the role of classic infantry forces
3) many missions would benefit greatly, in military as well as political terms, from being conducted by strong coalitions rather than U.S.-dominated forces

The overall normative argument of this paper, for Japan's force planning, is that the country would benefit from focusing more on peace operations and humanitarian relief—for possible scenarios ranging from Africa to North Korea to South Asia to the great archipelago nations of Southeast Asia. Doing so would allow Japan to demonstrate to its suspicious neighbors and the world that its interest in playing a larger role in international security affairs should not be mistaken for militarism. (This could even modestly improve Japan's prospects for eventually gaining a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council.) In addition, the world community needs help with such peace and humanitarian relief missions, which often suffer for lack of good infantry forces. These missions are important in moral terms; they are also important to prevent terrorists from using the territories of failed states to gain resources or establish sanctuaries.

By modestly cutting its existing ground forces, and using the savings to create more deployable logistics and strategic lift for those ground forces that remain, Japan could create the capacity to deploy one to two divisions abroad. That would not be so much as to constitute an invasion capability. But it would be enough to sustain one or two brigades in difficult peace

operations and relief missions for a number of years (or deploy as much as a division or two for a shorter time).

Of course, the scenarios below have other implications for Japan and the United States and other regional partners as well. But in terms of recommending changes to Japan's defense posture, the above argument is my most important.

A Possible China-Taiwan War

It seems extremely unlikely that the PRC could seize Taiwan, now or anytime in the foreseeable future, in an amphibious assault. Its strategic lift is too lacking; Taiwan's defenses are too extensive; modern sensors (in Taiwanese and American hands) make the possibility of true surprise attack remote; precision weapons make it harder than ever for large transports like ships and airplanes to successfully reach enemy shores in a major assault.[1]

Even if China could not seize Taiwan, it could try to use military force in a more limited way to pressure Taipei to accept terms for political association highly favorable to Beijing. Two scenarios are of particular interest: a missile attack designed to terrorize or coerce, and a blockade. In the latter case at least, U.S. military forces would probably need to come to Taiwan's assistance in order to avoid a slow strangulation of the island.[2]

Consider first a possible missile attack by China against Taiwan. The PRC has some 700 ballistic missiles deployed near Taiwan.[3] From their current positions, the M-9 and M-11 missiles can reach Taiwan. But neither possesses sufficient accuracy to effectively strike military assets using conventional explosives. Indeed, they would generally miss their targets by several football fields and almost always by the length of at least a single field. Granted, if Beijing unleashed a salvo of hundreds of missiles, it might register a few direct hits against lucrative military targets (as well as dozens of hits, with varying degrees of lethality, against population

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[1] See Bill Gertz, "Admiral Says Taiwan Invasion Would Fail," *Washington Times*, March 8, 2000, p. A5; Harold Brown, Joseph W. Prueher, and Adam Segal, eds., *Chinese Military Power* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2003), pp. 27-28; Tony Capaccio, "China Has Boosted Military, U.S. General Says," *Bloomberg.com*, January 13, 2004; David Shambaugh, *Modernizing China's Military* (Berkeley, Ca.: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 328-330; and Michael O'Hanlon, *Defense Policy Choices for the Bush Administration*, second edition (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 2002), pp. 154-203. The Pentagon is somewhat more worried about the invasion option but does not disagree with the assertion that it would be very challenging, largely because of lift constraints, and probably not China's preferred option. See Department of Defense, "FY04 Report to Congress Pursuant to the FY2000 National Defense Authorization Act: Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China," 2004, pp. 46-52. See also, Michael D. Swaine and Ashley J. Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 2000), p. 167.

[2] Lyle Goldstein and William Murray, "Undersea Dragons: China's Maturing Submarine Force," *International Security*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (Spring 2004), pp. 161–196; and Michael A. Glosny, "Strangulation from the Sea" A PRC Submarine Blockade of Taiwan," *International Security*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (Spring 2004), pp. 125–160.

