

no matter how powerful the advantages one side seems to have at the beginning. The second is that wars are always horrible. Not only are people killed or severely harmed, but whole societies, even of the victors, are brutalized. This was true of the British in Kenya, French in Algeria, Americans in the Philippines, Russians in Central Asia, and Chinese in Tibet. Finally, guerrilla wars are, at best, unwinnable, lasting as in Ireland for centuries and in Algeria for a century and a half. The people of Chechnya suffered massacre, deportation, rape, and massive destruction for nearly four centuries and still is not “pacified.” No one wins a guerrilla war; both sides lose. The only sensible policy is one that aims to stop such conflicts rather than to win them. Hegel and Santayana may be right; we may not learn. But certainly, Huntington is wrong in urging that we blot the lessons out of our minds. ■

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[oriental despotism]

# Red Sun Rising

The U.S. shouldn't presume that the PRC wants a peaceful future.

By James P. Pinkerton

BEIJING—As I watched the Chinese soldiers goose-stepping across Tiananmen Square, it occurred to me that maybe the U.S. and China weren't destined to be such close friends.

Once upon a time, people hoped that the logic of capitalism would knit countries together. In 1910, the British economist Norman Angell wrote *The Great Illusion*, arguing that it was illogical for industrial nations not to co-operate with each other, since confrontation—war—was so obviously catastrophic; the illusion was that a European war could be profitable or beneficial. Angell didn't prophesy that rich countries would never fight. He merely pointed out that if they did go to war, they would impoverish themselves. And in 1914, he was proven sadly correct.

The new great conventional wisdom, pushed by American neoconservatives and their fellow travelers, is that it is democratic nations that are naturally friendly toward each other. Democracy breeds tranquility. But *sacre bleu*, what about France, one of the world's oldest democracies? The French seem to be leading much of democratic Europe in an increasingly anti-American direction, as countries such as Italy and Ukraine withdraw their remaining forces from Iraq and the U.S. and the European Union go their separate ways on issues ranging from Iran to Airbus.

OK, that's Europe, which is mostly “old.” But what about the rising democracies here in Asia? Aren't they more pro-American? Maybe, maybe not.

Earlier this year in Indonesia, the young democratic government did nothing when a Jakarta court sentenced Abu Bakar Bashir to a mere 30 months in jail, meting out meager punishment for his role in the conspiracy to fire-bomb 202 people to death in Bali three years ago. The U.S. and Australian governments protested Bashir's light sentence; the newspaper *The Australian* editorialized that the sentence was “an obscene slur against the memory of the innocent victims of the Bali bombing.” Of course, in the bad old undemocratic days, high-powered protests from abroad might have had an impact on the Indonesian judicial system. That is, maybe a strongman in Jakarta would have tacked a few decades or centuries onto Bashir's jail time or arranged for him to be “accidentally killed while trying to escape.” But nowadays, the popular passions of the Indonesians, all 238 million of them, must be taken into account.

So popular passion, also known as “majority rule,” is good news for Bashir and his al-Qaeda-wannabe terrorist friends. Why? Let's be honest: there's a certain distinct sympathy in the Third World for brown people who kill white

people. According to the *South China Morning Post*, the venerable Hong Kong-based newspaper, Bashir's supporters thronged around the court building as they "waved banners and shouted anti-American, anti-Jewish and anti-Christian slogans." In addition, some protestors carried pictures of George W. Bush with his eyes cut out and the caption, "Drag and hang Bush." Meanwhile, the BBC reports that Bashir's lawyers are planning on appealing their client's brief prison sentence.

Back to China, which describes itself as a democracy with "Chinese characteristics." Westerners might dispute that China's system has any democratic features whatsoever. And one can even argue about the degree to which China has embraced free-market capitalism.

As I saw in Tiananmen Square, the Chinese have an aesthetic that, to a Westerner, looks fascist. Ominous-appearing indeed is the sharply dressed and smartly pressed unit of the People's Liberation Army, bayonets a-gleaming, that goes goose-stepping across Tiananmen every morning at dawn for the national flag-raising ceremony.

To be fair, lots of countries have strutting soldiers. But China goes further than most in its resurrection of abhorrent politico-military styles—as the world will soon see. In 2003, the government hired Albert Speer Jr., son of the famous Nazi architect/war criminal, to design a 10-mile axis running right through the center of Beijing. That will be the parade route for the 2008 Olympics. "His Beijing axis is re-awakening old memories," suggested an article in the German paper *Die Welt* two years ago: "Wasn't there a legendary north-south axis planned by the elder Speer for Hitler's new Berlin, which was to be called 'world capital Germania?' Is his son trying to copy him, or rather outdo him?"

