Proxy War:
A Critical Examination of Superpower Indirect Conflict in Africa

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Introduction

During the Cold War, war by proxy was a key strategy of indirect conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. The purpose of these proxy wars was to either maintain or change the balance of power between the superpowers/great powers[1] in conflict areas outside the central front in Europe. Within the condition of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD), both the United States and the Soviet Union sought to avoid direct confrontation between their conventional military forces in regional conflicts out of a fear that it would escalate to an all out nuclear war.

The Cold War occurred with the structural conditions of bipolarity based upon strategic and ideological competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. This condition, and the competition it entailed, largely determined the strategies of the United States and Soviet Union. In this condition, both powers engaged minor powers rather than each other directly. This entailed limited, indirect wars via proxy forces to minimize the threat of direct confrontation between the superpowers for fear of escalation.

Close to two decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall there has been very little discussion about proxy wars between major international powers that possess nuclear capabilities. The Soviet Union no longer exists and Russia is not the existential threat to the United States that the Soviet Union once was. Moreover, the United States currently stands unchallenged as the lone superpower. The international focus has shifted towards Western state intervention in small local conflicts and away from Cold War strategies under the umbrella concept of Peace Support Operations.

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[1] The term superpower was a label given to the United States and Soviet Union during the Cold War. For the purposes of this paper a superpower and a great power are synonymous.

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During the Cold War the United States concentrated on the containment of the Soviet Union, a United States grand strategy that began in the late 1940s and ended with the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union. It was a strategy to combat Soviet communist expansion in order to prevent Soviet influence penetrating countries that had traditionally been considered under the influence of Western interests. The Soviet Union and the United States effectively accepted the division of Europe. It was the Third World that was to mark the dynamics of the Cold War and become the focus of superpower competition and conflict. The nature of the Cold War saw the two superpowers pitted against one another in regional conflicts in Third World countries in an effort to diminish the others control and influence in order to promote their own national interests.

Since the end of World War II, interstate war between major international powers has become highly unlikely as a tool of foreign policy. Instead, as experienced during the Cold War, major powers will come into conflict indirectly through third parties in what are local internal conflicts in order to accomplish their national interests. The United States and the Soviet Union used foreign governments and international organizations as proxies, such as during the United Nations operation in the Congo in 1960 and the Angolan Civil war in 1975, to influence and alter the outcome of a local conflict to suit its national interests and alter the regional balance of power.

Today, there is a new potential great power on the horizon in China and there are strong indications, based on patterns of China's growing economy and military capabilities and China's regional and global strategic intentions that American and Chinese interests may clash in the future outside of Asia generating conditions for the return of the strategy of war by proxy. Moreover, there are strong indications that Africa

will become a main venue for United States – China strategic competition, as it was to some degree during the Cold War struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The debate on whether the future relationship between the United States and China will be one of competition or cooperation is at the forefront among academics and government officials in the West.[2] Regardless of this debate, China has significantly altered the strategic context in Africa and Beijing's motives have become more transparent. China's growing industries and middle class demand new energy and raw material suppliers and Africa has become central to meeting these demands. Since China is becoming ever more intertwined in the global economy, China is acquiring vital interests in more and more regions around the globe.[3] As vital interests increase China will attempt to shape the international order in ways favourable to its political interests even if they are counter to United States vital interests.[4]

For the first time in United States history the words national strategic interest and Africa have recently appeared together in government documents and statements. In

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[2] For further analysis on this debate see Peter Brookes & Ji Hye Shin. (2006). "China's Influence in Africa: Implications for the United States." In *Backgrounder*. Feb. 22. No 1916. pp. 1-9. David Gompert, Francois Godement, Evan Medeiros & James Mulvenon. (2005). "China on the Move: A Franco-American Analysis of Emerging Chinese Strategic Policies and Their Consequences for Transatlantic Relations." RAND. National Defense Research Institute. Doc. #CF199. David Shambough. (2000). "Sino-American Strategic Relations: From Partners to Competitors." In *Survivor*. Vol. 42. No. 1 pp. 97-115. Drew Thompson. (2005). "China's Emerging Interests in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges for Africa and the United States." In *African Renaissance Journal*. July/August. pp. 20-29.
[3] For an example of China's strategic thinking see Chris Alden. (2007). China in Africa. New York: Zed Books. Wen Jiabao, the Chinese Premier, stated at the China Africa Cooperation Forum in Addis Ababa in 2003 that the broader global strategic purpose of forging closer ties with Africa was to counter Western dominance. Alden p. 16.
[4] China does not share United States concerns for issues of governance, human rights, or economic policy, which are major concerns currently on the forefront of United States foreign policy. For example China has prevented UN sanctions on Sudan and curtailed international opposition to the Sudanese government due to their large stake in Sudan's oil industry. See Princeton Lyman & J. Stephen Morrison. (2006). "More Than Humanitarianism: A Strategic US Approach Towards Africa." Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed November 5, 2008. Available on-line: http://www.cfr.org/publication/9302/. pp. 9-10.

September of 2008 a new unified combatant command (AFRICOM) was established with an area of responsibility solely dedicated to the African continent.[5] Africa's exports of crude oil to the United States in 2007 exceeded those of the Persian Gulf,[6] further emphasizing the continent's strategic importance to the vital interests of the US.[7] In accordance with their national interests, the United States and China are looking for stable supplies of energy from as diverse a set of suppliers as possible and Africa is one of the largest regions of potential crude oil supplies.

The United States' and China's involvement in Africa have the potential of resulting in future conflict. Direct conflict between the two major powers is highly unlikely however, mainly due to the advent of nuclear weapons and the economic and human cost of a direct war between two major nuclear powers. The danger of beginning a catastrophic major war between the United States and China will limit the two to local theatres. The strategy of war by proxy may be utilized to preserve the "peace" between the two powers directly.[8]

Given the contemporary neglect of superpower conflict strategies, this thesis critically examines proxy war as a viable national strategy for nuclear armed great powers to advance and/or defend their global national interests in a bipolar international system.

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[5] CFR (2006). p. 55. Egypt is the one African country excluded from its mandate.
[6] The Persian Gulf states include Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates.
[7] Lauren Ploch. (2008). "Africa Command: US Strategic Interests and the Role of the US Military in Africa." In *Congressional Research Service Report to Congress*. Aug. 22. Order Code RL34003. Available: http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL34003.pdf. Also see United States Energy Information Administration. "US Imports by Country of Origin." Accessed December 10, 2009. Available: http://www.eia.doe.gov/oil_gas/petroleum/info_glance/petroleum.html.
[8] For a discussion on why major nuclear powers avoid direct military conflict see Scott Bills. (1986). "The World Deployed: US and Soviet Military Intervention and Proxy Wars in the Third World Since 1945." In Robert Clawson. (Ed.). East West Rivalry in the Third World. Wilmington. pp. 77-101. pp. 80-81. and Chris Loveman. (2002). "Assessing the Phenomenon of Proxy Intervention." In *Conflict, Security, and Development*. Vol. 2. No. 3. pp. 29-48. p. 38.

In effect, it demonstrates through a critical examination of the meaning of proxy war as a strategy and an analysis of its employment by the United States and Soviet Union in Africa during the Cold War and that the United States and China are likely to engage in similar behaviour in Africa in the future. Similar to the Cold War, which was essentially a conflict between opposing ideologies, the new potential confrontation between the United States and China will not only be based on a clash of world views about the structure and nature of international relations and security[9] but largely over the control of strategically vital energy resources based in Africa.

Chapter One defines the concept of proxy war as a strategy for nuclear superpowers and differentiates proxy wars from other forms of external power intervention. It also details what facilitates a war by proxy and what variables cause it. Chapter Two focuses on Africa during the Cold War and explains how and why the United States and Soviet Union used the strategy of war by proxy to further their control over certain regions and maintain the balance of power within the region between the two superpowers. It provides two historical examples, the United Nations operation in the Congo in 1960 and the Angolan civil war in 1975, which illustrate how proxy wars can effectively be used as a viable strategy to promote national interests. Chapter Three examines the strategic significance of Africa to China and the United States along with China's competitive advantage over the United States in Africa. Chapter Four examines the future structure of the international system and the logic of utilizing proxies in a great power rivalry within the African dimension.

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[9] For a further discussion see Shambaugh pp. 97-115.

Chapter One: War by Proxy

Arguably, the ultimate strategy of any type of war is to attain a more favourable peace. As such it is important to wage war while always keeping in mind the type of peace one desires.[10] This is what Clausewitz truly means, according to Liddell-Hart, when he defines war as "not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means."[11] During Clausewitz's time he changed conventional strategic thought. War did not represent a suspension of politics, but instead it is a ceaseless act of political interactions for the fulfillment of certain political ends.[12]

The term strategy has evolved over hundreds of years and has been defined in various ways as to compliment the political surroundings of the time. In On War, Clausewitz defined strategy as "the use of the engagement (of battle) for the purpose of the war. The strategist must…define an aim for the entire operational side of the war that will be in accordance with its purpose."[13] In other words, strategy is simply a plan, via the use of direct conflict between enemies, for war with the aim determining the methods intended to win the war. Liddell-Hart, however, finds Clausewitz's definition of strategy too restrictive and limited in nature. Liddell-Hart interprets Clausewitz's definition as purely the employment of battle, and that direct conflict with the enemy is the only means

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[10] An example of prominent military strategists who incorporate this view of strategy see Andre Beaufre. (1965). <u>An Introduction to Strategy</u>. New York; Frederick A. Praeger Inc. p. 22; B.H. Liddell-Hart. (1954). <u>Strategy: The Indirect Approach</u>. London; Faber and Faber Ltd. p. 366; Carl von Clausewitz. (2007). "*On War*" Accessed February 4, 2009. Available on-line: http://www.myilibrary.com.proxy2.lib.umanitoba.ca/Browse/open.asp?ID=114695. p. 93.
[11] von Clausewitz p. 28. Liddell-Hart p. 366.
[12] Philip Windsor. (2002). <u>Strategic Thinking: An Introduction and Farewell</u>. United States of America; Lynne Reinner Publishers, Inc.. pp. 26-7.
[13] von Clausewitz. p. 132.

to a strategic end.[14] According to Liddell-Hart, this is not necessarily the case and there are other means to achieve strategic ends other than direct violence. Instead of using direct violence or battles such as Clausewitz suggests, Liddell-Hart expands and uses the term "military means" to fulfill the goals of policy. Military means, according to Liddell-Hart, if provided with a perfect strategy, would be to produce a decision without any direct violence or combat at all.[15] The strategist's main goal "is not so much to seek battle as to seek a strategic situation so advantageous that if it does not of itself produce the decision, its continuation by a battle is sure to achieve this. In other words, dislocation is the aim of strategy…"[16] Although Liddell-Hart expands on Clausewitz's definition it still essentially is restricted to the use of military force.

French strategist, Andre Beaufre, defines strategy as "the art of applying force so that it makes the most effective contribution towards achieving the ends set by political policy."[17] According to Beaufre, strategy is the hypothetical interaction, which originates from some form of conflict between two "opposing wills." It is "the art of the dialectic of force or, more precisely, the art of the dialectic of two opposing wills using force to resolve their dispute." Strategy's purpose is to achieve the objectives set out by policy, utilizing the most efficient use of available resources.[18] Beaufre is the first to admit that his definition is very abstract but it is at this level of thought that strategy must be considered in order to understand its true nature. Beaufre continues to expand on the traditional definition of strategy by arguing that military victory, the objective of strategy defined by Clausewitz and Liddell-Hart, may in fact be unattainable at times and that it is

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[14] Liddell-Hart. p. 333.
[15] Ibid. pp. 335-8.
[16] Ibid. p. 339.
[17] Beaufre. p. 22.
[18] Ibid. p. 22-3.

not the only course to achieve strategic objectives. Other methods may in fact be more effective. Strategic objectives may be offensive in nature, defensive in nature, or simply the maintenance of the status quo. The outcome desired of any strategic objective is to "force the enemy to accept the terms we wish to impose on him." There is a certain "psychological effect" imposed on the enemy that convinces him that it is disadvantageous to initiate or alternatively to continue a struggle.[19] It is an ever evolving thought process that must continuously change to the political climate of the time and hypothesize into the future to produce solutions.[20]

The concept of strategy has evolved in two key ways since Clausewitz and Liddell-Hart. First, the concept of strategy has gone away from strictly meaning the use of armed violence to encompass the entire means of state policy. According to Julian Linder, strategy entails the political, economic, ideological and technological aspects that states employ.[21] WWI and WWII war became a struggle of entire countries applying their entire power; the strategy of war was now the art of using all the state's power in the pursuit of victory. Thus, according to Linder, it has "been related not only to armed struggle (warfare) but to the conduct of war as a whole; it has been transformed from the strategy of warfare into the strategy of war."[22] Contemporary strategy now must exceed the military conduct of war and include political action.[23]

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[19] Ibid. p. 23. Beaufre discusses other means of defeating an enemy via strategy other than direct battle such as inciting a revolution, economic sanctions, or backing a guerrilla campaign. Beaufre pp. 24-5.
[20] Ibid. p. 45.
[21] Julian Linder. (1981). "Towards a Modern Concept of Strategy." In *Cooperation and Conflict*. Vol. 16. pp. 217-235. p. 217. Liddell-Hart does touch on this type of strategy very briefly and writes about strategy's larger meaning but does not develop or go into detail about the four elements listed above. See Liddell-Hart pp. 366-72.
[22] Ibid. p. 217.
[23] Ibid. p. 220.

Second, the use of the term strategy has gone further than the traditional meaning of war to include national activity in peacetime. It also includes the aforementioned non-military elements. The concept of strategy has further evolved into the skill of administering all the resources of a state in order to secure its vital interests against actual or potential enemies. This level of strategy is applicable in both times of war and peace.[24] Robert Osgood develops this further by stating that:

> Military strategy must now be understood as nothing less than the overall plan for utilizing the capacity for armed coercion – in conjunction with the economic, diplomatic, and psychological instruments of power – to support foreign policy most effectively by overt, covert and tacit means.[25]

Whereas military strategy has traditionally played the leading role in the administration of strategy in war, political action prior to war and during it has played the leading role in defining the objectives of military strategy. The purpose of war is to successfully obtain political goals. It is the prioritization of these goals that governs the military strategy to be utilized.[26] Strategy represents the political goals of war and the development of strategy is under the direct leadership of policy. Military strategic decisions are primarily determined by political considerations.[27]

The definition of strategy has evolved considerably since Clausewitz and Liddell-Liddell-Hart's definition based on the contributions from Beaufre amongst others. Both

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[24] The idea of encompassing political, economic, ideological, and technological elements into the concept of strategy was developed in 1941 prior to Liddell-Hart's concept of strategy. See Edward Mead Earle. (1941). Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler. Princeton, NJ; Princeton University Press. Earl, Linder and Michael Howard, among others, have termed these elements "grand strategy." See Earl, Introduction, Linder p. 224, and Michael Howard. (1979). "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy." In Foreign Affairs. Summer. No. 5. pp. 975-986. p. 975. For the purposes of this thesis, strategy and grand strategy are synonymous.

[25] Robert Osgood. (1962). NATO: The Entangling Alliance. Chicago; The University of Chicago Press. p. 5.

[26] Linder p. 220. According to Linder these include "the strategic aims of war, the main methods of warfare used to achieve these aims, the size of the armed forces, and the weapons applied…"

[27] Ibid. p. 225. These considerations must be based on military capabilities however.

Clausewitz and Liddell-Hart mention the use of violence in war to achieve strategic ends. In the age of nuclear weapons this can no longer be the sole option when it comes to direct confrontation between superpowers. It may not be an option at all. As Brodie argued, "in the past the main idea of strategy was to win wars, but now it must be to avoid them."[28] The complexity of strategy in the political sense has acquired new dimensions in the nuclear missile age. The prevention of war has acquired imperative importance and this contemporary element of strategy is now a permanent objective for strategy between states with nuclear capabilities.[29] Unlike Clausewitz's definition, strategy is now organized towards preventing the use of armed conflict through methods of preventing the outbreak of war between nuclear superpowers of which the concept of deterrence dominates. Unlike the past where strategy was tantamount to achieving military victory in the attainment of political objectives, strategy in the contemporary context should augment political objectives with the least possible loss on both sides.[30] This new form of strategy can be termed indirect strategy as opposed to the methods of direct strategy.

The essential feature of indirect strategy is that it strives to achieve a result by methods other than direct military victory. There are overt strategic methods, which are utilized during times of war, and covert strategic methods that are utilized during times of peace. In light of the structure of the international system there has been a shift in emphasis from war strategy to peace strategy.[31] War, or direct strategy, is based on

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[28] Bernard Brodie. (1959). <u>Strategy in the Missile Age</u>. Princeton NJ; Princeton University Press. Brodie comprehensively develops the idea of the avoidance of war throughout his book between states with nuclear capabilities.
[29] Linder. p. 225.
[30] Ibid. p. 233.
[31] Ibid. p. 219.

finding the enemy's forces, fighting a decisive battle with military victory achieved when

the enemy's forces are annihilated. In peacetime, or indirect strategy, the objective is to

weaken the enemy "politically, economically, morally and militarily, in preparation for a

decisive military action or for forcing him to surrender without fighting."[32]

> According to Beaufre indirect strategy is:

> …the art of making the best use of the limited area of freedom of action
> left us by the deterrent effect of the existence of nuclear weapons and of
> gaining important and decisive victories in spite of the fact that the
> military resources which can be employed for the purpose must in
> general remain strictly limited.[33]

Indirect strategy may take on several different forms of conflict in which decisions are

sought by less direct methods other than clashes directly between military forces, i.e.

political, economic, technological, or psychological. One such indirect method is proxy

war as a key strategy for advancing national interests for nuclear superpowers. War by

proxy is a strategy for managing indirect conflict between superpowers via violent

struggle between regional or local actors.[34] The use of proxy war strategies is a key in

preventing a direct conflict between nuclear superpowers in a major war and these

strategies have contributed significantly to make the outbreak of total war less likely.[35]

Limited War and Proxy War

The nature of the international system has made direct conflict less plausible

between great powers, and so proxy wars have become the logical replacement for great

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[32] Ibid. p. 228.

[33] Beaufre pp. 109-10. Beaufre was mainly speaking about psychological, political, economic, and diplomatic strategies, which proxy wars would fall under. Beaufre mentions the Bay of Pigs as a form of indirect strategy. Beaufre pp. 111-2.

[34] Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov. (1984). "The Strategy of War by Proxy." In *Cooperation and Conflict*. XIX. pp. 263-273. p. 263.

[35] Philip Towle. (1981). "The Strategy of War by Proxy." In *Journal of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies*. Vol. 126. No. 1. pp. 24-5.

powers to advance their regional strategic or political interests. It is far superior to be able to control a local war to pursue state interest without the need to intervene with ones own forces because interstate war between superpowers is virtually obsolete as a tool of foreign policy. The advent of nuclear weapons has strengthened the need for superpowers to avoid coming directly into conflict with each other resulting in limited local wars, which is a significant facilitator for the strategy of proxy war. The threat of total war between nuclear superpowers has insured that their rivalries are directly contested only in regional theatres. However, this is not to imply that direct interstate war is non-existent or impossible. It is simply highly unlikely. Modern war between nuclear superpowers is potentially too dangerous to fight and by a rational cost-benefit analysis, a state is likely to calculate that to engage in direct conflict with a nuclear rival is simply unprofitable in terms of its political, military, and economic interests.[36]

Total war between nuclear superpowers would be irrational and nonsensical since total war implies that the aim, the effort, and the degree of violence are unlimited. Total war would be pursued without regard to the consequences essentially resulting in mutual suicide.[37] Total war is defined as "armed conflict between major powers in which the total resources of the belligerents are employed, and the national survival of a major belligerent is in jeopardy."[38] Neither belligerent is completely in control of the events and are not obedient to any law but their own resulting in total war and the total destruction or submission of one side by the other. This concept of total war has never

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[36] Loveman. p. 37.
[37] Lawrence Freedman. (1989). The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy. (2nd Ed.). Hampshire, England; The MacMillan Press Ltd. p. 99.
[38] United States Department of Defence. (2008). "Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms." Joint Publication 1-02. Accessed February 3, 2009. Available on-line: http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/

been of greater importance than during the nuclear age where total war has the potential to result in the total destruction of both sides.

Limited war is a logical solution to ensure state survival between nuclear superpowers and according to this strategy it cannot be understood in purely military terms. The prerequisite for a strategy of limited war is to reintroduce the political component into the notion of war and to abandon the notion that politics ends when war begins or that the strategic goals of war can be distinct from those of state policy.[39] Robert Osgood defines limited war as one in which "the belligerents restrict the purposes for which they fight to concrete, well-defined objectives that do not demand the utmost military effort of which the belligerents are capable and that can be accommodated in a negotiated settlement."[40] If the particular goals of war do not seek the rival's total destruction, conflict does not demand escalation to total war. For example, the United States can only directly partake in limited wars when up against non-nuclear lesser powers. The goals of direct intervention in these cases do not require the utilization of the entire force of the United States military. The survival of the continental United States is not directly threatened by sending military troops into a non-nuclear, less powerful state and thus, escalation to total war is not a threat. It is only when the United States is facing a state with even marginally comparable military capabilities for general and nuclear war that a "victory" now becomes less than a hundred percent certain.[41] The

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[39] Freedman. p. 102.
[40] Robert Osgood. (1957). Limited War: The Challenge to American Strategy. Chicago. University of Chicago Press. p. 18.
[41] Victory can have many meanings and interpretations. Victory from one perspective may not necessarily be a victory from another. Victory in this sense means that the existence of the United States military forces will not be threatened to the point of total annihilation.

threat of the complete survival of the United States now enters the equation and the potential for total war becomes a possibility.[42]

When dealing with nuclear superpowers however, the strategy of limited war involves an important kind and level of restraint – deliberate restraint.[43] The goal of contemporary limited war is to discourage and control deliberately a nuclear rival's aggression while avoiding total war.[44] During the Cold War, limited war was generally used to refer to wars involving the United States on the one side and the Soviet Union on the other, most likely not directly but usually through proxies on behalf of one or the other. During such conflicts the threat of total war always existed as an available alternative to limited objectives, which is why there is an emphasis on deliberate restraint.[45] Deliberate restraint is crucial in distinguishing limited war prior to nuclear capabilities and after. Limited wars prior to nuclear capabilities were conducted because the objectives of the war were genuinely limited due to various other factors.[46]

Prior to nuclear weapons there was a restraining factor of war in what Clausewitz called "escalation to the limit" in that there was a fear that a conflict about a matter of limited value might escalate into a conflict that was out of proportion to the original issue of contention. Now that nuclear weapons exist, the fear of escalation between superpowers has become so substantial that military maneuverability and options have been considerably reduced. This increasingly restricted area of action now becomes even more important to utilize effectively since it then becomes a significant means of

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[42] Freedman. p. 103.
[43] Brodie. p. 310.
[44] Ibid. p. 314.
[45] Ibid. p. 310.
[46] Freedman. p. 104.

changing the status quo, which the nuclear deterrent is supposed to maintain.[47] The fear

of escalation between nuclear superpower states strongly inhibits the use of conventional

military forces against the other. Nuclear power states must fear escalation more than

non-nuclear states, for in any conflict that ended at the nuclear level they would be prime

targets.[48]

   This fear generates the use of proxy strategies as a method of shifting or

maintaining the balance of power and accomplishing ones foreign policy goals. During

the Cold War one central goal of the Soviet Union was to broaden the area of Communist

control and to reduce Western influence throughout the world in order to shift the balance

of power in its favour while the United States conversely had similar goals to tip the

balance of power in its favour or maintain the status quo.[49] Balance of power theory

assumes that the necessity for survival provides the central motivation of states.[50] The

term balance of power refers to:

> the general concept of one or more states' power being used to balance that
> of another state or group of states….The theory of balance of power argues
> that such counterbalancing occurs regularly and maintains the stability of
> the international system….This stability does not, however, imply peace; it
> is rather a stability maintained by means of recurring wars that adjust
> power relations. Alliances play a key role in the balance of power.
> Building up one's own capabilities against a rival is a form of power
> balancing, but forming an alliance against a threatening state is often
> quicker, cheaper, and more effective.[51]

   In an anarchical international system, the most reliable restraint on the power of one

state is the power of other states. Balance of power theory is a useful predictor of state

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[47] Beaufre. p. 108-9.

[48] Kenneth Waltz. (1969). "International Structure, National Force, and the Balance of World Power." In James Rosenau (Ed.) International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory. New York. Collier-Macmillan Ltd. pp. 304-314. p. 307.

[49] Morton Halperin. (1966). Limited War in the Nuclear Age. New York; John Wiley & Sons, Inc. p. 4.

[50] Waltz (1969). p. 304.

[51] Joshua Goldstein & Sandra Whitworth. (2005). International Relations: Canadian Edition. Toronto, Ontario. Pearson Education Canada Inc. pp. 74-5.

behaviour in that states will align in a way that will prevent any one state from developing a superiority of power. This is based on two assumptions: "that states exist in an anarchic system with no higher government and that political leaders will act first to reduce risks to the independence of their states."[52] Unbalanced power, therefore, is a threat to weak and strong states alike. The general stability of the international system depends upon the maintenance of some form of balance among the states within it.[53] The purpose of proxies within this context therefore, is to alter or maintain the balance of power while minimizing the threat of direct conflict between superpowers and the fear of escalation by a direct conflict.

The Reagan Doctrine is one example of this strategy. The Reagan Administration adopted a broad policy for dealing with regional conflicts involving the Soviet Union in the Third World. Specifically, the Reagan administration declared a policy of backing guerrilla groups in Third World countries governed by Soviet sponsored regimes. Assisting these anti-Soviet rebel forces would help to destabilize regimes favourable to the Soviet Union with the purpose of maintaining or altering the regional and global balance of power in a zero sum game.[54]

Proxy wars are relatively low risk to the superpower compared to direct intervention or traditional war. With direct intervention there are risks of defeat, loss of resources, ostracism from the international community and resistance from one's own citizens, at least in democratic states.[55] Given the structural impediments to direct conflict, this is

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[52] Nye. p. 184.
[53] Waltz (1969). p. 312.
[54] Mark Lagon. (1992). "The International System and the Reagan Doctrine: Can Realism Explain Aid to 'Freedom Fighters'?" In *British Journal of Political Science*. Vol. 22, No. 1. pp. 39-70. p. 39.
[55] Proxy intervention allows states to distance themselves from being responsible for war crimes or the death of its own soldiers. For the vast majority, no state power likes to be involved in "dirty wars." See Loveman. p. 46.

another factor that has made proxy wars a prevalent strategy in the nuclear age. It's not just that a superpower faces significantly minimal or no threat to its territorial borders, but additionally its reputation and moral history are less blemished. Failure in the strategy of proxy war is relatively inconsequential as compared to failure in direct intervention.[56] This method helps the superpower advance its interests in foreign territory while keeping aloof from the warfare allowing it to better cope with any international consequences of its involvement. The Soviet Union and the United States suffered from direct involvement in Afghanistan and Vietnam respectively during the Cold War and both found their international prestige considerably tarnished.

