

Obama's Geopolitical China 'Pivot': The Pentagon Targets China

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Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the nominal end of the Cold War some twenty years back, rather than reducing the size of its mammoth defense spending, the US Congress and all US Presidents have enormously expanded spending for new weapons systems, increased permanent military bases around the world and expansion of NATO not only to former Warsaw Pact countries on Russia's immediate periphery; it also has expanded NATO and US military presence deep into Asia on the perimeters of China through its conduct of the Afghan war and related campaigns.

Part I The Pentagon Targets China

On the basis of simple dollar outlays for military spending, the US Pentagon combined budget, leaving aside the huge budgets for such national security and defense-related agencies of US Government as the Department of Energy and US Treasury and other agencies, the US Department of Defense spent some \$739 billion in 2011 on its military requirements. Were all other spending that is tied to US defense and national security included, the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies estimates an annual military spending of over \$1 trillion by the United States. That is an amount greater than the total defense-related spending of the next 42 nations combined, and more than the Gross Domestic Product of most nations.

China officially spent barely 10% of the US outlay on its defense, some \$90 billions, or, if certain defense-related arms import and other costs are included, perhaps \$111 billion a year. Even if the Chinese authorities do not publish complete data on such sensitive areas, it is clear China spends a mere fraction of the USA and is starting from a military-technology base far behind the USA.

China today, because of its dynamic economic growth and its determination to pursue sovereign Chinese national interests, merely because China exists, is becoming the Pentagon new "enemy image," now replacing the earlier "enemy image" of Islam used after September 2001 by the Bush-Cheney Administration to justify the Pentagon's global power pursuit, or that of Soviet Communism during the Cold War. The new US military posture against China has nothing to do with any aggressive threat from the side of China. The Pentagon has decided to escalate its aggressive military posture to China merely because China has become a strong vibrant independent pole in world economics and geopolitics. Only vassal states need apply to Washington's globalized world.

Obama Doctrine: China is the new 'enemy image'

After almost two decades of neglect of its interests in East Asia, in 2011, the Obama

Administration announced that the US would make “a strategic pivot” in its foreign policy to focus its military and political attention on the Asia-Pacific, particularly Southeast Asia, that is, China. The term “strategic pivot” is a page out of the classic textbook from the father of British geopolitics, Sir Halford Mackinder, who spoke at various times of Russia and later China as “pivot powers” whose geographical and geopolitical position posed unique challenges to Anglo-Saxon and after 1945, to American hegemony.

During the final months of 2011 the Obama Administration clearly defined a new public military threat doctrine for US military readiness in the wake of the US military failures in Iraq and Afghanistan. During a Presidential trip to the Far East, while in Australia, the US President unveiled what is being termed the Obama Doctrine.[1]

Obama told the Australians then:

With most of the world’s nuclear power and some half of humanity, Asia will largely define whether the century ahead will be marked by conflict or cooperation...As President, I have, therefore, made a deliberate and strategic decision — as a Pacific nation, the United States will play a larger and long-term role in shaping this region and its future...I have directed my national security team to make our presence and mission in the Asia Pacific a top priority...As we plan and budget for the future, we will allocate the resources necessary to maintain our strong military presence in this region. We will preserve our unique ability to project power and deter threats to peace...Our enduring interests in the region demand our enduring presence in the region.

The United States is a Pacific power, and we are here to stay. Indeed, we are already modernizing America’s defense posture across the Asia Pacific. It will be more broadly distributed — maintaining our strong presence in Japan and the Korean Peninsula, while enhancing our presence in Southeast Asia. Our posture will be more flexible — with new capabilities to ensure that our forces can operate freely .. I believe we can address shared challenges, such as proliferation and maritime security, including cooperation in the South China Sea.[2]

The centerpiece of Obama’s visit was the announcement that at least 2,500 elite US Marines will be stationed in Darwin in Australia’s Northern Territory. In addition, in a series of significant parallel agreements, discussions with Washington were underway to fly long-range American surveillance drones from the remote Cocos Islands — an Australian territory in the Indian Ocean. Also the US will gain greater use of Australian Air Force bases for American aircraft and increased ship and submarine visits to the Indian Ocean through a naval base outside Perth, on the country’s west coast.