For his part, Speer the younger denies any such intention, but the *New York Times* noted a connection between the father's design for the German Pavilion at the 1937 Paris World's Fair and the son's recent Expo 2000 in Hannover. In the politely shaded understatement of the *Times*, the son's project, 63 years later, bears "an uncanny parallel to one of his father's."

Peter Herz, a former American diplomat stationed in China, recalled for me an eerie conversation from a decade ago: when he told a Chinese associate that some of his ancestors came from Germany, the Chinese volunteered, "Oh, I think Hitler was a very great man." When he explained that his German kin were Jewish, the point didn't register. "The Holocaust simply isn't taught," Herz observed. Another Chinese, he added, simply dismissed anti-Semitic political massacres: "Well, isn't that a small price for getting the country back on its feet?"

So while Hitler never succeeded in building his *Welthauptstadt*, the Chinese, searching the world for role models, might naturally gravitate toward a fellow totalitarian with a

Ah, but weren't China and the U.S. on the same side against Japan? Yes and no. The American government sided with Chiang Kai-shek in the '40s, and when Chiang fled to Taiwan in 1949, the U.S. recognized Taiwan as the Republic of China, breaking off relations with Chairman Mao in Beijing. Then, to make matters worse, the U.S. and Red China went to war in Korea in 1950. Nearly 33,700 Americans died in that conflict—and almost a million Chinese. Americans have mostly forgotten the Korean War, but the huge losses on China's side, suffered on a warfront adjacent to the Chinese homeland, make for some lingering hard feelings. Those hard feelings, however well masked, help explain why the Chinese are so uninterested in corralling North Korea and its nuclear program.

But of course, the big enchilada, to mix an ethnic metaphor, is Taiwan. The U.S. didn't recognize the People's Republic of China—and de-recognize Taiwan—until 1979. Even today, America stands as Taiwan's chief ally, patron, and protector. And for all of China's enthusiasm for enrichment, the political

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grandiose and bombastic architectural vision. And if Hitler's favorite builder, Albert Speer, who died in 1981, is not available, why not get his son?

To the Chinese, what we call World War II was just another 20th-century European war. And as for the Nazis, they were just another bunch of warrior white people—with more style than most. Yet the Chinese had their own World War II, of course, in which as many as 15 million died.

class in China—perhaps because the Communists need something to justify their rule now that they don't micromanage the economy anymore—is keeping a steady drumbeat on the Taiwan "reunification" issue.

Indeed, the recent decision by Japan to side with the U.S. on Taiwan sent shockwaves here. Japan is China's arch-nemesis; the Japanese invaded the Middle Kingdom in the '30s, killing many millions—and have never apologized, at

least not to the satisfaction of the Chinese. So the headline in the March 7 edition of *China Daily*, a government publication, was blunt: "Lay off Taiwan, U.S. and Japan told." In the words of foreign minister Li Zhaoxing, "The Taiwan question is China's internal affair and should by no means be deliberated in the framework of the security alliance between the United States and Japan."

The Chinese may be nationalists, and they may even be, in a fashion, socialists, but it's worth emphasizing that, appearances notwithstanding, they aren't Nazis. They barely know who the Hitlerites were, just as few Americans know the difference between the Taiping Rebellion and the Boxer Rebellion.

And how do the Chinese feel about Americans in general? Gloria Zhang, a pollster for Horizon China, the country's

leading survey firm, told me that the Chinese people like America well enough, but added, "They don't like Bush."

So one question is whether or not the Chinese people's anti-Bush feelings will bleed into a general anti-Americanism. In the words of Charles Martin, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in China, whom I interviewed in

country, for example, has any intention of signing on to the International Criminal Court or the Kyoto global-warming treaty. And of course, the two countries are enormous trans-Pacific trading and investing partners.

But the truth remains: on a slew of strategic questions, from nuclearized North Korea to rearmed Japan to inde-

## THE TRUTH REMAINS: ON A SLEW OF STRATEGIC QUESTIONS, FROM NUCLEARIZED NORTH KOREA TO REARMED JAPAN TO INDEPENDENCE-MINDED TAIWAN, WASHINGTON AND BEIJING SEE THE WORLD IN STARKLY DIVERGING TERMS.

