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#### Chinese workers lack a credible platform to voice their concerns – state-run unions are co-opted by the state, forcing employees to use wildcat strikes instead.

Sarosh Kuruvilla and Hao Zhang, 2016 – [Andrew J. Nathanson Family Professor of Industrial Relations, Asian Studies, and Public Affairs at Cornell University, “Labor Unrest and Incipient Collective Bargaining in China”, http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/mor.2016.2]//bread

However, Friedman (2014a) does not see a promising corporatist future for the ACFTU for three reasons. First, corporatism requires that workers’ voices are successfully incorporated into the system, while the ACFTU does not incorporate workers voices. Second, corporatism requires that workers give up political demands in exchange for economic benefits and therefore implies a relatively de-commodified model of social governance, whereas in China workers clearly do not enjoy, sufficiently, such benefits. Third, however co-opted a union under corporatism is, it is a somewhat independent intermediary organization between the grassroots and the state, while the ACFTU, is clearly part of the state apparatus with no such independence. That being said, clearly there is some transition to a more representative role of the ACFTU. Chen (2003) documents the increasing ways in which unions are taking up their representative function with regard to individual, if not collective, disputes. The ACFTU has carried out reforms and ‘experiments’ at both central and local levels. In the arena of organizing, unions at all levels have developed various models (i.e., the traditional ACFTU pattern, the union association patter, and the regional, industry-based pattern) to strategically organize workers (Liu, 2010). Nevertheless, the unions’ ability to effectively represent workers is limited on the one hand by their subjective position with regard to the employer, and on the other because union leadership cadres see union organizing as a bureaucratic exercise to meet the targets suggested by the state, rather than a strategic one (Liu, 2010; Taylor & Li, 2010). Chen (2003) suggests that there is a natural limit to the ACFTU’s ability to be an independent representative agent, i.e., the state will not loosen its control over the unions, because of ‘solidarity phobia’ (e.g., the Polish experience) whereby more independent unionism is seen as subversive and threatening to the regime, as well as being threatening to the role of the state as a ‘developmental’ state. Therefore, we expect that the state will continue protecting the ACFTU monopoly on worker representation – a condition that Friedman (2014a) called ‘appropriated representation’, whereby the ACFTU may be able to promote collective bargaining using its unique political position at the national level, whereas workplace unions will remain weak and illegitimate. The crisis of legitimacy of the ACFTU has been well documented by several authors (Howell, 2008; Taylor & Li, 2007). The key argument here is that Chinese workers do not trust the ACFTU to adequately represent them, and in fact in many workplaces where the ACFTU is present, the workers do not even know that they have representation. The ACFTU is seen as largely apathetic, willing to allow management to exercise control (this explains the phenomena of ‘dual posting’ where the company’s human resource manager is allowed by the ACFTU officials to act as ‘union leader’). Friedman (2014a) suggests that official unions have been unable to win recognition from workers, and therefore wildcat strikes and other forms of representation continue to be the most effective means of addressing worker grievances. There have been recent experiments regarding direct union elections, which would arguably lead to more representative unions, and hence more legitimate ones, but there is a lack of sufficient worker involvement in these experiments (Chan, 2009; Howell, 2008), with a notable exception of elections initiated by workers via spontaneous strikes (Hui & Chan, 2014). Given that unions have an identity crisis as well as a crisis of legitimacy, the key hypotheses that we can advance is that unions will be unable to effectively represent workers in collective bargaining, and are more likely to see collective bargaining as a bureaucratic exercise, just as they view union organizing. Collective agreements then are more likely to be formalistic exercises that primarily re-state the basic conditions under the laws, and less likely to advance workers’ interests. Like the ACFTU, the two national employer associations – the CEC-CEDA and the All China Federation of Industry and Commerce (ACFIC) – participate in the tripartite framework to promote collective bargaining, but both are also subordinated to the CCP. Our current ongoing research suggests that these employer associations are half-hearted partners in promoting collective bargaining. Local employer associations, although theoretically have to be affiliated with the two big national associations, often enjoy more autonomy from the state as well as their upper levels in decision making than their equivalents on the union side do (Friedman, 2014b). This allows them to ignore collective bargaining, or when it suits their interests to encourage and promote it. Given tight labor market conditions, it often suits local employers to engage in some form of regional or industrywide coordination on wages and working conditions. In such cases, local employer associations serve as mechanisms of employers’ collective voice, while lead firms are indeed key players. But apart from these industry-wide bargaining scenarios employers tend to shy away from collective bargaining at the firm level, except after strikes. Given the union’s identity and legitimacy crises, and the employers’ relative lack of interest in promoting collective bargaining at the firm level, we have no basis to expect that the institution of collective bargaining will fulfill the state’s objectives in introducing it as a means of containing labor conflict. In what follows, we discuss our methodology, and in our results section, we attempt to categorize the variation that we see in collective bargaining (based on very limited research) in China.

#### These wildcat strikes are becoming more offensive and violent – it’s a statistically proven trend.

Manfred Elfstrom and Sarosh Kuruvilla, 2014 – [“The Changing Nature of Labor Unrest in China” , Manfred Elfstrom,  an Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics, Philosophy, and Political Science at the University of British Columbia, Sarosh Kuruvilla, Andrew J. Nathanson Family Professor of Industrial Relations, Asian Studies, and Public Affairs at Cornell University, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/001979391406700207]//bread

Causes of Strikes and Protests Contrary to the depiction of collective actions by Chinese workers as “defensive,” our data support the arguments of a small number of scholars that an upsurge in more “offensive” strikes is underway, although more traditional demands, such as for payment of wage arrears persist. Specifically, we find a rise in demands for more money, better working conditions, and more respect, that is, the traditional concerns of workers and trade unions everywhere. The centrality of demands for more money is apparent in both our data set and our interviews. A full 176 out of 763 strikes and protests in China Strikes reflect demands for higher earnings rather than legal minimums, wage arrears, or the reversal of wage cuts, with almost all such demonstrations (165) occurring from 2010 onward. Although defensive calls for payment of wage arrears, in particular, persist, the percentage of industrial actions featuring “offensive” demands rose from 7% in 2008 to 44.3% in 2010, the year that a strike at a Honda plant in Guangdong sparked a wave regional distinction, though: “In the south, people will say they’re suing their company for ‘face’ or for ‘respect’ or because they want ‘their labor respected’ or ‘workers respected,’” whereas in places like Wuhan, the focus is more on “small, purely money demands” (Interview 25). Chan (2001) recorded several instances of managerial abuse that sparked outrage in the 1990s, but these tend to involve extreme abuse—for example, foreign bosses forcing workers to kneel in the sun. Workers now appear to be focusing on more routine interactions (e.g., Li and Liu 2012). In our aggregate data, the percentage of strikes and protests explicitly featuring “respect” demands— relating to physical or verbal violence by managers, poor human resource practices, and the like—rose from 2.3% in 2008 to 5.5% in 2012. Clearly, therefore, the results are consistent with our predictions based on McAdam’s model that point to a new aggressiveness on the part of Chinese workers. Rising Worker Militancy Consistent with our framework, it would appear that the increase in strikes and protests is part of a general increase in worker militancy. At the most basic level, workers are exercising their “exit” (as opposed to “voice”) options (Hirschmann 1970), leaving employers who offer subpar wages or who are abusive. The factory boss quoted above estimated his plant’s turnover at 20%, up from next to zero “back in the day,” when he first began manufacturing in China, and the boss said that 20% was low compared with his competitors, who were experiencing 60 to 70% turnover (Interview 10). An SOE worker interviewed for this article said, “People don’t learn skills, they switch jobs constantly” (Interviews 12–18). Such comments were echoed by a survey of 108 foreign- invested manufacturers in China by the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai and Booz & Company (2009: 19), which found that 60 respondents had “difficulty in finding and retaining reliable personnel.” A full 34% of the businessmen interviewed, moreover, rated “poor employee retention” as one of their “top three” issues in 2007; this figure only dropped to 19% in 2008–09, during the height of the financial crisis layoffs (23). Workers are also engaging in what Scott (1985) called “everyday acts of resistance” using “weapons of the weak.” One factory boss said, “It’s not so much that there are different demands by workers. The behavior of today’s workers is different. Not steaming ahead, not as hard working” (Interview 10). The boss added that new incentives, including negative ones such as the threat of revoking housing and food subsidies, were now required to force employees to meet his factory’s standards (Interview 10). He also complained of increased “aggression” from workers, of a greater potential for violence over small disagreements; to protect against this, his factory has had to install 280 surveillance cameras. An activist similarly worried that “if no one steps in to represent workers, things will develop in an increasingly violent direction” (Interview 23). It should be noted, though, that reports of violence by police, factory security guards, and hired thugs against workers far outnumber reports of violence by workers themselves in our data set of aggressive auto factory strikes, before settling down to 22.9% for the whole of 2012. (But note that 31.2% of incidents in the first half of 2012 were offensive.) Figure 3 shows that the distribution of strikes and protests featuring such demands crosses regional boundaries. (Demonstrations for higher wages are marked in dark black.) Our interview results are consistent with this view. Today’s employees are less easily satisfied monetarily than were previous generations. This attitude is understood as “moneygrubbing” by older workers and factory managers. A member of a group of laid- off SOE workers in Guizhou, reflecting on the difference between themselves and their children, had the following to say: “Everyone is focused on earning money now. In the past, you got a bit of social support and you felt you were doing something for your country. You would even do some stuff as a volunteer. . . . Now, if you’re not paid, you don’t do anything” (Interviews 12–18). Echoing this assessment but from a different perspective, a foreign apparel factory manager noted, “Workers want 1,500 RMB for just their training period, when they aren’t doing anything for the company. In the past, they didn’t make any demands at all. They were happy to have air- conditioning” (Interview 10). In some instances, such as those described in our two case studies below, workers have sought to keep up with rising wages in nearby factories. Clearly, workers are acting on cognitive cues such as those presented in McAdam’s framework. Workers do not just strike and protest for more money, though. A CSR team noted that workers’ complaints are now more “pointed” (jian rui): “Now, they will bring up ‘overtime’ and other, more specific issues. They now dispute speedups without corresponding pay” (Interviews 28–30). In the words of an official from the Hubei Federation of Trade Unions (HFTU), “They [workers] care about new things, like time to rest. If they’ve earned enough, they want time for themselves” (Interview 26). Besides overtime and rest, a number of other details of work conditions appear to cause worker dissatisfaction. The same apparel factory owner quoted above also lamented to the authors, “Workers get angry about missing documents. Everything has to be in writing now. ‘Don’t say it, write it’” (Interview 10). The percentage of strikes due to work hours has held steady at around 10 to 11%, with the exception of low points in 2008 and the first half of 2012. We suspect that data covering a longer time span would show an uptake compared with the 1990s and early 2000s. Finally, workers are more likely than in the past to demand something more intangible: respect. The apparel factory boss said that workers are “definitely more easily offended now” and that, in order to retain employees, he “has to make people proud of their jobs, make them feel like they are highly qualified seamstresses” (Interview 10). According to an activist in the Pearl River Delta who has helped workers file legal cases, “It is now no longer just about money or about winning the case. . . . They will fight for their ‘face’ and status” (Interview 21). The HFTU official quoted above agreed: “They don’t just want a job . . . but also want respect” (Interview 26). A Wuhan- based activist who had previously worked in Guangdong made a regional distinction, though: “In the south, people will say they’re suing their company for ‘face’ or for ‘respect’ or because they want ‘their labor respected’ or ‘workers respected,’” whereas in places like Wuhan, the focus is more on “small, purely money demands” (Interview 25). Chan (2001) recorded several instances of managerial abuse that sparked outrage in the 1990s, but these tend to involve extreme abuse—for example, foreign bosses forcing workers to kneel in the sun. Workers now appear to be focusing on more routine interactions (e.g., Li and Liu 2012). In our aggregate data, the percentage of strikes and protests explicitly featuring “respect” demands— relating to physical or verbal violence by managers, poor human resource practices, and the like—rose from 2.3% in 2008 to 5.5% in 2012. Clearly, therefore, the results are consistent with our predictions based on McAdam’s model that point to a new aggressiveness on the part of Chinese workers. In addition, workers are taking increased advantage of emergent institutions outside the state and party- backed mass organizations. One activist in the southeast said workers used to be suspicious of his NGO when he would contact them, but now “they actually call and request materials” (Interview 20). The CSR auditor noted: “Five years ago, when we conducted CSR audits, most workers said what their bosses wanted them to say. . . . When we investigate factories now, workers say what they want to, tell the truth, explain their factories’ actual conditions, say things they wouldn’t say in the past” (Interviews 28–30). Wang (2011) said civil society activists were an important element in the 2010 Honda strikes. This sort of outreach shows a new savvy on the part of workers. Finally, anecdotal evidence suggests increased coordination of strikes and protests, better organization, and a more strategic focus. The first incident in the 2010 strike wave at Honda auto parts plants was perfectly placed in the company’s supply chain, shutting down the firm’s operations nationwide, and it involved extended negotiations led, on the workers’ side, by worker- elected representatives and by pro- worker academics. Workers at more than 20 other auto plants followed suit (IHLO 2010). The academics involved were impressed by the workers’ “complicated process of choosing goals” and “strong collective consciousness” (Interviews 6–8; see also Meng and Lu 2013). In November 2011, employees at Pepsi bottling plants in at least five widely separated cities (Changsha, Fuzhou, Chongqing, Nanchang, and Chengdu) held a coordinated leave- taking protest on the same day (China Labour Bulletin 2011b), while in July 2012, workers in Wanzhou, Chongqing, and Huizhou all struck on the same day over a leadership change at NVC Lighting (see, e.g., X. Li 2012). If the auto strike wave spread by demonstration effects and emulation, what Tarrow (2005) called “non- relational diffusion” (albeit within factories supplying the same companies), then the Pepsi, Motorola, and NVC Lighting waves seems to have been guided by neither “relational diffusion” (where the participants know each other or are part of the same networks) nor entirely “non- relational diffusion” but rather simply well- organized online outreach. This coordination contrasts sharply with the depictions of prior literature. All of these tactics—strikes, “everyday resistance,” and seeking out external organizations—are best viewed as expressions of workers’ new empowerment, not as themselves catalysts of that empowerment. In making their new demands for better pay, for greater attention to the details of working life, and for more respect, while employing new tactics, workers appear to be responding to the cognitive cues described here. For example, several interviewees noted the effect of media coverage of the Honda strike on workers’ sense of possibility. An NGO leader in the Pearl River Delta, said, “The Honda strike, in particular, gave workers a new momentum. It awakened them” (Interview 20). According to another, “The Honda strike had a big impact on workers’ opinions, because of the media attention given to the strike. Similar strikes occurred in the past, but without the same attention”

