

Pivot Insanity: Why is Obama Goaded China?

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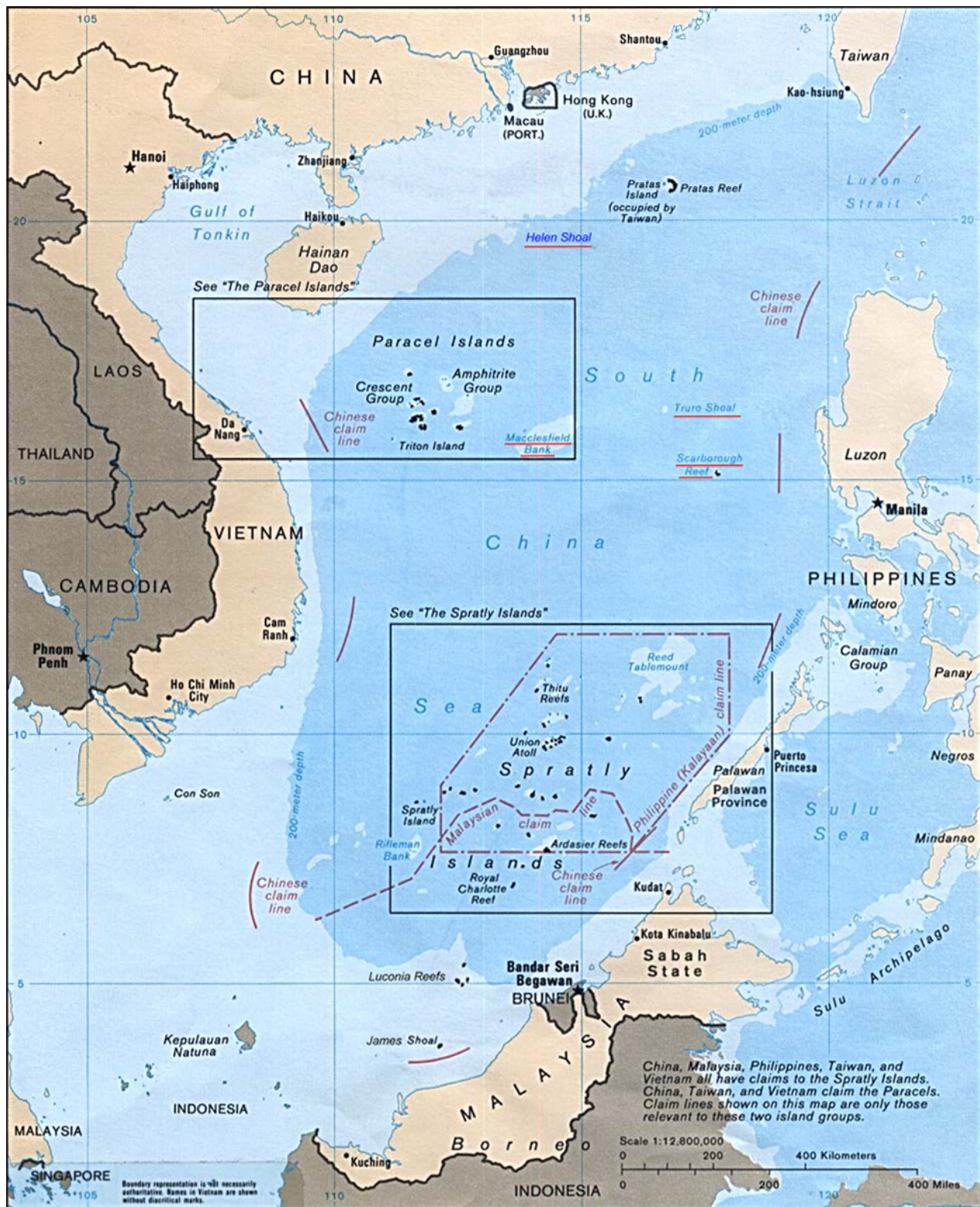
Region: [Asia](#), [USA](#)

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US Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter is willing to risk a war with China in order to defend "freedom of navigation" in the South China Sea. Speaking in Honolulu, Hawaii on Wednesday, Carter issued his "most forceful" warning yet, demanding "an immediate and lasting halt to land reclamation" by China in the disputed Spratly Islands.

Carter said: "There should be no mistake: The United States will fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows, as we do all around the world." He also added that the United States intended to remain "the principal security power in the Asia-Pacific for decades to come."

