

# US Brings Brush Fires and Broken Promises to Beijing. Attempts to Sell the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)

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*In reality, nothing was intended to be decided during US President Barrack Obama's visit to Beijing, China. US policy regarding China has been more or less set for decades and only superficial, rhetorical changes are made year-to-year for a variety of shorter-term political reasons.*

And despite the language used to market America's foreign policy both at home and abroad, what US President Obama is bringing with him to Beijing is yet another attempt to reassert geopolitical, military, and economic hegemony over China not only directly, but within China's growing sphere of influence in Asia.

This includes attempts to sell the so-called Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) - which in reality has nothing to do with "partnership" at all and is merely an attempt to erase national sovereignty as an obstacle to Wall Street and London's Fortune 500 and their desire to expand their markets into the heart of Asia. Though China is not included in the TPP, a similar bilateral deal is being proposed by the US to open up Chinese markets to these same Western monopolies. Additionally, US domination of Asian markets through the TPP's implementation will compliment economically, the geopolitical and military encirclement the US is attempting to achieve against China.

## The Brush Fires

As Air Force One touched down in Beijing, the US State Department's ongoing political subversion in China's special administrative region of Hong Kong continued. With the leaders of the so-called "Occupy Central" movement fully outed both by critics and even by many supporters of the movement [as US-backed](#), Beijing labors under no delusions regarding the true nature or intentions of the United States and its perception of where China falls within what Washington policymakers and pundits call their "international order."

In addition to Hong Kong, there is the restive region of Xinjiang where the United States [is openly backing militant separatists](#) who have been carrying out progressively more violent and widespread attacks across not only the troubled western province, but across all of China.

Beyond Hong Kong and Xinjiang, there is also a general campaign headed by the US State Department and its National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to sow chaos and sociopolitical division wherever and however it can across all of Chinese society - and within nations China is working hard to establish its influence economically, including across all of

Southeast Asia.

Imagine a guest invited to one's house, lighting the front lawn and backyard ablaze before crossing the threshold, and one begins to understand US foreign policy – a combination of threats, pressure, and “incentives” that constitute the now infamous “carrots and stick” policy the US has attempted to use against nations around the world. One also begins to understand the infinite patience of China's ruling political order as they host representatives from the West in Beijing in an attempt to avoid an escalating confrontation.

### **US Intent Versus Beijing Unchanged for a Century**

Despite US rhetoric of a “partnership” with China, it is clear by reading through decades of US policy papers regarding its intentions toward China that containment and eventually the co-opting of China's political order is the only goal of everything the United States has been doing in the Pacific since the end of World War II. Before that, China served as a colonial enclave for the United States and many European interests. Today's policy is little more than a polished version of the overt, racist imperialism that attempted to empty out China's wealth and oppress its people before the outbreak of the World Wars.

During the Vietnam War, with the so-called “Pentagon Papers” released in 1969, it was revealed that the conflict was simply one part of a greater strategy aimed at containing and controlling China.

In 1997, US corporate-financier sponsored policymaker Robert Kagan would summarize US foreign policy versus China in a piece titled, “[What China Knows That We Don't: The Case for a New Strategy of Containment.](#)” In title alone, America's game of containment is revealed yet again.

The policy centers around the belief that there exists a “world order” which Kagan describes as follows:

The present world order serves the needs of the United States and its allies, which constructed it.

In 1997, Kagan appeared to believe this order was something immovable that China chafed against. Today, we see a very different reality – a world order crumbling out from under the West's ruling elite amid increasingly desperate attempts to reassert it where it has diminished or altogether vanished.

Kagan would define in detail, plans to contain China's rise. Kagan would claim (emphasis added):

In truth, the debate over whether we should or should not contain China is a bit silly. We are already containing China — not always consciously and not entirely successfully, but enough to annoy Chinese leaders and be an obstacle to their ambitions. When the Chinese used military maneuvers and ballistic-missile tests last March to intimidate Taiwanese voters, the United States responded by sending the Seventh Fleet. By this show of force, the U.S. demonstrated to Taiwan, Japan, and the rest of our Asian allies that our role as their defender in the region had not diminished as much as they might have feared. Thus, in response to a single Chinese exercise of muscle, the links of containment became visible and were tightened.

The new China hands insist that the United States needs to explain to the Chinese that its goal is merely, as [Robert] Zoellick writes, to avoid “the domination of East Asia by any power or group of powers hostile to the United States.” Our treaties with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, and Australia, and our naval and military forces in the region, aim only at regional stability, not aggressive encirclement.

But the Chinese understand U.S. interests perfectly well, perhaps better than we do. While they welcome the U.S. presence as a check on Japan, the nation they fear most, they can see clearly that America’s military and diplomatic efforts in the region severely limit their own ability to become the region’s hegemon. According to Thomas J. Christensen, who spent several months interviewing Chinese military and civilian government analysts, **Chinese leaders worry that they will “play Gulliver to Southeast Asia’s Lilliputians, with the United States supplying the rope and stakes.”**

Indeed, the United States blocks Chinese ambitions merely by supporting what we like to call “international norms” of behavior. Christensen points out that Chinese strategic thinkers consider “complaints about China’s violations of international norms” to be part of “an integrated Western strategy, led by Washington, to prevent China from becoming a great power.