#### They inevitably create tension between the workers and the police, causing an escalation of conflict

Cynthia Estlund, the Catherine A. Rein Professor of Law at the New York University School of Law, 2017 – [“A new deal for China’s workers?”, https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674971394, p. 127]//bread

The official union in China is something quite different. It is supposed to represent workers’ interests, but its various branches are controlled by the Party above the level of the enterprise, and its enterprise branches are largely controlled by enterprise management. There have been periodic efforts to make the enterprise trade unions more accountable to the workers; that is the subject of the next chapter. But as things stand, workers who are aggrieved, and who want to make demands on their employer, do not regard the union at any level as their faithful agent. The union cannot regulate the workers because the workers do not trust the union. In particular, the official unions do not lead strikes. All strikes in China are what in the United States would be called “wildcat” strikes: they are not authorized or led by the union, but are organized from below by workers themselves. Indeed, it is often only when a strike is underway that the union and other party-state officials first get wind of a serious dispute. Wildcat strikes are problematic whenever and wherever they occur because there may be no organization or leadership that can credibly negotiate an end to the strike, or that can “regulate” workers’ collective action and attempt to keep it within peaceful bounds. So even if the government aims only to enforce basic social order (as opposed to actively backing the employer), it is largely relegated to sending the police to the scene. Whatever limits the government seeks to impose on workers’ collective action are backed up mainly by the threat of force against individual workers— arrests, detentions, police batons, or even bullets. A wildcat strike of any size or duration potentially puts workers in a direct **face-off with police** and creates some **risk of escalating conflict and politicization**. Given the inability of the official union to play the kind of organizing and mediating role that unions play in the West, two questions arise: How do workers manage to organize a strike, or a credible threat of a strike, so as to put some clout behind their demands? And how do officials respond to strikes when they do occur? The main focus here is on the official response to labor unrest and what shapes that response. But that requires some attention to the workers’ side of the equation: How do strikes take shape, and how do workers get their demands across, either before or during a strike? The complex, varied, and fast-changing nature of collective labor activity in China deserves a much closer look than is offered here.3 This is only a rough sketch to supplement the brief narrative of two pivotal strikes in Chapter 1. Even this glimpse of collective interest disputes and strikes, particularly as they have played out in Guangdong, will bring some focus to the ongoing debates and reforms around collective bargaining in China.

#### Deepening worker grievances create instability and create a scenario ripe for revolt - black swans make CCP collapse inevitable absent the aff.

Andrew Wedeman, Professor of Political Science at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2019 – [“Unrest and regime survival”, *HANDBOOK OF PROTEST AND RESISTANCE IN CHINA*, https://www.elgaronline.com/view/edcoll/9781786433770/9781786433770.xml]//bread

After two decades of unfulfilled predictions of the CCP’s imminent demise, it is tempting to dismiss the coming collapse thesis as naïve and built on the belief that communism is bankrupt and doomed, and to treat its advocates as prophets of doom who fixate on each new report of political instability and social unrest as a potential precursor of political Armageddon. The coming collapse thesis, at least in its more sophisticated forms, is not necessarily flawed. In essence, it posits that rapid economic growth has yielded negative externalities that have created political alienation, rising anger, and deepening grievances. Left unaddressed or answered with heavy-handed repression, such a rising tide of unrest could morph into a web of localized confrontations. Absent corruption, the state might meet or crush such challenges individually and prevent them from flowing into a broader, more unified rebellion. Widespread and worsening corruption, however, has hollowed out the state and weakened the security forces. At some juncture, the thesis thus contends, a random event will trigger an escalating cascade of unrest in the face of which the security forces may either crumble or, even worse, turn their guns on the regime, as happened in Romania in 1989. As simmering unrest gives way to mounting turmoil in the streets and the security forces begin to lose control, the leadership will allegedly split as the “moderate” throw their lot in with the rebels, believing they can ride the tide of revolt, while “hardliners” desperately battle to avert political collapse. The coming collapse thesis actually rests on a fairly conventional description of how moribund authoritarian regimes fail. As such, its primary flaw is that it gets reduced to a simplistic, deterministic model in which collapse is treated as an inevitable outcome but one whose timing cannot be predicted with any certainty. The thesis thus ends up asserting that the CCP will collapse at some point in an ever-shifting future. The literature on contentious politics clearly cautions against such determinism, and makes clear that the dynamics of unrest are complex and the outcome of collapse is highly contingent. First, grievance, alienation, and anger are present in all societies and must reach some ill-defined “threshold” before they become a necessary but not sufficient precondition for a transition from latent discontent and scattered, short-lived protests to large-scale open unrest. Second, “unrest” is not necessarily a singular phenomenon that can be collapsed into a crude catchall descriptor of diverse grievances and challenges to the status quo. Third, transitions from latent discontent to open confrontations between state and society are contingent on the ability of those most disaffected to frame broadly held but diffuse grievances into a coherent narrative of rebellion. Fourth, how the regime reacts to incipient dissent matters. Political authorities’ response may, however, also fuel popular anger and a widening of anti-regime demonstrations. Fifth, regime capacity affects a regime’s response to challenges and the effectiveness of its response. In conclusion, there is considerable evidence that China is “unstable” and that the extent of turbulence has increased since the 1990s. Rising unrest, worsening corruption, and nagging subversion could lead to the collapse of the CCP-dominated regime. But collapse is only one of many possible outcomes. Whether the CCP collapses depends on a hierarchy of alternatives. Are grievances stimulated by the state framed into a popular narrative of oppression and injustice? Are dissident leaders able to convince the masses to take to the streets or do the masses remain passive? Does the state respond to stirrings of dissent and unrest with conciliation, negotiation, or repression? If the state represses dissent, does it crush it, drive it deep underground, or inflame greater anger and dissent? If citizens take to the streets, do the police stand by or do they attack the protesters? If the police attack, do protestors flee or do they fight? If protesters resist, do protests morph into riots? If riots erupt, are the police able to restore order or does the violence spiral out of control? As the situation deteriorates, do the police stand firm or do they flee? As order collapses, does the leadership close ranks or does it split apart? Does the army come to the rescue or does it defect? And, more critically, does the leadership have the will to hang onto power at any cost? The key question is thus not whether the CCP faces a potentially fatal revolt from below at some ill-defined future point, but rather: (1) how do corruption, unrest, and subversion evolve and interact; and (2) **how does the state respond to turbulence** and pressure **from the streets**.