The supply of arms and general military relations with a foreign government or insurgent group has played a significant role in distancing the superpower from conflicts in various regions of the world and has played an important role in making the outbreak of direct conflict between superpowers less likely.[57] The supply of arms and military relations with a foreign government or insurgent group with the intent of influencing the affairs of a foreign conflict is another factor that facilitates indirect conflict via proxy between superpowers. The supply of arms does not automatically lead to direct involvement by a superpower in a conflict as was thought prior to WWII. On the contrary, it is usually a substitute for direct involvement because it allows a superpower to back one side in a conflict to fulfill national interests without becoming embroiled itself.[58] By keeping the proxy sufficiently well armed and trained, the superpower can avoid committing its own military forces. Studies regarding arms transfers suggest that supplying arms have not empowered superpowers to control the domestic or foreign

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[56] Ibid.
[57] Towle. p. 25.
[58] Ibid. p. 21.

policies of recipient states or groups but they do result in a definite influence in the conflict and have altered distributions of power while creating a supplier-recipient interdependent relationship.[59]

An important aspect of the policies of superpowers in supplying arms to groups has been the goal of maintaining or expanding the proficiency to project influence abroad in support of national interests.[60] The primary objectives of both the United States and Soviet Union's supply of arms had been political throughout the Cold War. For both of the superpowers, the supply of arms and military relations with groups or states had been employed as an avenue of augmenting the international position of the superpower relative to that of the other. Military relations had been considered an important ingredient in the attempts of both the Soviet Union and the United States to establish or solidify relations with important less developed states and to accumulate a degree of influence over the domestic and foreign policies of those states. A consequent effect has been the effort to erode or contain the influence of the rival superpower.[61]

Proxy War

The focus of this study concentrates on proxy war strategies in a bipolar international system with two great powers having nuclear capabilities, as was the case during the Cold War. Although proxy war strategies are not necessarily limited to a bipolar/Cold War international structure this study focuses on this type of relationship

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[59] Christer Jonsson. (1984). <u>Superpower: Comparing American and Soviet Foreign Policy</u>. New York. St. Martin's Press. p. 133.
[60] Roger Kanet & Claire Metzger (1984). "NATO-Warsaw Pact Rivalry in the Third World Arms Market." In Robert Clawson (Ed.). <u>East West Rivalry in the Third World</u>. Wilmington, Delaware; Scholarly Resources Inc. pp. 133-148. p. 141.
[61] Ibid. p. 138.

simply due to the historical evidence available. It is possible that proxy war strategies

could be employed in a multipolar international system to advance national interests.

However, to date no studies have been conducted on proxy wars in a multipolar

international system and this is a body of research that should be examined further.

The most discernible difference between proxy wars and other forms of external

power intervention[62] is that there is no direct armed military intervention by the

superpower.[63] Not having to commit one's own military resources to direct combat

significantly reduces the risk of losing military resources, prestige and domestic

opposition in order to accomplish one's goals. Instead, the proxy absorbs the majority of

risk by engaging in the conflict directly. Employing proxies can also reassure allies of a

superpower's level of commitment and demonstrate that a superpower has the motivation

and resources to support sufficiently an allied state or group. The United States and the

Soviet Union employed proxies during the Cold War to capitalize on these benefits.

A cold war is "a state of international tension wherein political, economic,

technological, sociological, psychological, paramilitary, and military measures short of

overt armed conflict involving regular military forces are employed to achieve national

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[62] Power is the ability to achieve one's purposes and goals or the ability to get others to do what they otherwise would not do. This is largely based on state resources, which include population, territory, natural resources, economic size, military forces, and political stability, among others. See Joseph Nye, Jr. (1990). "The Changing Nature of World Power." In *Political Science Quarterly*. Vol. 105, No.2. pp. 177-192. pp. 177-8. According to this definition external power intervention could refer to various forms of economic or social intervention. This thesis however, restricts the term external power intervention to armed military efforts or uses of violence by a superpower within a foreign state to achieve established goals. Intervention can be defined as "dictatorial interference by one state in the affairs of another. That is, intervention occurs when the affairs of one state are altered against its will by the actions of another. So conceived, intervention is associated with the use or threat of force. Coercion must be the indicator of intervention…" See James Rosenau. (1969). "Intervention as a Scientific Concept." In *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Vol. 13. No. 2. pp. 149-171. pp. 153-4.
[63] There is an exception to this rule of avoiding direct involvement with the use of 'hidden troops' as in the case of Angola. For a short period the Soviet Union provided 'hidden troops' which were deployed secretly and in small numbers in support of the MPLA unbeknownst to the US. Military advisors and military trainers can also be deployed by the superpower.

objectives."[64] The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union was unique

to other forms of war in that it was global and all persuasive taking place in the context of

the possibility of total war involving nuclear weapons. From this context evolved the

idea of limited war outside the central front in Europe characterized by three elements –

limits on ends, means, and the key condition that if one superpower intervened in a state

with direct military support of a client, the other limited its involvement to the provision

of military support to the opposing side through military aid, training, and/or advisors, as

evident in Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan. Direct military intervention by both

superpowers in the same conflict would lead to direct military confrontation between

them. With direct military confrontation comes the possibility of an escalation to total

war. This was to be avoided at all costs because the struggle on the periphery, while

important, was not worth the risk of total war. Proxy war strategies were employed

during the Cold War international atmosphere where two opposing superpowers sought to

advance or defend their national interests while minimizing the risks of a direct

confrontation between them.

There is a distinction between proxy wars where one superpower directly

intervenes and when neither directly intervenes. These can be classified as symmetric

and asymmetric proxy wars and both are sub-forms of limited war during the Cold War.

Examples of asymmetric proxy wars are Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan where one

superpower directly intervened and the other employed proxies to indirectly combat the

intervening superpower. From the perspective of the superpower intervening, these three

cases can be treated as examples of limited war and not proxy war resulting in an

asymmetric limited-proxy war. Examples of symmetric proxy wars are the UN operation

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[64]United States Department of Defence. (2008). "Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms."

in the Congo in 1960 and the civil war in Angola in 1975, both discussed at length in chapter two. Symmetric proxy wars are of focus throughout the thesis because both superpowers consider their actions under the category of proxy war strategies. Vietnam was not a proxy war from the perspective of the United States as the Afghanistan war was not a proxy war from the perspective of the Soviet Union.

Symmetric proxy wars are distinct from limited wars as proxy wars do not entail the direct military intervention on the part of either superpower in the conflict. Instead, both employ indirect military intervention in the form of military aid, training, and/or advisers. Proxy wars minimize the risk of a direct confrontation between the two superpowers; it reduces the risk of losing military resources, prestige, and domestic opposition along with reassuring allies. The use of proxies can also solve logistical problems of transporting forces into regions on the periphery because of its distance from the central focus in Europe and the Far East.

Direct intervention has all the insecurities of defeat and defamation. By employing the use of proxies, the superpower not only lowers the risk of any threat to its territorial well-being or loss of military resources and personnel, but also its prestige and moral record are less impaired. Defeat in a proxy war is inconsequential when it comes to the decline in international prestige, as compared to a military defeat in actual direct conflict regardless of whether one state or a coalition of states was defeated.[65]

In many, if not all, internal wars, external power intervention is present in varying proportions. If it is clear that the causes are solely domestic it can be concluded that there is an authentic internal civil war. If, however, external motivation and resources is a key

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[65] Loveman p. 46.

driver of civil war, it can generally be concluded that there is a war by proxy.[66]

According to Karl Deutsch, war by proxy is an "international conflict between two

foreign powers, fought out on the soil of a third country; disguised as conflict over an

internal issue of that country; and using some or all of that country's manpower,

resources, and territory as a means for achieving preponderantly foreign goals and foreign

strategies."[67] The foreign powers become involved by responding to the emergence of

conflict by employing proxies and are not the cause of the conflict itself. As a result,

however, the foreign powers intensify and prolong the fighting.

There are two overall forms of proxy war. First, two great powers/regional

powers in conflict with each other employ a third less developed state or states to conduct

indirect conflict. Second, one great power/regional power targets a weaker state, which is

not aligned with a stronger state and employs a proxy to advance its national interests.[68]

Proxy wars are best understood in settings where there are at least two belligerent great

powers with nuclear capabilities that want to avoid direct confrontation. This is simply

due to the necessity of pursuing national interests abroad while at the same time

minimizing the risks of direct confrontation with a rival great power with nuclear

capabilities. This form of proxy war is restricted to global nuclear superpowers and small

state or insurgent relationships. Therefore, a proxy war is always a limited local war

targeted against or in support of a smaller less developed state between two great

[66] Karl Deutsch. (1964). "External Involvement in Internal War." In Harry Eckstein (Ed) <u>Internal War: Problems and Approaches</u>. New York; The Free Press. pp. 100-110. p. 102.
[67] Ibid. p. 102.
[68] Loveman. p. 40.

powers.[69] By definition, proxy wars are not necessarily unique to the Cold War setting

itself; however, they are much more common within.

Proxy wars, in the context of the thesis, are limited to internal civil wars or

conflicts. Proxy wars with two states employed by two superpowers as proxies do occur

as both the United States and the Soviet Union intervened indirectly in the 1973 Yom

Kippur War to support their respective clients Israel and Egypt. Inter-state proxy wars

are part of the overall equation of the definition of proxy wars but are distinct from intra-

state proxy wars and are of a different nature. The nature and limits of proxy strategies

are distinct between inter and intra-state. The costs of defeat in an inter-state proxy

setting and its impact on demands for direct intervention are much higher than intra-state.

For example, allowing one's client state to be destroyed by another superpower's client

state can be much more dangerous and may drive the losing superpower to intervene

directly. The Yom Kippur War is an example as the potential destruction of the Egyptian

army was too much for the Soviet Union and as a result the Soviet Union threatened to

intervene.   The United States responded by putting its forces on nuclear alert. Inter-state

proxy wars have more danger and higher level of fear of escalation than intra-state

conflicts. Inter-state proxy settings have different elements and calculations involved on

the part of the superpowers and should be dealt with in a separate research study. The

two case studies detailed in chapter two are of the intra-state nature.

There are three central elements encompassing a war by proxy. First, a certain

relationship must exist between the superpower and the proxy and within this relationship

there requires coordination of activities, exchange of information, and the provision of

resources such as military aid, training, and/or advisors. Second, the superpower's

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[69] Bar-Siman-Tov. p. 267.

intention is to influence the affairs while avoiding direct intervention in, and

responsibility for, the conflict to generate an appearance of plausible deniability. Third,

the superpower provides the proxy with military aid, training, and/or advisors enabling

the proxy to prosecute the war with the intent of altering the outcome of the conflict to

reflect to some degree the strategic interests of the superpower. The superpower - proxy

relationship is somewhat complicated as both parties usually attempt to mask their

relationship. Governments are reluctant to publicize their coercion of another state

mainly to serve its own interests.[70]

Superpower – proxy relationships are unique. Although they may have some

level of formal or informal relationship, the proxy relationship is mainly to fulfill the

interests of the superpower. There is a specific trade off between the superpower and

proxy; the provision of material aid in exchange for a special service that will serve the

superpower's interests. This does not necessarily imply that the proxy is incapable of

accomplishing its goals as well, because the goals of the proxy are considered by the

superpower and are 'in play' within the relationship.

A central component of proxy wars is the ability of the superpower to influence

the affairs of the conflict in its favour while avoiding direct participation in the conflict.

As a result the superpower must have some decisive interest in the conflict or region and

the proxy must be willing to be influenced on some level in order to fulfill these

interests.[71] The main technique of administering this influence is through the provision

of military aid, training, and/or advisors. Support to a government, insurgent group, or

organization must be for more purpose than strictly selling arms for profit. It must be for

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[70] Bertil Duner. (1981). "Proxy Intervention in Civil Wars." In *Journal of Peace Research*. Vol. 18. No. 4. pp. 353-361. p. 359.
[71] Bar-Siman-Tov. p. 269.

more than purely economic interests. As Bar-Siman-Tov argues, if economic interests

and the selling of arms were enough to define a proxy war, all local wars would one way

or another be considered proxy wars thereby rendering the term meaningless.[72] The

superpower must have a level of interest in the conflict significant enough to care about

which party prevails in the conflict based on national interests.

The third component of proxy wars is the provision of military aid, training,

and/or advisors by the superpower to the proxy resulting in some level of conflict

escalation. The supply of material aid, such as weapons or other military equipment and

logistical support, is the most significant support the superpower can offer, short of

covertly dispatching its own troops. The transfer of military equipment aims to elevate

the proxy's military capabilities with the hopes of influencing the outcome of the conflict

itself. This is considered the most accepted and recognized aspect of proxy war.[73]

Proxies, in various degrees, are dependent on this military support. If not for these

resources, the proxy would likely be unable to continue the conflict or at least would be

incapable of continuing the conflict on the same level.[74]

Conclusion

Since the end of the Cold War the international focus has shifted towards Western

state intervention in small local conflicts and away from cold war strategies. This shift

has focused on external intervention based on humanitarian grounds emphasizing Peace

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[72] Bar-Siman-Tov. p. 270
[73] Loveman. p. 31.
[74] Duner. p. 356.

Support Operations (PSOs)[75] including humanitarian intervention and peace enforcement, which again are based on direct military intervention. Humanitarian intervention can be defined as "a coercive interference in the internal affairs of a state, involving the use of armed force, with the purpose of addressing massive human rights violations or preventing widespread human suffering."[76] Peace enforcement can be defined as:

> The application of military force or the threat of its use, normally pursuant to international authorization, to compel compliance with generally accepted resolutions or sanctions. The purpose of peace enforcement is to maintain or restore peace and support diplomatic efforts to reach a long-term political settlement.[77]

Peace enforcement may include military combat action such as the forcible separation of conflicting parties or engagement in combat with one or all parties involved in the conflict. Peace enforcement operations have the goal of restoring and maintaining order and stability, and the "protection of humanitarian assistance, guarantee and denial of movement, enforcement of sanctions…forcible separation of belligerent parties, and other operations as determined by the authorizing body."[78] Ideally, these operations will end up supporting the development and maintenance of a competent state government.

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[75] Not included in this usage of peace support operations is peacekeeping and peacemaking. Peacekeeping can be defined as "field operations established by the United Nations, with the consent of the parties concerned, to help control and resolve conflicts between them, under United Nations command and control, at the expense collectively of the member states, and with military and other personnel and equipment provided voluntarily by them, acting impartially between the parties and using force to the minimum extent necessary." See Marrack Goulding. (1993). "The Evolution of United Nations Peacekeeping." In *International Affairs*. Vol. 69, No. 3. pp. 451-464. p. 455. As per this definition peacekeepers must be invited onto foreign soil with the consent of all parties involved in the conflict and therefore would not be considered an intervention. According to the United Nations, peacemaking calls for a diplomatic effort through peaceful means to foster a peace agreement where military forces have no role. See Boutros Boutros-Gali. (1992). "An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping." Accessed February 10, 2009. Available online: http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html

[76] Jennifer Welsh. (2004). "Introduction." In Jennifer Welsh. (Ed.). Humanitarian Intervention and International Relations. Oxford. Oxford University Press. pp. 1-10. p. 3.

[77] United States Army. (1994). "Peace Operations." FM 100-23. p. 6.

[78] Ibid. p. 6-7.

Unlike peacekeeping operations, peace enforcement does not require the consent of conflicting parties to intervene and force may be used to compel or coerce.

With regard to humanitarian intervention and peace enforcement, proxy wars are unique since on the regional level one purpose is to increase the level of violence, while decreasing the chances of direct military conflict between superpowers on the global level. Unlike proxy wars, humanitarian intervention and peace enforcement typically have international authorization to pursue a mandate of maintaining international peace and security on the local level and to assist in efforts to resolve disputes between states and parties. Proxy wars also have a purpose to fulfill the goals of external superpowers and although humanitarian intervention and peace enforcement operations may fulfill the interests of foreign superpowers, they are typically used to fulfill goals of the international community and specific regional parties involved in the dispute.

In the contemporary international system proxy war strategies are less effective than during a bipolar, cold war setting. First, the United States is currently the lone superpower with no direct rival and has the ability to militarily defeat any state opposition. The survival of the United States as a state is not at stake as once was thought as during the Cold War. Second, the United States has the ability to directly intervene in regional conflicts without the threat or fear of escalation to total war with another rival state. Proxy war strategies, in the context of the thesis, are not as necessary as they once were due to the unipolar international system and the United States' ability to directly intervene without significant external reprisals.

Nuclear weapons have resulted in the necessity of fighting proxy wars between superpowers in order to pursue national interests. The goal is to discourage and control a

nuclear rival's aggression while avoiding total war. This requires deliberate restraint to avoid direct conflict between superpowers. Proxy strategies are a way to shift the balance of power or maintain the status quo by minimizing the fear of escalation by supplying military aid, training, and/or advisors. Proxy wars are also an effective strategy to minimize the risks of defeat in a direct intervention, the loss of resources, ostracism from the international community and domestic support, reassure allies, .

War by proxy as a strategy for nuclear superpowers has evolved from the traditional concept of strategy of strictly meaning armed violence to encompass state policy and political action. Proxy war strategy is a form of strategy that entails indirect military interaction to pursue national interests abroad.

Proxy wars exist in a local setting when there is significant external influence and motivation in order to achieve the interests of a superpower mainly through the provision of material aid that typically results in conflict escalation. Unlike other forms of external power intervention there is no direct military intervention on behalf of the superpower. The purpose of a proxy is to achieve preponderantly foreign policy goals unlike humanitarian intervention and peace enforcement, which is mainly to fulfill interests related to the state or region rather than interests of the intervening forces. Humanitarian intervention and peace enforcement generally have the support of the international community unlike proxies which are typically done in a covert manner.

Chapter Two: Proxy Wars During the Cold War

The United Nations Operation in the Congo in 1960 and the Angolan Civil War in 1975 became the ante in a superpower struggle and the history of these two events supports James Rosenau's hypothesis that great powers "test each other's strength and contest each other's influence through involvement in the internal wars of small neutral nations"[79] because the destructive capabilities of advanced weapons has diminished the probability of total war. There was an ongoing competition in the Third World and in Sub-Saharan Africa in particular during the Cold War and this was one of the primary determinants of the superpower relationship. The United Nations operation in the Congo brought the Cold War to Africa and the Soviet political and military involvement in the Angolan War was a primary factor in the demise of détente and the consequent decline in Soviet-United States relations.[80] Smaller, less powerful states therefore played a significant role in the grander scheme of global security involving relations between the East and the West.

The decolonization of African states and independence movements after WWII provided the regional context for the emergence of proxy war strategies. Due to the physical and financial costs of the WWII, Western states were largely unwilling and/or unable to maintain their control over African countries. The Roosevelt Administration also strongly advocated the independence of African nations. Many independence movements resulted in violent conflict and armed struggle by the native populations creating conditions of regional instability. Local political parties or dictatorships

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[79] James Rosenau. (1964). "Introduction." In James Rosenau. (Ed). International Aspects of Civil Strife. Princeton, NJ; Princeton University Press. p. 6.

[80] Robert Litwak. (1990). "Soviet Policies in the Third World: Objectives, Instruments, Constraints." In Roy Allison & Phil Williams. (Eds.) Superpower Competition and Crisis Prevention in the Third World. New York; Cambridge University Press. pp. 29-48. p. 29.

struggled to gain control and power over their respective newly established states.

During this process, Africa became a playing field for the United States and the Soviet

Union's competition to gain influence within the region. The two superpowers competed

with one another by propping up governments that would suit each superpowers interest.

Proxy war strategies were one method of gaining influence.

The nuclear stalemate between the superpowers beginning in the 1950s brought

about a shift away from direct confrontation in Europe, to indirect conflict in the Third

World. With third parties involved in indirect conflict, it brought a new dynamic that was

unlike direct confrontation.[81] This chapter examines two case studies of indirect conflict

between the Soviet Union and the United States in Africa; the United Nations operation

in the Congo between 1960 and 1964, and the Angolan War of 1975. Although there are

various other examples of indirect conflict via proxies that occurred during the Cold War,

these two case studies were highly significant and influential within Africa for United

States and Soviet Union relations. They also illustrate a 'victory' for the United States in

the Congo and the Soviet Union in Angola, which highlights that at one time or another

both the United States and Soviet Union were able to employ effectively proxies to fulfill

their national interests abroad. These two case studies are examples of symmetric proxy

wars and therefore can be considered proxy wars by the United States and the Soviet

Union. The United States employed the UN, the National Front for the Liberation of

Angola (FNLA), and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA)

as proxies in an effort to advance national interests. The Soviet Union employed the

Lumumba government, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), and

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[81] Jan Nijman. (1993). The Geopolitics of Power and Conflict: Superpowers in the International System 1945-1992. London, Great Britain; Belhaven Press. p. 84.

Cuban troops as proxies. Soviet involvement in Angola marked a new stage in superpower relations and the evolution of the Cold War. For the first time since 1945, the Soviet Union utilized its military power in a comparable way to the United States, by influencing an ongoing conflict in a decisive manner that helped secure victory for its ally over United States backed forces. Soviet involvement in Angola was also seen as the demise of détente appearing to mark a more aggressive dimension to Soviet foreign policy.[82]

The United Nations Operation in the Congo (Leopoldville)

The conflict in the Congo began on its Independence Day on June 30, 1960. Belgium was in the process of transferring sovereignty to the Congo after seventy-five years of colonial rule.[83] Officially, the plan was to transfer power to the Congolese government, which was led by Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba and President Joseph Kasavubu. However, unofficially the Belgian plan was to maintain de facto control over the new state and protect its vast mining interests in the province of Katanga. On July 5, the Belgian commander of the Force Publique called a meeting of the Leopoldville garrison and in an attempt to persuade the soldiers of their loyalty and obedience to Belgium, he wrote on a chalkboard, "After independence = before independence." Congolese troops rebelled, attacking Europeans and desecrating property resulting in the Belgian government airlifting paratroopers into the Congo to restore order. The credibility of the Congolese government was demolished as it proved unable to control its

[82] Richard Saul. (2007). <u>The Cold War and After: Capitalism, Revolution and Superpower Politics</u>. Ann Arbor, MI; Pluto Press. p. 141.
[83] Madeleine Kalb. (1982). <u>The Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa – From Eisenhower to Kennedy</u>. New York; MacMillan Publishing Co. p. 3.

own military forces. Lumumba demanded that all Belgian troops be withdrawn and

called upon the United States to send 3,000 American troops to reestablish order and

replace the Belgian troops. The United States administration declined the request

proposing instead that the Congolese government request military assistance from the

United Nations.[84]

The United States believed that chaos in the Congo would have consequences far

beyond the present conflict. The conflict could benefit the Soviets by providing an

opportunity for radical forces to take over and weaken United States interests. The

United States also realized that the intervention of Belgian troops could be capitalized

upon by the Soviets knowing it would antagonize the new Congolese government and

provide the Soviets with an opportunity to highlight their anti-imperialism with the new

African states. The most logical way to move forward was to place the Belgian

intervention under a UN umbrella. The Belgian troops could then be replaced by troops

from smaller countries.[85]

On July 10, 1960, initiated by the United States, Lumumba made a request for UN

assistance to restore order and oust the Belgian troops. The UN supported the request

and secured a UN Security Council resolution authorizing the establishment of a UN

force to restore order and promote economic and political stability. Belgium agreed to

withdraw its military troops, but only if they would be replaced by UN troops.[86] The

official line for the UN Congo operation, Resolution 161, stated the objectives of

ensuring the withdrawal of Belgian troops from the Republic of the Congo, assisting the

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[84] Richard Mahoney. (1983). JFK: Ordeal in Africa. New York; Oxford University Press. pp. 36-7.
[85] Kalb. p. 7.
[86] James Dobbins et. al. (2005). The UN's Role in Nation-Building: From The Congo to Iraq. RAND Doc# MG-304. p. 7

government in maintaining law and order, providing technical assistance, maintaining the territorial integrity and political independence of the Congo, preventing the occurrence of civil war and securing the removal from the Congo of all foreign military.[87]

Almost immediately upon its arrival, the UN operation clashed with the expectations of Lumumba. Lumumba became anxious with the slow withdrawal of Belgian troops from the province of Katanga and threatened to use the Congolese army to expel them if the UN did not act more aggressively. Lumumba also accused the Belgians of masterminding a secession of Katanga, which further deepened the security crisis. Moise Tshombe, leader of the province, declared Katanga independent from the Congo on July 11, 1960, the same day of Belgium's military intervention. Tshombe had the support of Belgian interests and thousands of Belgian troops while also hiring Belgian military officers and Western mercenaries to prevent Congolese troops from retaking control of Katanga.[88] On July 12, Premier Khrushchev firmly put on record the Soviet Union's support for the Congolese government. On August 14, Belgium formally transferred control of Katanga to the UN. Tshombe was satisfied but Lumumba had expected the UN to supply the Congolese government with transport planes needed to transport troops to Katanga in order to end the secession. Instead the UN ignored Lumumba and dealt directly with Tshombe on matters pertaining to Katanga.[89]

As the situation grew more chaotic, Kasavubu and Lumumba became increasingly estranged. Kasavubu eventually dismissed, then arrested, and eventually turned

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[87] Ibid. p. 28.
[88] Ibid. p. 7.
[89] Kalb. p. 48.

Lumumba over to Tshombe's government in Katanga. There he was murdered.[90] A report of the UN Commission of Investigation concluded that Lumumba had most likely been killed in Tshombe's company and that "in all probability" Kasavubu had acted deliberately in sending Lumumba into the control of his "bitterest enemies" and was therefore equally responsible for his death.[91]

On January 21st, 1962, the UN peacefully occupied Kolwezi in Katanga Province. Tshombe forfeited authority of his troops and instructed them to cooperate with the UN. After two and a half years of crisis, confrontation, and conflict, the Katanga secession was formally over. There was general rejoicing in Washington at the outcome.[92] In October of 1965, Tshombe was deposed by Kasavubu and only a few weeks later, Kasavubu was deposed by Sese Seko Mobutu in a bloodless coup. The Congolese army general, frustrated with the political turmoil and with guaranteed United States support, officially took power and named himself President for a five year term.[93] He subsequently formed a totalitarian regime and remained in power for thirty one years.