Kagan would also note (emphasis added):

The changes in the external and internal behavior of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s resulted at least in part from an **American strategy that might be called “integration through containment and pressure for change.”**

**Such a strategy needs to be applied to China today.** As long as China maintains its present form of government, it cannot be peacefully integrated into the international order. For China’s current leaders, it is too risky to play by our rules — yet our unwillingness to force them to play by our rules is too risky for the health of the international order. The United States cannot and should not be willing to upset the international order in the mistaken belief that accommodation is the best way to avoid a confrontation with China.

**We should hold the line instead and work for political change in Beijing.** That means strengthening our military capabilities in the region, **improving our security ties with friends and allies, and making clear that we will respond, with force if necessary, when China uses military intimidation or aggression to achieve its regional ambitions.** It also means not trading with the Chinese military or doing business with firms the military owns or operates. And it means imposing stiff sanctions when we catch China engaging in nuclear proliferation.

A successful containment strategy will require increasing, not decreasing, our overall defense capabilities. Eyre Crowe warned in 1907 that “the more we talk of the necessity of economising on our armaments, the more firmly will the Germans believe that we are tiring of the struggle, and that they will win by going on.” **Today, the perception of our military decline is already shaping Chinese calculations.** In 1992, an internal Chinese government document said that America’s “strength is in relative decline and that there are limits to what it can do.” **This perception needs to be dispelled as quickly as possible.**



Careful examination of this 1997 piece, representing a compilation of US foreign policy objectives regarding China, reveals that it not only was being implemented then, but the US is still attempting to implement it today.

Kagan would later end up a policy adviser to US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton who in late 2011 would pen an op-ed in Foreign Policy magazine titled, "[America's Pacific Century](#)." Despite being dressed up in diplomatic parlance, it is almost verbatim the same strategy of establishing regional hegemony in the Pacific and containing China described by Kagan over a decade beforehand. It includes overt admissions that the United States seeks to "play an active role in the agenda-setting" of regional institutions like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Since the US is not a Southeast Asian nation, one must question what legitimacy such a desire holds beyond consolidating a regional bloc, then using it as Kagan noted as "Lilliputians, with the United States supplying the rope and stakes."

### **Neo-Imperialism Vs. Partnerships**

Ultimately, between Kagan's 1997 analysis, US Secretary of State Clinton's remarks in 2011 almost certainly ghostwritten by Kagan, and US President Obama's agenda in Beijing this month with US-stoked chaos [inflicting Hong Kong and Xinjiang](#) among other places, it is clear the US is still pursuing an aggressive campaign of encirclement and containment versus Beijing.

The strategy versus China is multidimensional. It entails threats, political destabilization, and even armed terrorism within Chinese territory, as well as proxy wars around the planet designed to drive out Chinese interests – such as in Libya, Sudan, and Myanmar. There is also a push-pull strategy aimed at certain segments among China's political and business elite. The West works ceaselessly to establish and cultivate institutions, networks, and agendas within China alongside certain Chinese interests, while it simultaneously works to undermine and uproot those Chinese interests that ultimately oppose Western hegemony both in Asia and within China itself.

The complexity of America's current campaign of neo-colonization in the Asia-Pacific can be overwhelming, but with history as a guide, and consistency in US foreign policy papers transcending decades it should be clear that ultimately the US seeks to establish and maintain hegemony across Asia both directly and through a series of proxy regimes.

While the West will "partner" with those interests willing to put their own personal advancement ahead of China's survival as a sovereign state, it is ultimately unable to enter any sort of "partnership" with China as a whole because it is unable to respect nations as equals. It is an exercise of the same racist, overtly imperial ambitions it pursued before the World Wars in Asia, and the same racist, overtly imperial ambitions the British Empire pursued before that.

China's leadership, on the other hand, has exercised a resilient patience spanning decades and has exhibited a sociopolitical and cultural maturity unseen in Western foreign policy.

Moderation both domestically and abroad ensures enduring prosperity. Compared to the West's limitless hunger for conquest – a hunger that has already outpaced its means – China

needs only to wait and weather the West's attempts to reassert itself in Asia, while sustainably advancing its own interests. Maturity includes temperance - an acknowledgment of limitations. While Beijing's current political order is far from ideal, it understand that unlimited, unchecked greed and ambition may appear of maximum benefit to the individuals involved in the short-term, but is a death sentence for all involved in the long-term. Rampant corruption at home and overreaching ambitions abroad opens any given political order to predictable weaknesses that can invite disaster all on their own, or be exploited by enemies within and abroad.

Sustainably for China means not only resisting wasteful races with the West in response to geopolitical, military, and economic provocations, but also in terms of sabotaging the division the West is attempting to sow across Asia to build its united front to encircle and contain China. This can be done by ensuring not through words, but through actions, a commitment to the national sovereignty of its neighbors particularly in Southeast Asia, non-interventionism that will stand in stark contrast to the West's perpetual meddling, and the continuation of infrastructure projects that provide mutual, tangible benefits politically and economically across the region.

In this regard, China already has a substantial head-start in a race it appears the United States is unaware even started. America's brand of political meddling, economic manipulation, and "carrot and stick" geopolitics are the tired remnants of European imperialism. While not impossible for the US to retool its foreign policy, it is highly unlikely - and thus the inevitability of the West's retreat from Asia is all but assured.

This may be why Beijing graciously allows the US to start fires upon its lawn before crossing the threshold for a visit - they know the US is a hegemon of diminishing menace.

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