#### Domestic instability and the threat of CCP collapse triggers lash out – four scenarios

J. Michael Cole is editor in chief of Taiwan Sentinel as well as a Taipei-based Senior Fellow with the China Policy Institute/Taiwan Studies Programme at the University of Nottingham, UK, 2014 – [“Where Would Beijing Use External Distractions?”, https://thediplomat.com/2014/07/where-would-beijing-use-external-distractions/]//bread

This newfound assertiveness within its backyard thus makes it more feasible that, in times of serious trouble at home, the Chinese leadership could seek to deflect potentially destabilizing anger by exploiting some external distraction. Doing so is always a calculated risk, and sometimes the gambit fails, as Slobodan Milosevic learned the hard way when he tapped into the furies of nationalism to appease mounting public discontent with his bungled economic policies. For an external distraction to achieve its objective (that is, taking attention away from domestic issues by redirecting anger at an outside actor), it must not result in failure or military defeat. In other words, except for the most extreme circumstances, such as the imminent collapse of a regime, the decision to externalize a domestic crisis is a *rational* one: adventurism must be certain to achieve success, which in turn will translate into political gains for the embattled regime. Risk-taking is therefore proportional to the seriousness of the destabilizing forces within. Rule No. 1 for External Distractions: **The greater the domestic instability, the more risks a regime will** be willing to **take**, given that the scope and, above all, the *symbolism* of the victory in an external scenario must also be greater. With this in mind, we can then ask which external distraction scenarios would Beijing be the most likely to turn to should domestic disturbances compel it to do so. That is not to say that anything like this will happen anytime soon. It is nevertheless not unreasonable to imagine such a possibility. The intensifying crackdown on critics of the CCP, the detention of lawyers, journalists and activists, unrest in Xinjiang, random acts of terrorism, accrued censorship — all point to growing instability. What follows is a very succinct (and by no means exhaustive) list of disputes, in descending order of likelihood, which Beijing could use for external distraction. 1. South China Sea The South China Sea, an area where China is embroiled in several territorial disputes with smaller claimants, is ripe for exploitation as an external distraction. Nationalist sentiment, along with the sense that the entire body of water is part of China’s indivisible territory and therefore a “core interest,” are sufficient enough to foster a will to fight should some “incident,” timed to counter unrest back home, force China to react. Barring a U.S. intervention, which for the time being seems unlikely, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) has both the numerical and qualitative advantage against any would be opponent or combination thereof. The Philippines and Vietnam, two countries which have skirmished with China in recent years, are the likeliest candidates for external distractions, as the costs of a brief conflict would be low and the likelihood of military success fairly high. For a quick popularity boost and low-risk distraction, these opponents would best serve Beijing’s interests. 2. Jammu and Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh Although Beijing claims that it is [ready for a settlement](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-06-09/china-ready-for-india-border-dispute-final-settlement-wang-says.html) of its longstanding territorial disputes with India, the areas remain ripe for the re-ignition of conflict. New Delhi accuses China of occupying 38,000 square kilometers in Jammu and Kashmir, and Beijing lays claim to more than 90,000 square kilometers of territory inside the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. A few factors militate against the suitability of those territories for an external distraction, chief among them the difficult access in winter, and the strength of the Indian military, which would pose a greater risk to PLA troops than those of Vietnam or the Philippines in the previous scenario. Nevertheless, memories of China’s routing of the Indian military in the Sino-Indian War of 1962 could embolden Beijing. Though challenging, the PLA would be expected to prevail in a limited conflict with Indian forces, and China would have taken on a greater regional power than Vietnam or the Philippines, with everything that this entails in terms of political benefits back home. 3. East China Sea and Japan Sparking a war with Japan, presumably over the [disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islets](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-11341139), would represent a major escalation on Beijing’s part. Assuming that rational actors are in control in Beijing, a decision to begin hostilities with the modern and skilled Japan Self-Defense Forces would only be made if domestic instability were serious enough. Still, high resentment of the Japanese stemming from Japanese aggression before and during World War II and the competitive nature of the bilateral relationship make Japan **the perfect candidate** for an external distraction. More than any other conflict, hostilities with Japan would rally ordinary Chinese to the flag and tap into hatred that the leadership knows it could exploit if necessary. Although the chances of prevailing would be much smaller than in the South China Sea or Indian scenarios (especially if the U.S. became involved), the dividends of victory against Japan — anything from teaching Tokyo a lesson to redressing historical injustices — could be such as to become a major factor in appeasing major domestic unrest in China. Unless the **CCP were on the brink of collapse**, it is unlikely that the **leadership in Beijing would escalate tensions with Japan** beyond the disputed islets. In other words, military action probably would not extend to other parts of Japan’s territory, unless, of course, the conflict widened. Containing the conflict by limiting it to the Senkaku/Diaoyus would therefore be part of Beijing’s strategy. 4. Taiwan The “reunification” of Taiwan remains a so-called “core interest” of China and a major component of the CCP’s legitimacy with the public. Despite rapprochement in recent years, a substantial component of the PLA remains committed to a Taiwan contingency. Although the risks of war in the Taiwan Strait are low at the moment, China never shelved its plans to annex the island by force if necessary, and has vowed to do so should Taipei seek to unilaterally change the status quo by declaring *de jure* independence. Under Xi, Beijing has also signaled that while it is willing to be patient with Taiwanese and would prefer to use financial incentives to gradually consolidate its grip on Taiwan, it does not intend to be patient *forever*. In other words, foot-dragging on Taiwan’s part, or the election of a political party that is less amenable to rapprochement than the ruling Kuomintang (KMT), could prompt Beijing to choose a more aggressive course of action. Serious unrest on the island could also provide Beijing with the “justification” it needs to involve the PLA, which would be deployed to “protect” Taiwanese “compatriots.” Given that definitions of progress on “reunification” are very much Beijing’s to decide, any incident could theoretically warrant the use of force against Taiwan, especially if major domestic unrest compelled the CCP to seek an external distraction. Militating against such a decision is the fact that anything short of a full invasion of the island would probably forever kill any chance of “peaceful unification” with Taiwan, as the 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait missile crisis demonstrated. A limited military campaign against Taiwan is therefore probably not a good option for an external distraction, as the backlash against aggression would undo years of calibrated Taiwan policy and destroy hopes of unification, which would greatly discredit the CCP with the Chinese public, not to mention the PLA. A full invasion of Taiwan would then provide greater chances of success, at least if we measure success by its impact on public opinion amid serious unrest in China. However, the growing power imbalance in the Taiwan Strait notwithstanding, invading the island would be an extraordinarily difficult — and costly — task; talk of a “quick, clear war” remains just that, and pacifying the island would be a formidable challenge. Should the conflict drag on, as it most certainly would, whatever advantage the CCP may have accumulated by tapping into nationalist sentiment could dwindle and further contribute to resentment against the party. Consequently, unless the CCP were on the brink of collapse, Taiwan would be an extremely poor candidate for external distraction, worse even than Japan, where the chances of success in a limited campaign are higher

#### First scenario: SCS conflict upsets global trade and draws in regional powers

Connor Wagner, author at the American Security Project, 11/1/2018 – [“Chinese Escalation in the South China Sea”, https://www.americansecurityproject.org/chinese-escalation-in-the-south-china-sea/]//bread

A Chinese Destroyer recently came dangerously close to an American Navy ship during a “[Freedom of Navigation](https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/us-press-patrols-disputed-sea-china-warns-meddlers-58821570)” patrol near a Chinese-occupied reef in the contested South China Sea. Over the past several months the Chinese government has increased aggression toward its neighbors and US Navy ships patrolling the area. In addition to increased aggression, [the Chinese government has built several man-made military](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/world/asia/south-china-sea-navy.html?rref=collection%2Fspotlightcollection%2Fchina-reach) bases on top of arcs of shallow reef islands populated by tropical marine life in the South China Sea. Considering that the world has a over 5 trillion dollars invested in trade flow in the South China Sea, an increased military escalation could cause the regional powers to enter into a conflict that could potentially cost more than they bargain for.

The Philippines, Japan, Vietnam, and South Korea all rely substantially on trade routes in the South China Sea. Currently, [5.3 Trillion dollars in total global trade](https://www.cfr.org/interactives/chinas-maritime-disputes?cid=otr-marketing_use-china_sea_InfoGuide#!/chinas-maritime-disputes?cid=otr-marketing_use-china_sea_InfoGuide) travels through the region each year along with 11 billion barrels of oil, and 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Increased Chinese aggression puts more stress on trade routes and ports in China and throughout Southern Asia. It is projected that [90% of Middle Eastern fossil fuel exports](https://www.cfr.org/interactives/chinas-maritime-disputes?cid=otr-marketing_use-china_sea_InfoGuide#!/chinas-maritime-disputes?cid=otr-marketing_use-china_sea_InfoGuide) will to go to Asia by 2035, giving control of vital shipping routes to China in the contested region. A military conflict in the South China Sea could destabilize current geopolitical ties and precipitate a world economic crisis that could lead to **an all-out war**. China itself relies on the South China sea for nearly [40% of its total trade](https://chinapower.csis.org/much-trade-transits-south-china-sea/). It is possible that this is why the bases are being constructed, however, an increase in military presence in one of the world’s major trade routes could imperil future trade and the stability of the area.

Today, China claims [90%](https://www.cfr.org/interactives/chinas-maritime-disputes?cid=otr-marketing_use-china_sea_InfoGuide#!/chinas-maritime-disputes?cid=otr-marketing_use-china_sea_InfoGuide) of the South China Sea, much of which is contested by both the Philippines and Vietnam. Brunei and Malaysia also claim maritime territory in the South China Sea. These claims have led to the increasing of defense budgets of all countries involved and escalated the geopolitical militarization in the region. In a visit to the Southern Theatre Command, the Chinese President Xi Jinping ordered maritime troops there to increase their readiness drills and [prepare for war](https://www.businessinsider.com/chinas-president-orders-military-to-prepare-for-south-china-sea-war-2018-10). He stressed to the commanders China’s need to build a force that can “[fight and win wars](https://www.businessinsider.com/chinas-president-orders-military-to-prepare-for-south-china-sea-war-2018-10).” This kind of rhetoric could cause a relatively small incident, such as a Chinese destroyer coming dangerously close to a US Navy ship, to **escalate to an all-out war in the region.**

#### US-China war goes nuclear – especially true in a SCS conflict

Gerald C. Brown is an analyst with Valiant Integrated Services focusing on nuclear deterrence and East Asian security, 2021 – [“Understanding the Risks and Realities of China’s Nuclear Forces”, June 2021, https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#author]//bread