[3] The number was estimated at 500 as of 2003. See Department of Defense, "FY04 Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China," p. 6.

centers). Commercial sea traffic might diminish drastically for a period of time. But if China exhausted the bulk of its missile inventory to sink a grand total of two or three cargo vessels, and temporarily slow operations at a port or airfield, that might not be seen as such an intimidating or successful use of force.

The more troubling coercive scenario is a blockade. Rather than relying on sheer terror and intimidation, it would take aim at Taiwan's economy, and try to drag it down substantially for an indefinite period. It is doubtful that China could truly cut Taiwan off from the outside world with such a blockade. However, if willing to take losses, it could certainly exact attrition from commercial ships trading with Taiwan as well as Taiwanese military forces trying to break the blockade, and drive up the costs of insuring any vessels that subsequently still sought to carry goods to and from Taiwan. China could not quarantine Taiwan in all likelihood.[4] But even with an imperfect, "leaky blockade," it could sink enough commercial ships to scare others off, and do so over an extended period. Should it convince most commercial shippers not to risk trips to Taiwan, it could effectively begin to strangle the island. If Beijing then offered Taiwan a compromise deal, Taipei might be coerced into capitulation. For example, Beijing might demand reaffirmation of the one-China principle and some degree of political fealty from Taiwan while permitting the island to retain autonomous rule and finances, and perhaps some armed forces. Moreover, whether Taipei could be coerced in this way or not, China might believe it could—and hence try such a coercive use of force in response to future behavior from Taipei that it finds unacceptable.[5]

A Chinese blockade could take a number of forms. But for the PRC, the least risky and most natural approach would simply attempt to introduce a significant risk factor into all maritime voyages in and out of Taiwan by occasionally sinking a cargo ship with submarines or with mines it laid in Taiwan's harbors. (China does not have aircraft carriers to help with a blockade and is unlikely to for years to come.[6]) Using airplanes and surface ships would put more of its own forces at risk, especially since it could not realistically hope to eliminate Taipei's air force with a preemptive attack. A blockade using planes and surface ships would also be rather straightforward for the United States to defeat quickly. China might couple such a blockade with a preemptive air and special-forces attack—but perhaps just a limited one focused on Taiwanese submarine-hunting ships and airplanes, which it might be able to attack effectively.

Most of China's submarines do not have anti-ship cruise missiles or great underwater endurance at present[7] and their capacity to conduct a coordinated blockade operation in conjunction with surface and aerial assets is limited.[8] However, these shortcomings may not be

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[4] Michael A. Glosny, "Mines Against Taiwan: A Military Analysis of a PRC Blockade," *Breakthroughs* (Spring 2003), pp. 31-40.

[5] For a somewhat similar assessment, see Richard A. Bitzinger and Bates Gill, *Gearing Up for High-Tech Warfare?: Chinese and Taiwanese Defense Modernization and Implications for Military Confrontation Across the Taiwan Strait, 1995-2005* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 1996), pp. 44-45.

[6] Ian Storey and You Ji, "China's Aircraft Carrier Ambitions," *Naval War College Review*, vol. LVII, no. 1 (Winter 2004), pp. 77-94.

[7] See E. R. Hooton, ed., *Jane's Naval Weapon Systems*, issue 30 (Alexandria, Va.: Jane's Information Group, August 1999).

[8] Ronald Montaperto, "China," in Patrick Clawson, *1997 Strategic Assessment* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1996), p. 52; and William S. Cohen, "The Security Situation

particularly onerous when the submarines' targets are commercial ships approaching Taiwan. The submarines have adequate ranges on a single tank of fuel—typically almost 10,000 miles—to stay deployed east of Taiwan for substantial periods.[9] Although their ability to coordinate with each other and reconnaissance aircraft is limited, that might not matter greatly for the purposes of a "leaky" blockade. Carrying torpedoes with ranges of 10 kilometers or more, and being able to pick up commercial ships by sonar or by sight, such submarines acting individually could maintain patrols over a large fraction of the sea approaches to Taiwan.[10] It could take Taiwan weeks to find the better PRC submarines, particularly if China used them in hit-and-run modes. Modern attack submarines are able to detect enemy warships at considerable distance, and are fast when submerged (unlike the case, say, in World War II)—giving them a chance to escape surface ships without running vulnerably on the surface.[11]