In the summer of 1960, the Cold War advanced into Central Africa and the Soviet Union-United States struggle for influence and control in the Congo was dominated by their Great Power rivalry. The Belgian Congo was one of the most profitable colonies in Africa, known to possess vast reserves of copper, diamonds, gold, uranium, and by 1960, approximately sixty percent of the Western world's supplies of cobalt.[94] Actual United States investment in Africa and the Congo, which has significantly grown since, was

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[90] Princeton Lyman. (2004). "Ralph Bunche's International Legacy: The Middle East, Congo, and United Nations Peacekeeping." In *The Journal of Negro Education*. Vol. 73, No. 2. pp. 159-170. p. 163.
[91] Kalb. p. 309.
[92] Ibid. p. 371.
[93] Kalb. p. 379.
[94] David Gibbs. (1993). "Dag Hammarskjöld, the United Nations, and the Congo Crisis of 1960-1: A Reinterpretation." In *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. Vol. 31, No. 1. pp. 163-174). p. 165.

comparatively limited. In 1957, when the United States State Department established a Bureau of African Affairs, there were more Foreign Service officers assigned to West Germany than there were to all of Africa.[95] The Eisenhower Administration believed in the basic premise of Cold War ideology: the danger of hostile international communism directed by the Soviet Union. United States officials knew the Congo would be of strategic interest for the Soviet Union due to its size, central location in Africa, and its extensive mineral wealth. The United States also believed that a pro-Communist Congo would endanger Western sources of strategic raw materials. It was also anticipated that instability in the Congo would be augmented by the Soviet Union into influence, a base of control, and possibly even conversion to communism.[96]

However, the core issue in the Congo and its main strategic significance was the maintenance of global peace and the avoidance of an East-West direct confrontation as a result of internal conflict and political chaos. Direct United States military aid was quickly ruled out for fear it might be used as a guise for substantial Soviet intervention to aid Lumumba, which could lead to an undesirable confrontation between the two superpowers.[97] The UN military mission, from a Soviet and American perspective, at least initially, satisfied this primary goal of indirect conflict in the Congo.[98]

The United States engaged in the Congo essentially to oppose communist expansion and secondly to support Western economic interests. The United States sought a unified Congo with an established and moderate government in Leopoldville, capable

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[95] Kalb. p. XXVI
[96] Stephen Weissman. (1974). Uncertain Foreign Policy in the Congo: 1960-1964. United Kingdom; Cornell University Press. p. 52.
[97] Ernest Lefever. (1967). Uncertain Mandate: Politics of the U.N. Congo Operation. Baltimore, Maryland; The Johns Hopkins Press. p. 77.
[98] Mahoney. p. 37.

of maintaining mutually beneficial relations with the United States and Western states in general. The United States wanted to ensure continued Western access to the economic resources in the Congo and to thwart Soviet subversion, to avoid civil war, and to integrate Katanga province peacefully into the Congo as a whole. The United States emphasized the restoration of internal order based on the theory that chaos-to-communism would be exploited by the Soviet Union and their allies. The United States State Department anticipated the Soviet Union would exploit the chaos for purposes contrary to stability and the overall wellbeing of the Congolese people, and regarded the Soviet Union, not Belgium, as the main threat to independence.[99]

Two weeks after independence, Lumumba turned to the Soviet Union for military aid. The United States highly encouraged UN military action because with escalating disorder and the decline in Congo-Belgian relations, the from-chaos-to-communism theory became the critical and principle preoccupation of United States policy-makers. Their central concern was that the Soviet Union would provide troops or military advisers to the Congolese government. This, it was hypothesized, would lead to "permanent communist cells," a "Soviet takeover," and "turning over Central Africa to the Soviets."[100] The United States administration employed the UN as a proxy through which to obstruct Soviet activity in the Congo. Its plan of attack was to support the UN's goals without necessarily adhering to them; to exercise control over the Congo operation without admitting responsibility for the consequences.[101] Furthermore, the United States

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[99] Lefever. p. 76-8. Weissman characterizes this theory as the "from-chaos-to-Communism complex [which] was rooted in the conservatives' lack of sympathy for and lack of experience in the 'new nationalisms'….Some feared that instability in the Congo would spread beyond its borders, creating golden opportunities for the Soviet bloc." Weissman. p. 53.
[100] Weissman. p. 59.
[101] Mahoney. p. 96.

was not eager for direct military involvement in the Congo; an area outside the realm of military responsibility and lacking considerable United States economic investment. Even with the lack of investment, the United States was convinced that Western states could not stand aside and allow the Congo to be taken over by the Soviet Union. The United States used the UN to keep Soviet influence out. The most effective method, according to the United States administration, to prevent a Soviet takeover was to establish regulations that all aid to the Congo must be conducted on a multilateral basis.[102] Implementing multilateral methods of aid via the UN would impede unilateral support for the Congo from the Soviet Union.

From the very beginning the United States was in a dominant position to influence UN operations in the Congo and therefore employ it as a proxy to fulfill its objectives. A major factor was the great numbers of American personnel involved in the operation. Dag Hammarskjöld, the first Secretary-General for the Congo operation, was from Sweden, a "neutral" country, but this was not true for the majority of the most influential advisors around the Secretary-General. The Eastern Bloc states were largely excluded from the Congo operation and there was deliberate intent to see that no member of the UN Secretariat, who was a citizen of a communist state, saw the Congo telegrams.[103] According to Conor Cruise O'Brien, a former Secretariat official for the Congo, the principal UN personnel who dealt with the Congo operation comprised of an inner core of Americans around Secretary-General Hammarskjöld. All three of the Secretary-General's top advisors – Ralph Bunche, Andrew Cordier, and Heinz Weischoff – were

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[102] Kalb. p. 27.
[103] Conor Cruise O'Brien. (1962). To Katanga and Back: A UN Case History. New York, NY; Simon and Schuster. pp. 55-6.

Americans.[104] According to O'Brien, there was little question of their accepting

directives from the United States. The United States paid the majority of the expenses[105]

and was the largest contributor to the Congo operation. A withdrawal of United States

support would bring the Congo operation to a standstill. The United States possessed

tremendous influence in the General Assembly and in the Security Council and any

Secretary-General who lost the support of the United States would not get a second

term.[106] The United States government attempted to use its influence in the UN with

regard to the Congo to pressure UN operations towards its goals. American officials

would later acknowledge the success of their efforts. For example, State Department

official Averell Harriman judged that the Congo operation, due to the level of control the

United States had over the operation, in reality to have been a United States operation

rather than simply United States support for a UN operation.[107]   For the UN, a

significant amount of pressure from the Soviet Union, although with great difficulty,

could be weathered and dealt with but significant pressure from the United States would

most likely not be sustained for long. In order to manage this pressure and for the

ultimate survival of the Secretary-General's position, it was a virtual necessity for the

Secretary-General to surround himself with advisors and officials capable of managing

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[104] Ibid. p. 56. Bunche was the first head of operations for the UN in the Congo until Cordier replaced him.
Weischoff was a top advisor to Hammarskjöld. Weischoff and Hammarskjöld would eventually die in the
same airplane crash while flying over Northern Rhodesia on their way to negotiate a ceasefire in Katanga.
[105] During the four year UN operation in the Congo the United States provided forty-two percent of total
expenses, far more than any other single country, and United States support was especially crucial during
the first months of the operation. See David Gibbs. (2000). "The United Nations, International
Peacekeeping and the Question of 'Impartiality': Revisiting the Congo Operation of 1960." In *The Journal
of Modern African Studies.* Vol. 38, No. 3. pp. 359-382. pp. 364-5.
[106] The United States possessed tremendous influence within the UN until newly independent Third World
states joined and were granted voting power. Previously pro-American states dominated the General
Assembly.
[107] Gibbs. (2000). pp. 364-5.

pressure from the United States. Advisors like Bunche, Cordier, and Weischoff were important figures in managing and accommodating United States pressure.[108]

The military personnel and advisors who contributed to the Congo operation were largely from Western states. At the start of the operation, Major General Carl Von Horn, a Swedish officer was selected to command the military forces which consisted of staff officers from Canada, Sweden, New Zealand, and Italy, which were later joined by officers from Denmark, Great Britain, and Ghana. Not one of the military advisors or officers came from an Eastern European state.[109] The "Congo Club" thus, consisted of an inner core of Americans who advised the Secretary-General, with a second layer of Westerners, followed by a third layer comprised of members from Africa and Asia. The Western group and the Afro-Asian group were two of the three main basic ingredients of the UN. The communist states comprised the third ingredient that was not represented in the "Club."[110]

After Kasavubu relieved Lumumba of his duties as Prime Minister, civil unrest increased in the Congo. Cordier decided to discontinue all radio broadcasts and issued an order for UN troops to take over the radio station and airports throughout the country. At the time this was officially considered a neutral act and, in theory, it affected both Kasavubu and Lumumba equally. In reality however, this action clearly favoured Kasavubu and weakened Lumumba. Kasavubu was able to move his broadcasts across the river to Brazzaville in the Republic of the Congo. The government in that state favoured Kasavubu over Lumumba and permitted Kasavubu to broadcast his messages. Since Brazzaville was only a short distance from Leopoldville, Kasavubu's broadcasts

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[108] O'Brien. p. 56.
[109] Kalb. pp. 20-1.
[110] O'Brien. pp. 56-7.

easily reached his audience in the capital city. Lumumba, however, had no such

resources at his disposal to broadcast his messages.[111]

Cordier's decision to close the airports also had political ramifications for

Lumumba. As a result, he could not airlift troops to the capital, which would have

improved his odds significantly in restoring his power. From the very beginning the UN

actively sided with Kasavubu. In a conversation with a British diplomat, Hammarskjöld

stated that "the actions of the United Nations favoured and were designed to favour

Kasavubu."[112] Cordier would also later reveal that his decisions barring Lumumba from

the airports and radio station were intended to avoid Lumumba from developing the

Congo into a communist state.[113] A key factor in Cordier's decisions was the Soviet

Union. He was concerned by the progress the Soviet Union had made in the Congo,

especially compared to the minimal impact made by the United States.[114]

Lumumba's decision to accept aid from the Soviet Union significantly intensified

United States antagonism towards the Lumumba government.[115] Hammarskjöld's views

of Lumumba were similar to those of the United States and he occasionally stated his

opinions to American officials. Hammarskjöld noted that he wished to see Lumumba

replaced and that Lumumba was an "impossible person" that must be "broken."[116]

Although Cordier did not directly orchestrate Kasavubu's decision to dismiss

Lumumba, Cordier and other UN officials were aware of Kasavubu's plan several days in

advance. When Kasavubu announced the dismissal, UN officials expressed gratification.

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[111] Rajeshwar Dayal. (1976). <u>Mission for Hammarskjöld: The Congo Crisis</u>. India; Oxford University Press. p. 38.
[112] Gibbs. (2000). pp. 371-2.
[113] Dobbins. p. 22.
[114] Kalb. p. 74.
[115] The US became especially hostile to the Lumumba government at this point resulting in the CIA initiating covert operations aimed at destabilizing his government. See Gibbs. (2000). p. 369.
[116] Ibid. p. 370.

As noted in the memoirs of Major General Carl Von Horn, who was in charge of the UN

military force in the Congo, "it was impossible not to detect an atmosphere of relief,

almost of satisfaction."[117] In a public statement Hammarskjöld supported Kasavubu's

actions by saying, "I do not want to analyze the complicated constitution and the

complicated constitutional situation, but let me register as a fact that, according to the

[Congolese] constitution, the president has the right to revoke the mandate of the prime

minister."[118] Hammarskjöld's interpretation of the constitution was questionable since

Lumumba still had the support of parliament and it was highly unlikely that the creators

of the constitution designed it so that the president could acquire so much power that he

could remove from any responsibility a prime minister who had not lost the confidence of

parliament.[119] The day after Kasavubu removed Lumumba, Hammarskjöld

acknowledged to a member of the United States delegation to the UN that he was trying

to get rid of Lumumba without compromising his own position or that of the UN through

"extra-constitutional actions."[120]

Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, in a speech on January 6, 1961 before a closed

Kremlin meeting of party officials, stated that because of the deterrent factor of nuclear

weapons and the military power of the Soviet Union and the United States that world

wars were now virtually impossible. Khrushchev believed that limited wars could still

recur as long as the "imperialist" camp existed, but were becoming less probable. What

would become more common were national liberation wars, which began as "uprisings of

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[117] Carl Von Horn. (1967). Soldiering for Peace. New York; David McKay. p. 208.
[118] Andrew Cordier & Wilder Foote (Eds.) (1977). Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations. volume V. New York; Columbia University Press. p. 164.
[119] Gibbs. (2000). p. 371.
[120] See Kalb. p. 80 & Gibbs. (2000). p. 372.

colonial peoples against their oppressors, [which then] developed into guerilla wars."[121]

The Soviet Union would focus and fully support wars of national liberation, such as the

conflict in the Congo, and that there was "no force on earth now able to prevent the

people of more and more countries from advancing to socialism."[122]

The Soviet Union viewed the Congo as an opportunity to expand communist

influence in Central Africa. The Soviet Union's main objective was to "radicalize" the

Congo and use the Lumumba government as an agent for conducting its wider goals in

Africa. To accomplish the inevitable radicalization, the Soviet Union worked toward

three particular objectives in the Congo – the ejection of all Belgian economic and

military influence, the nullification of United States political influence, and the support

and socialization of the Lumumba government. The Soviet Union was eager to

demonstrate its determination to advocate the expulsion of Belgian forces, especially

from Katanga, and to thwart the efforts of the United States.[123]

Direct troop support from the Soviet Union was initially ruled out for many of the

same reasons that determined a comparable decision by the United States. The Soviet

Union did not want to provide an alleged reason for direct United States intervention.

The Soviet Union also lacked the logistical structure to deploy and maintain a meaningful

military force within Central Africa. Based on these factors, the Soviet Union supported

the July 14, 1960 UN resolution authorizing the dispatch of a UN force. Its support was

designed to prevent direct United States assistance, which would have been a

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[121] Deborah Welch Larson. (1997). Anatomy of Mistrust: US – Soviet Relations During the Cold War. United States of America; Corell University Press. p. 110.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Lefever. pp. 95-6. The term "radicalize" was used by Yuriy Zvyagin, a prominent Soviet commentator at the time.

considerable barrier to the achievement of Soviet goals in Central Africa.[124] The Soviets

favoured the creation of a UN force for the Congo because it was the course advocated by

the African states and it appeared to be the leading approach to replace Belgian troops,

and thus to assist the Lumumba government. Soviet officials were aware, however, that

by voting for the resolution they were essentially creating an entity which they could not

control. They were aware that the United States dominated the UN and that the United

States had supported the resolution in the hope of strengthening their own position in the

Congo.[125]

The Soviet Union believed that they were not sufficiently represented at the

decision-making levels of the UN, and in the particular instance of the Congo, UN

officials – American, European, and Afro-Asian – were pursuing goals to further Western

interests and to obstruct Soviet interests. The Soviets realized that if Lumumba was not

able to reassert control in Katanga, his reign as Prime Minister might be limited, and the

Soviets would lose its best prospect for influence in Africa. The Soviets planned on

winning over other leaders of the Third World and therefore the Soviets believed they

needed to capitalize on this opportunity. Sending combat troops was virtually impossible

both logistically and politically. Instead the Soviet Union decided on limited military aid

in the form of arms, transportation, and advisors. This hopefully would assist Lumumba

in regaining control without inviting the risk of Western military intervention and a direct

confrontation with the United States.[126] By August 20, 1960 eleven planes with Soviet

crews landed in the Congo along with more than one hundred Soviet technicians, close to

one hundred trucks with spare parts, along with weapons and ammunition for Lumumba's

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[124] Ibid. pp. 96-7.
[125] Kalb. p. 17.
[126] Ibid. p. 57.

soldiers.[127] The main purpose of Soviet military support was to end the secession in the

province of Katanga. The Soviet support ended up being a catastrophe however, and

Lumumba was out of power within a few days after the arrival of the Soviet support.

Although military support to Lumumba turned out to be a disaster, the Soviet

Union was determined to put the United States and Western powers on the defensive.

The Soviet Union turned to the opportunities in the changing structure of the UN.

Sixteen newly independent African states would soon be accepted into the UN,

establishing a possible Afro-Asian bloc which, together with the Warsaw Pact states,

would compose a majority. The Soviet Union wanted to take advantage of this soon-to-

be shift in power to form an alliance with Third World states and to take advantage of

their support for Soviet positions on a wide range of issues.[128] Their aggressive anti-

colonialist position was designed to address these Third World states and their policy in

the Congo was an essential feature in their campaign to change the balance of power

within the UN and eventually on a global scale in their favour.

The Soviet Union tried to establish themselves as the leading defender of Afro-

Asian interests in the struggle against colonialism. A significant setback occurred

however, with the expulsion of the Soviet Embassy in the Congo when the pro-Western

Mobutu took power and demanded that the Soviets leave immediately. The Soviet Union

ultimately blamed the Secretary-General of the UN and his associates for deliberately

thwarting Soviet aspirations in the Congo and the Soviets held the UN accountable for

the expulsion of the Soviet Embassy.[129]

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[127] Mahoney. p. 40.
[128] Kalb. p. 76.
[129] Ibid. p. 107.

The United States saw the UN as a vehicle through which to thwart Soviet objectives in the Congo and used it effectively to accomplish its goals. The plan of attack was to support the UN's objectives without actually adhering to them; to exert control over the UN Congo operation without accepting responsibility for any of the consequences.[130] Both UN Secretary-Generals who held the position during the Congo operation supported the United States Cold War goal of preventing the Congo from falling into the realm of Soviet influence. Both Hammarskjöld and the United States administration turned decidedly against Lumumba by September of 1960, right after he was able to secure Soviet support to take back control of Katanga. Both Hammarskjöld and the United States administration believed that preventing Soviet involvement in Congolese affairs was a fundamental, albeit unacknowledged, goal of the UN operation in the Congo.[131] Lumumba's eventual death went far to secure that goal. Hammarskjöld and his UN officials saw no contradiction between being "international, neutral civil servants" and being anti-communist. Although Hammarskjöld and his officials did not always agree with the United States and other Western powers, especially Belgium, at all times they viewed the Soviet Union as the dominant threat to global peace.[132]

The main concern in the Congo conflict for the United States and the Soviet Union was to avoid direct confrontation between them. The UN and the Lumumba government were employed as proxies, through the provision of military aid and financial support, to avoid direct confrontation between the superpowers. Africa was also outside the realm of direct military responsibility for the superpowers resulting in proxy

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[130] Mahoney. p. 96.
[131] Dobbins. p. 15.
[132] Carole Collins. (1992). "Fatally Flawed Mediation: Cordier and the Congo Crisis of 1960. In *Africa Today*. Vol. 39, No. 3. pp. 5-22. p. 10.

strategies as a logical method to advance national interests. If not for United States

support, the UN operation would not have occurred at the level it did. United States

support, in effect, intensified the operation. A vital component of proxy war strategies is

to allow a superpower to advance its national interest and the United States was able to

influence the UN operation in such a way that it was able to accomplish its goals of

keeping Soviet influence out of the Congo.

The Angolan Civil War

War in Angola broke out in 1961 when the two major nationalist movements, the

MPLA and the FNLA, began an armed struggle against the Portuguese to terminate

colonial rule. In 1965, UNITA, a third liberation movement was formed, and entered into

the guerrilla war for independence, which continued until April of 1974 when the

Portuguese dictatorship was overthrown by army officials amenable to the decolonization

of Angola.[133] An accord was established (the Alvor Agreement) between Portugal and

the three nationalist movements creating a transitional government, which would rule the

country until independence on November 11th 1975.

Attempted reconciliation between the three movements deteriorated and the

transitional government collapsed in the spring of 1975 resulting in civil war among the

three nationalist movements. This was by and large due to external involvement from the

Soviet Union, the United States, China, Zaire, South Africa, and Cuba. The Soviet Union

supplied the pro-communist MPLA with arms, while the United States provided covert

military assistance to the FNLA and UNITA by providing weapons to Zaire which was

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[133] Michael McFaul. (1990). Rethinking the "Reagan Doctrine" in Angola. In *International Security*. Vol. 14, No. 3. pp. 99-135. p. 101.

then redirected to the FNLA. Zaire also sent several thousand troops into Angola in support of the FNLA. The combination of this support and aid led the FNLA to believe they could win the struggle for power and rejected any idea of a coalition government after independence. The United States now judged victory or defeat in terms of the accomplishments of the FNLA while the Soviet Union, convinced that the United States was now backing the FNLA, immediately increased aid to the MPLA. Cuba, which had been providing minimal aid to the MPLA, followed suit.[134]

The Soviet Union started financial and military support to the MPLA before 1961 when the anti-colonial battle began and four years before the Cuban alliance with the MPLA. After a short stoppage in aid between 1972-74, the Soviets resumed support. The United States began providing restricted support to the FNLA starting in the early 1960s, the Chinese got involved with the FNLA in the early 1970s, and various African states supported one or another of the Angolan movements with arms, training, finance, political support, and sanctuary.[135]

In September 1975, the Soviet Union chose to provide a significant increase in military assistance to the MPLA with the goal of securing a total victory. Significant arms deliveries began in October and the Soviets were the most important factor in transporting and equipping Cuban troops. The Soviet Union wanted to ready the MPLA for a unilateral declaration of independence on November 11th, the pre-established target date for Angolan independence. The Soviet equipment supplied in October was not a

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[134] Thomas Noer. (1993). "International Credibility and Political Survival: The Ford Administration's Intervention in Angola." In *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 23, No. 4. pp. 771-785. p. 774.
[135] Chester Crocker. (1992). High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighborhood. New York; W.W. Norton & Company. p. 46.

response to the South African invasion as equipment began to arrive well before the South African intervention on October 22nd.[136]

The war increasingly intensified from late 1974 to early 1976, resulting in the armed intrusion of Cuban forces on the side of the MPLA, South African troops for UNITA and Zairian troops for the FNLA. South Africa would have seized the capital of Luanda if Cuba had not sent in troops in response to the MPLA's requests. As the South African invasion disintegrated and it became evident in the Western press that the United States and South Africa had been working in tandem in Angola, the United States drew back its support.[137] Fear of another Vietnam, the United States Congress voted to suspend all United States military assistance in December of 1975 with the Clark Amendment. This ended all United States military involvement and aid to independent groups involved in military or paramilitary operations in Angola until the amendment was repealed in 1985.[138]

By 1976, South African and Zairian troop withdrew from Angola while almost simultaneously there was a significant increase in Cuban troops. With the aid and support of the Soviet Union and Cuba the MPLA emerged victorious and was recognized as the legitimate government of Angola by a majority of states.[139] The war was far from over however, and the conflict continued. The civil war spread outward and the South African government responded by intervening in Angola from 1981 to 1987. The Soviet Union responded with increased amounts of military aid to the MPLA and Cuban forces.

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[136] Arthur Klinghoffer. (1980). <u>The Angolan War: A Study in Soviet Policy in the Third World</u>. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press. p. 23.
[137] Piero Gleijeses. (2006). "Moscow's Proxy? Cuba and Africa 1975-1988." In *Journal of Cold War Studies*. Vol. 8, No. 4. pp. 98-146. pp. 101-2.
[138] McFaul. p. 101.
[139] Ibid.

Conditions for withdrawing Cuban troops were simple. They would remain in Angola as long as there were external military threats. Cuba established two essential demands before they would depart. First, as agreed upon in 1978 by UN Security Council Resolution 435, Namibia must become independent and South African troops must leave its territory. Second, South Africa must end all aid to UNITA, which had been increased substantially. Finally, in December of 1988, with the New York agreements, South Africa agreed to leave Namibia, Namibia would become independent as stipulated by Resolution 435, South Africa would end all aid to UNITA, and Cuban troops would leave Angola within twenty-seven months.[140]

The strategic significance of Angola for long-term East-West relations during the Cold War had consequential importance. However, Angola as a distant state from both the United States and Soviet Union was not of particularly vital interest to either superpower. From an American perspective, the United States felt it had to respond to Soviet actions as upsetting the world balance of power and striving to impose a government against the will of the majority of the Angolan people.[141] The Ford Administration saw the Angolan conflict as an American-Soviet zero-sum game and as a component of regional power in the grander scheme of a balance of power between the United States and Soviet Union. The administration stressed the importance of preserving regional balances so that the larger global balance might be preserved.[142]

At the time the Angolan war began the United States had just gone through the turmoil of Watergate, South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia had all fallen to communist

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[140] Gleijeses. p. 131-2.
[141] Poles suggested that if an election was held at the time UNITA would have most likely defeated the MPLA. UNITA had the confidence of the majority of Angolans. See Noer. p. 778.
[142] Klinghoffer. p. 77

forces. The United States wanted to recover from past political damage by reasserting its

dormant international authority. The United States perception of the Soviet Union was

that of a destabilizing force that had the ability to sway the global balance of power. A

strong response to counter the Soviets was therefore advised by top government officials.