Emboldened Conventional Operations China’s nuclear forces can be considerably more concerning when not considered in isolation from other tools of war. Analysts and policymakers need to look at how nuclear weapons can affect the broader picture of warfare, including how they impact PLA conventional operations and the type of wars China envisions fighting.  China’s military strategy is focused on “winning informationized local wars,” effectively local, high tech wars in which the information domain will play a dominant role. Although the PLA’s reach is increasingly global, it has oriented itself toward local conflicts, with a particular emphasis on maritime conflicts, as the main war-fighting domain. This primarily concerns Taiwan but also the East and South China seas among others.[14](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote14) In 2015, the PLA made a drastic change to its command structure, orienting itself into joint war-fighting theater commands, directly geared to fighting in these regions. The PLA seeks to deter the United States from intervening in these local wars or to defeat the United States locally if it does.  In these local wars, nuclear overmatch against the United States is hardly necessary. Instead, China is more concerned with preventing U.S. nuclear coercion and intervention and constraining the scope of any war that may erupt. PLA strategists appear to believe that the United States would not intervene in a conflict that did not directly threaten the United States if there was a risk that the conflict could escalate to the nuclear level.[15](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote15) As Zhao Xijun, former deputy commander of the Second Artillery Force, has said, states “become very cautious” when contemplating military intervention against other nuclear-armed states.[16](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote16) Evidence suggests that a secure second-strike force may even embolden the PLA in local conventional conflicts, allowing them to accept greater risks at lower levels of escalation. That especially holds true when considering that all sides in China’s multiple territorial claims perceive themselves as defending the status quo.[17](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote17) Research has revealed the PLA’s overconfidence in its ability to control conventional escalation. Unlike in the case of nuclear weapons, Chinese documents emphasize “seizing the initiative” early in conventional conflicts. They envision using tools such as cyberwarfare and conventional missiles early, hard, and fast, even preemptively.[18](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote18) Although the focus of these writings is not nuclear weapons use, conventional operations could be emboldened by perceptions of nuclear stability. Entanglement Risks Another complication is that firebreaks between conventional and nuclear forces are increasingly blurred in modern warfare, and substantial risks exist when conventional strategies affect nuclear forces. One notable example involves discussions on space weapons. PLA assessments have highlighted the increasing importance of this domain, and the asymmetric weakness represented by U.S. overreliance on space in conflict. Critiques of Chinese military writings point toward the offense-dominant nature of such operations and the need to control the space domain early in conflict. They further assert that attacks against U.S. satellites would carry relatively low escalation risks and could even deescalate a conflict.[19](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote19)  U.S. satellite systems, however, are dual use, enabling a wide range of conventional and nuclear operations. Attacks against U.S. satellites would not only affect the country’s conventional capabilities, they would jeopardize the heart of the U.S. nuclear command, control, and communications and early-warning capabilities.[20](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote20) Further, although Chinese military analysts highlight the advantages of engaging in satellite attacks during conventional conflicts, the same actions would likely be taken prior to a nuclear conflict in order to degrade the effectiveness of U.S. missile defenses and ensure the effectiveness of a nuclear strike. As a result, Washington would view any Chinese attack on its satellites as profoundly destabilizing, potentially inciting a U.S. nuclear response. Similar entanglement risks exist with Chinese forces. PLARF bases all appear to host conventional and nuclear missile brigades. These are geographically separated from each other, but most of the weapons are on mobile platforms, creating overlapping risks when deployed. Conventional and nuclear forces seem to rely on the same supply and logistics infrastructure. Although command and control infrastructure are ostensibly separate, the extent of this separation is not fully understood, and overlap seems likely to exist.[21](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote21) Additionally, China’s nuclear submarine force appears to share the same onshore communications systems with Chinese conventional submarines.[22](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote22) Furthermore, an increasing number of midrange to intermediate-range weapons systems are dual use. Although the DF-21 maintains distinct conventional and nuclear variants that are typically not co-located, they are likely indistinguishable when deployed. In the case of the DF-26, conventional and nuclear warheads are likely co-located. Reports have highlighted DF-26 brigades, equipped with conventional and nuclear weapons, that hold drills in which units launch a conventional attack and then reload with a nuclear warhead to prepare for nuclear counterattacks.[23](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote23) In conflict, attacks against China’s shore-based communications systems that are directed at China’s conventional submarine force would cut off its nuclear-armed submarine force as well. Campaigns against China’s vast conventional missile force would almost certainly degrade China’s nuclear force too. The fixed bases supporting PLARF brigades would be likely targets as the dual nature of these bases means conventional and nuclear forces share the same base headquarters, resulting in severed communications and logistics networks for PLA nuclear forces. Even if China’s nuclear and conventional command and control networks were sufficiently separate, it would be challenging to distinguish between them. Conventional and nuclear midrange to intermediate-range weapons would likely be indistinguishable in conflict.  How would China respond to attacks against these dual-use systems and the degradation of its nuclear force? It is somewhat comforting that China’s ICBM force is relatively distinguishable from its dual-use weapons, and the majority of the force is located deeper within the Chinese mainland. What is not obvious is how strikes against regional-range nuclear forces would be perceived by Beijing in the middle of armed conflict. If China’s nuclear forces were degraded in any way, authorities could conclude that they no longer have a survivable deterrent. In the heat of a conflict, it is difficult to assess how Chinese decision-makers would react to this.  Further, a degraded Chinese nuclear force, in the middle of a crisis, could provide a tempting counterforce target for the United States. In such a case, there would be a challenge of perceptions, with neither the United States nor China truly knowing the other’s intentions. In conflict, with the ability to destroy China’s nuclear force or at least limit damage to itself should China opt for nuclear use, would the United States decide that a counterforce strike is worth the risk? The United States would understand that if it failed to strike, China could opt to use its remaining nuclear forces and inflict substantial damage. Similarly, knowing the United States faced such a dilemma and that it could face a disabling counterforce strike, China would be faced with strong use-it-or-lose-it pressures. All of these circumstances would be exacerbated by the fog of war, a degraded information environment, and the speed required to make decisions.  Some Western analysts have speculated that China’s conventional and nuclear weapons capabilities have been intentionally entangled to heighten the risks facing adversaries and to deter conflict. There is little evidence that this was a motivator. Instead, the PLA likely sought to take advantage of economies of scale. It is far cheaper and more logical for China to use the same designs for conventional and nuclear variants to its weapons, allowing for savings on manpower, production, maintenance, and research costs. Even so, this is hardly comforting and may leave the PLA less aware of risks resulting from a comingled system. States that entangle forces intentionally are likely better prepared for the risks involved. When such entanglement arises from nonstrategic reasons, as seems likely in China’s case, states are less aware of the escalatory risks, which may exacerbate escalatory pressures in a conflict.[24](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote24) War Control and Inadvertent Escalation There is little evidence that technological entanglement is a direct, strategic choice, but there are some limited indications that China could use nuclear signaling to constrain the extent of conventional conflicts and contribute to escalation control.[25](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote25) Nuclear signaling includes such actions as test launches, release of the locations of targets, an increase in readiness levels, missile deployments, or other actions to demonstrate resolve. The goal would not be necessarily to use nuclear weapons. Instead, the signaling would aim to raise fears that a conflict could credibly escalate to the nuclear level, thus “causing the enemy to dread that the possible consequences of its actions will be that its losses will exceed its gains, thereby causing the enemy to change its plans for risky activities and achieving the goal of restricting the war to a certain scope.”[26](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote26) In this way, China could capitalize on the uncertainty of a potential nuclear conflict to deter intervention and constrain escalation in conventional conflicts in the Pacific region. Such risks are compounded by China’s use of purposeful ambiguity as an integral component of its approach to nuclear deterrence.[27](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote27) One major problem is that such signaling by the Chinese may be indistinguishable from preparations for a nuclear attack. Yet, writings by experts on deterrence and signaling operations fail to acknowledge that these provocative actions could be misinterpreted by an adversary. In general, Chinese experts seem to believe that nuclear escalation is unlikely to be effectively controlled, but are overconfident that conventional conflict can be controlled without escalating to the nuclear level.[28](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote28) Lack of awareness about escalation risks could very well make the PLA more aggressive in local conflicts.  Finally, the concept of an “existential threat” may be different in China than many perceive it to be. The PLA is not China’s professional military so much as it is the armed wing of the Chinese Communist Party, a point drilled into PLA members and emphasized in the era of Chinese President Xi Jinping, who is also general secretary of the party.[29](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-06/features/understanding-risks-realities-chinas-nuclear-forces#endnote29) In that sense, destruction of the party may be synonymous with destruction of the state. Such conflation of ideas could come into play in the face of a humiliating conventional defeat by China over Taiwan or another dispute that China considers central to its sovereignty. If there were a perceived risk, irrational or not, that such losses could fracture the legitimacy of the Communist Party, drastic actions could become more likely. If Beijing perceived that nuclear weapons use would ensure victory in a conflict, it might escalate to using nuclear weapons in a last-ditch effort.

#### Second scenario: Border disputes with India escalates and goes nuclear

TOBY DALTON and TONG ZHAO, 2020 – [Dalton is the co-director and a senior fellow of the Nuclear Policy Program at the Carnegie Endowment. Tong Zhao is a senior fellow in Carnegie’s Nuclear Policy Program based at the Carnegie–Tsinghua Center for Global Policy, “NEW TECHNOLOGIES THAT ARE ENTANGLED WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE MORE IMPORTANT FOR STABILITY THAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS THEMSELVES.”31<https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/08/19/at-crossroads-china-india-nuclear-relations-after-border-clash-pub-82489>,]//bread

If a border dispute were to escalate into a larger military confrontation, additional inadvertent escalation risks could come from the co-location or mixing of nuclear and conventional missiles and the challenges of distinguishing between nuclear and non-nuclear systems. Most Indian and Chinese dual-capable military assets are theater-range (short-, medium-, and intermediate-range) weapons, whereas strategic, long-range missiles are exclusively armed with nuclear weapons. As noted earlier, China’s theater-range, dual-capable weapons include the DF-21 and DF-26.32 India’s dual-capable systems include fighter bomber aircraft; short-range missiles like Prithvi, Prahaar, and Agni-I; and perhaps also the medium-range Agni-II ballistic missile.33 If dual-capable weapons and their associated equipment and facilities were destroyed in a conventional attack against, for example, India’s Ambala Air Force Station or China’s missile facilities near Korla, the attacked party could wonder whether the strike was aimed deliberately at its nuclear assets and whether a response in-kind—or even a direct nuclear retaliation—could be necessary. This risk is not completely theoretical. Some reports suggest that PLA strategists may be contemplating the early use of missile strikes against Indian air bases.34 And at least some Chinese experts assess that “the Indian army and air force may not have the capacity or will to distinguish nuclear facilities from conventional targets.”35 Also posing a risk of nuclear use is the Chinese and Indian deployment of nuclear weapons on submarines in the open oceans, potentially subjecting their nuclear weapons to greater threat of destruction by conventional forces. Although there is no evidence that China is deploying nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) to the Indian Ocean, India may view China’s diesel-electric and nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs) operating in the Indian Ocean as a threat to its incipient SSBN force, especially during periods of heightened military tension. Similarly, some Chinese strategists are concerned that in a bilateral military conflict, India may send its attack submarines to the South China Sea to intercept Chinese naval forces sailing to the Indian Ocean. The South China Sea is reportedly the main operating area for China’s SSBNs,36 and the deployment of Indian attack submarines there could significantly increase Chinese concerns about their security.