The overall outcome of this type of struggle is very hard to predict. China's advanced submarine force is small, but Taiwan's advanced anti-submarine warfare capabilities are not much greater. In addition are the uncertainties over how many escort ships Taiwan would have lost in a preemptive Chinese attack, and uncertainties over how proficiently the two sides would use their respective assets.[12]

Chinese mines would likely pose a problem too. China's submarines usually each carry two to three dozen mines, so half of its entire submarine fleet would carry about 1,000. If half the fleet was able to deploy mines near Taiwan without being sunk, China would be able to deploy nearly as many mines as Iraq did—with considerable effect—against the U.S.-led coalition in 1990-1991. China surely has, and will acquire, more sophisticated mines than Iraq possessed, moreover, including "smart mines" that would be difficult for mine hunters to find or neutralize.[13] Moreover, Taiwan's minesweeping ships are limited in number and mediocre in quality and condition. It is likely that China could exact a price with its mines, perhaps causing attrition rates of several percent each time ships tried to enter or leave Taiwan's ports, by analogy with the U.S. Persian Gulf experience and other previous conflicts.[14]

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in the Taiwan Strait," Report to Congress pursuant to the FY99 Appropriations Bill, (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 1999), pp. 9, 16-17.

[9] Captain Richard Sharpe, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships 1995-96* (Alexandria, Va.: Jane's Information Group, 1995), pp. 117-118.
[10] Anthony J. Watts, *Jane's Underwater Warfare Systems, 1998-99*, 10th ed. (Alexandria, Va.: Jane's Information Group, 1998), pp. 215-216.
[11] Karl Lautenschlager, "The Submarine in Naval Warfare, 1901-2001," *International Security*, vol. 11, no. 3 (Winter 1986/87) pp. 258-268.
[12] Eric McVadon, "PRC Exercises, Doctrine and Tactics Toward Taiwan: The Naval Dimension," in James R. Lilley and Chuck Downs, eds., *Crisis in the Taiwan Strait* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1997), pp. 259-262.
[13] See for example, Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., *The Conflict Environment in 2016: A Scenario-Based Approach* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 1996), p. 7.
[14] Peter Yu Kien-hong, "Taking Taiwan," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, September 1998, pp. 31-32; Captain Richard Sharpe, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships 1995-96*, 98th edition (Alexandria, Va.: Jane's Information Group, 1995), pp. 116-118, 700-701; and Michael A. Glosny, "Strangulation from the Sea?: A PRC Submarine Blockade of Taiwan," *International Security*, vol. 28, no. 4 (Spring 2004), pp. 139-147.

The U.S. Armed Forces (and perhaps Japan's Self-Defense Forces?) Step In

For the above reasons, American military intervention, possibly aided by Japan's self-defense forces, might be needed to protect Taiwan and its economy. The basic concept for antisubmarine operations would be to set up a safe shipping lane east of Taiwan and near Taiwanese ports. To carry that mission out, the United States, together with Taiwan and perhaps Japan, would need to establish air superiority, protect ships against Chinese submarine attack, and cope with the threat of mines.

One forward ASW barrier could be maintained by U.S. attack submarines operating in the Taiwan Strait, most probably near China's ports. This would be the first line of defense. These submarines would seek to destroy any Chinese submarines they found. Over time, they could decimate the PRC submarine force, except perhaps for those vessels that remained in port throughout the conflict.

The second ASW barrier would consist of ships, primarily ASW frigates, accompanying convoys of merchant ships as they sailed in from the open ocean waters east of Taiwan. These convoys might form a thousand miles or more east of Taiwan, and enjoy armed protection from that point onward as they traveled to the island and later as they departed. The frigates would listen for approaching submarines, and for the sound of any torpedoes being fired.

