

Special Series on Warfare: US-China Negotiations

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Webinar transcription

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Meredith Friedman:

George, over to you.

George Friedman:

Hi, I wasn't sure if we were alive or dead or what. Welcome to the sixth of the series that we started with the 1973 Arab Israeli war, when PGMs really emerged as the size of weapon. And we are now down to the two war games, two games that we spoke about one, this today's is going to be about a negotiation, a pre-war negotiation being two sides, looking to either revert a war or justify it. Okay. this one next week next meeting I should say is going to be about the war itself. Whatever happens in this meeting piece or anything, there will be a war and we will model it. Then we will try to understand what that war is going to look like. I want to begin by pointing out that all simulations are deeply flawed. Absent is everything like careerist, opportunism, fear desire to make money, everything else, all the things that shape a negotiating position.

But that's the same problem of any war game. The military DOD, primarily competence States for its flaw by vastly over-complicating the game he says, no one can understand the various mechanics that are underway. It seems more legitimate, but it still is at best an approximation of what's going to happen. So we will try but never trust a war game. It's always the real thing will always show you that our strategy in Vietnam is working and there were games to show that, okay. The way we're playing as a two teams, one is a Chinese team. They're not really Chinese. They're Americans pretending to be Chinese. And the other will be the American team. And these two, four people to each members of GPF will be playing out what a negotiation looks like. Okay. And the way mechanically it'll be is that they will begin with a conference.

They've already worked out their negotiating positions. And at that conference, they will discuss the matter with each other suitably, with threats and promises and everything else. Then they will go away and evaluate each other's threats and promises and come back and this cycle will continue while they're gone. I will be singing Hungarian folk songs. You'll enjoy them, but if I can't get that out, I'm going to be asking you to ask questions of me that I will discuss. Cause I have some idea of what's going on and you'll see it. And we're going to go multi iteratively through this. The heart of the game is when they get together and talk to each other, which you will see when they plot and plan, you will not see it, but as we go down the road, it'll become clear what they're basically doing. The context we're looking. This is

at two nations are in hostile posture. The Chinese don't trust the Americans and the Americans don't trust the Chinese basic human history. China has demanded of the United States that All Sanctions be removed.

George Friedman:

Do United States is demanding reparations from China for releasing the pandemic. I couldn't come up with a better example of what we're demanding of the Chinese. So I made that up. There's a lot of talk now, going on that Houlihan was planned. I have no idea, but we'll throw that in there. There's also been a problem in that a Chinese ship has been struck by a mine in, in waters between the Philippines and Taiwan to Chinese charging. It was an American mine that did it. The Americans are denying it to claiming that there's engineering proof, that this was not how an American mind would act under these circumstances. In either case there's a mine, it exploded, it damaged the Chinese ship and China is charging to the United States. Did it, whether he did or not. We don't know that act brought us to a near war situation. It was tense already. Okay. Now you Zealand who has pretty good relations with the Chinese and pretty good relations with the United States sort of has called the conferences, invited parties to conference in Auckland, where they will sit down and work this out. Is this sort of the Switzerland of the Pacific for the moment and both sides agree to go to this.

The meeting begins by the fact that as the meeting begins, the Chinese launch, a new Eddy satellite system, it is an anti-satellite system that appears to have new behavioral characteristics that make it much more dangerous to American satellites. Since a war would begin with each side, trying to blind the other, the launching of a satellite creates tremendous tension among the Americans. The question of the mine still hangs there, but isn't here is China prepping a war and that's exactly the atmosphere that China wants to create their preppy award. So under these circumstances these representatives meet, they each have different roles and the conference goes on. It will go on. And is that sequence that I said them in, in front of you, negotiating them going away and negotiated with each other them returning and so on how it ends is in a way less important than trying to understand how the Chinese and the American see each other and how they might work out a relationship, will they, or won't they under any circumstances, we're going to have a war next time around because that's something we do have to model, but it's going to be very interesting to see what the pre-war situation looks like with the whole world hanging on and Oakland for the first time in human history, being a central place for the world to be studying.

George Friedman:

And I'm going to turn it over to Meredith. Who's going to introduce the people and who's doing this and get things going here.

Meredith Friedman:

Yes. so we have our two teams and we're going to put a slide up to show you the roles that they are playing for this particular session. And each person I'm going to go through and just tell you what they really do or did in real life. So starting with the U S team Lee Pryor was a Colonel served in Vietnam and in Saudi Arabia for desert shield and desert storm, Tom Fetterson was a captain he's now us Navy retired professor Emeritis of national security affairs at the U S Naval war college. Lakey Pissilitas is a global security specialist and Fred Borowski as a retired vice president of investments from Raymond,

James, and associates, and has a PhD in Greek and history, the China team, the red team we have Rob Kirkland. He is a West point graduate veteran of desert storm and Iraq, and was the multinational force Iraq historian from 2009 to 10. And he retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. Evan Marks was an informal advisor in international finance for war planning for J five. Jacek Bartosiak Coming to us from Warsaw in Poland is the founder and owner of strategy and futures and the author of three books on Pacific and Eurasia about potential war in the Western Pacific. Phillip Orchard is our analyst from geopolitical futures who covers and writes East Asian geopolitics for us. So those are the two teams and on the screen as each team reports, we will put up the slide so you can keep track of their roles in the actual game. Thank you, George. I'll hand it back to you.

George Friedman:

Well, as you can see, we have them all having different jobs. And as you can also see that the state department and the defense departments will immediately launch a war against each other that you don't have the CIA guy there who desperately wants to take DOD budget and wouldn't mind taking state department too. And so the normal situation is that the battling within the delegations is far more interesting than that between them, but this time we're going to ignore that lovely aspect of life. And the fact that Chinese, at some point, the Chinese delegate is going to disappear and not be seen again for a very long time. We'll, we'll get rid of that stuff. We will be focusing in on a United front between each and now what I'd like to say is that it is time for the teams to form up and begin putting forward their positions on what they're doing here. And I'd like to start with the American position and technologically, I have no idea how to do this.