The Pentagon’s target is China.

To make the point clear to European members of NATO, in remarks to fellow NATO members in Washington in July 2012, Phillip Hammond, the UK Secretary of State for Defense declared explicitly that the new US defense shift to the Asia-Pacific region was aimed squarely at China. Hammond said that, “the rising strategic importance of the Asia-Pacific region requires all countries, but particularly the United States, to reflect in their strategic posture the emergence of China as a global power. Far from being concerned about the tilt to Asia-Pacific, the European NATO powers should welcome the fact that the US is willing to engage in this new strategic challenge on behalf of the alliance.” [3]

As with many of its operations, the Pentagon deployment is far deeper than the relatively small number of 2,500 new US soldiers might suggest.

In August 2011 the Pentagon presented its annual report on China's military. It stated that China had closed key technological gaps. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for East Asia, Michael Schiffer, said that the pace and scope of China's military investments had "allowed China to pursue capabilities that we believe are potentially destabilizing to regional military balances, increase the risk of misunderstanding and miscalculation and may contribute to regional tensions and anxieties." [4] He cited Chinese refurbishing of a Soviet-era aircraft carrier and China's development of its J20 Stealth Fighter as indications of the new capability requiring a more active US military response. Schiffer also cited China's space and cyber operations, saying it was "developing a multi-dimensional program to improve its capabilities to limit or prevent the use of space-based assets by adversaries during times of crisis or conflict." [5]

Part II: Pentagon's 'Air-Sea Battle'

The Pentagon strategy to defeat China in a coming war, details of which have filtered into the US press, is called "Air-Sea Battle." This calls for an aggressive coordinated US attack. US stealth bombers and submarines would knock out China's long-range surveillance radar and precision missile systems deep inside the country. This initial "blinding campaign" would be followed by a larger air and naval assault on China itself.[6] Crucial to the advanced pentagon strategy, deployment of which has already quietly begun, is US military navy and air presence in Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, Vietnam and across the South China Sea and Indian Ocean. Australian troop and naval deployment is aimed at accessing the strategic Chinese South China Sea as well as the Indian Ocean. The stated motive is to "protect freedom of navigation" in the Malacca Straits and the South China Sea. In reality it is to be positioned to cut China's strategic oil routes in event of full conflict.

Air-Sea Battle's goal is to help US forces withstand an initial Chinese assault and counterattack to destroy sophisticated Chinese radar and missile systems built to keep US ships away from China's coastline.[7]

US 'Air-Sea Battle' against China

In addition to the stationing of the US Marines in the north of Australia, Washington plans to fly long-range American surveillance drones from the remote Cocos Islands — an Australian territory in the strategically vital Indian Ocean. Also it will have use of Australian Air Force bases for American military aircraft and increased ship and submarine visits to the Indian Ocean through a naval base outside Perth, on Australia's west coast.[8]

The architect of the Pentagon anti-China strategy of Air-Sea battle is Andrew Marshall, the man who has shaped Pentagon advanced warfare strategy for more than 40 years and among whose pupils were Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld. [9] Since the 1980s Marshall has been a promoter of an idea first posited in 1982 by Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, then chief of the Soviet general staff, called RMA, or 'Revolution in Military Affairs.' Marshall, today at the ripe age of 91, still holds his desk and evidently very much influence inside the Pentagon.

The best definition of RMA was the one provided by Marshall himself: "A Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) is a major change in the nature of warfare brought about by the

innovative application of new technologies which, combined with dramatic changes in military doctrine and operational and organizational concepts, fundamentally alters the character and conduct of military operations.” [10]

It was also Andrew Marshall who convinced US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and his successor Robert Gates to deploy the Ballistic Missile “defense” Shield in Poland, the Czech Republic, Turkey and Japan as a strategy to minimize any potential nuclear threat from Russia and, in the case of Japan’s BMD, any potential nuclear threat from China.

PART III: ‘String of Pearls’ Strategy of Pentagon

In January 2005, Andrew Marshall issued a classified internal report to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld titled “Energy Futures in Asia.” The Marshall report, which was leaked in full to a Washington newspaper, invented the term “string of pearls” strategy to describe what it called the growing Chinese military threat to “US strategic interests” in the Asian space.[11]

The internal Pentagon report claimed that “China is building strategic relationships along the sea lanes from the Middle East to the South China Sea in ways that suggest defensive and offensive positioning to protect China’s energy interests, but also to serve broad security objectives.”