Finally, additional assets would be dedicated to various special purposes. Some would protect U.S. aircraft carriers. Others would provide additional protection to ships, be they merchant ships or mine warfare vessels, as they operated near Taiwan's shores (and thus fairly close to China). Two main types of assets might be used. Surface ships—either additional frigates, or SURTASS arrays towed by T-AGOS vessels—might be deployed near aircraft carrier battle groups to provide additional protection for those groups. In addition, P-3 aircraft could be kept on call (a number of them possibly Japanese), or airborne, to pursue any submarines that might be roughly localized by surface-ship or submarine sonar.

The U.S. mine hunters and minesweepers would of course operate near Taiwan's ports and the main approaches to those ports. Land-based or ship-based helicopters might assist them, as might robotic submersibles deployed from ships near shore.

The U.S. aircraft carrier battle groups would operate east of Taiwan. They would probably function best as two pairs. One pair would be stationed relatively near the island to provide air superiority over and around Taiwan. Another pair would operate well east of the island. In part, it would serve as a backup to those near Taiwan. In addition, it would provide control of the airspace over the open ocean east of Taiwan. Doing so would help defend against any indirect Chinese attack (most likely by longer-range bombers) that managed to avoid the first pair of carriers and Taiwan's air force.

As an alternative to one or two of the carriers, several squadrons of U.S. Air Force or Navy aircraft might be deployed on Taiwan, provided that hardened shelters, effective air defense, and logistics support could be made available for them there. If most of Taiwan's air force survived initial Chinese attacks, t might not be deemed desirable, given concerns about overcrowding airfields and flight corridors. But it would be a sound option to consider, in order to reduce strain on the Navy's carrier battle groups and provide for shorter fighter flight paths to

the waters of the Taiwan Strait. It could also be important for preparing any offensive options against nearby coastal regions of the PRC mainland (e.g., ports, ships, and airfields near Taiwan) that might be considered at some point in the conflict. Some surveillance and support aircraft, such as AWACS, JSTARS, and tankers, may also be useful to station on Taiwan. Finally, if Japan allowed it—hardly a given—U.S. aircraft at Kadena air base on Okinawa could contribute the operation as well, securing the northern flank of the theater of operations. Overall, in any event, these missions would not tax Air Force capabilities nearly as much as this operation might tax the Navy.

My estimates, detailed elsewhere, are that the United States would need a force exceeding 100,000 personnel to help break the Chinese blockade.[15] It would require few if any ground forces, but perhaps 25 to 50 percent more naval capabilities than commonly assumed for a major theater conflict. Depending on the availability of bases, substantial numbers of Air Force combat capabilities, reconnaissance capabilities, and personnel could be needed in theater as well—with basing on Guam, perhaps in Japan, quite possibly on Taiwan as well. The Air Force capabilities would likely be less than for a major theater war of the classic, post-Cold War variety, but could total half as many as for such an engagement.

New Military Scenarios in Asia

With Saddam gone, it is time that the American, Japanese, and other allied military planning processes begin to emphasize new and imaginative possible future missions. Just as the Afghanistan war surprised almost everyone in the defense community, other missions that have not been frequently analyzed may arise.

Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe in South Asia

Of all the military scenarios that would undoubtedly involve the vital interests of the United States, short of a direct threat to its territory, a collapsed Pakistan ranks very high on the list. The combination of Islamic extremists and nuclear weapons in that country is extremely worrisome; were parts of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal ever to fall into the wrong hands, al Qaeda could conceivably gain access to a nuclear device with terrifying possible results. Another quite worrisome South Asia scenario could involve another Indo-Pakistani crisis leading to war between the two nuclear-armed states over Kashmir.[16]

The Pakistani collapse scenario appears unlikely given that country's relatively pro-western and secular officer corps.[17] But the intelligence services, which created the Taliban and also have condoned if not abetted Islamic extremists in Kashmir, are less dependable. And the country as a whole is sufficiently infiltrated by fundamentalist groups—as the attempted

[15] O'Hanlon, *Defense Policy Choices*, pp. 154-203.
[16] See Summit Gangly, *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions Since 1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).
[17] See Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 2004), pp. 97-130.

assassinations against President Mubarak as well as other evidence make clear—that this terrifying scenario of civil chaos cannot be entirely dismissed.[18]

Were it to occur, it is unclear what the United States and like-minded states would or should do. It is very unlikely that "surgical strikes" could be conducted to destroy the nuclear weapons before extremists could make a grab at them. It is doubtful that the United States would know their location and at least as doubtful any Pakistani government would countenance such a move, even under duress.