Lee Pryor:

So this is Lee Pryor as ambassador to China, I'd like to make a statement to the honorable gentlemen from the people's Republic of China as follows, the United States has always stood for freedom of navigation as demonstrated in the Persian Gulf and the South China sea. The United States has undertaken no actions, which breach this principle of freedom of the seas. The United States has undertaken no mining of any area in and around the child's China sea, or any interjection interdiction of seaborne traffic, which could be interpreted as threatening to the interests of the people's Republic of China. Moreover, no Naval vessels of the United States with mine laying capability have transmitted in the area under question. This includes for any training purposes or any other mission, the United States categorically denies any involvement in the incident described by the people's Republic of China and does not acknowledge any claim for ship damages as advanced by the people's Republic of China. The United States has in controvertible gold vert. Controvertible evidence of a launch by the people's Republic of China, of a satellite ASAP, which threatens American communications equipment in earth orbit United States regards this action as a hostile act, United States will undertake such actions to protect our property and to protect the American people from any action by the people's Republic of China, which threatens them.

This action Of the people's Republic of China violates international agreements, ensuring the peaceful use of space for all nations and peoples of United States. The man's in immediate termination of this ASAP by destruction of the threat. We are counseling with our allies, both here in the Pacific, as well as our allies in Brussels to determine what responses might be appropriate to the threat from the, from the people's Republic of China. In summary, the United States, categorically denies any responsibility for the

damage to the peoples of China Republic, Republic of China vessel requiring any compensation. Our action to interdict the internet in the people's Republic of China should be seen as an example of how serious the United States considers the nature of these false accusations of the people's Republic of China and their unwarranted launch of an ASAT. United States actions, imposing tariff sanctions were in response to the people's Republic of China repeated and habitual violations of United States, intellectual property rights. The United States further strenuously objects to the people's Republic of China's continued use of stolen intellectual property to produce and export manufacturing goods. The people of the United States and its economy were irreparably harmed by the COVID 19 virus. It has been globally acknowledged that the COVID 19 virus originated within the Republic within the people's Republic of China. It is unknown, but strongly suspected that this was a deliberate act to destabilize the United States and its allies.

The people's Republic of China took advantage of this situation to improve their own centralized economy while the United States and its allies dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic. The United States contends that the people's Republic of China should be held accountable for their actions in releasing the COVID-19 virus on the world, whether by intent or accident, the United States proposes consideration of gradual suspension of tariff sanctioned regime under the following circumstances that the people's Republic of China allows United States inspectors unfettered access to the Wu Han laboratory and to the scientists working there at the time that the COVID 19 virus was first discovered in the people's Republic of China United States, and its allies must be assured that the virus was not engineered and released by the people's Republic of China before any tariff or trade concessions can be offered. That is our position. Thank you.

George Friedman:

And now from the Chinese.

Evan Marks:

I would like to thank our esteemed friends in Auckland for hosting this session. It's been a long time and coming, and we are very desirous to restore a new status quo in the region Regarding the American accusation that there was a mind which destroyed our Naval vessel by implementation. You are suggesting that it was our own mind and it's beyond preposterous that China would mine these waters between Taiwan and the Philippines, because we send our fishing fleets there to feed our own people. In fact, if you look at American history, as we have, we have seen this charade before 120 years ago, American imperialists blew up their own battleship, the USS Maine in Havana Harbor, and use this fabrication is a pretext for war with Spain in order to illegally confiscate, not only Cuba, but the Philippines as well. The lessons of American history are not lost on China, but be aware China is not Spain for the record. China is America's peer economically technologically, and at least in the Western Pacific militarily, I would also hasten to add, we are your peer in space. And in cyberspace, we are incredulous over your actions to take [inaudible] internet. When we, with a flick of an electric switch can take down your electrical system, your grid, your natural gas pipelines and your federal fund wire. It, all it takes is a signal to our installed network of bots around the world.

Everyone is well aware that the US servicemen clandestinely released the COVID-19 virus in China. In fact, we believe that your Harvard scientists that were working at on weapons lab may have been implicated in this. You have in fact, sent your FBI to arrest them, but our system is much more resilient than yours. And we are enjoying a V-shaped economic recovery. While you are still wallowing under \$6 trillion of additional fiscal stimulus and debt to rescue your economy. When your nation was struggling under the pandemic, we selflessly and generously provided you with PPE and biological agents to create vaccines because in our global world, globalized world, China is the world's factory, but China is also the world's largest creditor. Our state administration for foreign exchange owns \$1 trillion of us treasury securities, and our multinational corporations own another trillion dollars of treasury securities. Where are we to liquidate our treasuries?

We would crush the U S dollar and send your interest rates, soaring, such that the us government would be bankrupt under the high cost of servicing. It's more than \$30 trillion of government debt. So America would be very wise to carefully consider our demands for a new status quo. I will enumerate our demands one immediately cease all FONOPS in the Western Pacific to respect China's sovereignty in the area within the nine dash line three immediately sees all arms sales to Taiwan, our Renegade province, and to enforce this reasonable demand by China, we are initiating a Naval quarantine of Taiwan effective in 30 days as America did with Cuba in the 1960s. And we will provide our timetable for the enforcement of our air defense and identification zone over the Island for you must remove all tariffs enacted since 2017 by the Trump administration and followed through by the Biden administration five, you must also remove all export restrictions on semiconductors, which have an adverse effect on the world's factory, through which all nations, including the United States benefits six.

And finally, you must allow Huawei to compete on a fair and transparent basis on America's rollout of its domestic 5g network. These are our demands, they are reasonable. However, if America continues on this path to provoke a confrontation, such that your forces strike our mainland, be aware that we will strike back in kind for instance, I am sure that your satellites have detected that our boomers have left their submarine pens on high Nan Island. And by now they are in deep waters beyond the second Island chain. So now you understand the new status quo that we are seeking the path to avoid further conflict is in your hands. That concludes my remarks.

George Friedman:

Well on basically I see war as the low-cost option here. So why don't we now diverge and consider what our responses are to the others. Clearly you're responsible and desperate tent to create a new reality. So let's shift now.

