

Sent: Fri, 20 May 2011 05:36:21 -0400
From: [REDACTED] P3/b(3)
To: "Johnson, David" <davidj@rand.org>, Ira Haron [REDACTED] P6/b(6)
<jlacey@ida.org>, "Kurtz, James H" <jkurtz@ida.org>
Subject: NightWatch: China, Pakistan,Thailand, Cambodia,US, Yemen, Reactions to the President's Address, Libya

-----Original Message-----

From: David Maxwell [REDACTED] P6/b(6)
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2011 5:38 AM
To: David Maxwell
Subject: FW: NightWatch: China, Pakistan,Thailand, Cambodia,US, Yemen, Reactions to the President's Address, Libya

Hmmm..... An attack on Pakistan would be tantamount to a attack on China? Sounds like an alliance. That is some pretty strong rhetoric and is it something that China could really back up? Note the comparison to north Korea – and remember the saying that China and north Korea are "closer than lips and teeth." What will China and Pakistan be - closer than "tongue and throat"?

Appears that Thailand and Cambodia have reached an agreement for a joint survey of the disputed area on the border.

Note Pakistan response to the Bin Laden raid – the "humiliation" of the attack is worse than anything Bin Laden did to Pakistan.

In Yemen an agreement may be signed on 22 May.

A roll-up of Mid East responses to the President's speech with this quote that sums it up:

Finally, if the US proposal was intended to win Arab support, it seems to have miscarried. Bahrain was one of the few states that responded positively. The Saudis, Syrians and Jordanians said nothing, during this Watch. A dirty secret of the Arabs is that they promise a lot but do little to support the Palestinian cause. Thus, Iran's ability to gain influence with Hamas is a direct result of Arab reservations about the wisdom of a real Palestinian state.

In libya it appears the regime is fracturing and fleeing with Qadhafi's wife and daughter reaching Poland.

NightWatch

For the Night of 19 May 2011

China-Pakistan: Update. On the third day of Pakistani Prime Minister Gilani's visit to China - and the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations, China warned that any attack on Pakistan would be tantamount to an attack on China, The News reported.

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao reportedly told Pakistani Prime Minister Gilani that Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi warned Washington during the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue to respect Pakistan's sovereignty. Moreover, Beijing will send a special envoy to Islamabad to express solidarity with Pakistan, a senior Chinese official said.

Comment: The precise wording and the intentions of the Chinese are not clear and there seems to be less substance than grandstanding. The words suggest China has agreed to act as Pakistan's protector, in some circumstances.

China's implied promise of a response would seem to apply to another US raid against terrorists and to drone attacks. What is not clear is how China might honor that commitment.

The language also seems to indicate that China would assist Pakistan in the event of an attack from India. China has done so for 40 years. On the other hand, the new alliance language also might imply that in the event of a war between India and China, Pakistan would be obliged to attack India on the flank.

A violation of sovereignty is an act of war, but it cuts in many directions. For example, Pakistan's harboring of Taliban leader Mullah Omar is certainly a hostile act against Afghanistan and arguably an act of war.

Nevertheless, the language reported by The News indicates a significant strengthening of the defense relationship, possibly converting it into an alliance as close as that which China has with North Korea. After the US, China is emerging as the largest beneficiary from the death of bin Laden!

Thailand-Cambodia: For the record. Thai Defense Minister Prawit Wongsuwan has agreed to Cambodia's proposal for a joint team to survey the 4.6 square-kilometer disputed area ahead of a General Border Committee meeting that will address problems between Thailand and Cambodia, according to a report in the Bangkok Post. The agreement was reached when Prawit and Cambodian Defense Minister Tea Banh met on 18 May in Jakarta on the sidelines of an Association of South East Asian Nations meeting.

Pakistan: According to a report in The News, the Islamabad government had expected from the in-camera joint parliamentary session to pronounce Usama bin Laden as the top enemy of Pakistan. It also expected the National Assembly to affirm that al-Qaida had declared a war against Pakistan. The National Assembly did neither.

Comment: Pakistani views about bin Laden are not congruent with American views. The "humiliation" is much more damaging to Pakistan, in their view, than anything bin Laden did to Pakistan.