#### Third scenario: Sino-Japanese conflict draws in the US and escalates, goes nuclear

Robert Ayson and Desmond Ball, 2014 – [Robert Ayson, Professor of Strategic Studies at Victoria University of Wellington; Desmond John Ball was an Australian academic and expert on defence and security. He was credited with successfully advising the US against nuclear escalation in the 1970s, “Can a Sino-Japanese War Be Controlled?”, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00396338.2014.985441]//bread

Nuclear options and incentives The role of nuclear weapons is one of the most important aspects of the escalation question in North Asia, as China has a nuclear arsenal and Japan relies on US extended deterrence. If Beijing and Tokyo engage in conventional military conflict, the prospects of direct Sino-American nuclear escalation come into play more clearly. One of the main concerns about the possibility of such escalation revolves around America’s superiority to China in terms of conventional fighting power.41 While China is closing that gap, some American conventional systems allow Washington to threaten China with accurate, destructive strikes that Beijing cannot hope to replicate. Should Sino-American hostilities seem likely to intensify, China could be tempted to utilise its nuclear forces. In such a conflict, however, Beijing should be aware that any attempted nuclear attack on the US would be almost guaranteed to generate a swift and probably disproportionate nuclear response. Mutual fear of surprise attacks and inadvertent nuclear war could not be ruled out, but nuclear deterrence might well operate effectively.42 In the early stages of a conflict involving only China and Japan, the nuclear question takes on a different perspective. Beijing would still face the prospect of relative conventional-military weakness, especially when it considered the possibility of American support to Tokyo. But if China decided to escalate by threatening Japan with nuclear bombardment, it would have to weigh the credibility of American extended deterrence, some portion of which would almost certainly swing into action. At the very least, China would have to deal with the costs of a strong conventional response by the US. One might expect that nuclear threats, implicit or otherwise, would remain in the background. Washington could regard the threat of a nuclear response as effective leverage, discouraging China from escalating a conventional conflict with Japan without the need for heavy US involvement in a conventional military contest. Similarly, China might remind Japan about the existence of its nuclear forces, so as to highlight the potential costs of conventional escalation. Testing an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) during early hostilities – rather like the 2014 Russian test, apparently longscheduled, during the Ukraine crisis – could be such a signalling mechanism. If China suffers, or merely fears, a significant attack on its command and control systems, there are other material reasons why nuclear escalation could become more likely. Unlike the US or the Soviet Union during the Cold War, China lacks separate, redundant theatre and strategic networks for C4ISR. This increases the likelihood that what Japan and especially the US view as an escalating conflict in the conventional domain could have quite a different appearance to Chinese decision-makers. Conventional escalation could easily cause the US to take measures that imperilled China’s control of its nuclear systems. Aware of its general C4ISR vulnerability, Beijing would already have experienced considerable pressure to use its antisatellite systems, anti-ship ballistic missiles (including the DF21-D) and other anti-carrier weapons, and to accelerate its cyber attacks.43 The US would likely respond to the use of these capabilities by destroying all remaining Chinese force elements in any way connected to them, which would have further C4ISR implications for China. America could be expected to forgo attacks on Chinese urban–industrial centres and many other force elements. Washington would seek to convey restraint and selectivity in its response, but would already have provided Beijing with a perverse incentive to use nuclear weapons pre-emptively, out of fear that its capacity to maintain command and control of these systems was being destroyed in the conventional conflict. The concentrated, limited range of China’s nuclear-powered ballisticmissile submarines (SSBNs) and associated command, control and communications systems would become an attractive target for the US soon after the nuclear threshold had been crossed. China only has three SSBN bases, which are also used by its attack submarines. Its single Xia-class SSBN is based at Jianggezhuang, around 24km east of Qingdao, and may never have become operational.44 The base also houses several nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs), meaning that either conventional or nuclear strikes on China’s attack submarines could also be interpreted as an attack on the Xia. 45 The Chinese navy currently has five Type-094 Jin-class SSBNs, which have 12 JL-2 submarine-launched ballistic missiles each, and share two home ports. The first two vessels in this class were based at Xiaopingdao, near Dalian in Liaoning Province.46 Since December 2007, Jin SSBNs have also been seen moored at Yulin naval base near Sanya (in Yalong Bay, on the southern coast of Hainan Island), which reportedly has large underground facilities for holding SSBNs.47 Moreover, the Chinese navy normally uses only two high-powered VLF stations for communications with its SSBNs and attack submarines. These are locatedat Changde and at the Datong naval base. Although the navy has another six VLF stations that it could also use (located at Fuzhou, Lushun, Qinghe, Yaxian, Yulin and Zhanjiang), they make up part of a vulnerable infrastructure that could easily be degraded.48 China’s overlapping command arrangements and the co-location of some of its main conventional and nuclear systems present particular escalatory challenges. The PLA’s Second Artillery Corps, for example, controls all of China’s land-based missiles, including conventional and nuclear-armed missiles, and both ballistic- and cruise-missile forces. The eight bases holding ICBMs also contain a mixture of intermediate- and medium-range ballistic missiles, meaning that an attack on one is likely to threaten the others. The Second Artillery Corps is headquartered just north of Beijing. It has an alternative base in the hardened facility under Yuquan Shan Mountain, which is located in the Western Hills just outside the capital and is also used by the Central Military Commission. As a result, the degradation or destruction of the headquarters of the Second Artillery Corps could also substantially impair the commission’s national command-and-control capabilities. In the knowledge that its nuclear systems could also be affected by an early strike against conventional command-and-control systems, China might face complex temptations to use them while it still could (even if they were not targeted directly), where the alternative was to cope with major uncertainties about what it might be left with as the war escalated. According to the US Department of Defense, the PLAN has a limited capacity to communicate with submarines at sea, and Beijing has no operational experience of managing a fleet of SSBNs conducting strategic-deterrence patrols.49 Renmin University’s Wu Riqiang has argued that existing Chinese SSBNs are too noisy to operate beyond the first island chain, where they would have a higher chance of successfully striking the continental US.50 By comparison, the shallower waters around mainland China have a much more complex acoustic environment, which could hamper submarine-detection efforts. Owen Cote, Jr, suggests that these waters would in a conflict situation ‘constitute a zone of “contested command” in which neither side can assure its use of the sea surface for either commercial or military purposes’. Forced to launch from these shallower waters, China’s relatively small SSBN force would likely be countered by US (and, increasingly, Japanese) ballistic-missile defence systems, and would hardly present Beijing with a secure second-strike capability. As Wu suggests, ‘China’s SSBNs are much more vulnerable than those of the Soviet Union. China’s leaders will face a much harder “use it or lose it” choice during a crisis. The situation is more dangerous than during the Cold War.’52 Moreover, in the event of much more serious escalation from the other side, China would find it exceedingly difficult to distinguish a deliberately crafted, limited nuclear strike by the US from a full-scale urban–industrial attack. Since the 1960s, US nuclear-war plans have contained various options for the use of strategic nuclear weapons against China; by the early years of the George W. Bush administration, these ranged from limited attacks in response to conflicts involving Taiwan and North Korea to larger-scale efforts in which as many as 500 nuclear missiles would be launched at the full range of Chinese nuclear-weapons sites, conventional military bases, industrial areas and leadership facilities.53 A more recent nuclear-war plan for a reduced US arsenal (which came into effect in July 2012) is organised around four categories of nuclear attack and contains dozens of limited options.54 In the context of an escalating war that had begun as a small conflict between Japan and China, the US would presumably have at least three different targeting missions in mind. These would include attacks that met the extended-deterrence commitment to Japan by destroying conventional targets and preventing China from gaining the ascendancy; strikes on all facilities associated with a Chinese assault on US satellites, aircraft carriers and undersea sensors; and a response to Chinese nuclear pre-emption.55 Coupled with Beijing’s diminished ability to judge the limits of a US strike after its C4ISR systems had been damaged, this intermixture of conventional and nuclear targets creates a worrying escalatory picture. An Asian nuclear war would be very difficult to control. Once the US and the Soviet Union had reached a political stalemate and informally acknowledged their common interest in avoiding a catastrophic war, worries about escalation tended to include the possibility that technical rather than political factors would allow a small conflict to get out of hand. There were varying assessments of the ease with which a war between the superpowers could be controlled in light of the vulnerability of their command systems, but political factors were rarely seen as a major, independent cause for concern. In the strategic relationship between Japan and China, however, there are problems at both the political and military–technical levels. Firstly, there seems to be minimal political understanding of, or commitment to, avoiding escalation. It is hard to tell whether Japan and China will see it as in their political interests to constrain what begins as a minor conflict. These political obstacles increase the pressure created by military considerations that encourage swift escalation, to the point at which even nuclear options seem attractive. The close military links between Japan and the US would not necessarily encourage restraint. It may be militarily logical for the US to place China in a position in which further escalation seemed tempting, while it could be politically logical for Japan to create conditions in which American action became more likely. An initial outbreak of hostilities between Japan and China over the East China Sea could remain just that: a short, contained exchange of fire and a sobering lesson that encouraged much-needed efforts to improve communication and recognise their common interest in avoiding conflict. But it might also veer out of control before they had a chance to take preventative measures. The subsequent involvement of the United States could lead to Asia’s first serious war involving nuclear-armed states. And we have no precedent to suggest how dangerous that would become.

#### Fourth scenario: Taiwan war causes extinction---triggers nuclear war through miscalc and cyber-attacks.

Michael E. O’Hanlon 19. Senior fellow at The Brookings Institution, specializing in defense and foreign policy issues. 4-30-2019. "The Senkaku Paradox: Risking Great Power War Over Small Stakes." Brookings Institution Press. Chapter 2. pg. 43-50. JSTOR. accessed 10-23-2019//JDi