Angola was considered a pristine area of superpower influence subject to a challenge for

power.[143]

Even though a strong response was desired to counter the Soviet Union, the

United States was keen on maintaining its détente relationship despite Soviet actions in

Angola running contrary to the principles of détente and threatening superpower

cooperation. The United States therefore resorted to covert methods in Angola to

preserve the foundations of détente and United States cooperation with South Africa

could be camouflaged. The attitudes of the American people also played a role as it

would have been ambitious for the United States administration to act overtly to any

meaningful degree so soon after the embarrassment in Vietnam.[144] Kissinger

summarized the United States position on covert aid when he stated:

> We chose covert means because we wanted to keep our visibility to a
> minimum; we wanted the greatest possible opportunity for an African
> solution. We felt that overt assistance would elaborate a formal doctrine
> justifying great power intervention…. The Angola situation is of a type
> in which diplomacy without leverage is impotent, yet direct military
> confrontation would involve unnecessary risks.[145]

In conjunction with Kissinger's statement, the Nixon Doctrine essentially was to

devise a new role for American power which would permit a new, less overt United

States role in Third World regions in the post-Vietnam era. The Nixon Doctrine aimed to

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[143] See Noer. p. 773 and Klinghoffer. pp. 78-9.
[144] Klinghoffer. pp. 90-2.
[145] Henry Kissinger quoted in Klinghoffer. p. 89.

maintain regional military balances through means of military support as a key means of maintaining stability and a substitute for direct United States intervention. This was to counter any opposition from the American people and to reaffirm American credibility internationally amongst its allies.[146]

The purpose of the covert aid and the Nixon - Kissinger strategy was to maintain or sway the balance of power in favour of the United States and to prevent a Communist takeover in Angola. Kissinger viewed the primary objective as the obligation to respond to an exceptional use of Soviet power achieved in part through the "expeditionary force of a client state" and the secondary objective as aiding South African states who oppose Soviet and Cuban intervention.[147] Kissinger rationalized American aid in order to counter the Soviet Union by stating in his memoirs:

> My assessment was if the Soviet Union can interfere eight thousand
> miles from home in an undisputed way and control Zaire's and Zambia's
> access to the sea, then Southern African countries must conclude that the
> US had abdicated in Southern Africa. Maybe for the best of reasons in
> the world. They will than have two choices as to where to turn – to
> China or the USSR…. This tendency will then spread. It would shift
> Tanzania and others further left, and have a major effect in Africa.
> Therefore, I thought we had a major obligation perhaps not to reverse the
> situation for which it was too late, but at least to balance the power so
> that we were not faced at independence with an undisputed claim by the
> Communists in Luanda.[148]

The United States' indirect intervention into Angola began as a response to the provision of arms by the Soviet Union to the MPLA. United States intelligence estimated that a significant number of MPLA fighters were being equipped and trained by the Soviets and Cubans. This changed the balance of power within Angola which resulted in

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[146] Robert Litwak. (1984). <u>Détente and the Nixon Doctrine: American Foreign Policy and the Pursuit of Stability, 1969-1976</u>. Great Britain; Cambridge University Press. p. 120.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Henry Kissinger. (1999). <u>Years of Renewal</u>. New York, NY; Simon and Schuster. p. 793.

MPLA attacks on the FNLA and UNITA forces who were eventually evicted from the capital of Luanda and the surrounding area. The victor in the struggle over Luanda had in all probability the claim to international recognition.[149] Kissinger summarized the motives of the United States for resisting Soviet aid and influence in Angola by asking:

> Do we really want the world to conclude that if the Soviet Union chooses to intervene in a massive way, and if Cuban or other troops are used as an expeditionary force, the US will not be able to muster the unity or resolve to provide even financial assistance? Can those faced with such a threat without hope of assistance from us be expected to resist? Do we want our potential adversaries to conclude that in the event of future challenges America's internal divisions are likely to deprive us of even minimal leverage over developments of global significance?.... And what conclusion will an unopposed superpower draw when the next opportunity for intervention beckons?[150]

Kissinger argued that the United States had to act forcibly in Angola in order to illustrate its intention to combat aggressive Soviet behaviour. Kissinger also needed to reaffirm that its allies would not lose faith in United States commitments to their defence.

For Kissinger, the issue was not whether the state of Angola represents a vital interest to the United States. The issue was whether the Soviet Union, supported by Cuban forces, could dictate to the majority of the Angolan population its own form of government. Kissinger believed that the United States Senate's action, on implementing the Clark amendment, encouraged foreign forces to participate in a majority of circumstances in which there was a possibility for foreign intervention. Kissinger argued that Angola was a testing ground of United States determination to restrict Soviet intervention throughout the Third World and, thus, was a test to the fundamental United States policy of containment of communism.[151]

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[149] Ibid. pp. 797-8.
[150] Ibid. pp. 830-1.
[151] Noer. p. 779.

Angola possesses vast mineral, petroleum, and hydropower resources. With the end of colonial rule and civil war, an indigenous government administered effectively could potentially have created an economic boom within Angola.[152] Instilling a government favourable to ones ideology would be beneficial in assimilating Angola into ones economic and defence systems. The Soviet Union did not specifically seek any strategic rights in Angola but it did act to counter American plans in their quest to incorporate Angola into their economic and defence operations.[153]

The Soviet Union's foreign policy goals in Angola involved the installation of a pro-Soviet Marxist movement in the MPLA and to develop closer ties to other southern African pro-Marxist movements. The Soviet Union wanted to establish a base of operations in Angola from which they could partake in a more comprehensive role in southern African politics. They were also attracted to Angolan port facilities as well as over flight and aircraft landing privileges. Also important to the Soviets was preventing a Zairian-United States sphere of influence. A secondary goal was to isolate Zaire, diminish its regional influence, and possibly even orchestrate the overthrow of Mobutu who was pro-American. Angola was strategically important toward this end because it controlled Zaire's copper route to the ocean and it was also in a position to blockade Zaire's lone Atlantic port at Matadi.[154]

Globally, a significant Soviet military setting in Angola could have put at risk the security of the United States and other Western states as the movement of oil around the Cape could have been inhibited by Soviet ships stationed in Angolan ports. Regionally, the Soviet Union now had the logistics for air and sea supply routes to South Africa in

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[152] Crocker. p. 44.
[153] Klinghoffer. p. 74.
[154] Ibid. p. 147.

case a major war broke out in the area. With the MPLA in power the Soviets now had the port, over flight, and landing rights previously enjoyed by the United States and they now had the potential for operating aerial surveillance flights out of Luanda.[155]

Beginning in the early 1960s and lasting more than two decades the Soviet Union viewed Africa as the most chaotic and rebellious area of the capitalist world, and therefore the weakest. Taking advantage of local instability created opportunities to expand the Soviet Union's area of control without incurring high risks. Varying degrees of financial support and the supply of relatively cheap weapons was a valuable investment for influencing new and insecure governments or anti-colonialist guerrilla groups.[156]

The Soviet Union's objectives in Angola involved the installation of power in the MPLA, a Marxist and generally pro-Soviet organization. This was to be accomplished with Soviet arms but with a low enough profile so as not to engage a more extensive United States, Zairian and South African interference. The Soviets also wanted to foster closer ties to other southern African liberation movements in order to create a foundation of operations in Angola so they could be involved in a more encompassing role in southern African politics. The Soviets wanted to develop an image of a revolutionary, anti-colonial, anti-imperialist and anti-racist power and to agitate the United States and China by identifying them with racist South Africa. It also wanted to show its reliability as an ally of the MPLA to other African liberation movements.[157]

By 1975 the Soviet Union was encouraging Cuba's intervention in Angola because Cuba's goals generally lined up with the Soviet Union's. Contrary to current

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[155] Ibid. pp. 76-8.
[156] Arkady Shevchenko. (1985). Breaking With Moscow. New York; Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. p. 271.
[157] Klinghoffer. p. 148.

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Soviet-United States relations of détente, the Soviet leadership was determined to pursue its objectives in Angola without taking United States opinion into account. The Soviet Union was convinced that the United States lacked political will in Angola and in Africa in general. After the humiliation of Vietnam the Soviet leaders judged that in addition to the "Vietnam syndrome," the United States now had an "Angolan syndrome."[158]

The Soviet Union openly supported the MPLA in its anti-colonial struggle against Portugal as well as after independence as compared to the United States and China who chose covert methods in their support of the FNLA and UNITA. Soviet military and logistics support and Cuban troops were assessed as necessary to defend a legitimate MPLA ruled state against hostility from South Africa, Zaire, the United States, and other powers.[159] The Soviet Union has always approved of the cause of the MPLA. Its Marxist ideological stance and ties to the Portuguese Communist Party were motivating factors for the Soviets. Also influencing the Soviet stance were United States and Chinese ties with the FNLA and later to UNITA.[160]

The strategy employed by the Soviets was a substantial supply of military equipment, a restricted function for Soviet advisers, and support from Cuban troops. The risk of direct United States involvement was very low due to the Soviet Union's unwillingness to commit its own personnel. The United States was assessed correctly as unwilling to counteract the Cuban involvement and the efforts of the Soviets and Cubans were sufficient to achieve an MPLA victory. The Cuban function was preferable to increased Soviet involvement as Cuba was not a superpower attempting to secure strategic rights or political leverage. In hindsight, it appears that the Soviet Union acted

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[158] Shevchenko. p. 271.
[159] Klinghoffer. p. 6.
[160] Ibid. p. 145.

judiciously and maximized its gains from the Angolan situation with minimal direct risk.[161]

The Soviet Union's involvement in the Angolan War was considerable and decisive and it cannot be viewed as simply a reaction to the inconsequential role of the United States. It did, however, act to block United States goals to further incorporate Angola into its economic and defence systems. The roles of the superpowers were clearly disproportionate in 1975 and, essentially, the Soviet Union was not reacting to United States action but instead it may have been taking advantage of United States inaction. The Soviet Union was, however, wary of increased South African involvement.[162]

It is now evident that, as the former Soviet ambassador to the United States, Anatolii Dobrynin, discussed in his memoirs, the Cubans sent their troops into Angola "on their own initiative and without consulting us."[163] Kissinger had to reconsider his original assessment by stating in his memoirs: "At the time we thought he [Castro] was operating as a Soviet surrogate….We could not imagine that he would act so provocatively so far from home unless he was pressured by Moscow to repay the Soviet Union for its military and economic support. Evidence now available suggests that the opposite was the case."[164] Cuba may have initiated its intent to intervene in Angola and performed semi-autonomously in the sense that it chose to act consistently with Soviet policy interests rather than providing no support at all to the MPLA. Cuba's level of independence however, normally did not allow behaviour inconsistent with general

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[161] Ibid. p. 146.
[162] Ibid. p. 99.
[163] Anatoly Dobrynin. (1995). In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to America's Six Cold War Presidents (1962-1986). New York; Times Books, Inc. p. 362.
[164] Kissinger. p. 816.

Soviet interests.[165] Dependence upon the Soviet Union provided Cuba with new

capabilities otherwise unavailable allowing them to undertake a considerable role

internationally. Above all else, Cuba could not have pursued its objectives in Angola

without the economic and military support it received from the Soviet Union. Cuba's

ability to achieve its objectives was attainable by the existence of a friendly superpower

on which Cuba depended for its economic and military lifeline. The Soviet Union, in

order to avoid directly committing its own ground troops, also depended on Cuba and

was eventually able to employ Cuban troops as a proxy to achieve its national interests

abroad. For example, when Cuba attained air superiority in southern Angola and

northern Namibia in 1988, it was with military support that had been provided by the

Soviet Union at no cost to Cuba.[166]

When there are rival global superpowers, there is a restricting balance between

them that limits either state from committing their own forces in a direct intervention for

fear of the rival's response resulting in a possible conflict escalation. Both the United

States and the Soviet Union were highly aware of this predicament and therefore

exceptionally motivated to use third parties to accomplish a number of their foreign

policy goals. Although the smaller state in question may not necessarily be of vital

strategic importance to either superpower, both superpowers perceive the others actions

and anticipated actions to be of vital importance. Third parties were necessary to prevent

direct confrontation between superpowers.

The United States and the Soviet Union devised each of their strategies in order to

counter the other due to a perceived change in the balance of power and employed proxy
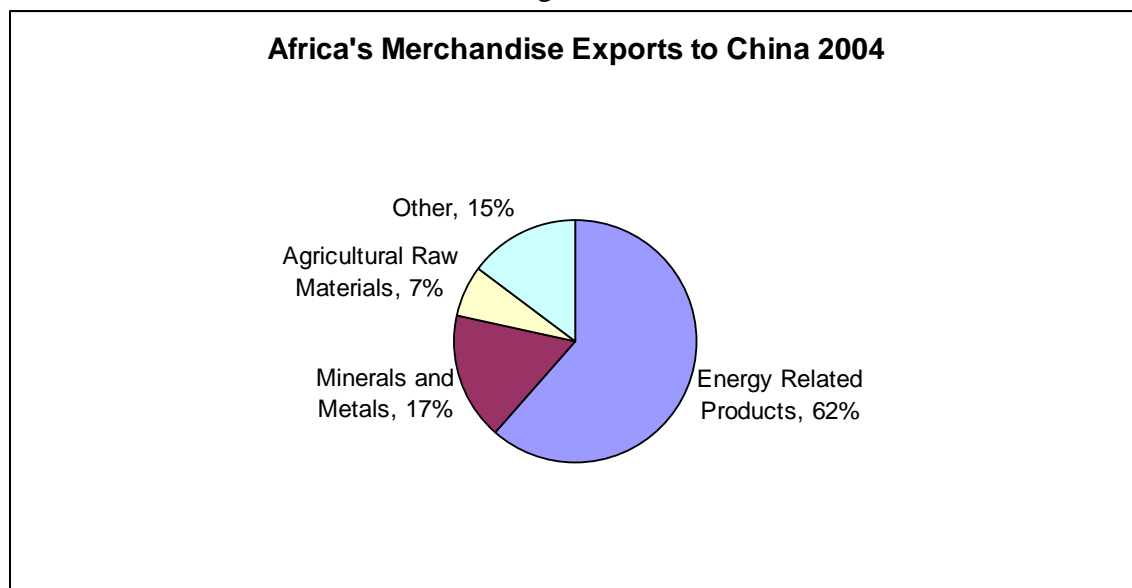
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[165] Klinghoffer. p. 119.
[166] Gleijeses. p. 144.

strategies to minimize the risk of a direct confrontation between them. The United States employed proxy strategies to camouflage its involvement and create a level of plausible deniability due to anticipated opposition from the American people. By employing proxy strategies the United States also wanted to demonstrate to its allies that they could rely on it for support and would not have to turn to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union hoped for similar benefits by showing its reliability to other African liberation movement.

Chapter Three: The Importance of Africa to the United States and China

Since the end of the Cold War, Africa has increasingly become a more and more important strategic continent in relation to natural resource acquisition and political competition between the United States and China. Just like European powers navigated for control over resources using Africa as an area to define their relative positions, China has expanded its interests in Africa causing reactions in Washington that reflect this current potential rearrangement of power and influence. Although energy resources are by far the largest export for Africa to the United States and China, the continent is abundant in other important minerals, namely, chromite, cobalt, vanadium, manganese, platinum, uranium, coal, diamond, copper and nickel whose exploitation continues to attract foreign interests. China also imports a significant amount of timber from Africa.[167]

Figure 3.1

Africa's Merchandise Exports to China 2004

Other, 15%
Agricultural Raw Materials, 7%
Minerals and Metals, 17%
Energy Related Products, 62%
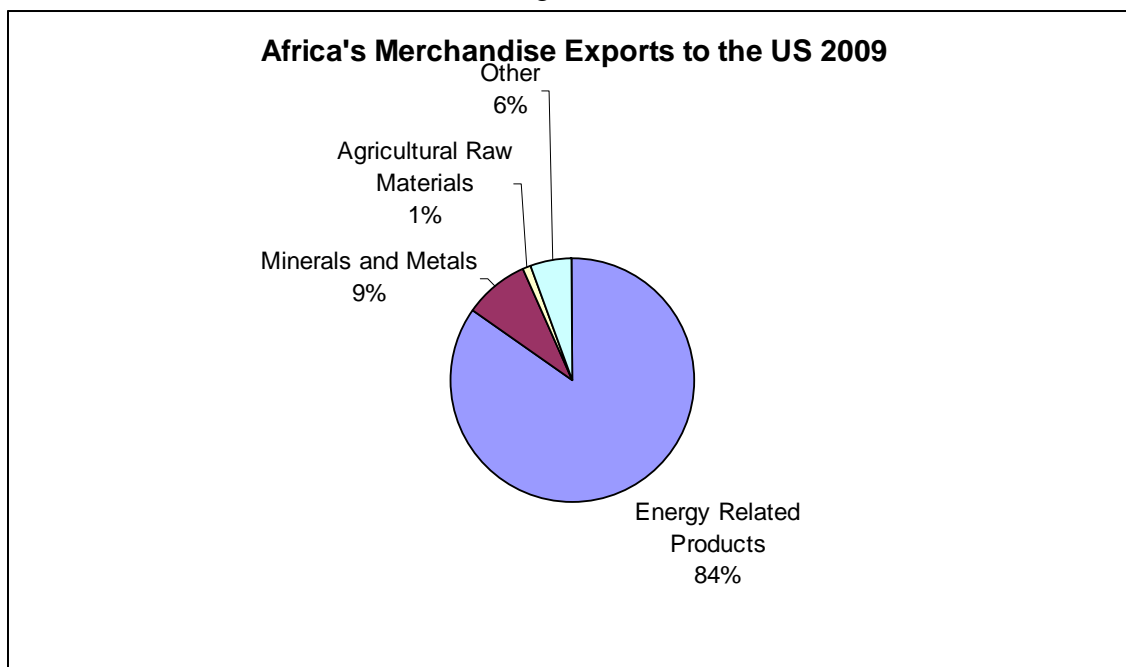
Source: Broadman.

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[167] R.A Akindele. (1985). "Africa and the Great Powers, with Particular Reference to the United States, the Soviet Union and China." In *Africa Spectrum*. Vol. 20. No. 2. pp. 125-151. p. 127

Figure 3.2

Africa's Merchandise Exports to the US 2009

Other
6%

Agricultural Raw
Materials
1%

Minerals and Metals
9%

Energy Related
Products
84%

Currently the United States is expanding its attempts to secure and defend access to African resources and to increase its influence within the continent in the face of increased expansion by China.[169] Ideologically, China increasingly views the world as being threatened by an unchallenged United States and China's policy in Africa has become centred on gaining support from African countries to counter United States dominance, which can be seen at the Sino-African Forum beginning in 2000. China has maintained the position that in the international system, with an unrivalled and ambitious United States policy, it is imperative that China and African countries support each other and work together to prevent the continued dominance by the United States. According to Chinese statements, maintaining that respect for each other's affairs and non-

[168] African Growth and Opportunity Act. "About AGOA." Accessed June 12, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.agoa.info/. Data compiled for statistics include only African countries eligible under the AGOA in 2009.

[169] Stephanie Rupp. (2008). "Africa and China: Engaging Postcolonial Interdependencies." In Robert Rotberg. (Ed.). China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence. Washington, D.C.; Brookings Institution Press. pp. 65-86. p. 67.

interference should be the basis of the emerging new international order is fundamental to this stance.[170]

China currently seeks a multipolar world in which superior United States power is weakened and constrained. The United States seeks to maintain its world leadership and strives to enhance the areas of democracy, market economies, and an international system conducive to United States and Western interests. There is growing concern in the United States that China's rise in Africa will eventually undermine its interests and that China's expanding presence in the region holds wider consequences for the international system. China is challenging United States and Western dominance on a continent that has traditionally served the West and, for the United States, as an increasingly important source of its energy needs. The most significant challenge to the United States in Africa in the years to come may be China and the first topic of most strategic debate regarding China and Africa is ideological conflict and energy resource competition.

The United States and Africa

After the fall of the Soviet Union and the freeing up of countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, significant United States attention and resources were dedicated to these former Soviet spheres of influence leaving little consideration of Africa.[171] During the 1990s there was a decline by roughly one third in its aid to Africa as the Clinton Administration pursued a policy of "trade, not aid" as displayed in the African

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[170] Ian Taylor. (2009). China's New Role in Africa. United States of America; Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. p. 90.
[171] Brennan Kraxberger. (2005). "The United States and Africa: Shifting Geopolitics in an "Age of Terror"". In *Africa Today*. Vol. 52, No. 1. pp. 47-68. p. 52.

Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).[172] In 1992 the United States became involved in

a UN mission in Somalia. However, after the debacle of Mogadishu and the death of

United States soldiers, it became extremely selective in sponsoring any humanitarian

missions that involved its soldiers in Africa for the next decade. Even though numerous

opportunities arose, notably in Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of

the Congo, United States administrations declined involvement even in the most

desperate humanitarian crises.[173]

The United States did not become directly involved in humanitarian crisis in

Africa but it did maintain ties with African states for the purposes of importing energy

resources and minerals. Many African states and organizations, however, became

irrelevant to American foreign policy elites. For example, Somalia, a former strategic

ally of the United States became a failed state after United States troops and UN workers

withdrew from the country. UNITA and the Democratic Republic of the Congo suffered

similar fates. Once United States allies, these places, organizations, and governments

became expendable.[174]

The post-9/11 global environment radically changed the priority of Africa in the

eyes of the United States and the amount of assistance to Africa has correspondingly

increased. Since 9/11, the United States government has expanded its engagement with

Africa through its military, intergovernmental policies, economic and humanitarian

efforts.[175] The United States perceives new threats due to the "War on Terror" and as the

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[172] African Growth and Opportunity Act.
[173] Kraxberger. p. 53.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Jessica Piombo. (2007). "Introduction: Africa's Rising Strategic Significance." In *Strategic Insights*.
Accessed December 4, 2008. Available on-line:
www.nps.edu/Academics/centers/ccc/publications/.../2007/.../introJan07.pdf

United States becomes increasingly concerned with minimizing the conditions that lead

to global terrorism, it has had to accept that incessant poverty, violent conflict, and failed

and failing states create a conducive environment for terrorist recruitment and

operations.[176] The United States is in the process of increasing its presence in Africa and

it has become widely accepted within the United States administration that its national

interests in Africa have expanded to include considerable global energy stakes. It has

become more critical for the United States to diversify its sources of oil, as violent

conflict in the Middle East caused the price of oil to increase significantly. As a result,

the strategic significance of Africa has risen greatly since 9/11.[177] The United States

National Security Strategy of 2006 echoed the importance of the War on Terror and

reflected that its national security depends on partnering with Africans to strengthen their

fragile states, promote economic development and democratic governance.[178]

A key to the new geopolitical shift towards Africa is military decentralization and

the forward deployment of United States troops. The Pentagon is in the process of long-

term, global restructuring of its defence resources, and Africa is receiving increased

attention. Traditionally, United States defence resources were structured according to

Cold War logic with overseas basing being concentrated in Europe and East Asia.

Pentagon planners have initiated a realignment of its defence resources which would

decentralize military personnel and resources. The shift would involve smaller facilities

spread out throughout the globe with capabilities to accommodate up to 5,000 troops,

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[176] Ibid.

[177] Bates Gill, J. Stephen Morrison, & Chin-Hao Huang. (2008). "China-Africa Relations: An Early, Uncertain Debate in the United States." In Chris Alden, Daniel Large, & Ricardo Soares De Oliveira. (Eds.) China Returns to Africa: A Rising Power and a Continent Embrace. New York; Columbia University Press. pp. 167-79. p. 168.

[178] United States Department of Defence. (2006). "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America." Washington, D.C.; The White House. pp. 14-17.

although many new bases would not house permanent military personnel.[179] This process

began in Africa in December of 2002 with a base for the Horn of Africa in Djibouti.

Pentagon planners envision a similar type base for West Africa, with key considerations

being proximity to failed or failing states and oil fields in the Gulf of Guinea.[180] Since

9/11, the United States government has shown increased interest in Africa's failed or

failing states with a major objective of controlling flows of people, weapons, and finance.

An essential program has involved the enhancement of the surveillance of international

boundaries.[181]

In 2007, the United States Department of Defence (DoD) initiated a new

combatant command known as United States Africa Command (AFRICOM).[182]

AFRICOM was designed to oversee more effectively its military related activities in

Africa. Announced as a war-prevention rather than a war-making military organization,

AFRICOM is designed to help the Department of Defence focus its resources to support

and enhance United States initiatives working with African states and regional

organizations to enhance stability and security.[183] AFRICOM represents a new fully

integrated, though militarily dominated, approach to United States foreign policy, where

military-to-military relations shape the foundation of political and economic bilateral

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[179] Kraxberger. p. 58.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid. p. 59.
[182] AFRICOM was created because Africa "is growing in military, strategic and economic importance in global affairs" and the United States needs a method in securing its current and future interests on the continent. AFRICOM's mission is to better enable "the Department of Defence and other elements of the US government to work in concert and with partners to achieve a more stable environment in which political and economic growth can take place…. Africa Command intends to work with African nations and African organizations to build regional security and crisis-response capacity in support of US government efforts in Africa." See United States Africa Command, The. "Questions and Answers about AFRICOM." Accessed June 1, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.africom.mil/AfricomFAQs.asp.
[183] United States Africa Command, The. "About AFRICOM." Accessed October 25, 2009. Available on-line: http://www.africom.mil/AboutAFRICOM.asp

policy.[184] The underlying purpose is to institutionalize and maintain the current "world

order" for decades to come. Unfortunately for the United States, the formulation of

AFRICOM has been met with suspicion from African leaders who perceive that the

United States is interested in Africa not for altruistic reasons, but to enhance its

domination, energy exploitation, and Cold War style competition with China.[185]

AFRICOM is currently headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, and, because of African

reluctance, it plans on remaining there for the foreseeable future.

The attacks on 9/11 prompted United States foreign policy elites to reassess

Africa giving considerable attention to Africa's Muslim populations and failed and failing

countries. The majority of the United States foreign policy establishment now picture

Africa's failing and failed countries as real or potential breeding grounds for terrorists.[186]

United States military engagement in Africa has been substantially expanded through not

only AFRICOM, but also the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI). The

TSCTI is

> a multi-year strategy aimed at defeating terrorist organizations by
> strengthening regional counterterrorism capabilities, enhancing and
> institutionalizing cooperation among the region's security forces,
> promoting democratic governance, discrediting terrorist ideology, and
> reinforcing bilateral military ties with the United States. The overall goals
> are to enhance the indigenous capacities of governments in the pan-Sahel
> (Mauritania, Mali, Chad, and Niger, as well as Nigeria and Senegal) to
> confront the challenge posed by terrorist organizations in the region, and to
> facilitate cooperation between those countries and our Maghreb partners
> (Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia) in the global war on terror.[187]

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[184] Ibid.

[185] Jon Walker. (2008). "China, US and Africa: Competition or Cooperation?" US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA. pp. 1-23. Accessed May 21, 2008. Avail. on-line: http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA481365&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf. p. 1

[186] Kraxberger. p. 48.