Meredith Friedman:

Okay. So the two teams are going offline and George it's yours until they're ready to come back.

George Friedman:

Okay. So I can't see you all, but I never could see you all anyway. So that's okay. We've seen the opening. The Americans have struck pretty closely with demands concerning the military situation. That's reasonable because the United States is quite content with other aspects of it for the time being. And they really want the Chinese to have to pull back militarily. The Chinese have used this as an opportunity to raise a range of issues about the U S relations far beyond that, of the immediates military issue. And

that's reasonable. They are really being pressed by the United States, particularly on tariffs, but other things as well, intellectual property that they want to rectification. So each side wants to use this crisis for their own purpose, the United States to contain China, China, to have the United States accept that China has become much greater. So we're all off the core issue.

George Friedman:

But we always were, this is about what we do now. Now the question is, what does each side prepared to give, if anything, and they're going to have to give something if we're not going to wind up in a war. So let me ask that people who have questions of me take this time to, we can talk about China and ask questions and they can if I believe write in their questions and the question box I've never done it before, but I told you can. And we can proceed from that. Okay.

Meredith Friedman:

I see Matt Shoemaker has his hand up and we can allow him to ask his question and others can write into the question box and George, I will read those out.

George Friedman:

I like one thing clear. I never heard either positions. I had no idea what they were going to say. They'd been off and I haven't wanted to hear it. So that, it's interesting what they, and I'm catching up with it with the longer you guys.

Matt Shoemaker:

Okay. Yeah. I inadvertently raised my hand, I believe because I'm using my phone and I was driving, but yeah, I mean, what, what so if I understand the scenario correctly where are we saying that war is eminent? Or are we trying to avoid war or what, what's the scenario?

George Friedman:

Well, that's what the people have to decide. They are facing war in a war. They can't be sure they're going to win. Everybody's certain at some point, but they're looking to get the things that they've asked for the Americans have asked the Chinese to accept the status quo. The Chinese have refused to there's pressure on them. Now each would like to achieve that without war but each has to bluff war. So it was a standard negotiation.

Matt Shoemaker:

Yeah. excellent. So I would say that in bluffing war, you know, at some point there are ships passing each other in space in the sea. And what do you think the opening salvo might look like? Is that a skiddish anxious captain or a younger officer on either side or what would that look like?

George Friedman:

It would look like a space, Pearl Harbor. In other words, all of the weapons that are being developed for card, quiet targeting you no longer see the place you're shooting at the targeting is generally provided by satellites and other systems with primarily satellites. Each side goes blind, did they lose their satellites? So the first round of each side will be tried to blind. The other, the idea is somehow that

everybody will come out blinded, but in fact, anti-satellite operations are not nearly as efficient. So one of the early questions when we get to war is going to be how much of the satellite systems of each side can be taken out. But I think that's where, where does it begin with a minor accident is, has to begin as world war II did with careful planning and expectations of some desperately trying to hang on and some trying to gain a great advantage. Okay,

Matt Shoemaker:

Great. Thanks for that.

Meredith Friedman:

James, you have a hand up as well. Why don't you go ahead with your question, James, you can go ahead and ask your question or you Jane channeled them. That is, or you can write it into the question box if you like,

George Friedman:

He may be on mute or something.

Meredith Friedman:

Yeah. Anyway I'll go to one of the questions in the question box while we wait. Okay. The book 2034 comes to mind comments, and you were just asking about that. Same question, same reader is threatening war equivalent to tactical nuclear nuclear weapons.

George Friedman:

Yeah. My personal view is that war between the United States and China is very unlikely. China has a whole range of weaknesses, geographic and tactical, and that they really can't deal with the United States has no interest in anything more than containing China, where it is, and possibly leave some concessions. So for China undertaking a war could mean the feet and the feet in that war could threaten the regime. The United States has very little to gain from a war except wanting to contain China somewhat. So I think the rationale for that we heard here is very real. But at the same time, my view is that at the end of the day, each side will regard war too risky. Neither side needs war for its wellbeing, and that's going to be avoided. How the war would be fought in 2034. It really depends on evolutions underway right now.

Here's Apple. We have things like a hypersonic missiles that we've talked about in here. They don't have the range they need to affect into continental action. In 20 2034, there are a range of systems that have been under development for 30 years. And hasn't been developed because we didn't have the technology they're betting that it will be there eventually, I think not. But again what we're going to take a look at is can these people who don't who know my opinion roughly come to some sort of understanding of what does each concede so that we're looking at is okay, they've both stayed. What are they willing to concede? Nobody's going to walk away from this table without concessions. Can they tolerate the concessions as to how the war will look at the next meeting metal worth? Are they yet I'm waiting for, well, the technology here at the function.

Meredith Friedman:

All right. Let's take one more question and then we'll invite the teams to come back in with the next round. So one more question from Richard okay. A dungeon master type scenario question. The U S speaker said that no mind laying ships were in the area. He did not mention the U S is highly advanced. Airdropped quick strike minds. Any comments on that, George?

George Friedman:

You also didn't mention submarine released minds. But the real message that he was dealing to the Chinese is your S your ship was damaged by a mine. We don't care. So whether or not, you know, he was denying it or not. He was basically saying that it happened and we didn't do it, but if we had do it, we don't care. There's a message in there as well. And that's, we have a lot more minds, but we didn't use it.

Meredith Friedman:

All right. We're inviting the us and the China team back in. And while they're getting settled, George, you want to tide us over with one more question here from Paul. One of the concerns during the cold war with Russia was the completely blinding. The other side by distorting the satellites CA capacity would be more dangerous. Isn't that true here as well?

George Friedman:

The geography of Europe who are war would have taken place would have meant that most reconnaissance in those days would have been done by aircraft, not now from a strategic standpoint, one of the means of detecting launches on the Soviet side and American side were satellites. Or before that the U2 that was able to both determine whether they would be a launch to DSP satellites, and also how many missiles they had and where they were located. The United States had adopted a second strike strategy. It assumed that it was not going to have an opportunity to launch missiles. And so it's constructed a missile, non missile defense, but a retaliatory structure that was designed to survive the first strike in that sense question, detecting the strike was a little less okay, by the way, nobody knew where the work I'm done and you're come to teams. I suggest that says trying to have the first words you us had the first word and this one to Chinese speak first.