In the Pentagon Andrew Marshall report, the term China’s “String of Pearls” Strategy was used for the first time. It is a Pentagon term and not a Chinese term.

The report stated that China was adopting a “string of pearls” strategy of bases and diplomatic ties stretching from the Middle East to southern China that includes a new naval base under construction at the Pakistani port of Gwadar. It claimed that “Beijing already has set up electronic eavesdropping posts at Gwadar in the country’s southwest corner, the part nearest the Persian Gulf. The post is monitoring ship traffic through the Strait of Hormuz and the Arabian Sea.” [12]

The Marshall internal report went on to warn of other “pearls” in the sea-lane strategy of China:

- Bangladesh: China is strengthening its ties to the government and building a container port facility at Chittagong. The Chinese are “seeking much more extensive naval and commercial access” in Bangladesh.
- Burma: China has developed close ties to the military regime in Rangoon and turned a nation wary of China into a “satellite” of Beijing close to the Strait of Malacca, through which 80 percent of China’s imported oil passes. China is building naval bases in Burma and has electronic intelligence gathering facilities on islands in the Bay of Bengal and near the Strait of Malacca. Beijing also supplied Burma with “billions of dollars in military assistance to support a de facto military alliance,” the report said.
- Cambodia: China signed a military agreement in November 2003 to provide training and equipment. Cambodia is helping Beijing build a railway line from southern China to the sea.
- South China Sea: Chinese activities in the region are less about territorial claims than

“protecting or denying the transit of tankers through the South China Sea,” the report said. China also is building up its military forces in the region to be able to “project air and sea power” from the mainland and Hainan Island. China recently upgraded a military airstrip on Woody Island and increased its presence through oil drilling platforms and ocean survey ships.

- Thailand: China is considering funding construction of a \$20 billion canal across the Kra Isthmus that would allow ships to bypass the Strait of Malacca. The canal project would give China port facilities, warehouses and other infrastructure in Thailand aimed at enhancing Chinese influence in the region, the report said... The U.S. military’s Southern Command produced a similar classified report in the late 1990s that warned that China was seeking to use commercial port facilities around the world to control strategic “chokepoints.” [13]

Breaking the String of Pearls

Significant Pentagon and US actions since that 2005 report have been aimed to counter China’s attempts to defend its energy security via that “String of Pearls.” The US interventions since 2007 into Burma/Myanmar have had two phases.

The first was the so-called Saffron Revolution, a US State Department and CIA-backed destabilization in 2007 aimed at putting the international spotlight on the Myanmar military dictatorship’s human rights practices. The aim was to further isolate the strategically located country internationally from all economic relations, aside from China. The background to the US actions was China’s construction of oil and gas pipelines from Kunming in China’s southwest Yunnan Province, across the old Burma Road across Myanmar to the Bay of Bengal across from India and Bangladesh in the northern Indian Ocean.

Forcing Burma’s military leaders into tighter dependency on China was one of the factors triggering the decision of the Myanmar military to open up economically to the West. They declared that the tightening of US economic sanctions had done the country great harm and President Thein Sein made his major liberalization opening, as well as allowing US-backed dissident, Aung San Suu Kyi, to be free and to run for elective office with her party, in return for promises from US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton of US investment in the country and possible easing of US economic sanctions. [14]

The US corporations approaching Burma are hand-picked by Washington to introduce the most destructive “free market” reforms that will open Myanmar to instability. The United States will not allow investment in entities owned by Myanmar’s armed forces or its Ministry of Defense. It also is able to place sanctions on “those who undermine the reform process, engage in human rights abuses, contribute to ethnic conflict or participate in military trade with North Korea.” The United States will block businesses or individuals from making transactions with any “specially designated nationals” or businesses that they control — allowing Washington, for example, to stop money from flowing to groups “disrupting the reform process.” It’s the classic “carrot and stick” approach, dangling the carrot of untold riches if Burma opens its economy to US corporations and punishing those who try to resist the takeover of the country’s prize assets. Oil and gas, vital to China, will be a special target of US intervention. American companies and people will be allowed to invest in the state-owned Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise.[15]

Obama also created a new power for the government to impose “blocking sanctions” on any individual threatening peace in Myanmar. Businesses with more than \$500,000 in investment in the country will need to file an annual report with the State Department, with details on workers’ rights, land acquisitions and any payments of more than \$10,000 to government entities, including Myanmar’s state-owned enterprises.