[187] United States Department of State. "Chapter 5 – Country Reports: Africa Overview." Accessed January 10, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2005/64335.htm

TSCTI was created over fear of the expansion of operations by Islamic terrorist organizations in the Sahel region.[188] Its base is in Djibouti and was involved in operations after Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia in late 2006, which disbanded the Union of Islamic Courts government, resulting in the United States attacking fleeing convoys suspected of transporting terrorists.[189]

The future of any United States strategy towards Africa will be heavily influenced by its experiences in individual African countries that are considered a high United States' priority. Countries considered a high priority are usually also considered a high priority by China as well which has been increasing its influence on the continent. This has certainly been true of Sudan and Angola and will almost certainly be true of Nigeria and Zimbabwe.[190] Long-term United States priorities in Africa will most likely be defined in terms of its perceived increase in United States national interests on the continent as a result of international terrorism, increased dependence on African oil, and also the increased engagement of China within the continent.[191]

In 2002, the African Oil Policy Initiative (AOPIG)[192], a United States organization, posited that African oil, especially in and around the Gulf of Guinea, and

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[188] The Sahel is a narrow band of land in Africa "extending from Senegal eastward to The Sudan. It forms a transitional zone between the arid Sahara (desert) to the north and the belt of humid savannas to the south. The Sahel stretches from the Atlantic Ocean eastward through northern Senegal, southern Mauritania, the great bend of the Niger River in Mali, Burkina Faso, southern Niger, northeastern Nigeria, south-central Chad, and into The Sudan." See Encyclopedia Britannica. "Sahel." Accessed June 6, 2010. Available online: http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/516438/Sahel.
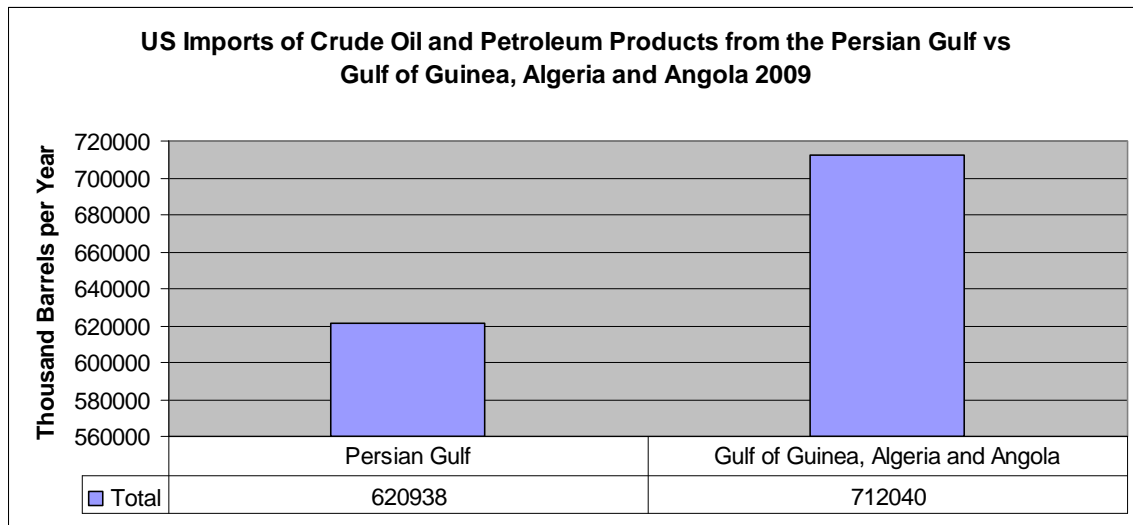
[189] Huang. pp. 303-4.

[190] Gill. p. 178.

[191] Letitia Lawson. (2007). "US Africa Policy Since the Cold War." In *Strategic Insights*. Vol. VI, No. 1. pp. 1-14. p. 7.

[192] The Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies held a symposium in Washington on January 25, 2002 on the issue of African oil and United States national security priorities. From this symposium grew AOPIG, which is comprised from offices in the United States Administration, the House of Representatives, Senate, international consultants, oil companies, and other United States investors. See Barry Schutz. et. al. "African Oil: A Priority for US National Security and African Development." African

mineral resources were of "vital interests" to United States national security. In March, 2002, United States Assistant Secretary of State Walter Kransteiner III asserted that, "African oil is of national strategic interest to us, and it will increase and become more important as we go forward."[193] In 2009, the Gulf of Guinea, Algeria and Angola supplied the United States with a higher amount of total oil imports than the Persian Gulf and the total imports from the Gulf of Guinea is predicted to increase significantly within the next five years while imports from the Persian Gulf has decreased over the last two years.[194]

Figure 3.3

US Imports of Crude Oil and Petroleum Products from the Persian Gulf vs Gulf of Guinea, Algeria and Angola 2009

	Persian Gulf	Gulf of Guinea, Algeria and Angola
Total	620938	712040

Source: United States Energy Information Administration.

Africa, and in particular West Africa, contains increasingly significant energy supplies for the United States. Considerable levels of oil investment in the Gulf of

Oil Policy Initiative Group. Accessed December 7, 2009. Available on-line: http://www.iasps.org/strategic/africawhitepaper.pdf. pp. 3-4.
[193] Schutz et. al. p. 2
[194] United States Energy Information Administration. "U.S. Imports by Country of Origin." Accessed December 10, 2009. Available on-line: http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/dnav/pet/pet_move_impcus_a2_nus_ep00_im0_mbbl_m.htm. Persian Gulf states include Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. Gulf of Guinea states include Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Liberia, Ghana, Togo, Cameroon, Benin, and Ivory Coast.

Guinea, especially Nigeria and Angola, have altered the region into a significant strategic supplier of oil to the United States and global energy markets. Oil development is not restricted to the Gulf of Guinea as Angola, Chad and Sudan are significant oil producers, and investments are beginning in Ethiopia, Kenya and Namibia.[195]
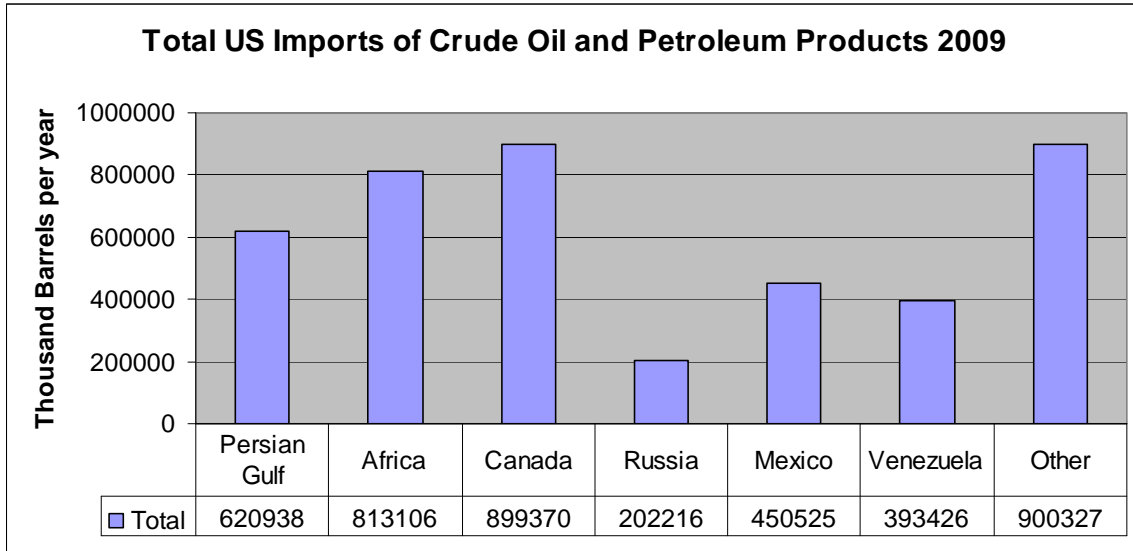
It is becoming more and more meaningful for the United States to locate new oil suppliers around the world, especially outside the Middle East. Currently, securing stable supplies of oil from Africa is considered essential objective of United States' national security. In a global oil market that has seen demand increase and prices reach as high as US$137 per barrel,[196] expansion into Africa and the Gulf of Guinea is a positive development. This objective requires a secure and politically stable, friendly governments to the United States within the Gulf region. It is no accident, therefore, that AFRICOM's first large scale mission has been the initiation of an off-shore African Partnership Station led by the United States Navy "aimed at strengthening emerging partnerships in West and Central Africa to increase regional and maritime safety and security."[197]

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[195] Lyman. (2006). p. 28.

[196] In July of 2008, average world oil prices reached $137.11 per barrel. See United States Energy Information Administration. "World Crude Oil Prices." Accessed December 10, 2009. Available on-line: http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/dnav/pet/pet_pri_wco_k_w.htm.
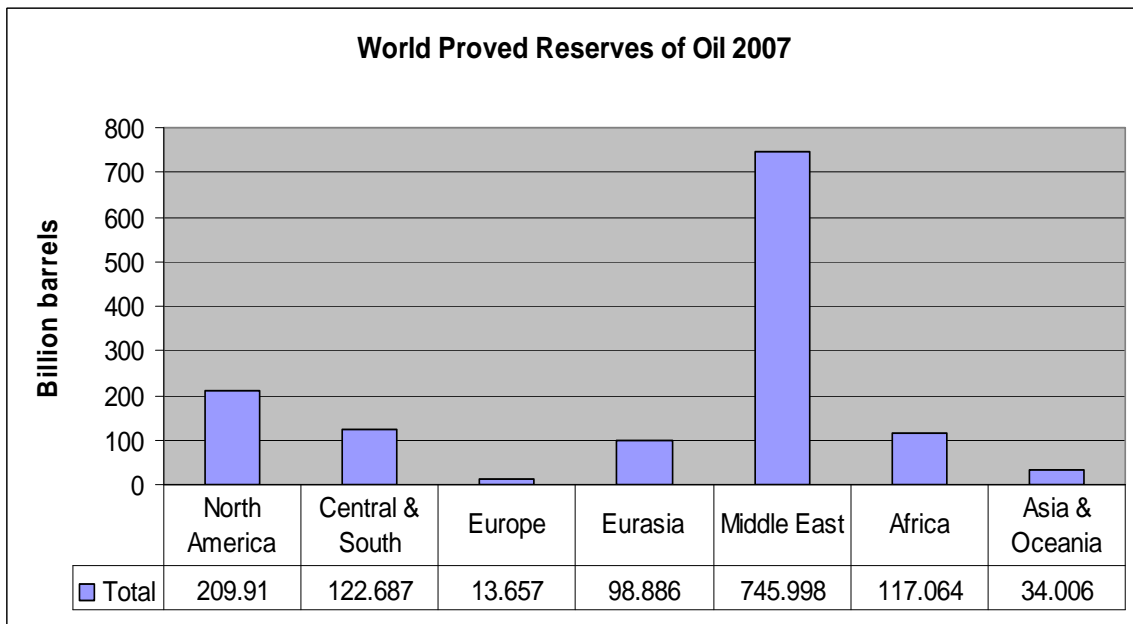
[197] United States Africa Command, The. "Africa Partnership Station." Accessed December 10, 2009. Available on-line: www.africom.mil/file.asp?pdfID=20091019122718

Figure 3.4

Total US Imports of Crude Oil and Petroleum Products 2009

	Persian Gulf	Africa	Canada	Russia	Mexico	Venezuela	Other
■ Total	620938	813106	899370	202216	450525	393426	900327

Source: United States Energy Information Administration.

Figure 3.5

World Proved Reserves of Oil 2007

	North America	Central & South	Europe	Eurasia	Middle East	Africa	Asia & Oceania
■ Total	209.91	122.687	13.657	98.886	745.998	117.064	34.006

Source: United States Energy Information Administration.

The primary national interests of the United States in Africa largely reflects the same primary interests as China's; namely access to African markets and natural

resources.[198] The United States, however, has developed much broader strategic goals, including executing the global war on terror, promoting governance and democracy, focusing on Africa's development needs, and fighting Africa's HIV/AIDS pandemic, arguably the greatest challenge to Africa's future social and economic security.[199]

These strategic goals are increasingly threatened by non-state actors, failed states, armed conflicts, along with China's growing influence and control over resources. Examples of immediate threats to United States interests emanates from the Niger Delta region, where organized crime coalitions operate a major crude oil theft operation backed by well-armed and increasingly well financed militias. Estimates of the level of theft range as low as 70,000 up to 300,000 barrels of oil per day. Even the low estimate would generate billions of dollars per year; ample funds to run arms trafficking and buy political influence.[200] The United States' Congress has also criticized Western oil companies for doing business in Equatorial Guinea; a country with a poor human rights record. However, if Western oil companies withdraw from Equatorial Guinea, China or other Asian countries would quickly replace the Western companies and any political leverage the United States exercised to reform the government of Equatorial Guinea would be largely lost.[201] China has become a significant and perhaps in certain situations a more positive alternative for some African countries.

For the United States democratization and the promotion of good governance are crucial processes that should be pursued intently in Africa by external actors, via aid

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[198] Harry Broadman. (2008). "Chinese-African Trade and Investment: The Vanguard of South-South Commerce in the Twenty-First Century." In Robert Rotberg. (Ed.). China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence. Washington, DC. Brookings Institution Press. p. 99.
[199] Drew Thompson. (2005). "China's Emerging Interests in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges for Africa and the United States." In African Renaissance Journal. (July/August) pp. 20-29). p. 27.
[200] Lyman. (2006). p. 30.
[201] Ibid. pp. 51-2.

programs and through the development of corporate responsibility. The United States

typically conditions aid and support based on the level of democracy and provides direct

assistance for democracy building.[202] Two of the major programs that have significant

influence for the distribution of this aid are the AGOA, signed into law in 2000, and the

Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), created by the United States Congress in 2004.

Under the AGOA, eligible countries in Africa get preferential access to the United States

market and MCA provides financial assistance to impoverished democracies throughout

the world. Under AGOA, an African country is eligible if they have established or "are

making progress toward establishing" market based economies, the rule of law and

democratization, the elimination of trade and investment barriers, efforts to counter

corruption, policies to mitigate poverty, increasing educational opportunities, the

protection of human rights, and the elimination of various child labour practices.[203]

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[202] The rhetoric of current and previous US administrations has not necessarily coincided with reality, however. United States foreign policy is guided and/or restrained by its political culture, which is based on the Constitution, Bill of Rights, political liberties and capitalism. A purely ethical approach to foreign government development in world politics is not effective, however. Human rights, democratization, and good governance are only linked to United States national interests. This effectively means that US administrations will promote democracy and good governance abroad only if it is in the national interests of the United States and in order to appease domestic pressure to conform with US political culture. Supporting foreign dictators for the achievement of national interests has not been uncommon in previous US administrations. The Shah of Iran, Saddam Hussein of Iraq, Mobutu of the Congo, Augusto Pinochet of Chile, and the Saud family are a few examples of the US' previous support of dictatorships. Former President Jimmy Carter, known for making human rights the cornerstone of his foreign policy, told the UN in March 1977, that human rights ranked behind security and arms control and building a better economic world order. The origin of the Carter administration's emphasis on human rights was primarily rooted in domestic politics and did not necessarily have a high concern for ethics abroad. See David P. Forsythe. (1980). "American Foreign Policy and Human Rights: Rhetoric and Reality." In *Universal Human Rights*. Vol. 2 No. 3. pp. 35-53. pp. 39-41.
[203] See African Growth and Opportunity Act & Millennium Challenge Corporation. "About MCC." Accessed January 10, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.mcc.gov/mcc/about/index.shtml

China and Africa

China has taken a much different approach than the United States towards its drive into Africa. China's push into Africa is highly focused on resource acquisition through diplomatic channels as opposed to the United States push which has a much higher military component to it. Like the United States, China's interest in Africa is not new but its shift in focus has altered in important ways. In the 1960s and 1970s China's interest in Africa was ideologically motivated providing support to underdeveloped states to promote national liberation movements as well as direct state-to-state aid. China's motives were primarily diplomatic which were aimed towards African states to counter the recognition of Taiwan and to gain the support and votes for the eventual rejection of Taiwan's credentials in the UN.[204]

Africa also played an integral role in China's competition with the Soviet Union for the leadership of the communist world with Mao Zedong's Three World thesis and the united front strategy first stated internationally in a speech at the UN in April 1974 by Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping.[205] According to the theory, the international system was divided into Three Worlds. The First World entailed the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, the Second World was made up of developed countries from Western Europe plus Japan, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and the Third World, which included China, comprised the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The Second and Third World countries were the centre of United States and Soviet Union contention. The Soviet Union was labeled by China as a "social-

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[204] Lyman. (2004). p. 41.
[205] The united front strategy can be traced back to the 1920s when the CCP joined the Nationalist Party for the common goal of defeating the regional warlords. See Herbert Yee. (1983). "The Three World Theory and Post-Mao China's Global Strategy." In *International Affairs*. Vol. 59 No. 2. pp. 239-249. p. 239.

imperialist" state which had replaced the United States as the main threat to world peace. The essence of Mao's Three World theory was to unite the Third World states under Chinese leadership to win over the Second World and to isolate the two superpowers.[206] The Three Worlds thesis became part of China's official foreign policy which was clearly aimed at rallying Third World support for China's global strategies. The theory reiterated that developing countries were the main force in the international united front against hegemony.[207] During this period, for the most part, strategic resources did not play a dominant role in China's search for relations with African countries. Instead, it was motivated by the provision of developmental aid and strategic competition with Taiwan and the Soviet Union before and after China's entry into the UN with the support of the countries in Africa.[208]

By the mid-1970s, China had a greater number of aid packages in Africa than the United States. However, from the late 1970s until the end of the Cold War, China's interest in Africa declined due to a higher focus on internal economic development.[209] China's engagement in Africa during the 1980s was restructured due to its internal modernization programs resulting in its aid programs in Africa developing into more commercially oriented involvement. China's aid programs in Africa were scaled back during this period but economic relations continued.[210]

The significant increase in relations between China and Africa can be traced back to three essential events: the Tiananmen Square incident in June of 1989 and its negative

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[206] Ibid. pp. 239-41.
[207] Ibid. p. 242.
[208] Chris Alden, Daniel Large, & Ricardo Soares De Oliveira. (2008). "Introduction." In Chris Alden, Daniel Large, & Ricardo Soares De Oliveira. (Eds.) China Returns to Africa: A Rising Power and a Continent Embrace. New York; Columbia University Press. pp. 1-25. p. 5.
[209] Taylor. (2009). p. 13.
[210] Alden. p. 5.

ramifications on China's international relations with the West; the enlargement of China's economy during the 1990s, and the ability to take advantage of the support in African votes at the UN, in part to prevent disapproving votes against China due to its human rights record and to guarantee that Taiwan continued to be unrecognized internationally at the UN.[211]

With China facing international isolation after Tiananmen Square, China rejuvenated its interest in Africa and began to once again start a proactive African diplomacy. The Tiananmen Square occurrence resulted in a critical crisis in China's relations with the West, including an arms embargo enforced by the United States and the European Union. Until the Tiananmen Square incident, China's human rights record had been virtually ignored by the West but due to strict criticism of the actions of the Chinese government by Western states it became a significant issue in the formulation of Chinese foreign policy. Although the West's reaction was severe, the reaction of the majority of African countries was far quieter, if not supportive.[212] Developing, especially African, countries were aggressively sought out in China's foreign policy in an effort to solidify coalitions to hide China from Western criticism within the international community.[213]

China's aid and support of African countries in the post-Tiananmen period increased significantly as China hastened to secure allies for its cause. Increased aid was an economical way that China could pay back those African countries that supported China during the Tiananmen crisis as well as a way to build relations for the future. To show the significant policy change, in 1988 China contributed US$64.4 million to

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[211] Taylor. (2009). p. 83.
[212] Ibid. pp. 85-6.
[213] Denis Tull. (2006). "China's Engagement in Africa: Scope, Significance and Consequences." In *Journal of Modern African Studies*. Vol. 44, No. 3. pp. 459-479. p. 460.

thirteen African countries and by 1990 China's aid had risen to US$374.6 million with forty-three African countries as recipients.[214] Exchange visits for African and Chinese dignitaries also increased significantly after 1989. China's Foreign Minister toured fourteen African countries on what were to become annual visits, while numerous African dignitaries paid visits to China at the invitation of the Chinese government. This trend has continued and steadily grown to the present.[215]

In 2000, China brought into existence the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) which was created as a platform for "collective consultation and dialogue and a cooperation mechanism between the developing countries, which falls into the category of South-South cooperation."[216] The purpose is to "strengthen consultation and expand cooperation" while focusing on "political dialogue and economic cooperation and trade, with a view to seeking mutual reinforcement and common development."[217] At the second meeting in 2003, the Chinese Premier announced the cancellation of debt of thirty one African countries totaling US$1.3 billion, promised aid for The New Partnership for Africa's Development[218] (NEPAD), and an expanded function and participation in UN peacekeeping operations in Africa. The Premier supported the elimination of trade barriers and farm subsidies between Africa and China, and increased support and debt relief by developed countries. The Premier promised that China would increase aid to Africa, provide professional training for military officers and encourage Chinese

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[214] Taylor (2009). p. 89.

[215] Ibid.

[216] Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. "Characteristics of FOCAC." Accessed February 2, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.focac.org/eng/ltda/ltjj/t157576.htm

[217] Ibid.

[218] NEPAD is a program of the African Union with the primary objectives of eradicating poverty; placing African countries on a path of sustainable growth; stopping the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process and enhancing the integration into the global economy. See New Partnership for Africa's Development, The. "About NEPAD." Accessed December 5, 2009. Available on-line: http://www.nepad.org/AboutNepad/sector_id/7/lang/en

companies to invest in Africa. For the most part these promises are being kept.[219]

China's widening political, economic, and military arrangements in Africa casts an

increasingly dynamic approach.

The landmark event in China-Africa relations was essentially not until the 2006

forum held in Beijing. Forty-eight of the fifty-three African countries sent their leaders to

China for the FOCAC; an event that no other country in the world has been able to

assemble.[220] During the same year, prior to the FOCAC, China's foreign minister, Li

Zhaoxing, visited Cape Verde, Liberia, Mali, Senegal, Nigeria, and Libya, followed by

China's President, Hu Jintao, who toured Morocco, Nigeria, and Kenya, and then China's

Premier, Wen Jiabao, toured Egypt, Ghana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola,

South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda. The 2006 FOCAC showcased China's new strategic

partnership with Africa and it amounted to a public declaration of China's arrival in

Africa.[221] The vast majority of the diplomatic exchanges and the FOCAC have centered

on economic and energy cooperation.

Since the beginning of the decade China has succeeded in securing economic and

political relations with African countries that rival relations that the United States and

European counties have dominated for over 150 years.[222] Two decades ago the United

States, France and the United Kingdom were seen as the major powers with significant

interests in Africa. This is quickly coming to a close as seen over the past ten years as

China has established itself as an increasingly instrumental actor across Africa.[223] After

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[219] Lyman. (2006). p. 42.
[220] Wenran Jiang. (2008). "China's Emerging Strategic Partnerships in Africa." In Robert Rotberg. (Ed.). China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence. Washington, D.C.; Brookings Institution Press. pp. 50-64. p. 52.
[221] Alden (2008). p. 2.
[222] Rupp. p. 65.
[223] Tull. p. 459.

World War II, European influence in Africa declined, and the United States, until now, has been preoccupied with the Middle East and the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and this is a decisive factor for the expeditious rise of China's influence in Africa. The high profile 2006 FOCAC indicates that China sees Africa as available and there are few constraining forces that have the potential to stop China from advancing its influence in Africa.[224] There is recognition not only in China but also in the United States that Africa is "in play" economically as never before as a result of world interest in Africa's resources, especially oil, and the unparalleled prices that these resources are demanding.[225] Many countries in Africa see China's expanding economy as an opportunity for their own development, with the hope that the experience with China will be more constructive than their previous experiences with European countries and the United States. After many decades of underdevelopment, many African countries are searching for alternative partnerships and economic relations other than their historic relations with Europe and the United States. China is viewed by many African countries as an opportunity for an alternative to traditional European and United States domination.[226]

China is aggressively engaged in obtaining oil rights on the continent such as in Kenya, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, and Nigeria. In 2006, the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) purchased a forty-five percent stake in a Nigerian oil field for US$2.27 billion. China actively undermined Western dominance in Africa by underwriting billions of dollars in unrestricted loans, thereby obstructing the monopolistic lending abilities of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

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[224] Jiang. p. 59.
[225] Africa-China-US Trilateral Dialogue. p. 3.
[226] Jiang. p. 59.

and World Bank.[227] Loans provided by the World Bank and the IMF are "slow in coming and weighted down with numerous conditions. In contrast, aid and loans from China come through quickly with no conditions attached. And, African countries don't have to sacrifice their sovereignty and dignity in acquiring these loans and aid."[228] A 2006 report by the United States Council on Foreign Relations determined that, "China has altered the strategic context in Africa. All across Africa today, China is acquiring control of natural resource assets, outbidding Western contractors on major infrastructure projects, and providing soft loans and other incentives to bolster its competitive advantage."[229] As these non-conditional loans become available to African countries, the United States will lose leverage in improving governance on the continent.

China's position in the world has altered in important ways. It has shifted away from self-reliance and into an interdependent phase. China's "go-out" strategy and open door policy, designed to invigorate foreign trade and investment, combined with China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) have shifted China's economic policies closer to a market economy. China's relations with African countries have been restructured to reflect this view and away from being "anticolonial brother-in-arms" to economic and trade partners.[230] It is important to emphasize that China's "go-out" strategy is driven primarily by the need to meet domestic energy and resource demands for its own development and modernization and Africa has become central to this strategy. In part, China's partnerships in Africa are a resource grab. Increasing Chinese

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[227] Henry Lee & Dan Shalmon. (2008). "Searching for Oil: China's Oil Strategies in Africa." In Robert Rotberg. (Ed.). China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence. Washington, D.C.; Brookings Institution Press. pp. 109-136. p. 116.

[228] He Wenping. "China's Loans to Africa Won't Cause Debt Crisis," *China Daily*, July 6, 2007. Accessed January 20, 2009. Available on-line: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2007-06/06/content_888060.htm

[229] Lyman. (2006). p. 40.