A possible Chinese blockade of Taiwan, on the other hand, clearly has even higher stakes, and history suggests that crises may again occur in connection with Taiwan. Beijing might convince itself that a blockade-centered operation against Taiwan, designed to force it to reverse whatever purportedly offending action or rhetoric had caused China’s reaction in the first place, might not be hugely risky. In principle, China could scale back or suspend enforcement of the blockade at any point if it needed to, and could do so while saving face, especially if the blockade was conducted principally by submarines. Moreover, Beijing might believe that even a partially effective naval blockade could be a potent instrument of coercion against Taiwan. Such a blockade would almost assuredly be nowhere near complete or airtight.84 However, China would not need to stop all commercial ships transiting into and out of Taiwan. It would simply need to deter enough ships from risking the journey that Taiwan’s economy would suffer badly. The goal would likely be to squeeze the island economically to the point of capitulation. This solution might seem quite elegant from Beijing’s point of view: it could involve little or no loss of life, little or no damage to Taiwan itself, and the ability to back off the attack if the United States seemed prepared to intervene or if the world community slapped major trade sanctions on China in response.85 In any such blockade, China might well combine various elements of military power, including cyberattacks, into a multidimensional operation.86 It could attack command and control as well as reconnaissance capabilities both on land and in space (the latter intended largely to blind the United States). The centerpiece of the approach would probably be the PRC submarine fleet introducing a significant risk factor into all maritime voyages into and out of Taiwan by occasionally sinking a cargo ship, either with submarines or with mines it had laid in Taiwan’s harbors.87 The PRC submarine force has improved by leaps and bounds in recent decades. Over the past twenty years, China’s fleet of modern attack subs has grown from roughly two to forty.88 China’s precision-strike capabilities have improved to the point that China could conceivably use a preemptive missile and air attack against Taiwanese airfields and ports and associated infrastructure to hobble Taiwan’s ability to strike back, though it might choose not to attack Taiwan’s territory in the first instance.89 To allow humanitarian supplies to reach Taiwan, Beijing might offer countries the option of first docking in a PRC port for inspection before sailing to their destinations. In this and other ways, it could limit the dangers to innocent civilians. Since this strategy might require the Chinese submarine fleet to sink only a few ships to achieve the desired aims, even in the worst case Beijing might believe that it was acting humanely— threatening the lives of only 100 to 200 commercial seamen. Given the perceived stakes involved, Beijing could well consider this a reasonable risk. If they chose to try to break the blockade, the basic concept of operations for the United States and Taiwan would probably be to assemble enough forces in the western Pacific to set up a protected shipping lane east of Taiwan. To carry out that mission, the United States would need to establish air superiority throughout a large part of the region, together with Taiwan (and perhaps other countries such as Japan). The United States and Taiwan, and perhaps others, would also need to protect ships against Chinese submarine attack while coping with the threat of mines near Taiwan’s ports. And they might have to do all this without assured access to much of their satellite architecture, especially for imagery and some types of signals intelligence. That is because China’s abilities to shoot down or disable low Earth orbit satellites, through direct-ascent interceptors or directed-energy weapons or other means, have improved in recent years (even as some aspects of U.S. access to space have become more distributed and resilient as well).90 China might well be willing to shoot at American satellites even if it sought, at least initially, not to attack U.S. ships or aircraft. However, its willingness to do the latter in addition should not be dismissed, in light of Taiwan’s importance to Beijing. And its willingness would likely grow very quickly after the first Chinese submarine was sunk, which could happen if the U.S.-Taiwan blockade-busting and convoy escort operation shot back at a PLA submarine that had just attacked a cargo vessel. Escalation could happen fast. Later in a conflict, China might even consider using nuclear weapons in such an attack, despite its official no-first-use policy, as Columbia professor Thomas Christensen has argued.91 While the term “surgical nuclear strike” is almost oxymoronic and Strangelovian, to the extent it has any faint resemblance to reality, it is probably in a situation like an attack on a lone ship at sea. Establishing air superiority has become much harder for the United States and Japan in these kinds of scenarios because of the PLA Air Force’s modernization trends in recent years, combined with the limited options for basing U.S. aircraft in the region. Fortunately, modern U.S. stealthy or “fifth-generation” aircraft are still far superior to Chinese planes. Unfortunately, China now has close to 1,000 “fourth-generation” fighters roughly comparable to U.S. aircraft such as the F-15 and F-16. And it can base perhaps 1,000 aircraft within several hundred miles of Taiwan. A RAND simulation estimates that China might be able to surge about half that number in an attack on Taiwan or on the shipping around it, including a mix of air-to-air, air-to-ground, and electronic-warfare planes. Using a basic model and some simplifying assumptions, RAND estimates that the United States could prevent such a surge force from reaching most of its targets only by continuously keeping some two wings or about 150 aircraft airborne near Taiwan. The United States and its partners would likely succeed in such an effort because, according to RAND’s model, the United States’ fifthgeneration aircraft—F-22s and F-35s, and to a lesser degree F/A-18E/F Super Hornets—could have 50 percent more lethality and up to 90 percent less vulnerability than Chinese combat jets.92 But the success would come at a price, and only with considerable effort and difficulty. China could choose the time and place of its surge, and the United States (with any allies) would therefore have to be vigilant at all times. It would need to keep fighters airborne near Taiwan essentially for as long as the crisis endured. It would also need the continued presence of airborne warning aircraft in the vicinity. Bases on Okinawa are about 750 kilometers away from Taiwan, or about an hour of flight time; aircraft carriers might be kept roughly that close too. But other bases in the area—Misawa Air Base on Japan’s main Honshu island, Andersen Air Force base on Guam— would be 2,500 kilometers or more distant, meaning some three hours of flying each way to get to station and then return after flying a patrol. If aircraft and crews are limited to a daily flight average of about six hours a day, jets from Okinawa could average 1.5 sorties per day and those from the more distant bases slightly less than one sortie per twenty-four hours. That would translate into three hours a day on station flying from Kadena and 1.5 hours a day flying from Guam or Honshu. Put differently: Eight aircraft (plus or minus) based on Kadena would be needed to sustain one on station near Taiwan. Sixteen aircraft or so based at Misawa or Andersen Air Force Base would be needed to keep one on station near Taiwan. Averaging this out, keeping two wings of fighters aloft at a time could require about ten to twelve times that number being based in the region, or twenty to twenty-four wings—more than half the total U.S. military aggregate. (The RAND study actually estimates that fourteen to thirty would be needed, depending on specific assumptions; I have simplified the analysis above.93) Moreover, the United States could lose a number of aircraft in this process, perhaps even dozens. China could lose dozens or even hundreds. The backdrop would be set for escalation. Both sides would be increasingly tempted to attack the land bases and aircraft carriers from which planes operated.94 Ballistic missiles and ballistic missile defense would be important in this kind of engagement, too. China now has missiles, such as the medium-range DF-21 in the Dong-Feng series, that are capable of being fired from its homeland and reaching ships east of Taiwan. It is not clear whether the United States could blind China’s sensors adequately to deprive the PLA of targeting information. Any PLA attack against military facilities in a place like Okinawa therefore could well shut down runways for at least some stretch of time and destroy aircraft or ordnance and fuel stocks not in underground areas or hardened shelters.95 Again, Chinese nuclear attacks against American and any allied naval assets in the region are hard to dismiss categorically. The antisubmarine warfare (ASW) effort could have multiple aspects. The United States would probably be tempted to deploy its own attack submarines as close as possible to China—certainly in the Taiwan Strait, maybe just outside PRC ports. This approach would provide American submarines a good prospect of destroying PRC submarines at their source, before they were in position to fire on commercial shipping (or U.S. aircraft carriers) in more distant waters. However, this type of ASW could be escalatory if it involved attacks in Chinese territorial waters. Whatever happened near Chinese shores, there would surely be additional layers of American ASW farther out to sea. American ASW assets on ships and planes would accompany 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 then later as they departed. The ASW assets would use sonar to listen for submarines, and for the sound of any torpedoes being fired. The United States would have to deploy significant numbers of surface combatants and airplanes such as P-3s and P-8s, as well as helicopters, to the region for this mission. Some would help protect U.S. aircraft carriers east of Taiwan. Others would provide additional protection to merchant ships or mine warfare vessels as they operated near Taiwan’s shores. Any Chinese submarine wishing to fire a torpedo at a merchant ship or aircraft carrier would then first have to run a gauntlet (if it were firing long-range antiship missiles, it could avoid some of the gauntlet, but would depend on targeting information provided by another platform). It would likely have to evade submarine detection as it left port, avoid any openwater search missions that the United States and Taiwan established, and then somehow penetrate the defensive ASW perimeter of whatever convoy it was attacking as it approached its target. To survive the overall engagement and return to port, it would then need to successfully negotiate all of this in the other direction. Unfortunately for Chinese submarines, this would be risky business. Unfortunately for the United States, Taiwan, and any other allies participating in the effort, it would also be risky for their assets, and some would surely be lost in the operation. During the Cold War, the effectiveness of ASW operations was commonly assessed at 5 to 15 percent per barrier. (Cold War barriers were often more linear and literal perimeters than would be likely here, but the fact remains that Chinese submarines would have to survive perhaps three types of pursuers on three different parts of their journey to or from home base.) By those odds, the typical Chinese submarine would do well to survive for two or three round-trip missions from base.96 But it might succeed in getting off several shots against valuable, and vulnerable, surface ships before meeting its own demise.97 A recent major RAND study on the U.S.-China military balance concurred with this broad result, especially in cases where Chinese submarines could be cued by sensors to a general area where a target such as a U.S. aircraft carrier might operate. In that case, a given submarine might have multiple opportunities to get off shots at lucrative surface targets.98 China might hope that a quick strike that sank a major U.S. ship and killed hundreds of Americans (or even thousands, in the event of a carrier sinking) would cause Washington to waver in its future commitment to the defense of Taiwan. The United States might face serious challenges in waters near Taiwan as well, despite the proximity of land-based assets that could join in the ASW hunt. Shallow waters are complex sonar environments in which sound waves bounce back and forth in multiple and unpredictable directions. This makes ambush a real worry, especially for the mine warfare vessels and surface ships that would have to escort commercial vessels all the way into Taiwan’s ports.99 Toward a Net Assessment Where does this leave us? Although I have not provided a detailed scenario analysis or combat modeling exercise here, the broad contours of the situation drive home some central points. They are also consistent with the more detailed modeling work of others, such as RAND. Once a Chinese blockade operation against Taiwan began, it would be difficult to be confident that it would end without a significant and escalating conflict pitting the United States, Taiwan, and perhaps Japan against China. If that occurred, sustained naval, aerial, and missile combat in and around Taiwan would likely lead to substantial losses on all sides. American advantages in fifth-generation combat aircraft and modern attack submarines would give the United States and its partners in the operation a significant edge. However, that edge is less than it used to be. China would clearly have the edge in geography, and it also increasingly possesses good attack submarines and precision-strike missiles as well. Myriad uncertainties, including the survivability of space and cyber systems, as well as ships and land bases, make it hard to be confident in predicting outcomes. Indeed, when I modeled uncertainties with respect to a possible U.S.- led invasion of Iraq in 2002, I produced a likely band of possible casualties in which higher estimates were literally ten times greater than lower estimates. This broad approach was eventually vindicated: it initially appeared, in April 2003, that U.S. losses might be very modest, but over the course of several years it became clear they were much higher. A U.S.- China war would be far more uncertain. For most scenarios involving blockades and other possible intense operations over and in the waters of the western Pacific, the United States and allies could probably muscle their way to victory over China at this point, as we approach 2020. Taiwan could also likely endure the privations that would be experienced during the military campaign before victory was assured.100 My best guess is that both sides would lose most low-altitude satellites and some cyber as well as command, control, and communications capability, so the war would ultimately be fought in a certain fog. Yet American high-tech advantages in weapons platforms would ultimately provide an important and probably decisive edge. This somewhat sanguine conclusion is far from certain, however. It hinges in part on a willingness in Washington to accept many thousands of American battlefield dead and at least some risk of nuclear escalation. Even though U.S. nuclear forces far exceed those of the PLA, China might conclude that its disproportionate interests in the Taiwan issue warranted nuclear brinkmanship, especially if China had already possibly lost thousands of its own people in conventional combat, which would heighten the stakes as well as the reputational importance of the outcome of the conflict. These concerns could be amplified if the United States, intentionally or not, began to strike the nuclear assets of the PLA in the course of conventional fighting near Taiwan. If that happened, China might face a “use them or lose them” dilemma.101 Nuclear attack against a carrier, or a high-altitude nuclear airburst over a base like Kadena (designed to destroy people and equipment immediately below, without generating lots of fallout), might seem particularly attractive options to Beijing. Nuclear escalation might happen in another way as well. Perhaps China would attempt a large-scale cyberattack against the United States (and quite possibly Japan too) in the course of such a conflict. Its hope might be, for example, to incapacitate the U.S. electricity grid—as National Security Agency director Admiral Michael Rogers said in 2014 that China might well be able to do. Such a result could badly incapacitate many of the Defense Department systems in the United States that require civilian produced electricity to function.102 Even if such systems could be restored quickly, the U.S. electrical system as a whole might remain damaged for many months, as might national infrastructure needed to deploy military forces abroad. Whether the United States could muster a major military response at a time when its national capacities were needed to take care of the many Americans left in the cold and dark, without medicine or sanitation or clean water or viable living quarters, is an open question. China might hope that U.S. military assets would be devoted to missions closer to home, to prevent mass famine, privation, or disease, after such a catastrophe. China might do this, if already losing in a conventional conflict or expecting to lose, even if its own cyber systems could be just as vulnerable to attack.103 Countries sometimes start wars or escalate not out of complete confidence that they will succeed but after concluding that the risks of inaction outweigh those of even risky action.104 And if China conducted such a cyber operation, it might be the very type of non-nuclear strategic attack that the Trump administration’s Nuclear Posture Review envisions as a plausible basis for possible American nuclear first use.105