American companies and people will be allowed to invest in the state-owned Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, but any investors will need to notify the State Department within 60 days.

As well, US “human rights” NGOs, many closely associated with or believed to be associated with US State Department geopolitical designs, including Freedom House, Human Rights Watch, Institute for Asian Democracy, Open Society Foundations, Physicians for Human Rights, U.S. Campaign for Burma, United to End Genocide— will now be allowed to operate inside Myanmar according to a decision by State Secretary Clinton in April 2012.[16]

Thailand, another key in China’s defensive String of Pearl Strategy has also been subject of intense destabilization over the past several years. Now with the sister of a corrupt former Prime Minister in office, US-Thai relations have significantly improved.

After months of bloody clashes, the US-backed billionaire, Former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra , managed to buy the way to put his sister, Yingluck Shinawatra in as Prime Minister, with him reportedly pulling the policy strings from abroad. Thaksin himself was enjoying comfortable status in the US as of this writing, in summer 2012.

US relations with Thaksin’s sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, are moving in direct fulfillment of the Obama “strategic pivot” to focus on the “China threat.” In June 2012, General Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, after returning from a visit this month to Thailand, the Philippines and Singapore stated: “We want to be out there partnered with nations and have a rotational presence that would allow us to build up common capabilities for common interests.” This is precisely key beads in what the Pentagon calls the String of Pearls.

The Pentagon is now quietly negotiating to return to bases abandoned after the Vietnam War. It is negotiating with the Thai government to create a new “disaster relief” hub at the Royal Thai Navy Air Field at U-Tapao, 90 miles south of Bangkok.

The US military built the two mile long runway there, one of Asia’s longest, in the 1960s as a major staging and refueling base during the Vietnam War.

The Pentagon is also working to secure more rights to US Navy visits to Thai ports and joint surveillance flights to monitor trade routes and military movements. The US Navy will soon base four of its newest warships — Littoral Combat Ships — in Singapore and would rotate them periodically to Thailand and other southeast Asian countries. The Navy is pursuing options to conduct joint airborne surveillance missions from Thailand.[17]

In addition, Deputy Defense Secretary Ashton Carter went to Thailand in July 2012 and the Thai government has invited Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, who met with the Thai minister of defense at a conference in Singapore in June.[18]

In 2014, the US Navy is scheduled to begin deploying new P-8A Poseidon reconnaissance and anti-submarine aircraft to the Pacific, replacing the P-3C Orion surveillance planes. The

Navy is also preparing to deploy new high-altitude surveillance drones to the Asia-Pacific region around the same time. [19]

PART IV: India-US Defense 'Look East Policy'

US Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta was in India in June of this year where he proclaimed that defence cooperation with India is the lynchpin of US security strategy in Asia. He pledged to help develop India's military capabilities and to engage with India in joint production of defence "articles" of high technology. Panetta was the fifth Obama Cabinet secretary to visit India this year. The message that they have all brought is that, for the US, India will be the major relationship of the 21st century. The reason is China's emergence. [20]

Several years ago during the Bush Administration, Washington made a major move to lock India in as a military ally of the US against the emerging Chinese presence in Asia. India calls it India's "Look East Policy." In reality, despite all claims to the contrary, it is a "look at China" military policy.

In comments in August 2012, Deputy Secretary of defense Ashton Carter stated, "India is also key part of our rebalance to the Asia-Pacific, and, we believe, to the broader security and prosperity of the 21st century. The US-India relationship is global in scope, like the reach and influence of both countries." [21] In 2011, the US military conducted more than 50 significant military activities with India.