[230] Jiang. p. 52.

economic growth combined with declining domestic oil deposits have forced China to look abroad.[231]

China's surging economy, which has averaged a nine percent annual growth rate for the last twenty years, requires huge amounts of energy to sustain its rapid development. Although China relies heavily on coal for most of its energy needs, it has become the second largest consumer of oil in the world behind the United States.[232] Prior to the 1990s, China was able to obtain its energy needs through locally produced coal and domestic reserves of oil. In 1993 however, China became a net importer of oil and as of 2007, it was the third largest consumer of imported oil, behind Japan and the United States.[233]
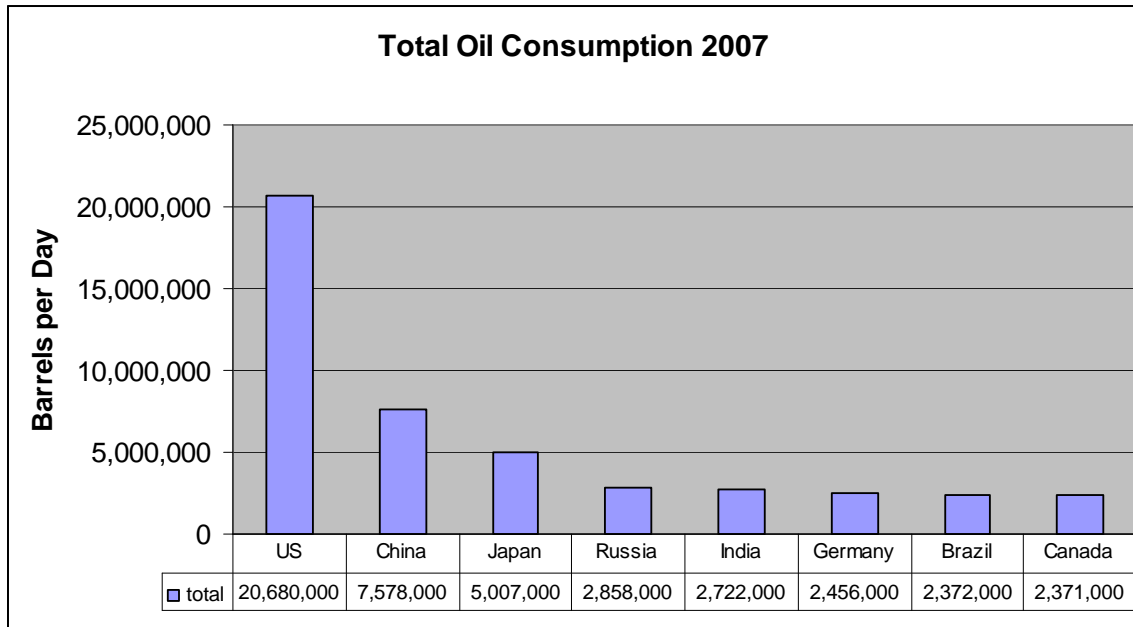
Figure 3.6
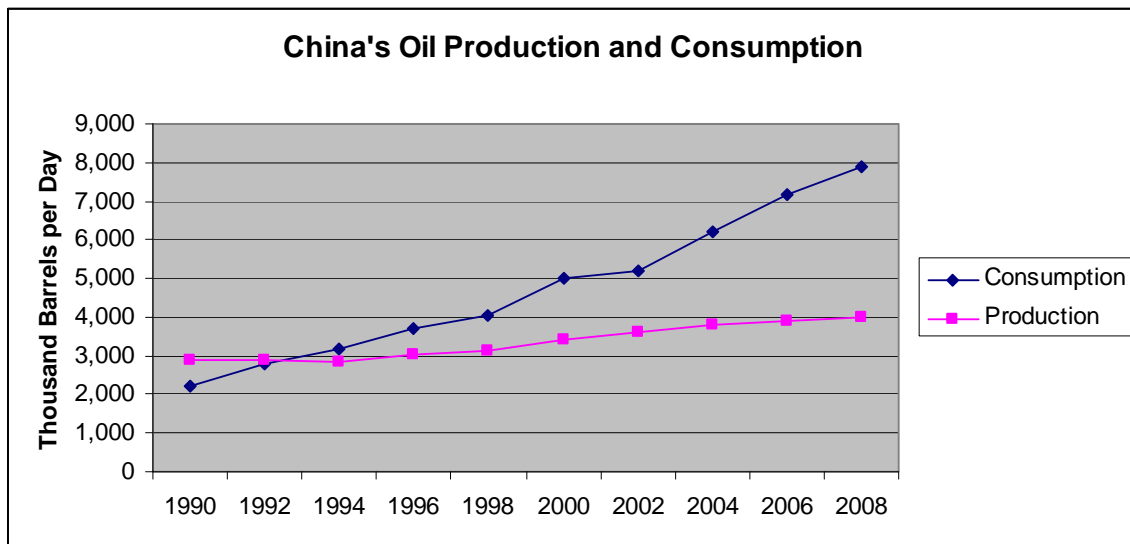
Source: United States Energy Information Administration.

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[231] Hoshua Eisenman. & Joshua Kurlantzick. (2006). "China's Africa Strategy." In *Current History*. May pp. 219-224. p. 219.
[232] Stephanie Hanson. (2008). "China, Africa, and Oil." In *Council on Foreign Relations*. Accessed Jan 15, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.cfr.org/publication/9557/
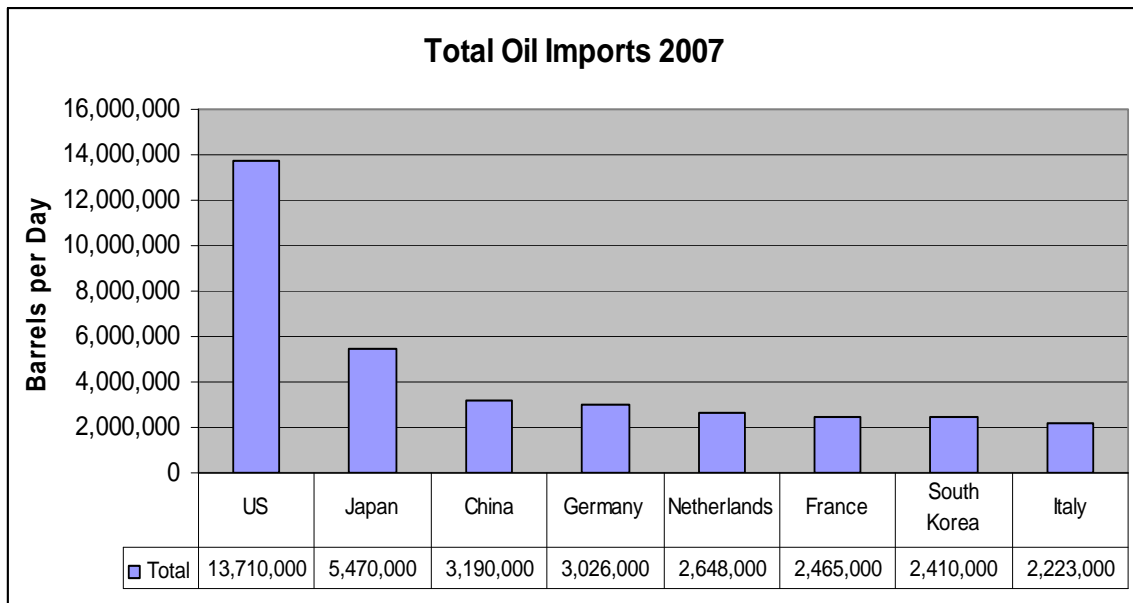[233] See Central Intelligence Agency. The World Fact Book. "China: Oil Imports." Accessed February 2, 2009. Available on-line: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2175rank.html?countryName=China&countryCode=ch&regionCode=eas&rank=4#ch

Figure 3.7

Total Oil Consumption 2007

	US	China	Japan	Russia	India	Germany	Brazil	Canada
total	20,680,000	7,578,000	5,007,000	2,858,000	2,722,000	2,456,000	2,372,000	2,371,000

Source: Nationmaster[234]

Figure 3.8

Total Oil Imports 2007

	US	Japan	China	Germany	Netherlands	France	South Korea	Italy
Total	13,710,000	5,470,000	3,190,000	3,026,000	2,648,000	2,465,000	2,410,000	2,223,000

Source: Nationmaster[235]

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[234] Nationmaster. "Energy Statistics." Accessed June 6, 2010. Available on-line:
http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/ene_oil_con-energy-oil-consumption
[235] Nationmaster. "Energy Statistics Oil Imports by Country." Accessed June 6, 2010. Available on-line:
http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/ene_oil_imp-energy-oil-imports

As of 2007 China accounted for thirteen percent of world demand for oil and oil products. According to the International Energy Agency, China's domestic oil requirements will double in the next two decades. China's proven oil reserves are small in comparison to its consumption and to date there are no indications of any new areas of oil production within China. China's proven oil reserves as of 2007 were 15.493 billion barrels.[236] At current production rates, China's oil reserves will last for less than two decades.[237] China, therefore, will have to rely more and more on an external energy supply.
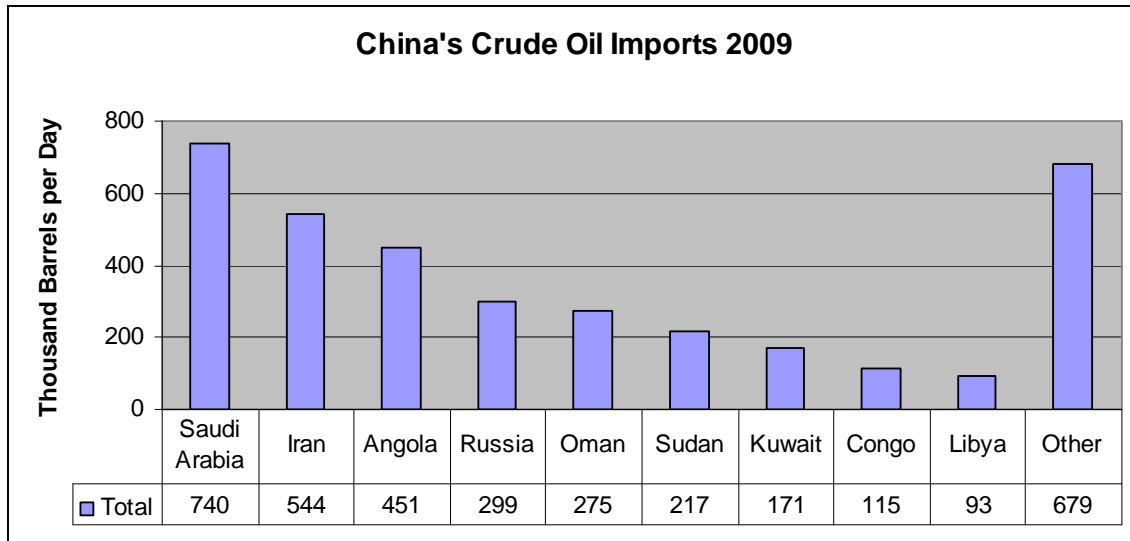
In order to secure a stable supply of imported oil in the global environment, China's strategy is to create a level of interdependence between it and oil supplying countries that will lead to greater trade and build stronger bonds.[238] Africa holds a fraction of the globe's proven oil reserves, eight percent compared to the Middle East's fifty five percent, but oil analysts have concluded Africa could contain significant undiscovered oil reserves. Due to the instability in the Middle East region, China's oil imports from that region have declined in recent years. As of 2008, China received approximately thirty-three percent of its oil imports from Africa and the percentage is anticipated to rise.

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[236] United States Energy Information Administration.

[237] International Energy Agency. "China, People's Republic of: Statistics." Accessed December 7, 2009. Available on-line: http://www.iea.org/stats/countryresults.asp?COUNTRY_CODE=CN&Submit=Submit. In 2007, China consumed nearly eight million barrels of oil per day while the United States consumed nearly twenty one million barrels per day. According to the estimate China will reach a level close to sixteen million barrels per day within the next two decades.

[238] Henry Lee & Dan Shalmon. (2008). "Searching for Oil: China's Oil Strategies in Africa." In Robert Rotberg. (Ed.). China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence. Washington, D.C.; Brookings Institution Press. pp. 109-136.

Figure 3.9

China's Crude Oil Imports 2009

	Saudi Arabia	Iran	Angola	Russia	Oman	Sudan	Kuwait	Congo	Libya	Other
■ Total	740	544	451	299	275	217	171	115	93	679

Source: United States Energy Administration.

Unlike the Middle East, Africa remains largely unexplored in the oil sector and there are few areas left in the world where there are high probabilities of significant oil discoveries. Angola, Nigeria, Sudan, and Libya are four exceptions resulting in a greater anticipation of oil discoveries in Africa than in any other part of the world.[239] Acquiring favoured status with the leaders of these countries could prove quite valuable. China's biggest suppliers of oil in Africa as of 2006 were Angola, Sudan, the Republic of the Congo, Libya, and Equatorial Guinea. It has also imported oil supplies from Nigeria, Chad, Algeria, and Gabon.[240]

When one looks at China's overall imports from Africa, they are unequally distributed and concentrated on African countries that produce energy resources. China is a key market for African countries that produce significant raw materials. Overall, five

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[239] See David Shinn. (2008). "Military and Security Relations: China, Africa, and the Rest of the World." In Robert Rotberg. (Ed.). China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence. Washington, D.C.; Brookings Institution Press. pp. 155-196. p. 182, Hanson, & Lee. p. 115. Two other areas where significant new oil discoveries are anticipated are in the Antarctic and the Gulf of Mexico.
[240] Hanson.

oil exporting African countries account for eighty-five percent of exports to China and nine of its ten most vital African trading partners are oil rich countries. Oil is by far the most significant export from Africa to China and there is little debate that oil and natural resources are at the centre of China's overall interests in Africa.[241] China's increased interest in Africa also comes at a time when substantial new discoveries of oil have been made, particularly in the Gulf of Guinea. Angola and Nigeria are Africa's largest producers of oil and are expected to double their production within the next five years. Important oil finds have also been discovered in Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome Principe and Chad.[242] Africa's portion of China's oil imports is significant and is increasing slightly year after year. In 2008, Africa's contribution of China's overall oil imports reached thirty percent, as opposed to the Middle East which provided approximately fifty percent. In 2009, Angola was the third largest importer of oil to China with a share of approximately thirteen percent, just behind Saudi Arabia and Iran.[243]

China's Competitive Advantage

China's strategy to obtain secure oil imports has three basic components: "differentiate Chinese initiatives from those offered by Western governments and their oil companies; leverage China's competitive advantages while downplaying its disadvantages, and focus on those countries in which there is a high probability that oil reserves will grow and where China can negotiate arrangements that cater to its long-term

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[241] Alden (2008). p. 12.
[242] Tull. p. 465.
[243] United States Energy Information Administration. "Country Analysis Briefs: China." Accessed January 20, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/China/pdf.pdf.

interests."[244] China is convinced that it must become less dependent on market imposed

pricing of oil in case of a global crisis or a planned United States attempt to disrupt or cut

oil supply lines to China.[245] China is currently buying oil on the global market. However,

with global oil supplies relatively unstable, China has been looking for secure sources

over which it can exercise direct control – equity ownership. In theory, equity ownership

projects overseas gives owners greater security by reducing dependence on oil from

major producers and market pricing. Equity ownership however, is extremely difficult to

achieve. The majority of countries have nationalized oil, and sell it on the open market

through state oil companies. Nonetheless, China has been able to achieve a level of

equity oil in the Sudan but at a cost of billions of dollars in the form of financial aid and

investment.[246] While only a fraction of China's oil imports from Africa are from equity

ownership or acquired through fixed long-term contracts as opposed to buying oil on the

open market, this method of securing oil contrasts with current Western visions of a well-

functioning energy market.[247]

China takes advantage of a variety of instruments to promote its economic

interests that are not available to the United States or United States companies. The

majority of China's oil investments are through state-owned companies where

investments do not necessarily have to be profitable as long as they serve national

interests. China's oil companies therefore can bid low, even at a loss, in order to secure

major oil contracts. China can also combine government to government offers of

financial aid with oil investment endeavors; practices which American oil companies are

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[244] Lee. p. 111.
[245] Eisenman. p. 220.
[246] Rotberg (2008). p. 4-5. See Lee. p. 112.
[247] Soares. p. 89-90.

unable to offer due to rules articulated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.[248] The United States and China have evolved to promote different strategies for the way in which they bid for African oil. The United States promotes and follows transparent bidding while China prefers and promotes exclusive access to oil supplies through subsidized loans and/or by including aid packages in its competitive bids. The difference between the United States and China approach is centred on the advancement of competitive tenders versus the promotion of closed deals or less than transparent subsidies.[249]

American companies are more established and far more experienced in Africa and are at a far higher level of technological advancement than Chinese companies. As such China does not have a competitive edge over its American counterparts in an open market. However, in a closed market, like many countries in Africa, Chinese companies are able to gain from government influence.[250] In January 2006 Nigeria exchanged oil exploration rights to China for a four billion dollar commitment in refining investments giving China a forty-five percent stake in new oil fields. Also, to gain support from the Angolan government, China provided close to eleven billion in loans and aid which included the construction of new railroads, schools, roads, hospitals, bridges, and a fiber optics network. China is following this type of business model with other African countries as well. In so doing, China has acquired economic and diplomatic favour in Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, the Republic of Congo, and Sudan that the United States does not enjoy.[251]

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[248] Lyman (2006). p. 52.
[249] Africa-China-US Trilateral Dialogue. p. 20.
[250] Alden. (2008). p. 42.
[251] Hanson.

The Chinese government has advocated a Chinese-style economic development model for African countries; one that is based on a controlled market system driven by a main priority of maintaining a single party government. Many single party regimes in Africa are determined to invigorate their economies while at the same time maintaining a firm grip on political power. These types of authoritarian governments tend to find the Chinese economic development and reform model more beneficial than a free market and democratic policies promoted by the United States and other Western countries.[252]

In the past, some oil-producing countries have perceived Western governments as exclusively targeting oil, while ignoring the country's long-term social and economic interests. China has come to the conclusion that if it can offer a financial aid package that goes beyond oil, it would be able to cultivate partnerships as opposed to business relationships based on one commodity. China's efforts contrast those of its United States competitors. In theory the partnerships will grow to the point that China might receive the type of preferential treatment historically given to Western companies. For example, China is rebuilding Angola's transportation network and is constructing a massive hydroelectric dam in the Sudan. The focus of this strategy is to develop a level of interdependence that will lead to increased trade and build enduring ties, while securing a flow of oil to China in an increasingly insecure market.[253]

China has recently become a significant player in the oil sector on the west coast of Africa in the Gulf of Guinea, the largest oil producing area in Africa. Nigeria and Angola are Africa's largest oil producers and China is increasing its oil activities in both countries. China has provided Angola with a two billion dollar loan in part of a longer

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[252] Brookes. p. 6.
[253] Lee. p. 111-2.

term eleven billion dollar aid package that has direct ties to its successful bid for exploration rights for a block in Angola.[254] Because Nigeria and Angola have a decades long relationship with American oil companies, China has used the strategy, with some success, of offering and providing integrated packages of aid.[255]

A unique characteristic to the African-Chinese oil deals is the willingness of China's oil companies to move into high "troubled zones" with significant investment and aid packages in exchange for oil, as compared to American oil companies. China has taken risks in Angola and Nigeria. In Nigeria, China bid on oil blocs in the contested areas of the Niger Delta where insurgency, banditry, and the theft of oil are endemic. China has the potential to lose significant amounts of money within these oil blocs, but it will retain a considerable foothold in the Nigerian oil sector. China's willingness to invest where Western companies are not contributes to its appeal for African countries.[256]

The Gulf of Guinea is of great interest and importance to China due to a lack of modern technological advancements in its oil refineries. Crude oils with lighter viscosities are much easier to refine and the availability of light crude oil as compared to heavy crude oil is declining. This trend is predicted to continue. The exceptions have been oil discoveries in Africa, especially in the Gulf of Guinea. Light crude oil from countries such as Angola and Nigeria is becoming increasingly valuable in the current market, and China has the will to go to great lengths to access it.[257]

[254] Lyman (2006). pp. 44-5.
[255] Not all aid deals have been successful, however. In Nigeria, CNPC's two billion dollar investment in an oil refinery fell through and Angolan news reports suggest that work on the railroads has encountered serious delays. See Hanson.
[256] Lyman (2006). p. 45.
[257] Lee. p. 115.

China also has the advantage of targeting African countries suffering from Western-imposed sanctions. The United States, and Western states in general, are the most important trading partners of African countries and Western sanctions tend to have a side effect of marginalizing these countries. This allows China the ability to develop political and economic relations in countries where the United States and the West have very little or no presence at all making it easier for China to establish itself. China has no legal or political obligation to accept or even acknowledge Western imposed sanctions and therefore can position itself as an alternative partner of "pariah states."[258] China has adopted the strategy in the Sudan and Zimbabwe. Chinese oil companies do not have to compete with Western oil companies in countries that have Western-imposed sanctions due to the fact that Western oil companies simply are just not present. Given the inadequate technological competitiveness of China's oil companies, the targeting of African countries with Western-imposed sanctions is just one strategy to secure oil resources.[259] The Sudan is an example of how China has pursued its energy security policy in Africa. In 1996, China acquired a forty percent stake in the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company after United States sanctions against Khartoum. The steady withdrawal of other Western oil companies allowed China's state-owned China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) to become the largest foreign investor in Sudan's developing oil production.[260]

Many undemocratic African governments, in certain ways, are attractive to Chinese investments as opposed to democratic regimes with diversified economies. Democracies represent much more difficulty for Chinese investments and foreign

[258] Chris Alden. (2007). China in Africa. New York: Zed Books. p. 25
[259] Tull. p. 469.
[260] Ibid. p. 470.

assistance due to the regulatory requirements and level of legislation imposed on business

activity.[261] From this perspective, China is better off dealing with dictatorships than with

democracies. China's partnerships in Africa are fundamentally opportunistic in nature.

China has made oil deals with governments in Africa that have been marginalized by the

United States and Western countries because of their lack of respect for international law

and institutions. These deals have undermined certain United States' goals for the

continent such as isolating "rogue" governments for failing to promote democracy,

comply with international law, or respect human rights. As China's exploration for oil

and resources cues it towards "rogue" governments such as Sudan, China is defying the

United States' moral control and its ability to influence countries whose political records

it does not agree with.[262] China's support of undemocratic African governments provides

these governments international legitimacy and influence in the UN that help to deflect

pressure from the United States and Western countries on human rights, economic

openness, and political freedom. For example, in the past, China has protected the

Khartoum government against UN sanctions for the ongoing attacks in Darfur because of

their significant investments in Sudan's oil fields. China has also used its seat on the UN

Security Council to protect the government of Zimbabwe from international sanctions.[263]

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[261] Alden. (2007). p. 72.

[262] David Zweig & Bi Jianhai. (2005). "China's Hunt for Energy." In *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 84, No. 5. pp. 25-38. pp. 31-2.

[263] In 1980, when Robert Mugabe became President, Zimbabwe was, relatively speaking, a prosperous country in Africa. For over a decade however, Mugabe has suppressed his political opponents and opposing tribes, and the country's economy has been in steady decline. Zimbabwe is now challenged with constant food shortages and up to seventy percent unemployment. In 2005, Mugabe started Operation Murambatsvina (Operation "Clear the Filth"), a program of eviction and demolition of tens of thousands of homes. The UN has estimated that this program has displaced 700,000 people, most of whom supported the political opposition. Mugabe has contributed to the problems by denying international humanitarian aid agencies access to the country. These abuses led the United States and the European Union to impose sanctions against Zimbabwe. Despite United States and European Union arms embargos, China sold Zimbabwe fighter aircraft and military vehicles. China also provided a radio jamming device which was used to block broadcasts of anti-government reports from independent media stations during the 2005

Ethiopia and China have increased their trading relationships and have indicated interest in closer military ties even though Ethiopia has been criticized because of recent election disputes and border conflicts with Eritrea. China offers these African governments an alternative source of support from the United States and the West.[264]

In the near future China will most likely not make any constructive contributions to support adjustments to democracy in Africa's undemocratic countries. The promotion of democracy is not an objective of China's foreign policy.[265] The promotion of democracy abroad would inevitably imply the tarnishing of China's Communist leaders towards their domestic political legitimacy. This is one reason why China adamantly sticks to its policy of noninterference in the internal affairs of foreign governments. China's defence of sovereignty, at times to the benefit of "rogue" regimes, weakens efforts of democratization on a global scale.[266] China's domestic political system is fundamentally un-democratic. From the view of the Chinese, however, there is no consensus on an international definition of good governance and therefore China does not precondition its aid packages to Africa on the existence of democracy.[267] Moreover, from China's perspective, consensus politics is more important than democratization and elections. Like the United States, China prioritizes stability in Africa. However, China argues that in some cases democratization can bring a destabilizing effect and the international community should not force democracy on African countries too quickly.[268]

parliamentary election campaign. See Peter Brookes & Ji Hye Shin. (2006). "China's Influence in Africa: Implications for the United States." In *Backgrounder*. No. 1916. pp. 1-9. pp. 4-6.

[264] Lyman (2006). p. 41.

[265] People's Republic of China, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The. "China's Independent Foreign Policy of Peace." Accessed February 2, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt/wjzc/t24881.htm

[266] Tull. pp. 473-4.

[267] Africa-China-US Trilateral Dialogue. (2007). "Summary Report." The Brenthurst Foundation, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Council on Foreign Relations, Leon H. Sullivan Foundation. pp. 1-56. p. 7.

[268] Africa-China-US Trilateral Dialogue. p. 3.