Beijing, "There's definitely an undercurrent sense among many Chinese that the U.S. doesn't want China to be a world power." And of course, Martin added, "There are plenty of Americans who don't want China to be a great power."

Seen from that realist perspective, the U.S.-China relationship is just another great-power rivalry. Different countries have different interests. Yet some Americans, to be sure, coming from a more ideological neoconservative perspective, might not be so pragmatic, arguing that China's record of internal oppression and external aggression justifies a strong, even forceful, response from the U.S.

But that's the point: all through history, nations and empires have coexisted, collided, and frequently fought—sometimes with good reason. But it's worth noting again that the political or economic systems of the combatant countries are generally less important than the fact that the countries wanted the same things—ranging from territory to resources to pecking-order status. Which is to say, even if China were to become a genuine democracy, it would still be vying with the U.S. for its place in the sun.

On some issues, to be sure, the U.S.A. and the PRC see eye to eye. Neither

pendence-minded Taiwan, Washington and Beijing see the world in starkly diverging terms. Norman Angell was right in pointing out the costly folly of fighting, but as the 20th century proved, nations sometimes go to war anyway, because they have to. And as the last century also proved, sometimes they go to war because they want to. Thus the great challenge of the coming century is to make sure that those stark divergences don't turn into an even starker warfare—assuming, of course, that both countries wish to avoid war.

As I watched those goose-stepping soldiers in Tiananmen—and as I thought about the blustering, jingoizing, mandatory world-improving utopians back home in the U.S.—I wondered if Norman Angell's lesson about the disastrous cost of war was going to be neglected yet again. Indeed, I wondered if the presumption that both Pacific powers want peace was just another great illusion. ■

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[Margaret Sanger's logic]

# Pre-emptive Executions?

The notion that legalizing abortion drives down crime rates is logically flawed and morally repugnant.

By Steve Sailer

DID LEGALIZING ABORTION in the early '70s reduce crime in the late '90s by allowing "pre-emptive capital punishment" of potential troublemakers? Or did the Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, by outmoding shotgun weddings, adoption, and respect for life, instead make more murderous the early '90s crack wars fought by the first generation of youths to survive legalized abortion?

Since 1999, the University of Chicago economist Steven D. Levitt has been pushing his theory that legal abortion is responsible for half of the recent fall in crime. This assertion is the most prominent element in *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*, the entertaining new book Levitt co-wrote with journalist Stephen J. Dubner.

Despite his claim to be a "rogue economist" (and his excruciating taste in book titles), Levitt is much admired within his profession. In 2003, the American Economics Association awarded him, at the unusually early age of 35, its biennial John Bates Clark medal as the outstanding economist under 40.

The theory that legalizing abortion cuts crime is hardly original to Levitt, but it has long been more whispered than printed. Levitt's hypothesis embarrasses pro-choicers, who don't want public discussion of how quite a few people, from

crusading eugenicist and Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger onward, have backed fertility control as a way to limit "undesirables." Since blacks undergo about three times as many abortions as whites per capita, white liberals realize that endorsing Levitt's reasoning could be politically disastrous.

Levitt's idea also outrages pro-lifers, who note that King Herod used similar logic in ordering the slaughter of thousands of babies to try to eliminate the threat posed by the infant Jesus.

That doesn't mean the argument is false. As a social scientist, Levitt has an obligation to follow the data wherever they may lead him. But that doesn't mean it's true, either.

Levitt's theory rests on two plausible-sounding statements. First, he claims that abortion lowers the number of

which young men enter their criminal prime—the rate of crime began to fall. What this cohort was missing, of course, were the children who stood the greatest chance of becoming criminals."

Although Levitt's research has been praised by normally hardheaded gentlemen such as George Will and Robert Samuelson, few have probed its statistical complexities. Overall crime-trend data are frequently questionable. For example, the city of Atlanta long understated crime to attract the 1996 Olympics. The FBI's homicide statistics, however, are more trustworthy because, as Arthur Miller might have said, attention must be paid to a dead body with a hole in it.

According to Levitt's logic, murder should have declined first among the youngest and last among the oldest. Did it? Unfortunately for Levitt, the opposite

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"unwanted" babies, who would be more likely to commit crimes someday. Second, crime did fall. Levitt writes, "In the early 1990s, just as the first cohort of children born after *Roe v. Wade* was hitting its late teen years—the years during

is true. The murder rate for Americans age 25 and over started falling way back in 1981 (when the youngest person in this cohort was born in 1956) and fell fairly steadily for two decades. Indeed, in contrast to his theory about post-*Roe*