Evan Marks:

Thank you. Thank you for being so clear. Ambassador Pryor in an effort to sort of bridge the differences. At least those differences in that we believe can be bridged. We offer the following regarding the investigation into the COVID-19 virus, we are happy to facilitate in run by the world health organization. And regarding the idea which we believe is preposterous of reparations upon the conclusion of the who investigation into the Wu Han laboratory. We would submit to a jurisdiction at the United nations general assembly, As far as the destruction of our ASAP systems, we will consider destroying our systems in public view of some sort of United nations weapon and inspection regime. If you immediately land the X 37 B and also destroy your own systems.

The idea that we can accept freedom of navigation in our territorial waters, which is the area East of the nine dash nine line, isn't an athema to our view of our own sovereignty. So the FONOPS must cease. Moreover we've given you a window to respond before we enact our quarantine of Taiwan. As I

mentioned before, when we met earlier, that was within 30 days, the activation, the timetable that I referred to for the activation of our air defense identification zone over that Island in the Strait of Taiwan will be on a parallel track to the implementation of our quarantine. So we encourage you to engage with our military attache is to discuss how our forces can minimize the chances of conflict. In that regard,

You must be aware that within the next two weeks, the spring fishing season in the South China sea is about to start. This involves vessels, you know, perhaps up to 17,000 domestic Chinese vessels in our merchant Marine, that will be throughout the East and South China seas. In order, they're sent there to obviously to harvest the fishing resources that we will need to sustain our people through the summer and fall. We further encourage the U S military and its Navy in particular to withdraw from those areas and not to interfere with our freedom of navigation and fishing rights within the area demised by the nine dash line. That concludes our response. Would you define fun ops for some people don't know what it is. Freedom of navigation patrols in which the U S demonstrates to the world and nearby observers that navigation is free and open and enforced by the American Navy in this case, the the third and seventh fleets, if we could hear from the Americans now. Yes. Thank you very much.

Lee Pryor:

At this time I'd like Admiral Fedyszyn, to respond, if you would please. Okay.

Tom Fedyszyn:

And Mr. Ambassador, I had an opportunity to hear what the Chinese delegation said, and I'm, I'm very pleased to hear that he's suggesting that the military forces of both our countries work together, because I feel that there's every opportunity that we can improve the relations between our countries, if our militaries are at the forefront. So let me just take on some of the specifics with respect to respecting the sovereignty of the of the waters within the nine dash line for the people's Republic of China I'll simply turn to the United nations and I'll turn to the entire world, not one country of which feels that the water inside the nine dash line, this Chinese territory, exactly every other country in the world takes it as international waters. So I'm shocked that China interprets this very obvious fact in a way completely contrary to the way that the entire world looks at it.

And to think that one can simply make an assertion that open ocean waters are yours is preposterous. We have never done it. No one else has ever done it. And we just don't understand how it can ever be said. So let's just put that one away and get down to some of the other issues that we have with respect to the minds. Of course, we've denied that that it was our mind because the FONOPS that we run in this part of the world are done by ships that do don't do mine warfare. I know that personally, that's just the simple fact, but we don't like mines. Mines are a horrible thing to work with. And I don't know whose mind that was. I know it wasn't ours, but whoever ever it was, we need as many, we need as much help and cooperation as possible to eliminate the mind threat.

So therefore I would ask my military friends and the people's liberation army Navy to send some technicians to me, I will in turn, send an entire fleet of mine, sweeping ships into this area. I don't want to do it though without Chinese technicians on board, because for fear that it actually was a Chinese mine, having forbid only they know how to disarm that mind. All I know is that it wasn't American, but I do want to look for it because I don't like mines in open water either. I did test it more than you to test

it. So let's have a team effort and get rid of those minds, send the technicians directly to me and I'll get them a float. There's two other things though, that really do worry me. And that is the, the ASAP Oh, I'm sorry that the FONOPS issue is once again, that just following international law, there, there's no reason that anybody could and would ever objectify offs, no one ever has.

When you go and open international seas, you're simply free to do that. That, that is what international law says, but let's get to the, to the two points, the ASAP that can be an immediate threat to American vital national interests. I simply agree completely with the ambassador and I'm sure with the position that comes out of Washington, that that has to go how it goes. I don't know, but please, it must go. I, there is one thing though that I do have some control over, and that is addressing the issues of the the ballistic missile submarines, leaving Heinen Island. It should come as no surprise that the United States is preeminent and anti-submarine warfare. I hope the Chinese appreciate that. That of course they must. There's no one in the world that is even close to our ability in detecting submarines.

If they think that we don't know precisely where these submarines are, I feel sorry for your intelligence sources. Should you choose to challenge the American knowledge on this? Go ahead and say so, and see how long the submarines can survive. My cell, my Intel sources tell me not to worry. We know where every submarine in the Pacific ocean is. Just say the word boss. This is not a threat that I'm about to do anything, but if pushed, I can, I could. And I will. Mr. Ambassador, thank you very much. That concludes our side for this round.

George Friedman:

Okay So do round eventually, we'll just talk to each other, but head out and find your next position.

Meredith Friedman:

Thank you. So while the two teams are leaving, we will go back to the attendees, the audience, and we'll take a couple more questions.

George Friedman:

I want to say something. So we've seen the United States really come down heavily on their military capability. The last statement by the United States on their anti-submarine capabilities really is a serious claim. I think it's true is generally conceited, but they're driving home that their demands on control of the waters around China is rejected and the China challenges the other, and the Chinese took an equally hard position, but a somewhat more morphous one, there was not a clear thrust to it, except for the threat of financial consequences. If the United States doesn't go lower than how real that is as with the ASW question is the issue. But each side is looking at their big gun. The Americans are looking at their Naval power and the Chinese are looking at financial power as a kind of systemic threat. So now we'll go to questions.

Meredith Friedman:

Okay. let's go to Gray's question. How will South Korea and Japan react and or participate in this?

