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Getting real about China

The Obama Pentagon is finally starting to recognize the threat

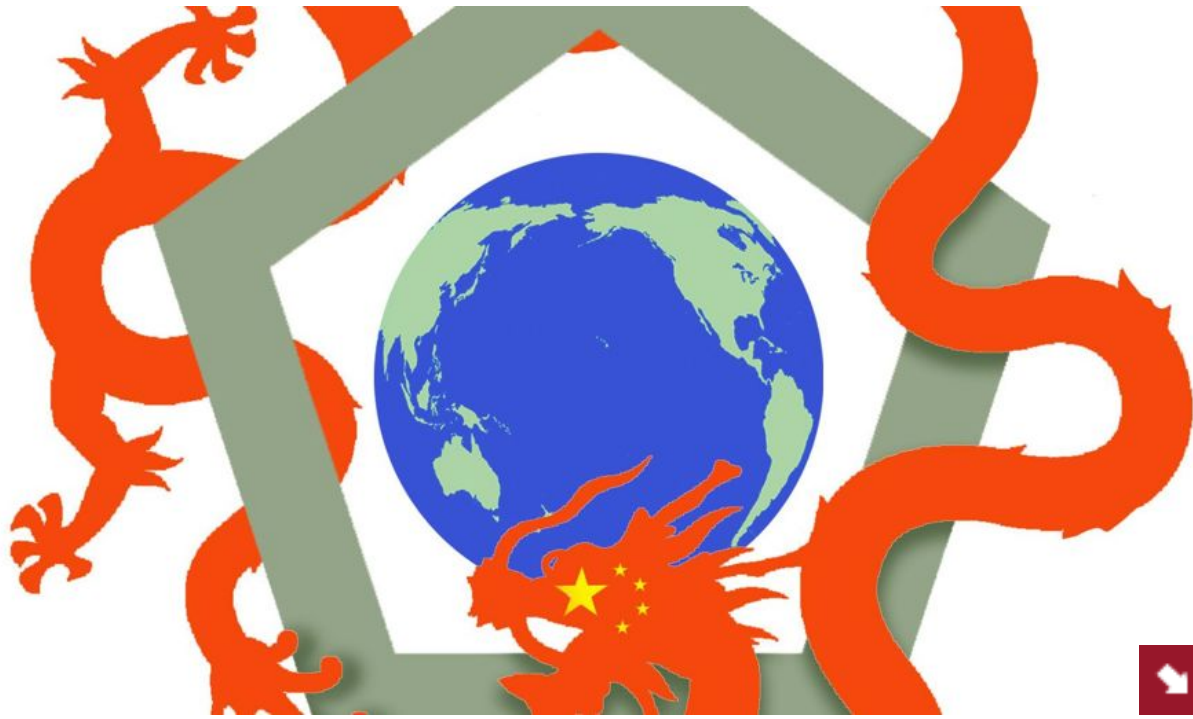


Illustration on the need for a U.S. response to China's world strategy by Alexander Hunter/The Washington Times [more >](#)

By James A. Lyons and Richard D. Fisher Jr. -- Tuesday, May 12, 2015

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ANALYSIS/OPINION:

Three times in April the Obama administration allowed the [Pentagon](#) to issue uncharacteristically expansive and blunt warnings over [China's](#) growing threat. However welcome, this trend is late in forming and must now be followed by more vigorous action to ensure [China](#) remains deterred.

On April 9, the U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Intelligence released a report on [China's](#) navy that was not only full of details, but also charts and illustrations, accompanied by two videos explaining [China's](#) military expansion in the Western Pacific. It was the first U.S. government report on [China's](#) military build-up that approached the usefulness of the Reagan administration's famous Soviet Military Power series. This is significant as both the George W. Bush and Obama administrations resisted as too provocative an annual [Pentagon](#) report to the Congress on [China's](#) military that cast [China](#) as a "Cold War" level challenge.

However, it is becoming clearer that barring corrective actions by [Washington](#), [China's](#) threat could grow into a global challenge to American interests, justifying an annual [China Military](#) Power publication to warn U.S. policymakers. The Office of Naval Intelligence report details that [China's](#) navy and coast guard are building about 60 ships a year. The U.S. produces 10 to 15. [China](#) eventually will have a large fleet equipped with carriers, nuclear attack submarines and amphibious ships to project power in defense of ruling Communist Party interests.

[China's](#) first priority remains the conquest of democratic Taiwan, but its growing navy will also be used to enforce its

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expansive territorial claims in the East and South China Seas. In the latter, [China](#) is literally turning seven coral reefs into large island bases, three of which will be equipped with airfields and combat aircraft. When complete, [China](#) will be able to exert control over sea-lanes that transport 40 percent of the world's commerce, and threaten U.S. ally, the Philippines.

In addition, [China](#)'s seeks to control the South China Sea to better defend its growing fleet of nuclear missile submarines.

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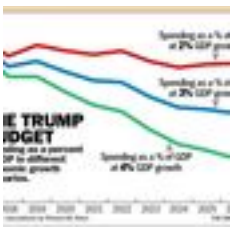
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- YES
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