China has been able to alter a government's policies significantly based on their strategies of engagement on the continent of Africa. One such example is Angola; a country that has typically been dominated by United States and Western influence since the end of the Cold War and is of strategic importance to the United States because of its energy resources and geographic location in Africa. After decades of civil war, Angola's infrastructure had been destroyed. The financial resources available to the government had been committed to the war instead of establishing and improving its transportation, power, and economic infrastructure. Angola needed capital and financial assets and the only achievable option was to request assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which agreed to provide a substantial loan with conditions. Angola had to commit to both transparency reforms and to the IMF stabilization program focused on reducing inflation, as opposed to increasing capital expenditures. The IMF was worried that oil revenues were being channeled to Angola's elite and were not being used to improve the countries social needs.[269]

Angola is on a post-war reconstruction path which has traditionally been centred on the management of its oil wealth and a dialogue with the IMF. The dialogue with the IMF was focused on bringing about preliminary reforms within the government of Angola and higher transparency initiatives with regards to oil revenues. Recent developments however, have given the Angolan government additional financial flexibility and the ability to move more freely. In 2004, Angola suddenly broke off negotiations with the IMF and announced that China had agreed to provide a two billion US dollar low interest loan to the Angolan government along with up to nine billion in

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[269] Lee. p. 119.

additional financial aid in exchange for access to Angola's oil resources.[270] These loans

and aid from China came without conditions or requirements, which has the potential to

undermine years of international efforts to link aid to better governance. Global Witness,

an international natural resource corruption watchdog, and IMF officials have warned

that China's loans and aid packages to Angola, given no requirements or pressure to

reform, could allow the government of Angola to revert to its old ways of corruption and

human rights abuses.[271] The loans and aid China has provided have enabled the Angolan

government to ignore any of the IMF's transparency prescriptions and to follow its

postwar reconstruction strategy without any consultation through a Western donors'

conference that could impose stipulations intended to suit Western interests.[272]

Sudan and its significant reserves of oil is another such partner for China. Since

1996, over eighteen billion US has been invested by China in Sudan, predominantly in

the oil sector and related projects. China has been criticized for obstructing Western

efforts to marginalize and punish the government of Sudan. In 2004, China's UN

ambassador significantly altered and watered down United States' draft resolutions to the

UN, essentially rendering them meaningless, including the removal of the call for UN

peacekeepers to enter Darfur and help end ethnic cleansing.[273] China viewed this as a

violation of Sudan's sovereignty and feared that the UN force might be used to apprehend

Sudanese government officials indicted by the International Criminal Court. However,

since 2006, China's stance towards the Khartoum government has changed due to

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[270] Lyman (2006). pp. 33-4.
[271] Eisenman. p. 223.
[272] Ricardo Soares De Oliveira. (2008). "Making Sense of Chinese Oil Investment in Africa." In Chris Alden, Daniel Large, & Ricardo Soares De Oliveira. (Eds.) China Returns to Africa: A Rising Power and a Continent Embrace. New York; Columbia University Press. pp. 83-109. p. 98. Also see Thompson. p. 25.
[273] Eisenman. p. 223.

international pressure. China has persuaded the Khartoum government to accept a UN plan for a ceasefire and a "three-phase expansion of a hybrid UN-AU force in Darfur."[274] This is perhaps an indicator that China's noninterference doctrine is changing to fit its status as a future great power. A complete and encompassing noninterference strategy as a great power is most likely unsustainable.[275]

African countries are looking towards China not only because they provide no-strings-attached capital for projects, but they also act as a balance to United States and Western interests. African countries are no longer exclusively reliant on Western interests and are in a better position to negotiate the conditions of new investments.[276] China's stated policy also allows countries to choose their own social and political systems. Directly based on this policy, China considers human rights an "internal matter" and Africa and the United States have different views on human rights: the right to "existence and development" is more valuable than civil and political rights.[277] China's view on human rights also differs from the United States in that China places more importance for developing countries to emphasize a responsibility to the society as a whole rather than individual personal rights. If cases arise where serious violations of human rights occur, external countries should first turn to the African Union for the solution, and only if this avenue fails, should the UN be utilized, which should apply sanctions only in the most severe situations.[278]

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[274] So far Sudan's President, Omar al-Bashir, has obstructed the UN "Annan plan" with considerable success leaving the operation less effective. See Chin-Hao Huang. (2008). "China's Renewed Partnership with Africa: Implications for the United States." In Robert Rotberg. (Ed.). China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence. Washington, D.C.; Brookings Institutions Press. pp. 296-312. p. 306
[275] Lee. p. 130.
[276] Lee. p. 117.
[277] Africa-China-US Trilateral Dialogue. p. 10.
[278] Africa-China-US Trilateral Dialogue. pp. 13-4.

Countries, that vary from one another in social system, states of development, historical and cultural background and values, have the right to choose their own approaches and models in promoting and protecting human rights in their own countries. Moreover, the politicization of human rights and the imposition of human rights conditionalities on economic assistance should be vigorously opposed to as they constitute a violation of human rights.[279]

China has taken a position that would allow African leaders the responsibility of being the judge of what are and what are not human rights, and how these rights should or should not be protected. This view is promoted by China even though it contradicts the prevailing belief in the West today that state leaders should not be allowed to hide behind state sovereignty to abuse their own citizens.[280]

Non-interference in the domestic politics of foreign countries and mutual reciprocity is a cornerstone of China's foreign policy. China claims it does not pass judgment on the behaviour of other countries with which it trades, nor does China associate its economic relationships to any standard of conduct.[281] This makes China extremely attractive to many African countries. Additionally, China has no real incentive to follow Western views on issues such as government transparency and accountability. By discarding regulation efforts from the West based on non-interference, China positions itself as a "free-rider" and is apt to gain the political favour of, and therefore economic advantages from, sovereignty conscious governments. The case of Sudan

[279] Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. "Beijing Declaration of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation." Accessed February 2, 2010. Available on-line:
http://www.focac.org/eng/ltda/dyjbzjhy/DOC12009/t606796.htm
[280] Ian Taylor. (2004). "The 'All-Weather Friend'?: Sino-African Interaction in the Twenty-First Century." In Ian Taylor & Paul Williams (Eds.). Africa in International Politics: External Involvement on the Continent. London; New York: Routledge. pp. 83-101. p. 93.
[281] Lee. p. 112.

underscores the extent to which China is prepared to defend its economic interests based on the principle of non-interference.[282]

The Chinese non-interference policy in Africa threatens to reduce considerably the leverage of the United States and the West, and thereby subvert the political and economic reform policies the United States and the West have been advocating in Africa for two decades. Even more disconcerting from a Western perspective is a successful economic engagement by China that has the potential to open a huge new market for trade and investment, which China would be in a position to dominate. The political implications of an economically rising Africa in close alliance with China are disconcerting in United States policy circles.[283]

China's non-interference policy in the domestic affairs of foreign governments has not prevented China from involving itself closely in African politics, especially in favour of various undemocratic governments. Military cooperation and arms sales are valuable aspects in relations with some African countries, especially countries under threat of civil war, insurgencies or domestic opposition but which are prohibited from accessing weapons from Western sources. China only supplies six to seven percent of all arms transferred to Africa but Chinese weapons manufacturers have established military ties with controversial and contested countries such as Sudan and Zimbabwe. For example, China has established three small arms factories in Sudan that manufacture light weapons for the use in the region.[284]

China views its military partnerships with African countries as a means of elevating its status as an international political power, and advancing its capacity to

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[282] Tull. p. 474.
[283] Lyman (2006). pp. 40-55.
[284] Alden (2007). p. 25-6.

secure access to significant natural resources, notably oil.[285] China will likely continue to expand on its military and security relationships with African countries, focusing on those who export significant quantities of oil to China or have the capabilities to do so in the future. For that reason, China is attempting to expand it military partnerships with significant oil producers such as Nigeria and Angola and commence partnerships in countries such as Equatorial Guinea, Chad, and Libya. Although China has been an important moderator for Khartoum's policies in Darfur and provides support for the Comprehensive Peace Agreement with South Sudan, China will most likely not be deterred from maintaining its close military relationship with Sudan, regardless of international pressure to stop the transfer of arms.[286]

China has also sent troops to Africa under UN mandates, sending observers to various African missions and peacekeepers to UN missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Liberia. In accordance with UN resolution 1590, China has dedicated support in the form of engineering and medical troops to support the mission in Sudan. The deployment of peacekeepers to Liberia in 2003 happened two months after Liberia changed its official policy and stopped its recognition of Taiwan.[287]

China's resource acquisition has been extremely beneficial for some African countries, as it has allowed them to take advantage of untapped resources or increase leverage to negotiate better deals with foreign investors. But for other countries, particularly the United States, China's demand for natural resources is causing concern. The United States worries as China enters its spheres of influence and settles deals with countries they have tried to marginalize. In some areas in Washington, including the

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[285] Hanson.
[286] Shinn. p. 183.
[287] Thompson. p. 23.

Pentagon, the intelligence service, and Congress, the fear that China can challenge American influence and potentially destabilize the continent is rising.[288]

China will likely try to use its increased influence within Africa to reshape the rules and institutions to better serve its interests, and the United States will start to see China as an increasingly important security threat. During the Cold War the Soviet Union rivaled the United States as a development model and ideological competitor. Today China is emerging as both a military and economic rival, resulting in a pronounced shift in the distribution of global power; power that is moving East. The irony in relation to Africa and the competition to secure its energy resources is that both the United States and China require a stable international environment in order to achieve their goals. They simply have conflicting strategies for accomplishing ideas of a stable order and strategies to create such an order.

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[288] Zweig. p. 26.

Chapter Four: The Future Great Power Rivalry in Africa

During the Cold War, United States foreign policy towards Africa had little to do with the continent itself. As with other developing regions around the globe, African countries were by and large simply pawns in the struggle for the containment of communism and the fight against the Soviet Union. From the late 1950s until the late 1980s, the United States perceived few, if any, direct strategic or economic interests in Africa and therefore engagement with the region was largely defined by Cold War logic. With the fall of the Soviet Union the United States began to initiate a new world order based on the promotion of United States-sponsored liberal democracy, economic liberalization and human rights. These aspirations were realized to some degree with the beginning of liberal democracy and capitalist markets in east-central Europe culminating in the accession towards Western values of former communist states once belonging to the former Soviet Union. While some parts of the world were joining the United States' new world order, other areas, notably in sub-Saharan Africa, were largely ignored by the United States and continued to remain on the margins.[289] Over the last decade, however, Africa's strategic relevance has significantly changed and the continent's importance is steadily increasing. Both the United States and China see Africa as strategically important in the process of achieving their individual national interests.

Perceptions of energy scarcity will force the United States and China to take actions within Africa to assure future access to energy supplies. Africa and access to its energy resources are currently considered vital to both the United States and China and its importance is expected to rise in the future. As China's international status, influence, and power increases, the structure of the international system will likely shift from a

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[289] Saul. pp. 180-1.

unipolar system towards a bipolar one, with characteristics similar to the Cold War. If this occurs comparable types of Cold War strategies will be implemented by the United States and China in a great power rivalry with Africa being an important dimension within that competition.

The Future Structure of the International System

The Cold War was generally understood as a bipolar relationship based upon the strategic and ideological competition between two superpowers. The continued rise of China will reshape the international system and potentially transform it from what is currently a unipolar system back to a bipolar system.[290] Among current second-tier powers such as China, India, Russia, Brazil and Japan, China is the most likely contender to evolve into a peer competitor that can challenge the United States on economic, political and military fronts.[291] According to the International Futures Model presented in the National Intelligence Council's "Global Trends 2025" report, China will gain the most relative global power over the next fifteen years. China has also seen the most significant rise in GDP in relation to the other second-tier powers and this trend is predicted to continue. Although the United States will still be the dominant power in the international system, China will have closed the gap significantly. If the estimates are correct and the trend continues, China will continue to close the gap on the United States at a much faster rate than any other second-tier power.

[290] Kenneth Waltz describes a bipolar world not to mean that either power can exert a positive control everywhere in the world, but that "each has global interests which it can care for unaided, though help may often be desirable." The power of the two states is typically predominant but not absolute. See Kenneth Waltz. (1964). "The Stability of a Bipolar World." In *Daedalus*. Vol. 93. No. 3. pp. 881-909. p. 888.
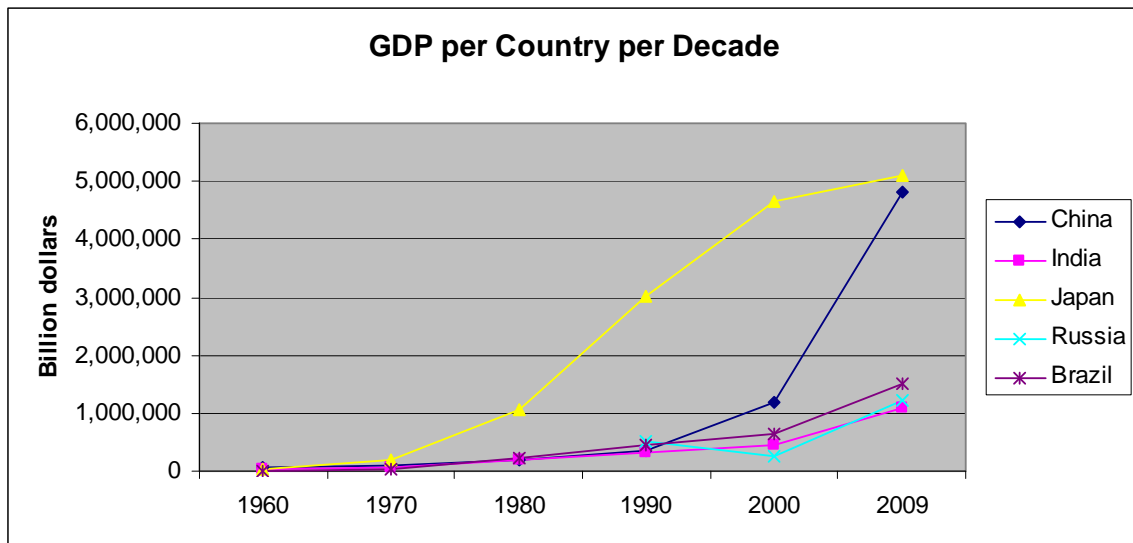[291] See Yong Deng. (2001). "Chinese Perceptions of US Power and Strategy." In *Asian Affairs*. Vol. 28, No. 3. pp. 150-155. p. 153. and National Intelligence Council. (2008). "Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World." Accessed May 10, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.dni.gov/nic/NIC_2025_project.html. p. 29.

Figure 4.1

Measurement of State Power as a Percentage of Global Power
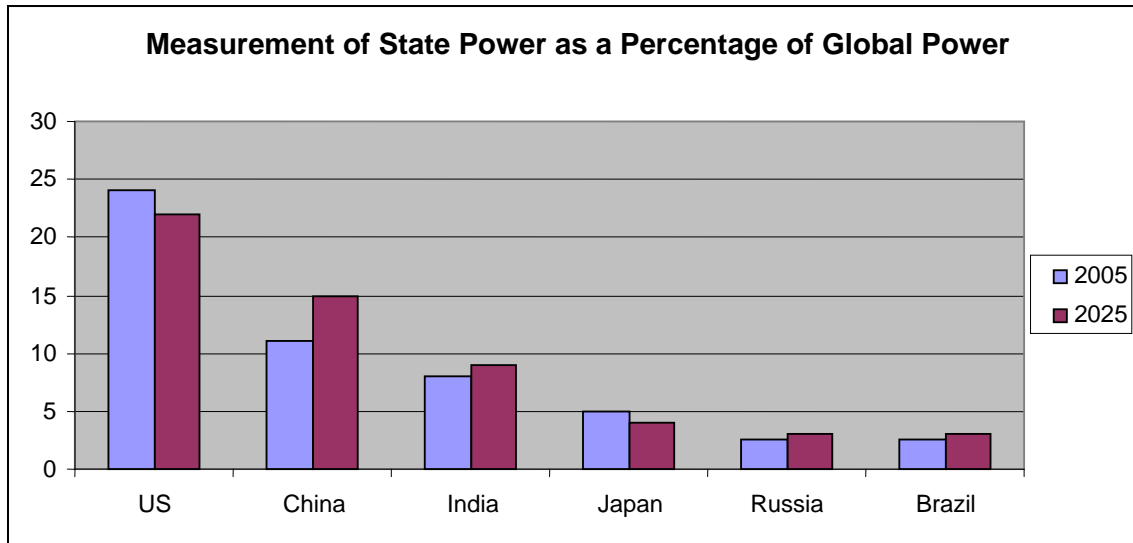
Source: International Future Model.[292]

Figure 4.2

GDP per Country per Decade

Source: Nationmaster[293]

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[292] "National Power scores are the product of an index combining the weighted factors of GDP, defence spending, population, and technology. Scores are calculated by the International Futures computer model and are expressed as a state's relative share (percentage) of all global power." See National Intelligence Council. (2008). pp. 28-9.

[293] Nationmaster. "Economy Statistics: GDP by Country." Accessed June 10, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/eco_gdp-economy-gdp-nominal.

A bipolar international system will create similar situations as the Cold War where two great powers struggle to advance their own distinctive values and interests with the intent of shaping the international system towards its own national goals. When great powers compete and fight in bipolarity, they are likely to engage minor powers, not the rival great power.[294] This is what occurred during the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union due to the nature of the international system and the circumstances and tacit rules that controlled the actions of each superpower. These rules of limited, indirect war for fear of escalation will likely return and will influence the United States and China's relationship significantly.

If China continues on its current trend of economic growth it will have the ability to rival the United States economically within twenty years. China is currently in the process of an extensive military expansion and a major part of this is in areas that are intended to deter and combat the United States.[295] One area of focus for China has been the development and expansion of its Navy. China has an effective aircraft carrier research and development program, which has the potential to construct multiple carriers by the end of the decade. China's Navy is also improving its over-the-horizon targeting capability with advanced radar and improved long-range missiles with the assistance of satellites to assist in detecting targets at great distances.[296] This is an indication that they plan on not only protecting their coastal borders and sea lanes but also to expand their sphere of influence far out into the Pacific and beyond in order to secure sea lanes for the

[294] John Mearsheimer. (2001). The Tragedy of Great Power Politics. New York, NY; W.W. Norton & Company. pp. 339-41.

[295] Richard Bernstein & Ross H. Munro. (1997). "The Coming Conflict with America." In *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 76, No. 2. pp. 18-32. p. 25.

[296] United States Department of Defence. (2009). "Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2009." Accessed February 6, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/China_Military_Power_Report_2009.pdf. pp. 48-9.

transport of energy resources. China does not feel secure in continuing its reliance on the

United States providing protection of sea lanes, in particular in the Strait of Malacca and

the Taiwan Strait, both of which China's oil tankers use.[297] Currently, if the United

States and China were to have a significant dispute, the United States has the ability to

cut off China's supply of foreign oil from sea lanes. China is working to become more

self reliant in providing its own security of oil supplies. China also hopes to purchase

large transport aircraft and aerial refueling tankers from Russia. These activities

contribute to China's transformation through the acquisition of modern weapons with the

hopes of improving its international stature and extending its influence throughout the

globe.[298] It is intended to safeguard the country's increasingly global economic and

energy needs. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) is also diversifying its training and

missions to include domestic and international disaster and humanitarian relief.[299]

China has invested in new generations of nuclear missiles, capable of targeting the

United States as well as regional powers. China's near term focus appears to be on

Taiwan, but long-term trends indicate China is building its military with capabilities to

extend far beyond Taiwan and the region. China's ability to sustain military power at a

distance remains limited but it is continuing to develop these areas as well as its nuclear,

space, and cyber warfare capabilities. China has recently begun to concentrate more of

its defence resources towards its air force, navy and second artillery (China's strategic

[297] Zweig. p. 33.
[298] United States Department of Defence. (2009). p. 50.
[299] International Institute for Strategic Studies, The (2010). "Chapter Eight: East Asia and Australasia." In The Military Balance 2010. pp. 377-440. Accessed April 14, 2010. Available on-line: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/04597220903545874. p. 378.

missile forces). This has signaled a shift away from the previous ground force oriented

mindset.[300] According to United States government estimates

> …twenty five percent of Chinese naval surface forces in 2008 could be
> categorized as modern (defined as multi-mission platforms with significant
> capabilities in at least two warfare areas) compared with seven percent in
> 2004; forty six percent of the submarine fleet in 2008 was modern (capable
> of firing anti-ship cruise missiles) in contrast to less than ten percent in
> 2004; and twenty percent of the air force had modern fourth-generation
> combat aircraft in 2008, double the ratio in 2004.[301]

These developments are changing the regional military balances and have significant

implications beyond the Asia-Pacific region. According to China's 2008 National

Defence White Paper, China has reached a "historic turning point" and now plays a major

role in the international security order.[302]

To date China's ability to exert its military presence beyond the Asia-Pacific

region has been limited to contributions to the international community in areas such as

peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. However, these capabilities

could also allow China to project power to ensure access to energy resources via military

coercion for diplomatic advantage, advance national interests, or resolve disputes in its

favour.[303] Currently China poses little direct military threat to the United States but this

is changing with each passing year and within twenty years China could become a rival to

the United States militarily. Already China's rise has resulted in a significant shift in the

balance of global economic power and, if China continues its military build up, a shift in

the balance of global military power.[304] The distribution of global power is shifting from

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[300] International Institute for Strategic Studies, The. p. 377.
[301] Ibid.
[302] People's Republic of China. "China's National Defence in 2008." Accessed January 10, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.gov.cn/english/official/2009-01/20/content_1210227.htm.
[303] United States Department of Defence. (2009). pp. 28-9.
[304] Refer to Figure 4.1 "Measurement of State Power as a Percentage of Global Power."

the United States to China and the United States' ability to shape the international system is diminishing.[305]

Estimates have predicted that China will overtake the United States in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) within the next twenty years. In 2008 Goldman Sachs predicted that China would pass the United States in GDP by 2028[306] and in 2009 the Economist Intelligence Unit predicted that China's GDP would pass the United States' in 2021.[307] In general, as GDP increases, total government expenditures increase and as a result so does military spending[308] and in China's case this is precisely what is occurring.

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[305] For arguments on China's rise and increased influence in the international system see Fareed Zakaria. (2008). The Post-American World. New York: W.W. Norton. Parag Khanna. (2008). The Second World: Empires and Influence in the New Global Order. New York; Random House. Kishore Mahbubani. (2008). The New Asian Hemisphere: The Irresistible Shift of Global Power to the East. New York; Public Affairs, and National Intelligence Council. Much of this anxiety over China's increased influence in Africa was initially prompted by China's opposition to United States efforts to sanction the Sudanese government. Subsequent attention has been focused on China's disregard for human rights abuses and poor governance as it deepens relationships with several countries, notably Zimbabwe and Angola. See Thompson. pp. 27-8.
[306] Goldman Sachs. "Video: Interview with Jim O'Neill." Accessed May 9, 2010. Available on-line: http://www2.goldmansachs.com/ideas/brics/index.html.
[307] Christopher Layne. (2009). "The Waning of US Hegemony – Myth or Reality?" In *International Security*. Vol. 34. No. 1. pp. 147-172. p. 163.
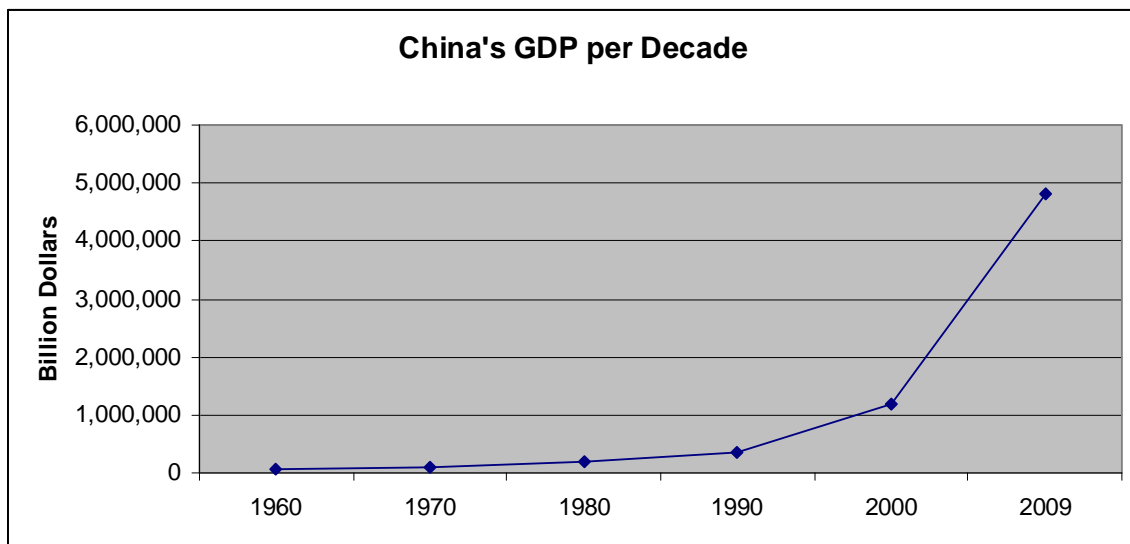[308] Paula De Masi & Henri Lorie. (1989). "How Resilient are Military Expenditures?" In *Staff Papers – International Monetary Fund*. Vol. 36. No.1. pp. 130-165. p. 136.

Figure 4.3

Military Expenditure of China
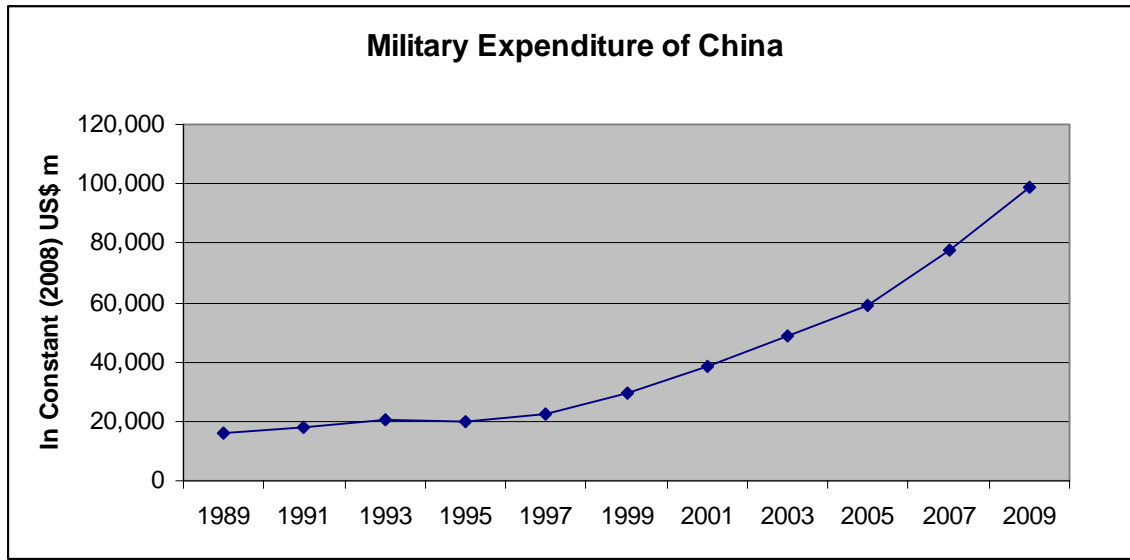
Source: SIPRI[309]

Figure 4.4

China's GDP per Decade

Source: Nationmaster & CIA World Factbook.[310]

[309] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. "The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database." Accessed June 10, 2010. Available on-line: http://milexdata.sipri.org/result.php4. It is important to note that it is difficult to accurately measure precisely how much China spends on its military as the military has always had "extrabudgetary sources of revenue and significant hidden categories of expenditure in other ministerial budgets or secret accounts." See David Shambaugh. (2004). <u>Modernizing China's Military: Progress, Problems, and Prospects</u>. Los Angeles, CA. University of California Press, Ltd. p. 184.
[310] Nationmaster. "Economy Statistics: GDP China." Accessed June 10, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.nationmaster.com/time.php?stat=eco_gdp-economy-gdp&country=ch-china. Central Intelligence Agency. The World Fact Book. "China." Accessed June 10, 2010. Available on-line: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html.