George Friedman:

Their position is evolving. South Korea is an ally of the United States formally. It does not have a significant Navy and any confrontation with China is likely to be a Naval confrontation. It has little to contribute it also badly doesn't want a war because South Korea sells a tremendous amount of product, particular technology to the Chinese. So they will be arguing against the war. The Japanese did something interesting. This week for real a Chinese ship went into the area where the mines I postulated were and a Japanese and a Taiwanese ship converged on them, which indicated that the Japanese and the Taiwanese are actually collaborating. So Japan may throw something into it. It has a Navy, but from a military standpoint, the U S has it, or it doesn't allies are not going to help it, but the most they can do. And it's quite a bit close off all the passages around them and the Japanese have that ability and others in the region, such as the British, who have bought their carrier into the region, the Australians, quite a number of ships. These are the ones not necessarily cutters are South Korea and Japan that we're going to be counting on because this is Naval war and we're looking at babies.

Meredith Friedman:

Okay. Andreas has a good question. Assuming in this simulated diplomatic exchange, the U S would come up with this offer. We're willing to concede on all of your demands concerning who I, technology theft, currency manipulation. COVID-19 with one exception, no Naval ambitions for China, including Taiwan. Here's my question. Do you think the Chinese could live with that?

George Friedman:

They would be putting themselves at American mercy deepest fear of the Chinese and the United States, either at the ports or the various choke points that exist on the line from Japan to straits of Malacca, we'll close it off. China isn't is a maritime power. It exports by sea and above all else. It has to keep those, those lanes open and with all the concessions made, but that concession the presence of the U S fleet in Chinese ink, close to China, it's areas of interest. I don't see how the Chinese can trust the United States, not to act on that. And if the United States does act on that, well, then China, its ability to take advantage of the concessions declines. So I don't think the Chinese could accept that this is really at the heart of the dispute from a Chinese point of view. They want the U S Navy away from the line of islands and show points there and guaranteed that they won't use those. Then the proposal you have, that's the one thing to us does it concede? So I don't think that flies to the Chinese.

Meredith Friedman:

All right. I see that we have another hand up here. Steven Jury, your hand is up. If you can unmute please ask your question.

Steven Jury:

I was struck by two of the opening threats by the Chinese. One of which seemed rather empty the idea that they would sell treasuries and cause a collapse with the U S dollar, because of course that would help them just as badly as it would hurt the United States. But what I was really interested in was the threat to take down the electrical grid. How, how realistic is that capability for the Chinese and wouldn't that immediately be met with a nuclear response, because that seems to be a very, very extreme action.

George Friedman:

Well, this is a point at which negotiators, But also the public the United States has less control of the Chinese public and mood. Then the Chinese have over the Americans by speaking of a depression, by speaking of a collapse of the electrical grid they're touching on the points that would most disturb the American public when it leaked, where they threatened to do, whether they can do it or not. Is I think for the moment, immaterial is an interesting bargaining point. I don't think they can. We heard this with the Japanese years ago that they would wreck the American economy by selling their bonds. Well, they would sell the bonds with somebody who would buy them. It's it's not as easy to push the price down. There's a lot of demand for that, but more to the point it would hurt the Chinese just as much as the electrical grid. I mean, we now hear all sorts of things we saw at attack on the gasoline pipeline. What is striking is how little effect it had that in few days it was cleared up, did maybe a shortage of good, but it really didn't dramatically change things. But again, when you're negotiating internationally negotiating the multiple audiences internal, bureaucratic audiences external foreign policy, you know, the host countries public other countries, and the Chinese had made a threat that would hit home and hopefully would undermine the ability of the Americans to negotiate freely.

Meredith Friedman:

Okay. I think we have time for one more question. I'd like to go to this one. It's really interesting. To what extent does making the space around earth unusable due to satellite destructions enter into the thinking of each side?

George Friedman:

Well, I don't know about unusable because each side also has their own satellites up there, not in the same orbits, but close by, but certainly as I said before, knocking out the others satellite capacity would knock out this strategic targeting capability or limited severely reducing his aircraft or something like that. And that would open a window of opportunity where those who have satellites could act at the very least losing those satellites with paddock that country, and they might make political concessions to avoid the conflict. So, I mean, it is a crucial aspect of any future war, the ability to take out the satellites. And I think the Chinese van that the US-based plane land was sort of based on that that's a highly maneuverable platform that may survive and they sat attack. So I would think that making space unusable would be difficult. So a lot of space out there and more to the point would hurt both sides, which they don't want to do.

Meredith Friedman:

Hi, George, the teams are back back to you, which one would you like to go first this time?

George Friedman:

Well, at this point it's time to start discussing with each other and you've made certain statements. We'll go one more round of making statements. I think last time I invited the, I forget who I invited first. I know Chinese, the Americans can now go first.

Lee Pryor:

Thank you. So at this point I'd like our national security advisor Mr. Borsky to make a statement. Thank you, sir.

Fred Borowski:

Hey, good afternoon, gentlemen. After a consultation with Washington and the president he has instructed me to advise the people's Republic that the launching of an ASAP is a provocative action and has precipitated along with their unfounded claims regarding the damage to their ship that, that is a provocative action that has nothing to do with the, with the state of affairs prior to their launch. This is unacceptable. The ASAP must come down to their second point about the pandemic. It's, it's been clear that the, who in other organizations do not have the authority or the wherewithal to do a proper investigation. So whether it's the UN or whether it's the who that's passed, we are past that point. So we need to have our own inspectors in there to ensure our, our people that we weren't the victims of either a direct an intervention by the Chinese into our economy in our, in our political system, or that we can determine that it was an accident, either case we need to have our own inspectors on the ground with respect to the Chinese offer of cooperation.

We appreciate and welcome any cooperation between our militaries and would, would welcome the Naval attache in any place or in any form that we can arrange. So we appreciate that offer. We relieve that talking is, is always better than shooting. And finally, we, we we appreciate the people's Republic concerned about their fishing fleet. We wish them well in their catch. However, we also wish their neighbors who live in the same area and occupying the same space in the oceans. We wish them as well, good fishing in those, the area of, of the nine dash, which they have claimed us their economic zone. So good fishing to all. Thank you.