#### A small war would cause extinction---counter-forcing is impossible.

Starr 14 Steven Starr, the Senior Scientist for Physicians for Social Responsibility and Director of the Clinical Laboratory Science Program at the University of Missouri. Starr has published in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and the Strategic Arms Reduction (STAR) website of the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, June 11th, 2014, “There Can be No Winners in a Nuclear War”, Truth Out, <https://truthout.org/articles/there-can-be-no-winners-in-a-nuclear-war/>, EO

Nuclear war has no winner. Beginning in 2006, several of the world’s leading climatologists (at Rutgers, UCLA, John Hopkins University, and the University of Colorado-Boulder) published a series of studies that evaluated the long-term environmental consequences of a nuclear war, including baseline scenarios fought with merely 1% of the explosive power in the US and/or Russian launch-ready nuclear arsenals. They concluded that the consequences of even a “small” nuclear war would include catastrophic disruptions of global climate and massive destruction of Earth’s protective ozone layer. These and more recent studies predict that global agriculture would be so negatively affected by such a war, a global famine would result, which would cause up to 2 billion people to starve to death. These peer-reviewed studies – which were analyzed by the best scientists in the world and found to be without error – also predict that a war fought with less than half of US or Russian strategic nuclear weapons would destroy the human race. In other words, a US-Russian nuclear war would create such extreme long-term damage to the global environment that it would leave the Earth uninhabitable for humans and most animal forms of life. A recent article in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, “Self-assured destruction: The climate impacts of nuclear war,” begins by stating: “A nuclear war between Russia and the United States, even after the arsenal reductions planned under New START, could produce a nuclear winter. Hence, an attack by either side could be suicidal, resulting in self-assured destruction.” In 2009, I wrote “Catastrophic Climatic Consequences of Nuclear Conflicts” for the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament. The article summarizes the findings of these studies. It explains that nuclear firestorms would produce millions of tons of smoke, which would rise above cloud level and form a global stratospheric smoke layer that would rapidly encircle the Earth. The smoke layer would remain for at least a decade, and it would act to destroy the protective ozone layer (vastly increasing the UV-B reaching Earth) as well as block warming sunlight, thus creating Ice Age weather conditions that would last 10 years or longer. Following a US-Russian nuclear war, temperatures in the central US and Eurasia would fall below freezing every day for one to three years; the intense cold would completely eliminate growing seasons for a decade or longer. No crops could be grown, leading to a famine that would kill most humans and large animal populations. Electromagnetic pulse from high-altitude nuclear detonations would destroy the integrated circuits in all modern electronic devices, including those in commercial nuclear power plants. Every nuclear reactor would almost instantly meltdown; every nuclear spent fuel pool (which contain many times more radioactivity than found in the reactors) would boil off, releasing vast amounts of long-lived radioactivity. The fallout would make most of the US and Europe uninhabitable. Of course, the survivors of the nuclear war would be starving to death anyway. Once nuclear weapons were introduced into a US-Russian conflict, there would be little chance that a nuclear holocaust could be avoided. Theories of “limited nuclear war” and “nuclear de-escalation” are unrealistic. In 2002 the Bush administration modified US strategic doctrine from a retaliatory role to permit preemptive nuclear attack; in 2010, the Obama administration made only incremental and miniscule changes to this doctrine, leaving it essentially unchanged. Furthermore, Counterforce doctrine – used by both the US and Russian military – emphasizes the need for preemptive strikes once nuclear war begins. Both sides would be under immense pressure to launch a preemptive nuclear first-strike once military hostilities had commenced, especially if nuclear weapons had already been used on the battlefield. Both the US and Russia each have 400 to 500 launch-ready ballistic missiles armed with a total of at least 1800 strategic nuclear warheads, which can be launched with only a few minutes warning. Both the US and Russian Presidents are accompanied 24/7 by military officers carrying a “nuclear briefcase,” which allows them to transmit the permission order to launch in a matter of seconds. Yet top political leaders and policymakers of both the US and Russia seem to be unaware that their launch-ready nuclear weapons represent a self-destruct mechanism for the human race. For example, in 2010, I was able to publicly question the chief negotiators of the New START treaty, Russian Ambassador Anatoly Antonov and (then) US Assistant Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller, during their joint briefing at the UN (during the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference). I asked them if they were familiar with the recent peer-reviewed studies that predicted the detonation of less than 1% of the explosive power contained in the operational and deployed US and Russian nuclear forces would cause catastrophic changes in the global climate, and that a nuclear war fought with their strategic nuclear weapons would kill most people on Earth. They both answered “no.” More recently, on April 20, 2014, I asked the same question and received the same answer from the US officials sent to brief representatives of the NGOS at the Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee meeting at the UN. None of the US officials at the briefing were aware of the studies. Those present included top officials of the National Security Council. It is frightening that President Obama and his administration appear unaware that the world’s leading scientists have for years predicted that a nuclear war fought with the US and/or Russian strategic nuclear arsenal means the end of human history. Do they not know of the existential threat these arsenals pose to the human race . . . or do they choose to remain silent because this fact doesn’t fit into their official narratives? We hear only about terrorist threats that could destroy a city with an atomic bomb, while the threat of human extinction from nuclear war is never mentioned – even when the US and Russia are each running huge nuclear war games in preparation for a US-Russian war. Even more frightening is the fact that the neocons running US foreign policy believe that the US has “nuclear primacy” over Russia; that is, the US could successfully launch a nuclear sneak attack against Russian (and Chinese) nuclear forces and completely destroy them. This theory was articulated in 2006 in “The Rise of U.S. Nuclear Primacy,” which was published in Foreign Affairs by the Council on Foreign Relations. By concluding that the Russians and Chinese would be unable to retaliate, or if some small part of their forces remained, would not risk a second US attack by retaliating, the article invites nuclear war. Colonel Valery Yarynich (who was in charge of security of the Soviet/Russian nuclear command and control systems for 7 years) asked me to help him write a rebuttal, which was titled “Nuclear Primacy is a Fallacy.” Colonel Yarynich, who was on the Soviet General Staff and did war planning for the USSR, concluded that the “Primacy” article used faulty methodology and erroneous assumptions, thus invalidating its conclusions. My contribution lay in my knowledge of the recently published (in 2006) studies, which predicted even a “successful” nuclear first-strike, which destroyed 100% of the opposing side’s nuclear weapons, would cause the citizens of the side that “won” the nuclear war to perish from nuclear famine, just as would the rest of humanity.

### Solvency

#### Thus, I affirm: A just government of the People’s Republic of China ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike.

#### Recognizing the legal right to strike solidifies workers’ abilities to collectively bargain and sets the floor for future labor rights policies.

Kai Chang, Renmin University, People’s Republic of China and Fang Lee Cooke Monash University, Australia, 2015 – [“Legislating the right to strike in China: Historical development and prospects”, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0022185615573009]//bread

The right to strike is a basic human right in the Covenant on International Human Rights (United Nations Human Rights website: http://www.ohchr.org/ EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx). It is also the basic content of the right to collective disputes in labour disputes. This concerns an important issue in the legislation of the right to strike, that is the position of the right to strike in the legal system of citizens’ rights in China. We argue that human rights or Constitutional rights must be made more specific through further legislation. Otherwise, such rights will only exist in notion without any enforcement possibility. In China, the legislation of strike should be reified in labour laws and not merely exist as a kind of general human rights or constitutional rights in abstract. Although the Constitution in 1975 and 1978 also stipulated ‘the freedom of strike’, the meaning of this kind of constitutional right is symbolic as a declaration rather than implementational. This is because the stipulation was not re-enforced with more specific legal regulations, especially when the Labour Law (enacted in 1995) and other relevant labour regulations did not exist at the time. The legislation of the right to strike is therefore not only a necessity in the provision of a **fuller set of human rights or civil rights** in general, but also a necessity in providing a more **comprehensive set of basic labour rights**, particularly the right to organise and the right to collective bargaining (Kova´cs, 2005). The legislation of the right to strike is an important component of labour legislation. In the system of labour laws, the right to strike is not a single or isolated right, but an integral part of the system of workers’ rights. The right to strike, the right to organise and the right to collective bargaining together form the ‘basic labour rights’. These rights are interconnected and interact with each other to take effect. In particular, the right to organise is a basic right; the right to bargaining is a core right; and the right to strike is to guarantee the right to bargain (Ewing, 2013). As the basic component of labour rights to collective disputes, the right to strike is the **ultimate and the highest means of defence for workers in the dispute between labour and capital**. As a labour right of self-defense for workers, the effect of strike is ‘deterrent’. It exerts pressure and restriction on employers and forces them to deal with labour relations more cautiously. The implementation of the right to strike is closely related to the right to collective bargaining. Under normal circumstances, only when the bargaining fails, or the collective contract fails to perform, or the rights and interests of the workers have been violated or will suffer an encroachment and cannot be resolved by bargaining, can workers exercise the right to strike. The direct purpose of a strike is to sign or implement collective contract or other agreement. The strike is the major means that workers have to restrict employers from refusing to bargain and non-honest bargaining in the course of collective bargaining. In China, without the guarantee of the right to collective disputes, especially the right to strike, **it will be difficult for the system of collective bargaining to be effective**. Therefore, the legislation of the right to strike in China should be combined with the legislation of collective contract. This will avoid ambiguity of the legislation on the right to strike. It will stipulate the nature, effect and position of the right to strike more clearly. The implementation and restriction of the right will also be more easily regulated.

