

## The PRC - US Tension

Notes 02/02/2017

Enter the DF-41 ICBM. The technical reasons why Russia does not see the DF-41 as a threat are simple - and may unveil the rationale behind the deployment.

Beijing has been able to deploy its predecessor, the DF-31 - which is able to target Russia - for more than a decade now. And a simple analysis of distance and trajectory reveals that Heilongjiang province is the optimum location for the DF-41 to target the whole of the continental US.

It is virtually guaranteed that an official Chinese confirmation of the DF-41 deployment will accelerate a nuclear arms race, involving all players from Russia, China and the US to India and Pakistan and even North Korea.

**>> A Chinese editorial the day after US President Donald Trump's inauguration took talks of a trade war even further, speculating on the possibility of real war between the two.<<**

Will there be a trade war between the two largest trading powers? Many are saying a showdown with China is unavoidable and imminent.

Trump showed no inclination to back down in his inauguration speech January 20, Zhang said, noting the new president's promise that every decision on trade, taxes, immigration and foreign policy will be made to benefit American workers and American families.

Zhang speculated on what that might mean for Chinese businesses. "If there is a hike in tariffs across the board, then Chinese companies will lose a lot of orders for the same goods they have been shipping to the US market for the last decade," he said. But they might gain an opportunity to offload products that aren't profitable or that are made with environmentally costly materials.

"Officials with China's National Development and Reform Commission may thank the Trump administration if it can help China offload obsolete, unsustainable industrial capacity quicker," he said.

Meanwhile, Chinese business could take the opportunity to seek tax breaks to help improve their competitiveness, and the country's savings could be used to upgrade its industry.

But what will be the reaction, he mused? "No war can be one-sided. The Chinese government will adopt counter-measures, and local companies will find more import substitution opportunities in the selected industries," he guessed.

"And if a real war is waged alongside a trade war, that will only create more defense orders for local companies."

Zhang went on to detail the costs the US would bear as war-maker, saying protectionism would hurt the US economy and would turn away China's 1.3 billion potential customers. "What real businesspeople should do is negotiate to strike the best deal they can. Indeed, since Trump was quoted as having said everything is negotiable, what's the point of a trade war?"

**>> China steps up preparedness for possible military conflict with U.S.<<**

Donald Trump's election as US president has increased the risk of hostilities breaking out, according to Chinese analysts.

26 01 2017

China is stepping up preparedness for a possible military conflict with the US as the Donald Trump presidency has increased the risk of hostilities breaking out, state media and military observers said.

Beijing is bracing itself for a possible deterioration in Sino-US ties, with a particular emphasis on maritime security.

The People's Liberation Army said in a commentary on its official website last Friday, the day of Trump's inauguration, that the chances of war have become "more real" amid a more complex security situation in Asia Pacific.

The commentary written by an official at the national defence mobilisation department in the Central Military Commission said

the call for a US rebalancing of its strategy in Asia, military deployments in the East and South China Seas and the instillation of a missile defence system in South Korea were hot spots getting closer to ignition.

**>> A war within the president's term' or 'war breaking out tonight' are not just slogans, they are becoming a practical reality.<<**

The official People's Daily said in another commentary that China's military would conduct exercises on the high seas regardless of foreign provocations. China's sole aircraft carrier Liaoning passed through the narrow Taiwan Strait last month.

The commentary referred to remarks by the US secretary of state Rex Tillerson that the US should stop China's access to artificial islands it has built in disputed areas of the South China Sea.

New White House spokesman Sean Spicer - the US would prevent China from taking over territory in international waters in the South China Sea.

Spicer told the press, "the US is going to make sure that we protect our interests there," when asked about US President Donald Trump's position on the South China Sea. "It's a question of if those islands are in fact in international waters and not part of China proper, then yeah, we're going to make sure that we defend international territories from being taken over by one country," he said.

Foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying responded by telling the US "to be cautious in what it says and does, so as to avoid harming the peace and stability in the region."

The Chinese military is constantly prepared for possible military conflict whoever serves as US president, but Donald Trump's possible "extreme approach" against China was dangerous, according to analysts.

Ian Storey, a senior fellow at ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute in Singapore - some of the comments from Trump's key advisors and appointees suggest that the US may pursue a more hardline policy against Beijing in the South China Sea over the next four years.



It is highly **unlikely** that China will compromise its sovereignty claims in the face of US pressure, we can be sure that the dispute will increasingly become a risky point of contention between Beijing and Washington.

The comments come as President Xi Jinping is overseeing massive reforms within China's military to improve its fighting capabilities. A huge reshuffle is also underway in the military's top brass. Vice-Admiral Shen Jinlong, commander of the South Sea Fleet, is to replace retiring Admiral Wu Shengli as chief of the PLA Navy.

Meanwhile, Vice-Admiral Yuan Yubai, the former North Sea Fleet commander, has been promoted to head the Southern Theatre Command, which focuses on the South China Sea. "Promoting naval officers to command theatres is aimed at utilising them to the maximum and getting ready to win wars," Song Zhongping, a military affairs commentator.

The navy has been the focus of recent developments within the PLA, with massive investment and the construction of large numbers of ships, Song said.

China is involved in other disputes beyond the South China Sea, particularly with Taiwan. Sovereignty disputes with Japan in the East China Sea and concerns over the deployment of the missile shield in South Korea are other potential flashpoints.

But more than this, it will be yet another lethal blow to the Beltway's master strategy - first deployed by Dr. Zbig "Grand Chessboard" Brzezinski - of trying to prevent the emergence of any peer competitor, or worse, an alliance of peer competitors such as Russia-China.

Just at the start of the Trump era, the new reality could not be more striking. Not long ago, it was "say hello to Russia-China". Now it's "say hello to China's ICBMs."

High-ranking military officers confirm that two vice admirals have been formally made the naval chief and the head of the command overseeing the South China Sea respectively on Monday, while an ally of President Xi Jinping was named the next day political commissar of the People's Armed Police.

Vice Admiral Shen Jinglong, former commander of the People's Liberation Army South Sea Fleet, was promoted to be the next navy commander, according to senior colonel Xie Zhanqiu.

Xie, former head of the mobilisation department at the former Guangzhou Military Command,



Vice Admiral Yuan Yubai, the former commander of the North Sea Fleet, became the commanding officer of the Southern Theatre Command, which is responsible for the South China Sea. The appointments of Shen and Yuan have taken effect.

Tension has simmered among various countries including China, the Philippines and Vietnam after Beijing build artificial islands in the South China Sea. As a senior Navy officer, Yuan's appointment to head the Southern Theatre Command is a break from the practice of sourcing commanders at this level from the land force.

Shen succeeded Admiral Wu Shengli, 71, while Yuan took over from General Wang Jiaocheng, 64.

Xie : "As General Wang has not yet reached the retirement age of 65 for cadre in his ranking, he is assigned to lead the Strategic Planning Committee affiliated with the CMC."

Lieutenant General Zhu Shengling was named a political commissar of the People's Armed Police (PAP), according to Wu Tingfu, the former deputy commander of the Guangdong branch of that force.

Zhu, 59, is a close ally of Xi - he spent a long time in Fujian province, where Xi worked for years, ahead of being named

commissar of the National Defence Mobilisation Department at the CMC years afterwards.



Wu added that Major General Yang Guangyue, the commanding officer of Yunnan province, had been named the deputy commander of the PAP force on the same day as Zhu's appointment.