Lee Pryor:

Thank you. Thank you.

Evan Marks:

Ambassador Borowski please send president Biden, our regards. There are a number of issues here that I will address, but not before thanking you for your acquiescence of our future quarantine of Taiwan. I think we are very grateful for your understanding, the need for us to reel in our Renegade province with respect to the issues that you Mr. Barofsky. And and Tom you'll forgive me, Tom. I can't pronounce your last name, but Tom brought up in your last session. China has a historical claim to the areas around and within, and certainly to the West of the nine dash nine line. These claims go back for a millennia, the, it it's similar to how the Israelis justify their claim to their promised land. After a multisensory interlude, which witnessed their Exodus into Europe. We, our ancestors have been fishing and have been traveling in this area for over a thousand years.

Moreover, we find it hypocritical for the United States to justify their falling up operations. When it itself, I should say she herself has never signed the United nations convention on the law of the seas by not signing the unclass convention, the us able to project its Naval power around the globe without fear of any litigation in the world court or at the United nations. So that's how we view your request and your desire to maintain the fauna, the current fun op regime by the us Navy, as for Tom's suggestion about mind removal in the East and South China seas, you know, it's hard for us to seriously consider such a suggestion. And in fact, we find it a little bit humorous. The last thing that the PLA N wants is to have the United States Navy and its allied navies flood that zone with vessels under the pretext of

massive mines beeping operation, because it sort of sets the stage to invalidate many of the things that we consider to be in our strategic interest. And that concludes our response.

George Friedman:

Okay. I think we should do another round the way and then begin face-to-face negotiations that would happen, which can be one-on-one or the entire group together, but let's go and think through where we are presented and then perhaps move on unless you decide you need more time alone. Okay. Thank you. Okay.

Meredith Friedman:

Okay. George Olson or George,

George Friedman:

Hold on I want to summarize. So we've seen a sort of softening of the lines, each one, giving a trivial concession of sorts, but on the other hand, also best wishes to Biden or something. And in a negotiation like this that indicates I am not weak, but I'm not looking for trouble. And these little tiny signals that are being given that not, not with a weakening of the line, but being given indicates that each side is seeing the need to somehow back off at least, or in a more extreme positions. We'll see how that works down. Okay Meredith.

Meredith Friedman:

Yes. George Olson you have your hand up would you like to go ahead and ask you a question if you count? I will read one. You wrote into the question box. Okay.

George Olson:

Okay. Yes. Thank you. My question is about the Philippines recently statements by Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte indicated that he believed China was already in possession of the South China sea. Of course, that has been contradicted by other former members of, of the Philippine government. But the current administration is holding to that position. And there's some internal conflict there, but in any case, the Chinese delegation has not indicated anything alluding to this, a significant country in a CND acknowledging Chinese sovereignty over the entire region. And that would contradict the American assertion that no other country has acknowledged China's sovereignty there. So I was just wondering how that kind of action might affect the negotiations.

George Friedman:

Well there's international law on the sea that is being played back and forth. But the important thing about the Philippines, it's two things. The first is that the Philippines is the single most strategic country for the Chinese and for the Americans. If the Chinese could overthrow or take control of the Philippines, and you look at a map, the blockade that the us could impose this line of islands that would break apart, but there'd be wide gap that would easily be closed. And this would give the Chinese Navy a much greater opportunity to move into the Western Pacific. The Chinese have the Filipinos have played a very complex game, partly because some say that the president is not quite sane others because he seems to be doing quite well. He is holding out to the Americans, the possibility of continuing alignment at the same time, according to Chinese.

George Friedman:

So the Philippines precisely because in this complex position, perhaps because of the personality disorders of the presidents, I don't know, never met him, are playing a very complex game on either side. They don't want to be stuck as an Chinese target against the Americans. They don't want to be seen the Chinese overwhelmed the region. They're, they're playing everybody off against the middle. So there's a consistent pattern in Chinese foreign policy discussions. The first is that the president is highly unpredictable. Secondly, that there are deep tensions. So the foreign minister recently had an anti-Chinese tirade over partly this issue. So the Philippines are a weak, utterly strategic and quite nervous country. And the way they're responding to that is keeping everybody off balance and it comes naturally to dry day. So, you know, that, that I think is what's going on there? No one's making concessions, the Filipinos are in a position to make concessions or threats, but they're there to confuse the situation it's in their interest. Okay. Thank you.

Meredith Friedman:

Okay, well go to try this question. 10 days ago, China arrested grain analysts and now their farm consultancy operations. Why would the CCC want to be clamping down on their farming data?

George Friedman:

Well, the normal reason for this is corruption. They're consistently clamping down on corruption. I don't exactly know what these guys do, but if they have access to Raines, for example, their opportunity of summing it or setting prices as something favorable to others is extremely high. So my first explanation of why this is, is that the breasts follow a series of investigations that turned up massive corruption. The second reason which I have no evidence for is that there has been a serious agricultural failure to threatens Chinese wellbeing and that they're being held responsible for it. That may be the case, but there's no evidence of a major economic failure from anywhere. So I would have to argue that the corruption charges vast corruption within the agricultural sector may be the most likely thing Meredith,

Meredith Friedman:

Sorry. I was muted. Okay. Vassil has one more question. What will the Chinese red line before sing it to strike first? What will be the Chinese red line that would force it to strike first

George Friedman:

A blockade of its major ports on the East coast, a blockade of the choke points. So for example, of placing significant Naval force at any point that the Chinese use Andrew to the Pacific above all blockading the straits of Malacca, which is where the overwhelming amount of Chinese oil comes in to charter. So the line they can't live with is America interfering with their Naval their maritime access anywhere. And the United States has the ability to do that hints of doing that, but doesn't do it. So that's their line. And if that happened, they would have to do something. Now the most important question is can they, there's a longstanding story about how powerful China has become militarily? Well, they're certainly more powerful than they were, whether they can engage the United States successfully is another question, but I think they would have to risk something serious if we did that.