If a surgical strike, series of surgical strikes, or commando-style raids were not possible, the only option might be to try to restore order before the weapons could be taken by extremists and transferred to terrorists. The United States and other outside powers might, for example, respond to a request by the Pakistani government to help restore order. But given the embarrassment associated with requesting such outside help, it might not be made until it was almost too late; complicating the task of helping them restore order before nuclear arsenals could be threatened. Hence such an operation would be an extremely demanding challenge, but there might be little than to attempt it. The international community, if it could act fast enough, might help defeat an insurrection. Or it might help protect Pakistan's borders, making it hard to sneak nuclear weapons out of the country, while providing just technical support to the Pakistani armed forces as they tried to put down the insurrection. All that is sure is that, given the enormous stakes, the United States would literally have to do anything it could to prevent nuclear weapons from getting into the wrong hands.

Should stabilization efforts be required, the scale of the undertaking could be breathtaking. Pakistan is a very large country. Its population is just under 150 million, or six times Iraq's. Its land area is roughly twice that of Iraq; its perimeter is about 50 percent longer in total. Stabilizing a country of this size could easily require several times as many troops as the Iraq mission—with a figure of up to a million being plausible.

Of course, any international force would have help. Presumably some fraction of Pakistan's security forces would remain intact, able, and willing to help defend their country. Pakistan's military numbers 550,000 Army troops, 70,000 uniformed personnel in the Air Force and Navy, another 510,000 reservists, and almost 300,000 gendarmes and Interior Ministry troops.[19] But if some substantial fraction of the military broke off from the main body, say a quarter to a third, and were assisted by extremist militias, it is quite possible that the international community would need to deploy 100,000 to 200,000 troops to ensure a quick restoration of order. Given the need for rapid response, the U.S. share of this total would probably be a majority fraction, or quite possibly 50,000 to 100,000 ground forces.

What about the scenario of war pitting Pakistan against India over Kashmir? It is highly doubtful that the United States or its allies would ever wish to actively take sides in such a conflict, allying with one country to defeat the other. Their interests in the matter of who controls Kashmir are not great enough to justify such intervention; no formal alliance commitments oblige them to step in. Moreover, the military difficulty of the operation would be extreme, in light of the huge armed forces arrayed on the subcontinent and the inland location and complex

[18] See International Crisis Group, *Unfulfilled Promises: Pakistan's Failure to Tackle Extremism* (Brussels, 2004).

[19] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2003-2004*, pp. 140-142.

topography of Kashmir. In addition to the numbers cited above for Pakistan, India's armed forces number 1.3 million active-duty troops, and feature such assets as 4,000 tanks, 19 submarines, and about 750 combat aircraft (the defense budgets of the two countries are $2.5 billion and $13 billion, respectively).[20]

However, there are other ways in which foreign forces might become involved. If India and Pakistan went up to the verge of nuclear weapons use, or perhaps even crossed it, they might consider what was previously unthinkable to New Delhi in particular—pleading for help to the international community. For example, they might agree to allow the international community to run Kashmir for a period of years. After local government was built up, and security services reformed, elections might then be held to determine the region's future political affiliation, leading to an eventual end to the trusteeship. While this scenario is admittedly a highly demanding one, and also unlikely in light of India's adamant objections to international involvement in the Kashmir issue, it is hard to dismiss such an approach out of hand if it seemed the only alternative to nuclear war on the subcontinent.

What might a stabilization mission in Kashmir entail? The region is about twice the size of Bosnia in population, half the size of Iraq in population and land area. That suggests initial stabilization forces in the general range of 100,000, with the U.S. contribution perhaps 30,000 to 50,000. The mission would only make sense if India and Pakistan truly blessed it, so there would be little point in deploying a force large enough to hold its own against a concerted attack by one of those countries. But robust monitoring of border regions, as well as capable counterinsurgent/counterterrorist strike forces, would be necessary.

