

U.S. China-Bashing Countered by Scholars

by Michael Billington

July 14—Leaders in Congress and the Washington thinktank Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), among others, have rapidly escalated their war hysteria against China. The CSIS, which occasionally promotes reasonable strategic positions, went into hyperbolic extremes of China-bashing in a July 10-11 conference on “Recent Trends in the South China Sea and U.S. Policy.” The persistent underlying assumption of the panelists (with the exception of two Chinese representatives and a Malaysian spokesman), was that China, under President Xi Jinping, has become a serial aggressor, threatening peace in Asia and, to some speakers, the entire world’s peace and prosperity.

There is a certain perverted irony in CSIS’s sponsorship of a conference in the U.S. capital, defining China as one of the world’s most dangerous aggressors, due primarily to their drilling for oil and building facilities on contested islands in the South China Sea, with nary a mention of the Obama Administration’s multiple criminal wars of aggression against nations that pose no threat to the United States, threatening global war by the massing of U.S. and NATO forces and anti-ballistic missile systems along the Russian and Chinese borders, adopting a first-strike doctrine against China, known as Air-Sea Battle, carrying out drone killings worldwide without any legal or political oversight or justification, and spying on every nation on Earth—to name but a few of Obama’s impeachable crimes.

In fact, while 80 Congressmen from both parties sent a letter to Obama demanding that he stop his newest illegal war—yet another war in Iraq—CSIS chose to invite Republican hawk Rep. Mike Rogers (R-Mich.), chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, who is calling for immediate U.S. air strikes against Iraq, to open their “confront-China” conference. He did not disappoint.

China, said Rogers, after 20 years of investing in its military prowess, believes that “now is the time, while

the world is distracted,” to expand at the expense of its neighbors. “This has to change,” Rogers inveighed. “This is death by a thousand cuts,” creating “brewing clouds of conflict—this is as serious as it gets.” He praised the U.S.-Philippine agreement to allow U.S. air, sea, and land forces to occupy bases in the Philippines; he praised Japan’s decision to scrap the postwar pacifist constitution, and to prepare to join in a U.S. war in Asia; he praised Vietnam for sending military ships to disrupt a Chinese oil rig near the Paracel Islands, which are under Chinese control; but, he said, “This is not enough, it is getting more serious every day. This could lead to outright conflict—we’re on that matrix.”

Rogers added that the U.S. “must aggressively pursue deterrence,” and provide Japan with “state of the art weaponry.” We must stop normal diplomatic approaches, “be more direct, more aggressive, empower our friends—now is the time to confront China’s glut-tonous, naked aggression.”

Incredibly, Rogers charged that China is not only strategically dangerous, but that it is responsible for destroying the economies of the region—in fact, of the whole world! China, he said, “uses its power to bully, intimidate, and destabilize the economy of the world.”

This points to the real target of this exercise. China, together with Russia, India, and other Eurasian nations, including all of the Southeast Asian nations other than the Philippines and Vietnam, are engaged in collaboration with China in massive infrastructure development—in energy, rail, water, space, nuclear, and more, even while the U.S. and Europe are in economic freefall, pumping trillions of newly printed dollars and euros into bailing out the gambling debts of the trans-Atlantic banking system, while massively cutting investments into the real economy. Obama and his British/Wall Street controllers would rather have war than accept Eurasian growth and new international economic institutions, such as those coming into being at the BRICS meeting in Brazil this week, while the West collapses.

China’s Response

To the credit of CSIS, they did invite two prominent Chinese scholars from Tsinghua University to address the conference: Jia Bingbing, a law professor who defended China’s legal position regarding the contested territories, and Chu Shulong, a political science professor. Professor Chu provided a cogent and damning analysis of the U.S. intentions and actions in the South China Sea, notably directly contrasting them to the “last

Democratic Administration” under President Bill Clinton.

Under Obama, Chu said, the policy in the South China Sea is not actually about the South China Sea, but is part of the “larger strategic framework” of the Asia Pivot, or Rebalancing, pronounced by Obama in 2012. In the past, U.S. policy in the region included economic issues, human rights, and strategic concerns—but now, it is “almost all strategic, dependent on troubles, disputes between Asian countries.” When the Philippines or Vietnam construct things on the islands, or send warships to the islands, “the U.S. is silent—only China is the bad guy in Asia.”

Chu noted that there is much talk about international law, but that “the U.S. will not join the International Criminal Court, or the UNCLOS, or even some human rights conventions—the U.S. wants international law for others, but ignores it for itself when it wants to, including Iraq and other countries.”

Of course China is building its navy, Chu said, as a maritime country with rapidly expanding trade. But is there a reason, he asked, “for the massive build up of U.S. military forces in the South China Sea, which threatens China? Is this not coercion?”

The Empire’s Toadies

From British Commonwealth member Australia, where the U.S. is setting up extensive air, sea, and land military facilities directed at China, Cabinet Minister Malcolm Turnbull went further even than Congressman Rogers. Speaking at Australian National University on June 20, Turnbull claimed China has no friends in Asia! “It has really no allies in the region, apart from North Korea,” he said. “And the consequence has been [that] now China’s neighbors are drawing closer to the United States than ever before.” Ironically, Chinese President Xi’s visit to Seoul in early July demonstrated that China is closer to U.S. military ally South Korea than it is to the North, while nearly all the nations of Southeast Asia and Central Asia, including India, are strengthening their cooperation with China.

U.S. Secretaries of State and Treasury John Kerry and Jack Lew, along with Adm. Samuel Locklear, head of the Pacific Command, were in Beijing July 9-10 for the annual U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue. Despite the Obama Administration’s growing confrontation with China, the U.S. military has insisted



Prof. Chu Shulong, of Tsinghua University in Beijing, identified the buildup of U.S. military forces in the South China Sea as a threat to China.

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on maintaining close relations with China—Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey has repeatedly warned against the “Thucydides Trap” (believing that because China is a rising power, it must necessarily lead to conflict with the U.S.), and Admiral Locklear invited China, for the first time, to the recent Rimpac naval exercises in the Pacific, and has invited them to return next year.

Otherwise, the Dialogue provided far less an exchange of ideas than what is required by the current state of the global war danger. Kerry again demanded that China submit the territorial issues to international arbitration under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)—a Convention which the U.S. has itself refused to ratify, based on the claim that it would entail a loss of sovereignty! Yet, China *has* signed the Convention, and is following its rules precisely, including that arbitration is only allowed when both parties to a dispute agree to it.

In fact, the Philippine spokesman at the CSIS conference, after extended denunciations of China’s refusal to submit to supposedly impartial international arbitration, admitted in his closing statement that he had met with the Chinese 120 times, and that China has repeatedly called for “joint development” of the region—which the Philippines rejects. Clearly, Obama doesn’t want development—he wants imperial “divide and conquer” conflict.

mobeir@aol.com