Meredith Friedman:

Okay. the last question I have at the moment actually takes us a little way from China, but to the middle East. So I know you just wrote on that yesterday, George getting away from the scenario, do you believe the situation in Gaza will be taken advantage of by China believing we will be preoccupied, the U S would be preoccupied?

George Friedman:

Well, if they did take over the beat in the Eastern Mediterranean, their access to the Eastern Mediterranean is very limited. Their ability to maintain a position in Gaza is extremely limited. They be facing a group of powers that don't want them there. The Americans, the Israelis, the Russians, who are in Syria. And I don't think the Iranians, when it did not go there, they can't, they can't take advantage of it for logistical reasons. And the political outcome would be terrific and their ability to exploit it. I mean, taking control of Gaza, you know, is like taking control of a bankrupt company is not necessarily the best thing you can do with your time. So I don't think that'll happen. And I don't think the Chinese really couldn't do that or want to do that.

Meredith Friedman:

All right. The team's back and just before they go back to their negotiating, George us team would like one more round after this. We're not done.

George Friedman:

Absolutely. Okay. The Chinese go first this time. I think I'm lost it. Just trying to go.

Robert Kirkland:

I am the I'm the NEC I'm the national security advisor Admiral Kirkland and here today to to give our response to the U S we the vice premier marks was indisposed for a little bit and was brought back to Beijing for indoctrination. And we'll be returning here shortly to our group. His removal should not be seen as any, either affirmation or denial of the way that, of our physicians that have been articulated by the vice premier up to this point. So we, China is a peace loving nation. We appreciate the us position on on, on what you have given us so far. We are offering some concessions to you regarding some, the things that you brought up, the first thing is that regarding the mind sweeping, we agree that this mind, that this mind needs to be are the minds that could be more minds in this area of the Pacific.

And we propose that there be a joint Japanese, Russian mind sweeping operation that takes place in this area and the South China sea with both us and Chinese officials on each on also as a part of that as operating as observers. We agree that that that the us should be involved in looking at the situation and Wu Han, we, we, again, reaffirm that we do not book that we have nothing to do with the COVID 19 and the release and anything to do with this virus. It was an accident. It was something that was, that's nothing to do with it, but with any purposeful actions by the people's Republic of China, however, we do welcome the U S as part of this hu UN sponsored investigation into the origins of the of the COVID-19 virus regarding the ASAP capability.

We are willing to disorder this orbit, our ASAP capability. Again, we are a peaceful nation and that is something that we can do. And we you know, we understand that the United States has, you know, also has asset capability, but we are willing to deorbit our ASAP capability for the for the time being finally again, we reaffirmed that we are grateful to the United States to the United States for gift, for act, for giving us the ability to be able to quarantine Taiwan, and to be able to rightfully bring them back into the orbit of our country. So thank you. And we look forward to your response.

Lee Pryor:

Thank you, sir. Like China, we are also a peace loving feed people and have no desire whatsoever to see this advance to a more aggressive confrontation. We have spoken with president Biden, and at this point I'll let our national security advisor speak to you and convey what we have discussed with president Biden. Fred, thank you. It's most welcome news to hear that the people's Republic is going to rescind

Fred Borowski:

Their provocative launch of the ASAP that is certainly very welcome by the president and by the American people addressing the issue of Taiwan. We did not even think he was, it was necessary to respond to the folly of vice premier Marx's statement that we have no interest in our friends in the free, free state of Taiwan. So do not be you should disabuse yourself of the notion that we will not act in the best interest, not only of the United States, but also the people of Taiwan. We have supported the time when he's as a separate entity with all recognizing there is just one China they have a right to self-determination and the Chinese silly assumption that, you know, we would abandon them is just that it's, it's perfectly silly.

So the president would like chairman G to know that we have in place the necessary assets to respond to any attempt, to invade Taiwan any attempt to dislodge there in our air forces, from the flight zone and that the straights remain subject to international law and freedom of navigation. One final thing. It wouldn't be appropriate. I think given the fact that the people's Republic has, has agreed to take down their ASAP we would think it would be the most important for them to recall their boomers as as a follow on gesture. We do not want to have to take any action there that we feel might be detrimental to the United States interests. So recall the boomers, I think is, is, is a next step, as far as the the [inaudible] situation. Obviously the Chinese have just admitted that it was an accident. Now we can't just take their word for that and the who and other investigations have been just inadequate. So since they have admitted, it was an accident, it's just a case of a malfeasance, and it doesn't mean that we haven't suffered damages from their inability to contain this virus. So we appreciate their their, their their that's the extent of my remarks.

Lee Pryor:

So just to make sure we're clear and the language here you used the word that we have acquiesced to the quarantine of Taiwan. I want to make clear that that is not the case. The U S has not accepted your statement, and we have not acquiesced to the people's Republic of China quarantining, the Taiwan Republic. Thank you.

Robert Kirkland:

And I would clarify that that there has been no determination of the origins of the of the COVID-19 virus if it was alluded to as an accident, that was that is not correct.

Lee Pryor:

Okay. Thank you. Okay. we'll talk George, one more round, please. Thank you.

George Friedman:

So now we saw the Chinese throw a monkey wrench by starting out by being totally capitulating and suddenly raising the real issue. That's on the table here. We're just Taiwan, and this is the core issue, and they want it back. And they did it in such a way to make it clear by asserting an American position that error isn't there. This was a concession and the Americans responded without subtlety. Basically the answer was screw you and the horse you rode in on it was absolutely blank. And now we're down to the real issue. They want Taiwan, if they have Taiwan, that's another way to break the blockade of the U S could put on them by opening the gap between Japan and Taiwan, which is wide and all the other games that we're playing, he came down to, this is what happens in negotiation. You come into negotiation and you ask how the guy's wife is and grandkids and everything. And no one cares if they do that then they go and raise a bunch of issues that have nothing to do with matters. Then they hit you in the head that they think your business's wonderful, and they hate the bankrupted, but they're coming into the business sentence taking over anyway, we'll leave it at that. And any questions I missed?

Meredith Friedman:

Yes, we have. Matt, has you stand up again? Unless that's a mistake, Matt?