Based on these predictions there are indications that unipolarity is coming to an end and that the coming decades could see a significant power transition back towards bipolarity with the United States and China standing at each pole.

Roger Altman, Chairman of Evercore Partners and former United States Deputy Treasury Secretary in 1993-94, argues that the financial and economic crash of 2008 has contributed to significant declines in the control and influence over the international system once held by the United States. New rising economic powers are gaining influence and China will gain the most in its relative global position than any other country. The financial crisis has hurt China's economy but relative to the United States, China will have more opportunities to solidify its strategic advantages. China will be in a position to provide assistance to other countries and make strategic investments in energy resources at a time when the United States can not. This is in part due to its foreign exchange reserves totaling $2 trillion, the largest in the world. Due to these reserves it will be in a position to exert an increasing amount of influence on the international system.[311]

In a bipolar world the two great powers have vital interests and involvement in all the outcomes of world politics. Both the Soviet Union and the United States were concerned with developments in vast areas of the world.[312] With China's rising power it is also developing more influence and vital interests around the world – the Middle East, South America, and Africa, with more and more countries and regions coming under China's umbrella of vital interest. The more interest within a region the more a state will try to reshape that region in the pursuit of its national interests. China is currently

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[311] Roger Altman. (2009). "The Great Crash, 2008: A Geopolitical Setback to the West." In *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 88. No. 1 pp. 2-15. p. 3.
[312] Rosecrance. p. 314.

pursuing this type of policy in Central Asia and as China gains more and more interests

within Africa, it will also increasingly attempt to influence and reshape the continent to

suit its interests. This potentially will cause increased tension with the United States as it

attempts to extend its influence in the pursuit of its own distinctive national interests.

According to a guiding document of United States defence strategy, the 2006

Quadrennial Defence Review Report:

> The US will work to ensure that all major and emerging powers are
> integrated as constructive actors and stakeholders into the international
> system. It will also seek to ensure that no foreign power can dictate the
> terms of regional or global security. It will attempt to dissuade any
> military competitor from developing disruptive or other capabilities that
> could enable regional hegemony or hostile action against the US or other
> friendly countries.[313]

In summary, the United States will attempt to influence and integrate China into the

parameters and system of rules developed by the United States. As previously discussed

in chapter three however, China is not completely accepting of all of these parameters

and is attempting to develop its own system of rules to shape the international scene.

In a bipolar system the recurrence of crises between the two great powers is a

natural occurrence where small conflicts are waged. However, caution, moderation, and

the careful management of these crises come to be of great importance.[314] If crises do not

occur, it means that one side or the other is neglecting its own interests.[315] In a

competitive bipolar system motivation for great power states to expand is quite high.

Because of the competition between poles, each action by one will be viewed as a

strategic maneuver by the other. Even actions that may not be intended to have strategic

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[313] United States Department of Defence. (2006). "Quadrennial Defence Review Report." Accessed January 18, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/QDR20060203.pdf.
[314] Waltz. (1964). pp. 883-4.
[315] Rosecrance. p. 314.

significance will be seen in terms of the bipolar competition. This in turn results in additional political hostility between the two poles. Any advance in the position of one will take place at the expense of the other. Therefore, any improvement in the position of one must provoke the other to counter its move.[316] This scenario is significant due to the United States and China's aggressive push to carve out new or maintain their current spheres of influence within Africa and the potential for this competition to intensify in the future is highly probable considering their current level of competition. Due to these circumstances, intensified competition to the point of proxy strategies on the part of the United States and China are feasible.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has expressed concern about the disadvantages they face in the international hierarchy where democratic values, capitalism, and the idea of international responsibility are promoted. According to Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue, China is striving for the establishment of a "new world order that will ensure a long-term stable and peaceful international environment… (where) more than 200 countries in the world and more that six billion people should not and cannot be put under the control of one country….The common wish is for the establishment of a just and reasonable new political and economic order in the world…."[317] The basis of the new world order should be the five principles of peaceful coexistence; "mutual respect for each nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs,

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[316] Waltz (1964). p. 882.
[317] Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America. "China Wants New World Order." Accessed June 15, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zmgx/zgwjzc/t35080.htm

equality and mutual benefits, and peaceful coexistence."[318] China recognizes that the United States currently dominates the world order and it is structured in such a way that a radical reconfiguration to China's international environment through direct confrontation is neither feasible nor worthwhile.[319]

The fall of the Soviet Union allowed the United States the ability to exert more control over the international system and the United States has taken full advantage of shaping that system towards its political and ideological values. The NATO alliance has expanded into East Central Europe and into the territory of the former Soviet Union and the United States has projected its power into Central Asia. It invaded Iraq in order to consolidate United States dominance in the Persian Gulf and to alter the Middle East by promoting the spread of democracy. Finally the United States has proclaimed that free-market democracy is the world's only feasible model for economic development promoting a globalized international economic system.[320] Robert Gilpin theorizes that when rising states are unsatisfied with the status quo there is a "desire to redraft the rules by which relations among nations work," and "the nature and governance of the system."[321] China is not satisfied with the status quo and therefore proxy strategies could be utilized as a method to further China's national interests abroad in order to reshape the international environment towards their values.

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[318] Ibid.
[319] Yong Deng. (2008). China's Struggle for Status: The Realignment of International Relations. New York, New York; Cambridge University Press. p. 22.
[320] Layne. pp. 148-9.
[321] Robert Gilpin. (1981). War and Change in World Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 198.

Proxy Logic in a Great Power Rivalry

In a bipolar great power international system proxy war strategies are a method to advance national interests. China and the United States are likely to seek to advance or defend their national interests while minimizing the risks of a direct confrontation. The nuclear arsenals and conventional military capabilities of the United States and China will make direct conflict between the two great powers over disputes within Africa less plausible allowing proxy strategies to be a logical replacement for the United States and China to advance their global and regional strategic and political interests. What will result will be the avoidance of direct conflict over disputes in Africa resulting in conditions for limited wars, which is a significant determinant for the strategy of proxy war. The threat of total war between nuclear great powers will increase the odds that the rivalries between the United States and China will be contested in local, intra-state conflicts within Africa.

The fear of escalation in a direct conflict between the United States and China strongly inhibits the use of conventional military forces against one another. During the Cold War the probability of direct war between the United States and the Soviet Union was "practically nil precisely because the military planning and deployments of each, together with the fear of escalation to general nuclear war, [kept] it that way."[322] The relationship between the United States and China will take on similar characteristics as the Cold War where two great powers are unwilling to risk direct war between conventional forces because of the unpredictability and fear of miscalculating the other rival resulting in the possibility of the use of nuclear arsenals leading to total war. This

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[322] Robert Art & Kenneth Waltz. (1983). "Technology, Strategy, and the Uses of Force." In Robert Art & Kenneth Waltz, (Eds.). <u>The Use of Force</u>. Lanham, Md; University Press of America. p. 28.

fear of escalation towards total war promotes the use of proxy strategies as a convincing method of shifting or maintaining the balance of power and accomplishing ones foreign policy goals.

Currently, the ideological conflicts of the Cold War have been replaced by economic competition and new ideological differences, as China takes part in the global economy and strives for expanded trade terms and economic markets rather than an alternative communist vision. Currently China is not thinking ideologically but the United States is. China is thinking economically and they'll build relations with any type of government as long as they gain access to their energy resources or markets to sell their products. In the near future however, the possibilities of not only an increase in competition for strategic energy resources between the United States and China may occur, but also an ideological struggle, similar to the Cold War, where the United States and China become involved in a competition for the restructuring of a new world order. The relentless pace of Chinese and American acquisitions of African energy resources, the competing forms of acquiring these resources and alternative visions of the continent have possibly put American and Chinese interests on a collision course. The United States is promoting Western values of democracy and good governance; values the Chinese do not promote. China's foreign policy in Africa, in part, has in fact promoted values directly opposed to the efforts and values of the United States. Chinese leaders emphasize sustaining a peaceful order domestically and internationally that is advantageous to the perpetuation of communist party rule[323] and the promotion of democracy is not compatible with the way the CCP rules. The United States may not see

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[323] Robert Sutter. (2008). <u>Chinese Foreign Relations: Power and Policy Since the Cold War</u>. United States of America; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. p. 161.

China as a communist threat like the Soviet Union during the Cold War, but they do see China as hindering the goals and values the United States is promoting throughout Africa.

The use of proxies during the Cold War gave the United States and the Soviet Union a level of plausible deniability in particular conflicts and minimized their responsibility for the outcomes. This helped prevent the tarnishing of the superpower's international credibility, image and status. China is quite conscious in promoting a positive international image and this becomes more relevant as China grows into an international great power. China does not want to be viewed as an imperialist power and it is extremely sensitive to the country's international status treating it as an overall guide in forming their foreign policy objectives.[324] Utilizing proxy strategies would allow China to maintain their anti-imperialist image within Africa, uphold the value of sovereignty, and eliminate any negative consequences to its international image that a direct intervention may cause. The United States is also conscious of its international image as it is trying to improve a tarnished world wide image after the invasion of Iraq and the foreign policies of the Bush administration. A unilateral decision for direct intervention in an African country, particularly a Muslim country such as Sudan, would be detrimental for the improvement of its international image and legitimacy.

China is striving to become a regional and international great power and its rise is directly related to its international status, which is directly dependant on its relative capabilities.[325] According to this logic, as China continues to gain more and more international status the more economic, political, and military capabilities it will posses in

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[324] Yan Xuetong. (2001). "The Rise of China in Chinese Eyes." In *Journal of Contemporary China*. Vol. 10, No. 26. pp. 33-39. p. 34.
[325] William Wohlforth. (2009) "Unipolarity, Status Competition, and Great Power War." In *World Politics*. Vol. 61. No. 1 pp. 28-57. p. 30.

relation to the United States. The current unipolar international system generates far fewer incentives than a bipolar system for direct great power competition over status. Therefore, as China continues to increase its international status, becoming closer to a bipolar system, there will be an increase in great power competition between the United States and China.[326] Increased power competition has the potential to increase tensions between the two states resulting in an increase in possible conflict. Because direct conflict between two nuclear great powers is unlikely, indirect strategies, such as proxies, are a logical alternative.

Economic integration between the United States and China may also facilitate proxy strategies within Africa. In 2009 the United States was China's top trading partner with trade between the two countries totaling $366 billion.[327] At the end of 2009, China was the largest foreign holder of United States debt totaling $894.8 billion.[328] Any type of direct conflict between them would inevitably lead to government directed boycotts and sanctions on products resulting in a decrease in productivity. Both economies would suffer significant ramifications and measures would be taken to prevent any significant loss of productivity. Proxy strategies are a way to allow great powers a level of plausible deniability. Employing proxy war strategies are far superior for China and the United States to control or influence local wars in the pursuit of national interest as opposed to direct military intervention. If the United States and China have the ability to deny

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[326] Ibid.

[327] United States-China Business Council. "US-China Trade Statistics and China's World Trade Statistics." Accessed April 10, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.uschina.org/statistics/tradetable.html

[328] Japan was second with $765.4 billion followed by the United Kingdom with $180.3 billion. See United States Treasury Department. "Major Foreign Holders of Treasury Securities." Accessed August 17, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.ustreas.gov/tic/mfh.txt. Some estimates put China's total closer to $1 trillion arguing that China uses offshore accounts when purchasing United States Treasury debt. See Washington Times, The. "China holds more US debt than indicated." Accessed August 17, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/mar/02/chinas-debt-to-us-treasury-more-than-indicated/.

plausibly any involvement in a conflict that inevitably would cause significant tension

between the two great powers resulting in boycotts and sanctions, the utilization of

proxies may be a logical alternative to direct methods in order to preserve the economic

ties between the two states.

The African Dimension

An ideological struggle coinciding with energy resource competition between the

United States and China is probable. As China's engagement in Africa increases, the

United States will engage in African countries to oppose Chinese expansion and to

support Western economic and political interests. The United States is promoting a

stable continent with moderate governments capable of maintaining mutually beneficial

relations with the United States and Western states in general. These policies are put in

place in order to ensure continued Western access to the economic resources in Africa.

China, on the other hand, is engaging African countries to access their natural resources

and large market base and to balance out and diminish United States influence that has

been established in certain strategically important countries, such as Nigeria, Angola and

Gabon in order to increase their own influence and access to vital energy resources.

Many African leaders are quite concerned about the behaviour of both the United

States' and China's. Many view their behaviour paralleling the actions of the colonial

past. Part of the unresponsive reaction to AFRICOM, even among United States allies, is

the fear that Africa will again become a pawn in a strategic competition between two

superpowers, as it was during the Cold War.[329] African leaders do not want to be forced

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[329] The Ghanaian chief of Army staff, Brigadier General Robert Winful, said recently, "I wish to also remind you that one of the potential pitfalls of AFRICOM is that it could make Africa become a theatre for

to choose between China and the United States. Africa sees the United States and China as able to offer different kinds of investment and aid. African elites hope to benefit from positive relations with both. African leaders have used the competition between the United States and China to their advantage in the past by accepting the best offer provided. African leaders now have an alternative to the dictates of American corporations and Western international financial institutions. This can give African states more room to maneuver.[330]

It is in the interest of the United States to remain the dominant influential power within Africa and specifically within strategically relevant African states such as Nigeria, Angola and various other countries within the Gulf of Guinea where there are significant oil deposits. During the Cold War the United States concentrated on the containment of the Soviet Union by effectively utilizing the UN as a proxy in the Congo conflict beginning in 1960. The Soviet Union was able to utilize Cuban troops to accomplish foreign goals and diminish American influence in Angola. This same type of strategy may be used again by China and the United States via proxy methods.

It was a policy to combat Soviet expansion in order to prevent the Soviets from penetrating countries that had traditionally been considered under the influence of Western interests and this same type of policy may be used to diminish and contain Chinese influence. Instead of implementing policies to prevent the spread of communism, the United States has begun to implement policies in order to prevent the

the new scramble for resources between China and the US…. More importantly, it is the relationship between China and America that worry most people in our continent. What happens if the Chinese leadership decides to establish the abolition of AFRICOM in Africa? The only victim, as was the case during the Cold War, would be Africa and its people." See American Enterprise Institute. "AFRICOM: Implications for African Security and US-African Relations." Accessed August 16, 2010. Transcript and video available on-line: http://www.aei.org/event1571.
[330] Mauro De Lorenzo. (2007). "African Perspectives on China." In *American Enterprise Institute*. Accessed August 16, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.aei.org/article/26917.

spread of Chinese influence and control over energy resources. The United States'

increased military focus on the African continent with the establishment of AFRICOM is

perhaps the most significant development in maintaining its level of influence within the

region. The United States has begun to focus on democratization, good governance, and

progress toward establishing market based economies, all Western values, and has tied

these to its aid packages through the AGOA and the MCA. Unlike the United States'

military focus on engaging African countries, China is implementing strategies precisely

to increase Chinese influence and diminish American influence through more diplomatic

channels. The FOCAC in 2006 is perhaps the defining moment in China-Africa relations

as forty-eight of the fifty-three African countries sent their leaders to China. The FOCAC

has significantly increased trade between countries in Africa and China. By providing

African countries an alternative to the IMF, China provides funds that are counter to

Western imposed values and stipulations that come with IMF loans. Providing

alternatives to Western sources of influence diminishes the United States' influence and

increases China's. The Chinese non-interference policy in Africa threatens to reduce the

leverage of the United States and the West, and thereby subvert the political and

economic reform policies the United States and the West have been advocating. It is a

zero-sum game as China increases its influence and acquisition of energy resources

within Africa it inevitably diminishes American influence and any possibilities of the

United States acquiring those energy resources in the future. A pro-Chinese Africa will

endanger American and Western interests and sources of strategic energy materials.

American and Chinese interests have run counter in the past and will continue in

the future outside of Asia generating conditions for the return of the strategy of war by

proxy. The strategic interests of the United States and China within Africa have

significantly increased within a very short number of years. The United States – China

strategic competition, to varying degrees, will have similarities to the Cold War struggle

between the United States and the Soviet Union as the two great powers will become

pitted against one another in strategically important African countries in an effort to

diminish the others influence within the region and to promote their own distinctive

national interests and values. As stated in China's 2008 defence White Paper, Chinese

strategies and national defence are developed based on the understanding that power

politics still exists as it did during the Cold War and is a dominant element in

international relations.[331] This "power politics" viewpoint of the international system

will influence the way China develops it foreign policy in the future.

The United States saw the Angola conflict as an American-Soviet zero-sum game

and as a component of regional power in the grander scheme of a balance of power

between the United States and Soviet Union. The United States and China view their

relationship in a similar light. Competition between them will force other states to pick

sides and "will involve all the standard elements of international competition: military

strength, economic well-being, influence among other nations and over the values and

practices that are accepted as international norms."[332]

The United States perception of China has the potential to be that of a

destabilizing force that has the ability to sway the global balance of power and

significantly diminish American influence and access to resources within Africa. As a

great power, the United States has vital interests around the globe and soon the military

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[331] People's Republic of China. "China's National Defence in 2008."
[332] Richard Bernstein & Ross Munro. (1997). "The Coming Conflict with America." In *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 76. No. 2. pp. 18-32. p. 21.

and political power of China will be able to threaten these vital interests. As during the Cold War when the United States felt it necessary to respond to Soviet actions in Africa as upsetting the world balance of power by imposing governments to suit their own interests, the United States has the potential to utilize similar strategies towards China. As unstable, strategically important African countries struggle and progress towards security and stability within their borders, opportunities will arise for the United States and China to "take sides" in these intra-state conflicts and influence the outcomes in order to suit their own interests. Instilling a government favourable to ones values and interests is beneficial in assimilating that particular state into ones economic and resource acquisition systems. This is precisely what the United States and the Soviet Union intended to accomplish during the Cold War by strategies of war by proxy as detailed in chapter two. The future great power competition between the United States and China will have similar characteristics in that each rival will strive to persuade African regimes to take on its own distinctive values and interests and proxy strategies may need to be utilized in order to accomplish these goals.

During the Cold War Africa was considered by the Soviet Union and the United States as one of the most chaotic and rebellious areas in the world, and therefore one of the weakest. Taking advantage of local instability created opportunities to expand the Soviet Union's and the United States' area of influence. Proxy wars can be used as an effective method of increasing an area of influence as the Congo and Angola examples illustrate. Both the United States and the Soviet Union were able to implement successfully a government via proxy that contributed to an increase in its sphere of influence within the region. Currently only about forty percent of African states are

electoral democracies.[333] Nigeria is only just becoming a democracy but it has significant internal ethnic and economic divisions, most notably a conflict between the Muslim majority in the north and a largely Christian south. Corruption, organized crime, and an unstable government leave the country open to exploitation by organizations intent on discrediting or damaging the current government and its external ties.[334] Along with Nigeria, Angola continues to rank amongst the most corrupt countries in the world and half of the world's top twenty most corrupt governments are in Africa.[335] Sudan, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, and Democratic Republic of Congo are among these and are looked upon by both the United States and China with significant interest.

Although Africa has changed significantly since the end of the Cold War the continent still possesses certain criteria that make it ripe for proxy strategies. Intra-state wars and conflicts are instrumental criteria in order for proxy strategies to be utilized and there are numerous intra-state wars, both current and potential, within Africa. For example, the collapse of the Nigerian government would present China with unique opportunities to promote a government that may be more favourable to China's value system. Currently, the United States controls the majority of the energy exploration rights within Nigeria but if the government was to fall and a regime came to power that favoured China the situation may significantly shift away from American control in favour of China. A proxy strategy could be utilized in order for China to accomplish this and extend its influence within the country. Unlike the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, China is currently not orchestrating regime changes to

[333] Lyman. (2006). p. 6.
[334] Ibid. p. 32.
[335] Transparency International. "The 2009 Transparency International Index." Accessed April 1, 2010. Available on-line: http://www.transparency.org/

advance its interests within Africa as occurred during the 1960s and 1970s.[336] This has

the potential to change as China's international and regional interests increase together

with its ability to extend power further and further throughout the globe China will have

more at stake in regional and local politics and will increasingly be pressured to influence

the outcomes of local and regional conflicts. This is becoming more evident as the

international community looks to China to use its power to influence local politics such

as in North Korea, Iran and Sudan.

The National Intelligence Council predicts that states within the Sub-Saharan and

North African regions will remain highly susceptible to conflict for at least the next

twenty years. These same states are currently experiencing increased economic growth

and high levels of outside investment. This is likely to continue if energy prices remain

high and for African regimes, managing their economies will be very delicate. Although

some governments will succeed, others will not and civil disorder and conflict will occur

because "rulers miscalculate the balancing act of fostering economic growth and

maintaining authoritarian rule."[337] This makes certain African countries strong

candidates for external influence through proxy war. Both the United States and China

prefer governments in power that are favourable to its national interests.

The Soviets had a goal of creating closer ties to other southern African pro-

Marxist movements because they wanted to establish a base of operations (in Angola)

from which to partake in a more comprehensive role in southern African politics. China

has similar aspirations and although China is not heavily influenced by a government's

political views, it is utilizing a strategy in order to gain increased influence, have a more

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[336] Zweig. p. 38.
[337] National Intelligence Council. p. 61.

comprehensive role, and increased access to energy resources in Africa. Within many African countries, China has an image as a developing country – indeed as a member of the "Third World fraternity" – and this image, which has been actively promoted by China, will continue to be an important aspect of its appeal towards developing countries. Many African countries consider China the only member of the UN Security Council to be "one of their own." It's an image which China uses to increase its influence and has been quite effective.[338]

Africa could be a testing ground of American determination to restrict Chinese influence throughout the Third World and could be a test to a United States policy of the containment of China. Indeed, the United States' actions towards China in Africa could set the stage for an overall policy of containment towards China. Curtailing Chinese influence in Africa in order for the United States to maintain its superiority within the continent is in its interests. Proxy strategies were one method the United States employed in order to contain the Soviet Union and it is plausible the United States will use this strategy in the future for the purposes of containing China.

China will have the ability to support intra-state conflicts within Africa possibly within the next decade. The acquisition of long range heavy lift aircraft along with aerial refueling tankers will provide China the capabilities to supply weapons to governments or insurgent groups with a level of plausible deniability. China's rapid increase in its development and acquisition of modern technology will provide China with more appeal to potential proxies. Higher technology allows a great power who is supporting a proxy improved odds of influencing the conflict in its favour. An example would be the United States' donation of Stinger anti-aircraft missile systems provided to the Afghan

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[338] Lyman. (2006). pp. 41-2.

mujahideen fighters during the 1980s that were used to combat the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan.

Africa is perceived to be of vital interest to both the United States and China and because of this they will be highly motivated to protect their interests and in so doing conflict between the two has and will continue to arise. If crises do not occur, it means that one side or the other is neglecting its own interests.[339] The more interest within a region the more a state will try to reshape that region in the pursuit of its national interests. The United States and China have begun to devote more attention and resources to secure what they perceive as policies beneficial to their national interests. This is evident in countries such as Nigeria, Angola, and Sudan. During the Cold War both the United States and the Soviet Union were highly motivated to contain or diminish the others influence as the Congo and Angola examples illustrate. The two superpowers were motivated to utilize proxy strategies successfully due to an ideological war. The future context between the United States and China is within a similar international and regional environment and the United States and China have the motivation to use proxy strategies in the future.

Conclusion

Proxy wars exist in local settings when there is significant external influence and motivation in order to achieve the interests of a great power. Proxy wars are always utilized in local conflicts where instability is prominent. Nuclear weapons have resulted in the necessity of great powers becoming indirectly involved in limited wars in order to pursue national interests. The goal is to deliberately discourage and control another great

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[339] Rosecrance. p. 314.

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power's aggression while avoiding total war. Proxy wars are a way to shift the balance of power or maintain the status quo by reducing the fear of escalation to total war by supplying material aid to a weaker group or organization. Proxy wars are also an effective strategy to minimize the risks of defeat in a direct intervention, the significant loss of resources, and ostracism from the international community.

The current and future situation in Africa contains the criteria for proxy strategies to be utilized. There are intra-state conflicts that have the potential to be unresolved for decades and there is significant motivation for the United States and China to exert their power and influence indirectly within these conflicts in order to pursue national interests. The United States will try to maintain the balance of power within Africa while China is pushing aggressively to shift the balance of power away from the United States. In order to minimize a direct confrontation and the fear of escalation to total war between the United States and China, proxy strategies can be an effective alternative in the pursuit of national interests.

The UN operation in the Congo in 1960 and the Angolan Civil War in 1975 illustrate that proxy strategies have been employed in the past between two great powers and have been used effectively to accomplish goals in the pursuit of national interests. These examples support the theory that great powers assess each other's strength and contest each other's influence through the involvement in the internal wars of small countries.[340] The ultimate goal of proxy strategies during the Cold War was the maintenance of global peace and the avoidance of an East-West direct confrontation as a result of internal conflict and political chaos. Due to the international climate and situation third parties were necessary to prevent direct confrontation between the United

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[340] Rosenau. p. 6.

States and Soviet Union. The possible future climate of the international system possesses similar traits. As China continues on its path towards great power status, the United States and China will eventually use strategies to prevent direct confrontation in the pursuit of national interests and third party proxies may be just one of these strategies.

Proxy strategies were an effective method for the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War to advance its national interests abroad and Third World countries were the battle grounds in the struggle for international power and influence. Africa was an integral component in this competition and there is evidence that the continent will once again become a focal point for the upcoming competition and struggle for energy resources and international influence between the United States and China. The United States – China competition might well be met as the United States – Soviet Union competition was, with renewed efforts to carve out a sphere of influence as an end in itself.

The nature of the international system directly influences the strategy of great powers and a bipolar international setting, as opposed to a unipolar setting, increases the odds that proxy strategies will be utilized to advance national interests. It is impossible to predict with certainty what the future holds for the structure of the international system and there are strong arguments indicating the international system will remain unipolar for decades or possibly shift towards a multipolar system. It is possible that proxy war strategies can be employed in a multipolar setting, however, there is a whole body of research that needs to be conducted before coming to any concrete conclusions and future research is needed. Regardless of these arguments, if the international system does

become bipolar there is a strong possibility that the United States and China will employ

proxy strategies in order to pursue their national interests abroad.

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