Carter continued in remarks following a trip to New Delhi, "Our security interests converge: on maritime security, across the Indian Ocean region; in Afghanistan, where India has done so much for economic development and the Afghan security forces; and on broader regional issues, where we share long-term interests. I went to India at the request of Secretary Panetta and with a high-level delegation of US technical and policy experts." [22]

Indian Ocean

The Pentagon "String of pearls" strategy against China in effect is not one of beautiful pearls, but a hangman's noose around the perimeter of China, designed in the event of major conflict to completely cut China off from its access to vital raw materials, most especially oil from the Persian Gulf and Africa.

Former Pentagon adviser Robert D. Kaplan, now with Stratfor, has noted that the Indian Ocean is becoming the world's "strategic center of gravity" and who controls that center, controls Eurasia, including China. The Ocean is the vital waterway passage for energy and trade flows between the Middle East and China and Far Eastern countries. More strategically, it is the heart of a developing south-south economic axis between China and Africa and Latin America.

Since 1997 trade between China and Africa has risen more than twenty-fold and trade with Latin America, including Brazil, has risen fourteen fold in only ten years. This dynamic, if allowed to continue, will eclipse the economic size of the European Union as well as the declining North American industrial economies in less than a decade. That is a development that Washington circles and Wall Street are determined to prevent at all costs.

Straddled by the Islamic Arch—which stretches from Somalia to Indonesia, passing through the countries of the Gulf and Central Asia— the region surrounding the Indian Ocean has

certainly become the world's new strategic center of gravity.[23]

No rival economic bloc can be allowed to challenge American hegemony. Former Obama geopolitical adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, a student of Mackinder geopolitics and still today along with Henry Kissinger one of the most influential persons in the US power establishment, summed up the position as seen from Washington in his 1997 book, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*:

It is imperative that no Eurasian challenger emerges, capable of dominating Eurasia and thus of also challenging America. The formulation of a comprehensive and integrated Eurasian geo-strategy is therefore the purpose of this book. [24]

For America, the chief geopolitical prize is Eurasia.... America's global primacy is directly dependent on how long and how effectively its preponderance on the Eurasian continent is sustained. [25]

In that context, how America 'manages' Eurasia is critical. Eurasia is the globe's largest continent and is geopolitically axial. A power that dominates Eurasia would control two of the world's three most advanced and economically productive regions. A mere glance at the map also suggests that control over Eurasia would almost automatically entail Africa's subordination, rendering the Western Hemisphere and Oceania geopolitically peripheral to the world's central continent. About 75 per cent of the world's people live in Eurasia, and most of the world's physical wealth is there as well, both in its enterprises and underneath its soil. Eurasia accounts for 60 per cent of the world's GNP and about three-fourths of the world's known energy resources. [26]

The Indian Ocean is crowned by what some call an Islamic Arch of countries stretching from East Africa to Indonesia by way of the Persian Gulf countries and Central Asia. The emergence of China and other much smaller Asian powers over the past two decades since the end of the Cold war has challenged US hegemony over the Indian Ocean for the first time since the beginning of the Cold War. Especially in the past years as American economic influence has precipitously declined globally and that of China has risen spectacularly, the Pentagon has begun to rethink its strategic presence in the Indian Ocean. The Obama 'Asian Pivot' is centered on asserting decisive Pentagon control over the sea lanes of the Indian Ocean and the waters of the South China Sea.

The US military base at Okinawa, Japan is being rebuilt as a major center to project US military power towards China. As of 2010 there were over 35,000 US military personnel stationed in Japan and another 5,500 American civilians employed there by the United States Department of Defense. The United States Seventh Fleet is based in Yokosuka. The 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force in Okinawa. 130 USAF fighters are stationed in the Misawa Air Base and Kadena Air Base.

The Japanese government in 2011 began an armament program designed to counter the perceived growing Chinese threat. The Japanese command has urged their leaders to petition the United States to allow the sale of F-22A Raptor fighter jets, currently illegal under U.S law. South Korean and American military have deepened their strategic alliance and over 45,000 American soldiers are now stationed in South Korea. The South Koreans and Americans claim this is due to the North Korean military's modernization. China and North Korea denounce it as needlessly provocative.[27]

Under the cover of the US war on Terrorism, the US has developed major military agreements with the Philippines as well as with Indonesia's army.

The military base on Diego Garcia is the lynchpin of US control over the Indian Ocean. In 1971 the US military depopulated the citizens of Diego Garcia to build a major military installation there to carry out missions against Iraq and Afghanistan.