Stabilizing a Large Country Such as Indonesia or Congo

Consider the possibility of severe unrest in one of the world's large countries such as Indonesia or Congo or Nigeria. At present, such problems are generally seen as of secondary strategic importance to the United States, meaning that Washington may support and help fund a peacekeeping mission under some circumstances but will rarely commit troops—and certainly will not deploy a muscular forcible intervention capability.

However, under some circumstances this situation could change. For example, if al Qaeda developed a major stronghold in a given large country, the United States and key allies might—depending on circumstances—consider overthrowing the country's government or helping the government reclaim control over the part of its territory occupied by the terrorists. Or they might intervene to help one side in a civil war against another. For example, if the schism between the police and armed forces in Indonesia worsened, and one of the two institutions wound up working with an al Qaeda offshoot, the United States and key allies might accept an invitation from the responsible half of the government to help defeat the other and the terrorist organization in question.[21] Or if a terrorist organization was tolerated in Indonesia, a U.S.-led coalition might strike at it directly. That could be the case if the terrorist group took control of land near a major shipping lane in the Indonesian Straits, or simply if it decided to use part of Indonesia for sanctuary.[22]

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[20] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2003-2004*, pp. 136-137, 337.
[21] On Indonesia, see Robert Karniol, "Country Briefing: Indonesia," *Jane's Defense Weekly*, April 7, 2004, pp. 47-52.
[22] Krepinevich, *The Conflict Environment of 2016*, pp. 23-27.

Clearly, the requirement for foreign forces would be a function of how much of the country in question became unstable, how intact indigenous forces remained, and how large any militia or insurgent force proved to be. For illustrative purposes, if a large fraction of Indonesia or all of Congo were to become ungovernable, the problem could be twice to three times the scale of the Iraq mission. It could be five times the scale of Iraq if it involved trying to restore order throughout Nigeria, though such an operation could be so daunting that a more limited form of intervention seems more plausible—such as trying to stabilize areas where major ethnic or religious groups come into direct contact.

General guidelines for force planning for such scenarios would suggest foreign troop strength up to 100,000 to 200,000 personnel, in rough numbers. That makes them not unlike the scenario of a collapsing or fracturing Pakistan. For these somewhat less urgent missions, by comparison with those considered in South Asia, U.S. contributions might only be 20-30 percent of the total rather than the 50 percent assumed above. But even so, up to two to three American divisions could be required.

Protecting the Persian Gulf Oil Economy Against Iranian Opposition

In the 1980s, during the Iran-Iraq war, the United States had to cope with threats to shipping in the Persian Gulf. To ensure the viability of the global oil economy, it reflagged some oil tankers under its own colors and enhanced its naval presence in the region. This could happen again, perhaps in the context of a crisis sparked by Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions.

There are two main ways to imagine protection of the shipping lanes in question. Either way, a certain number of naval vessels would be needed for antisubmarine warfare, for convoy escort, for mine hunting, and for short-range ballistic missile defense. The above estimates from the China-Taiwan scenario are roughly indicative of the needed force requirements here as well, given the somewhat similar geography. Although the Persian Gulf's narrowness makes the mission more difficult, Iran's lesser power by comparison with China makes this mission somewhat easier.

Reconnaissance and rapid-strike capabilities could be provided either via sea-based assets or land-based capabilities. Aerial and sea reconnaissance, as well as quick-strike capabilities, would be needed. Submarines would probably be desired to keep a constant track on Iranian submarines. And of course, ships to protect convoys would likely be required as well.

The quantitative requirements for these various assets would be a function of three main sets of factors: geography, rotational policies, and total Iranian force strength. The United States, and any assisting allies, would need to maintain robust quick-action capabilities along the whole length of the Gulf. It would need to be able to sustain coverage 24 hours a day. And it would need to be able to face down an all-out Iranian assault if necessary as well. As I have argued at greater length elsewhere, however, force requirements could be quite substantial—extending into the range of 100,000 to 200,000 foreign personnel.