In order to show Chinese leaders "who's the boss", Carter has threatened to deploy US warships and surveillance aircraft to within twelve miles of the islands that China claims are within their territorial waters. Not surprisingly, the US is challenging China under the provisions of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, a document the US has stubbornly refused to ratify. But that's neither here nor there for the bellicose Carter whose insatiable appetite for confrontation makes him the most reckless Sec-Def since Donald Rumsfeld.



So what's this really all about? Why does Washington care so much about a couple hundred yards of sand piled up on reefs reefs in the South China Sea? What danger does that pose to US national security? And, haven't Vietnam, Taiwan and the Philippines all engaged in similar "land reclamation" activities without raising hackles in DC?

Of course, they have. The whole thing is a joke. Just like Carter's claim that he's defending the lofty principal of "freedom of navigation" is a joke. China has never blocked shipping lanes or seized boats sailing in international waters. Never. The same cannot be said of the United States that just recently blocked an Iranian ship loaded with humanitarian relief-food, water and critical medical supplies-headed to starving refugees in Yemen. Of

course, when the US does it, it's okay.

The point is, Washington doesn't give a hoot about the Spratly Islands; it's just a pretext to slap China around and show them who's running the show in their own backyard. Carter even admits as much in his statement above when he says that the US plans to be "the principal security power in the Asia-Pacific for decades to come." China knows what that means. It means "This is our planet, so you'd better shape up or you're going to find yourself in a world of hurt." That's exactly what it means.

So let's cut to the chase and try to explain what's really going on, because pretty soon no one is going to be talking about Ukraine, Syria or Yemen because all eyes are going to be focused on China where our madhatter Secretary of Defense is trying to start a third world war.

Here's the scoop: Washington has abandoned its China policy of "containment" and moved on to Plan B: Isolation, intimidation and confrontation. In my opinion, this is why the powerbrokers behind Obama dumped Hagel. Hagel just wasn't hawkish enough for the job. They wanted a died-in-the-wool, warmongering neocon, like Carter, who is, quite likely, the most dangerous man in the world.

Carter's assignment is to implement the belligerent new policy of incitement and conflict. His actions will prove to the skeptics that Washington is no longer interested in integrating China into the US-led system. Rather, China has become a the biggest threat to Washington's plan to pivot to Asia. And, just to remind readers how important the pivot is to America's future, here's an Obama quote I lifted up from Tom Engelhardt's latest titled "Superpower in Distress":

"After a decade in which we fought two wars that cost us dearly, in blood and treasure, the United States is turning our attention to the vast potential of the Asia Pacific region....As we end today's wars, I have directed my national security team to make our presence and mission in the Asia Pacific a top priority."

The so called pivot is Washington's "top priority", which means that China's unprecedented ascendancy must be slowed and its regional influence curtailed. Thus, the dust up over the Spratly Islands will be used in the same way the US has used other incidents, that is, by demonizing China's leaders in the media, by assembling a coalition that will publicly oppose China's activities, by implementing harsh economic sanctions, by launching asymmetrical attacks on China's currency and financial markets, by excluding China from critical trade agreements, and by inciting social unrest (color-coded revolution) through the support of dissidents living in China. These are the all-too-familiar signs of US meddling directed at "emerging rivals" who threaten US global hegemony. China now finds itself at the top of the list.

US powerbrokers know that bullying China involves significant risks for themselves and the world. Even so, they have decided to pursue this new policy and force a confrontation. Why? Why would they embark on a strategy so fraught with danger?

The answer is: They don't see any way around it. They've tried containment and it hasn't worked. China's growing like crazy and its regional influence threatens to leave the US on the outside looking in. Carter even admitted as much in a recent speech he gave at the McCain Institute at Arizona State University. He said: "We already see countries in the

region trying to carve up these markets...forging many separate trade agreements in recent years, some based on pressure and special arrangements.... Agreements that.....leave us on the sidelines. That risks America's access to these growing markets. We must all decide if we are going to let that happen. If we're going to help boost our exports and our economy...and cement our influence and leadership in the fastest-growing region in the world; or if, instead, we're going to take ourselves out of the game."

See? It's all about markets. It's all about money. Here's more from Carter's speech: (The) "Asia-Pacific...is the defining region for our nation's future"... "Half of humanity will live there by 2050" and that "more than half of the global middle class and its accompanying consumption will come from that region."...."There are already more than 525 million middle class consumers in Asia, and we expect there to be 3.2 billion in the region by 2030...President Obama and I want to ensure that... businesses can successfully compete for all these potential customers.Over the next century, no region will matter more... for American prosperity."

This is why the Obama administration is making a general nuisance of itself in the South China Sea. It's so the big US mega-corporations will have new customers for their IPADs and toaster ovens.

For that, they are willing to risk a nuclear war.

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