#### Illegal and violent strikes threaten the legitimacy of the CCP, but legal and moderate strikes have the opposite effect

Teresa Wright, Department of Political Science, California State University, Long Beach, 2018 – [“Labour protest in China’s private sector: responses to Chinese communism with capitalist characteristics”, https://doi.org/10.1080/03085147.2018.1492803]//bread

From the perspective of central party-state leaders, private sector worker protests have been positive in the sense that they have served as a ‘fire alarm’ alerting authorities to the most egregious violations of worker rights (Gallagher, 2014, p. 83). Further, especially since 2008, authorities have used financial compensation to address protestors’ concerns. By doing so only in cases of extreme abuses that have resulted in protests of such a magnitude that they capture the attention of higher-level authorities, this has been a relatively low-cost way of managing worker grievances – without having to grant broader rights (such as the right to form independent unions) that the regime views as a potential threat to its power (Gallagher, 2014, p. 88). Further, because party-state leaders at all levels collect data on protest actions and their causes, governing elites have been able to use this information to craft new laws and policies designed to address the underlying causes of worker protests. Similarly, protests have served a positive function for China’s ruling regime because they have allowed aggrieved citizens to ‘let off steam’ without challenging CCP rule. Indeed, when national party-state leaders have stepped in on the side of protestors, protest actually has helped to enhance the legitimacy of the central political system. However, the dynamics of private sector worker protest also have had some negative consequences. For private sector workers, even when protests have been successful, they almost invariably have involved serious conflict, and even violence. For, as noted above, the immediate targets of private sector worker protests – their employers – typically have responded to workers’ collective actions with intransigence, threats and physical force. Indeed, it generally has been only after workers have met with a negative response to their initial request for redress that they have engaged in more public and contentious collective actions designed to attract the attention of outside authorities. This experience often has been scarring for participants, with the result that even when they ultimately have been ‘paid off’ in response to their protests, these gains have come only through a stress-laden process involving much fear, pain and suffering. As noted by Lee (2014, p. 132), even successful protests have left participants feeling embittered, indignant, disappointed and resentful. Thus, as a means for conflict resolution, this ‘fire alarm’ system has had serious collateral damage for those involved. From the perspective of regime authorities, this method of conflict resolution also has had negative effects. For one, the perception that only a ‘big disturbance’ will get the attention of higher-level authorities has encouraged more extreme behaviour on the part of private sector workers. As a result, such actions have become fairly commonplace. Although to date private sector worker protests have remained localized and focused on economic grievances, the more large-scale and intense a protest action becomes, the greater the possibility that it might spin out of the central regime’s control. Further, the actual practice of protest has given private sector workers a feeling of empowerment and efficacy that has made them more likely to engage in collective contentious action in the future, and to demand more than simply the enforcement of their legal rights. Coupled with the psychological and physical wounds inflicted by their prior experiences of protest, this has made for a potentially volatile situation for Chinese party-state authorities.

### Framing

#### The standard is maximizing expected wellbeing

#### Only pain and pleasure are intrinsically good or bad – everything else collapses.

Moen 16 [Ole Martin Moen, Research Fellow in Philosophy at University of Oslo “An Argument for Hedonism” Journal of Value Inquiry (Springer), 50 (2) 2016: 267–281]

Let us start by observing, empirically, that a widely shared judgment about intrinsic value and disvalue is that pleasure is intrinsically valuable and pain is intrinsically disvaluable. On virtually any proposed list of intrinsic values and disvalues (we will look at some of them below), pleasure is included among the intrinsic values and pain among the intrinsic disvalues. This inclusion makes intuitive sense, moreover, for there is something undeniably good about the way pleasure feels and something undeniably bad about the way pain feels, and neither the goodness of pleasure nor the badness of pain seems to be exhausted by the further effects that these experiences might have. “Pleasure” and “pain” are here understood inclusively, as encompassing anything hedonically positive and anything hedonically negative.2 The special value statuses of pleasure and pain are manifested in how we treat these experiences in our everyday reasoning about values. If you tell me that you are heading for the convenience store, I might ask: “What for?” This is a reasonable question, for when you go to the convenience store you usually do so, not merely for the sake of going to the convenience store, but for the sake of achieving something further that you deem to be valuable. You might answer, for example: “To buy soda.” This answer makes sense, for soda is a nice thing and you can get it at the convenience store. I might further inquire, however: “What is buying the soda good for?” This further question can also be a reasonable one, for it need not be obvious why you want the soda. You might answer: “Well, I want it for the pleasure of drinking it.” If I then proceed by asking “But what is the pleasure of drinking the soda good for?” the discussion is likely to reach an awkward end. The reason is that the pleasure is not good for anything further; it is simply that for which going to the convenience store and buying the soda is good.3 As Aristotle observes: “We never ask [a man] what his end is in being pleased, because we assume that pleasure is choice worthy in itself.”4 Presumably, a similar story can be told in the case of pains, for if someone says “This is painful!” we never respond by asking: “And why is that a problem?” We take for granted that if something is painful, we have a sufficient explanation of why it is bad. If we are onto something in our everyday reasoning about values, it seems that pleasure and pain are both places where we reach the end of the line in matters of value.

#### **Extinction is a unique ontological phenomenon that outweighs under every ethical theory.**

Burke et al., Associate Professor of International and Political Studies @ UNSW, Australia, ‘16

(Anthony, Stefanie Fishel is Assistant Professor, Department of Gender and Race Studies at the University of Alabama, Audra Mitchell is CIGI Chair in Global Governance and Ethics at the Balsillie School of International Affairs, Simon Dalby is CIGI Chair in the Political Economy of Climate Change at the Balsillie School of International Affairs, and, Daniel J. Levine is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Alabama, “Planet Politics: Manifesto from the End of IR,” Millennium: Journal of International Studies 1–25)

8. Global ethics must respond to mass extinction. In late 2014, the Worldwide Fund for Nature reported a startling statistic: according to their global study, 52% of species had gone extinct between 1970 and 2010.60 This is not news: for three decades, conservation biologists have been warning of a ‘sixth mass extinction’, which, by definition, could eliminate more than three quarters of currently existing life forms in just a few centuries.61 In other words, it could threaten the practical possibility of the survival of earthly life. Mass extinction is not simply extinction (or death) writ large: it is a qualitatively different phenomena that demands its own ethical categories. It cannot be grasped by aggregating species extinctions, let alone the deaths of individual organisms. Not only does it erase diverse, irreplaceable life forms, their unique histories and open-ended possibilities, but it threatens the ontological conditions of Earthly life.

IR is one of few disciplines that is explicitly devoted to the pursuit of survival, yet it has almost nothing to say in the face of a possible mass extinction event.62 It utterly lacks the conceptual and ethical frameworks necessary to foster diverse, meaningful responses to this phenomenon. As mentioned above, Cold-War era concepts such as ‘nuclear winter’ and ‘omnicide’ gesture towards harms massive in their scale and moral horror. However, they are asymptotic: they imagine nightmares of a severely denuded planet, yet they do not contemplate the comprehensive negation that a mass extinction event entails. In contemporary IR discourses, where it appears at all, extinction is treated as a problem of scientific management and biopolitical control aimed at securing existing human lifestyles.63 Once again, this approach fails to recognise the reality of extinction, which is a matter of being and nonbeing, not one of life and death processes.

Confronting the enormity of a possible mass extinction event requires a total overhaul of human perceptions of what is at stake in the disruption of the conditions of Earthly life. The question of what is ‘lost’ in extinction has, since the inception of the concept of ‘conservation’, been addressed in terms of financial cost and economic liabilities.64 Beyond reducing life to forms to capital, currencies and financial instruments, the dominant neoliberal political economy of conservation imposes a homogenising, Western secular worldview on a planetary phenomenon. Yet the enormity, complexity, and scale of mass extinction is so huge that humans need to draw on every possible resource in order to find ways of responding. This means that they need to mobilise multiple worldviews and lifeways – including those emerging from indigenous and marginalised cosmologies. Above all, it is crucial and urgent to realise that extinction is a matter of global ethics. It is not simply an issue of management or security, or even of particular visions of the good life. Instead, it is about staking a claim as to the goodness of life itself. If it does not fit within the existing parameters of global ethics, then it is these boundaries that need to change.

9. An Earth-worldly politics. Humans are worldly – that is, we are fundamentally worldforming and embedded in multiple worlds that traverse the Earth. However, the Earth is not ‘our’ world, as the grand theories of IR, and some accounts of the Anthropocene have it – an object and possession to be appropriated, circumnavigated, instrumentalised and englobed.65 Rather, it is a complex of worlds that we share, co-constitute, create, destroy and inhabit with countless other life forms and beings.

The formation of the Anthropocene reflects a particular type of worlding, one in which the Earth is treated as raw material for the creation of a world tailored to human needs. Heidegger famously framed ‘earth’ and ‘world’ as two countervailing, conflicting forces that constrain and shape one another. We contend that existing political, economic and social conditions have pushed human worlding so far to one extreme that it has become almost entirely detached from the conditions of the Earth. Planet Politics calls, instead, for a mode of worlding that is responsive to, and grounded in, the Earth. One of these ways of being Earth-worldly is to embrace the condition of being entangled. We can interpret this term in the way that Heidegger66 did, as the condition of being mired in everyday human concerns, worries, and anxiety, to prolong existence. But, in contrast, we can and should reframe it as authors like Karen Barad67 and Donna Haraway68 have done. To them and many others, ‘entanglement’ is a radical, indeed fundamental condition of being-with, or, as Jean-Luc Nancy puts it, ‘being singular plural’.69 This means that no being is truly autonomous or separate, whether at the scale of international politics or of quantum physics. World itself is singular plural: what humans tend to refer to as ‘the’ world is actually a multiplicity of worlds at various scales that intersect, overlap, conflict, emerge as they surge across the Earth. World emerges from the poetics of existence, the collision of energy and matter, the tumult of agencies, the fusion and diffusion of bonds.

Worlds erupt from, and consist in, the intersection of diverse forms of being – material and intangible, organic and inorganic, ‘living’ and ‘nonliving’. Because of the tumultuousness of the Earth with which they are entangled, ‘worlds’ are not static, rigid or permanent. They are permeable and fluid. They can be created, modified – and, of course, destroyed. Concepts of violence, harm and (in)security that focus only on humans ignore at their peril the destruction and severance of worlds,70 which undermines the conditions of plurality that enables life on Earth to thrive.

#### Util is lexically prior – in order for agents to be able to engage in complex moral deliberations they must first be safe and not in danger of death – that means materially reducing violence outweighs.

#### Aff gets 1AR theory – otherwise the neg can be infinitely abusive and there’s no way to check back. 1AR theory is drop the debater, competing interps, and the highest layer of the round – the 1ARs too short to be able to rectify abuse and adequately cover substance. No RVI or 2N theory because you have 6 minutes to go for them whereas I only have a 3 minute 2AR to respond so I get crushed on time skew.