Pakistani investigators established links between the 16 May attack on a Saudi diplomat, an earlier grenade attack on the Saudi mission in Karachi and Saudi Arabia's refusal to accept the three widows and nine children left by Usama bin Laden. Both attacks were carried out by al Qaida as a demonstration of their solidarity with bin Laden's family and a warning to Pakistan against the possible extradition of the family to the United States, an investigation official said. He said that the attacks were assisted by a local militant group.

Comment: Bin Laden's widows and children are currently in custody in Islamabad. Pakistani Interior Minister Rehman Malik requested that Saudi authorities accept them, but the Kingdom has refused. The Pakistani Taliban has vowed to avenge bin Laden's death by attacks against Pakistan.

The Pakistani Interior Ministry imposed a ban on foreign diplomats' travel to other cities without permission, SAMAA reported May 19. If any foreign diplomat is found traveling in a city other than their appointed city without permission, they will be sent back, according to the ministry. The ministry issued instructions for taking action under the Terrorism Act against anyone who breaches the ban

Comment: This is another reaction to the US attack on Abbottabad. Harassment of US diplomats also has resumed.

Pakistan-US: Comment: This week, a senior US military officer stated in a press conference that Pakistan was "humiliated" by the raid against Abbottabad, but insisted he was a close friend of Pakistani Chief of Army Staff General Kayani. Hmmm...

Yemen: The third time around. An accord mediated by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to end the political dispute between President Saleh and the opposition now will be signed on 22 May, ruling party and opposition officials announced.

A ruling party official said the signing will take place in Sanaa, and GCC Secretary-General Abdullatif bin Rashid al-Zayani has been informed that both parties have agreed to sign. The official said Saleh's reservations have been resolved. After the signing, delegations from the ruling party and opposition will travel to Saudi Arabia to cement the final details, the official added.

Reactions to the US President's Statement.

Palestinian Authority: President Mahmoud Abbas expressed his appreciation for US President Obama's efforts to resume permanent peace talks in order to reach a final status agreement, chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said. There are no substantive comments from the Palestinian Authority or from Fatah leaders.

Hamas: A Hamas spokesman accused US President Obama of deception and bias in favor of Israel. He said his movement does not believe in US policies because they favor Israel and deny Palestinian rights. Another Hamas spokesman said Obama needs to take concrete steps to protect the rights of the Palestinian

people and the Arab nation.

Egypt: Muslim Brotherhood leader Essam el-Erian said US President Obama's speech was disappointing and that the American strategy of covering dictatorial presidents in Syrian, Yemen and Bahrain remains the same. El-Erian said there is no decisive decision to immediately withdraw from Iraq or Afghanistan, and the US threats to Iran remain the same.

Israel: Prime Minister Netanyahu declared that the US President's proposal is defenseless.

Special comment: The public positions are not necessarily the actual positions in talks. Nevertheless, one may depend on the Hamas statement as conveying a true position. The ambiguous and negative tones of the Palestinian responses are instructive.

Long experience has demonstrated that grand gestures not bargained for are feckless. Free concessions always beget the inevitable question, "so what else?"

The US diplomatic experience reinforces a disinclination to give away key positions because the practice invariably backfires. George Kennan described Soviet negotiating tactics as pocketing anything conceded and using the concession as the floor for bargaining for more concessions. That is precisely how the North Koreans and most states negotiate.

Today's statement also is somewhat misleading. The notion that the Israelis and Palestinians have to "start somewhere" ignores decades of similar proposals by every US administration. The Palestinians and Israelis have "started somewhere" dozens of times. The Oslo Accords represent arguably the high water mark of past "starts from somewhere" and might have been the jumping off point for any new initiative.

For Israel, acceptance of the 1967 borders would mean that Israeli Army sacrifices in the 1973 Yom Kippur War were for nothing.

Finally, if the US proposal was intended to win Arab support, it seems to have miscarried. Bahrain was one of the few states that responded positively. The Saudis, Syrians and Jordanians said nothing, during this Watch. A dirty secret of the Arabs is that they promise a lot but do little to support the Palestinian cause. Thus, Iran's ability to gain influence with Hamas is a direct result of Arab reservations about the wisdom of a real Palestinian state.

Libya: Qadhafi's wife and daughter arrived in Poland, via Tunisia, irrespective of Tunisian and Libyan denials. Polish government sources confirmed the arrival of the wife and daughter of the Libyan leader from Tunisia.

Comment: The Libyan leadership group appears to be fragmenting and fleeing.

End of NightWatch for 19 May.

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"It is important that the adversary think you know more about him than you really do." William T. Sherman