China has two Achilles heels—the Straits of Hormuz at the mouth of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Malacca near Singapore. Some 20% of China oil passes through the Straits of Hormuz. And some 80% of Chinese oil imports pass through the Strait of Malacca as well as major freight trade.

To prevent China from emerging successfully as the major economic competitor of the United States in the world, Washington launched the so-called Arab Spring in late 2010. While the aspirations of millions of ordinary Arab citizens in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and elsewhere for freedom and democracy was real, they were in effect used as unwitting cannon fodder to unleash a US strategy of chaos and intra-islamic wars and conflicts across the entire oil-rich Islamic world from Libya in North Africa across to Syria and ultimately Iran in the Middle East. [28]

The US strategy within the Islamic Arch countries straddling the Indian Ocean is, as Mohamed Hassan, a strategic analyst put it thus:

The US is...seeking to control these resources to prevent them reaching China. This was a major objective of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but these have turned into a fiasco. The US destroyed these countries in order to set up governments there which would be docile, but they have failed. The icing on the cake is that the new Iraqi and Afghan government trade with China! Beijing has therefore not needed to spend billions of dollars on an illegal war in order to get its hands on Iraq's black gold: Chinese companies simply bought up oil concessions at auction totally within the rules.

[T]he USA's...strategy has failed all along the line. There is nevertheless one option still open to the US: maintaining chaos in order to prevent these countries from attaining stability for the benefit of China. This means continuing the war in Iraq and Afghanistan and extending it to countries such as Iran, Yemen or Somalia.[29]

PART V: South China Sea

The completion of the Pentagon "String of Pearls" hangman's noose around China to cut off vital energy and other imports in event of war by 2012 was centered around the increased US manipulation of events in the South China Sea. The Ministry of Geological Resources and Mining of the People's Republic of China estimated that the South China Sea may contain 18 billion tons of crude oil (compared to Kuwait with 13 billion tons). The most optimistic estimate suggested that potential oil resources (not proved reserves) of the Spratly and Paracel Islands in the South China Sea could be as high as 105 billion barrels of oil, and that the total for the South China Sea could be as high as 213 billion barrels. [30]

The presence of such vast energy reserves has not surprisingly become a major energy security issue for China. Washington has made a calculated intervention in the past several years to sabotage those Chinese interests, using especially Vietnam as a wedge against Chinese oil exploration there. In July 2012 the National Assembly of Vietnam passed a law

demarcating Vietnamese sea borders to include the Spratly and Paracel islands. US influence in Vietnam since the country opened to economic liberalization has become decisive.

In 2011 the US military began cooperation with Vietnam, including joint “peaceful” military exercises. Washington has backed both The Philippines and Vietnam in their territorial claims over Chinese-claimed territories in the South China Sea, emboldening those small countries not to seek a diplomatic resolution.[31]

In 2010 US and UK oil majors entered the bidding for exploration in the South China Sea. The bid by Chevron and BP added to the presence of US-based Anadarko Petroleum Corporation in the region. That move is essential to give Washington the pretext to “defend us oil interests” in the area. [32]

In April 2012, the Philippine warship Gregorio del Pilar was involved in a standoff with two Chinese surveillance vessels in the Scarborough Shoal, an area claimed by both nations. The Philippine navy had been trying to arrest Chinese fishermen who were allegedly taking government-protected marine species from the area, but the surveillance boats prevented them. On April 14, 2012, U.S. and the Philippines held their yearly exercises in Palawan, Philippines. On May 7, 2012, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Fu Ying called a meeting with Alex Chua, Charge D’affaires of the Philippine Embassy in China, to make a serious representation over the incident at the Scarborough Shoal.

From South Korea to Philippines to Vietnam, the Pentagon and US State Department is fanning the clash over rights to the South China Sea to stealthily insert US military presence there to “defend” Vietnamese, Japanese, Korean or Philippine interests. The military hangman’s noose around China is being slowly drawn tighter.

While China’s access to vast resources of offshore conventional oil and gas were being restricted, Washington was actively trying to lure China into massive pursuit of exploitation of shale gas inside China. The reasons had nothing to do with US goodwill towards China. It was in fact another major weapon in the destruction of China, now through a form of environmental warfare.

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