Matt Shoemaker:

No, not this time. So I appreciate it. So yeah, Taiwan obviously has a lot of firepower and local knowledge. They're not just a bystander. And also, I assume that coalitions would start to form an, a be pursued by the state department and the Chinese counterparts. The Chinese China's Eastern seaboard is basically surrounded by at least ostensibly American allies, like Korea, Japan the Philippines if pressed, I assume et cetera, what, what would those coalitions look like? And how would they play? How would they come up?

George Friedman:

Coalition is already there. South Korea, Japan, Taiwan have formal relations with the United States. The Philippines, I pointed out the oddity there. Indonesia has no formal agreement with co cooperates very much on Chinese relations. Vietnam is extremely hostile to China. And oddly enough now allows us ships support the straits of Malacca and Singapore Singapore, we have bases there. So one, they are surrounded by a, an Alliance that I was calculated where China has \$14 trillion a year GDP. The Alliance I've just named has about \$33 trillion is a financially massive. And more importantly, you're graphically massive that the military is limited, perhaps, but the geography is superb. We include now in that India and Australia, and we see the Chinese face, a great deal. But if you look at a map and you look at Taiwan, if that were Chinese, that would breach the line on the mat because it's such a massive gap.

So the Chinese wanted for historical reasons. They want to, because they're in a very bad strategic position. Their ports could be closed down by mines by the number of different ways. They're scared they want to break out. And the only place they can think of breaking out is Taiwan. That gives it an air of legitimacy and international relations. And so they're coming back at us. So Taiwan, Taiwan, Taiwan, but the American coalition which is now turning into what's called the quad, the Naval Alliance of India Australia the United States and Japan who are all doing maneuvers at sea with each other is, is really a massive force. There's a lot of blocking to try to use, and that's why they really want to get out.

Matt Shoemaker:

And is there a chance that that would fracture China as well? This kind of scenario where Hong Kong would choose to become independent or breakaway in the South of China would be same

George Friedman:

East China's real problem is its GDP is the second largest in the world. Its per capita income is 75th ragging behind the Yana and equatorial. Guinea is a poor country. The poverty is in the West there's wealth in the East, which makes the poverty in the West even deeper. It's clamping down on place, Xinjiang, Tibet, other places, but it's really the place that Mao wants to start the revolution, the interior, that that's the place that scares them. But I think that's something they're dealing with, whether or not we have the blockade or not we haven't put a blockade on them and even if we don't put a blockade, the Chinese has to deal with that.

Meredith Friedman:

Okay. That kind of ties in with Brent's other question as regards Taiwan, how important are the chip making capabilities

George Friedman:

Of Taiwan? Yeah, there's supposed to be a very big I, I don't know enough about the chip industry to figure out if this is a shortage replan shortage or watch, but they certainly have put themselves at the center of the international scene. I just don't know, but I don't think the Chinese design for Taiwan has to do with chip store as the American interest there that has to do very different things.

Meredith Friedman:

All right. I think both teams are back and ready to go to the next round. Let me just, okay. Give us a few seconds here. America's coming back a little more slowly. The Chinese are back and ready and raring to go. And the one final question that's out there by the way for after we finished this round or maybe during this discussion is what are the other great powers doing as this is going on? Richard asked a good question. I was just keeping it for a later time.

George Friedman:

What other great powers, sorry.

Meredith Friedman:

But I think it a back if you want to go over there. Yeah.

George Friedman:

Well, let's go to the United States. I think we went to United States.

Lee Pryor:

Okay. Thank you. I don't roll gentlemen. We really appreciate your willingness to work with us on several of these important issues. We graciously accept your offer to arrange for a joint Japanese, Russian mind sweeping operation with the ability to have Chinese and us technicians onboard the vessels. Should any questions arise about any mine that is discovered and brought on board to be disarmed? So we, we agree to that and we're ready to move forward, working through your channels, Naval and tissues and the other countries to make that happen as soon as possible. We also understand and are agreeable to your offer to combined U S investigators are experts with some investigators and experts from the world health organization to take another look at the wool Haun lab and at the situation that might've caused the virus to arise in the city of [inaudible] where there was a natural occurrence or an unnatural occurrence, a leakage from the lab.

But we, we agreed to combined with the world health organization. And again, we'd like to do that as soon as possible. And so we, we, we appreciate your flexibility on those issues. We would like to hear from you as to how soon you will disarm and as you said, I believe dis orbit the ASAP and bring it back down to earth. We hope you can of course, plan to do that, to get an open ocean situation. So nobody will be at risk, but we're very happy that you've agreed to that. We want to, of course, make you aware again, that we did not act with us to any any quarantine of Taiwan. We are completely prepared and have forces on alert to react should the people's Republic of China make the unfortunate decision to put in place a quarantine Taiwan and a attempt to enforce it. We will support our friends in Taiwan. Should that happen? Please don't have any doubt in your mind about that possibility. Thank you.

Robert Kirkland:

Ok we had brought Carl back from China with myself. So he is now in our good graces again. So will be a part of this along with the rest of our group. And we will have a joint response here and I will start out with our response and then I will let Premier marks add in if I miss anything. first is that China is a Renegade province. So China, Taiwan is a Renegade province of China. We have no plans to invade Taiwan that we are quarantining Taiwan, right? We want Asia to prosper. We are looking for, for harmony in, in, in, in this area of the world, we will selectively decide who goes in and out of Taiwan. So that is our prerogative as a sovereign nation with Taiwan being one of our States.

Again, we will not invade Taiwan. We are just simply want control through a quarantine of access to Taiwan. And this includes the airspace above Taiwan in regards to the the ASAP that you asked about, we are a gracious country and we are willing to unilaterally deorbit our ASAP with no corresponding action from the United States in this regard. Finally regarding the pandemic and the COVID I would, we would note that this pandemic is as much a, the issue is as much mismanagement by the U S government in regards to the way that they reacted to this pandemic as much what could be discovered happened in China regarding whatever we did or did not do to prevent the spread of this virus. And I turn it over to premier marks for further comment here.

Evan Marks:

Yes. thank you, comrade regarding the virus and the us is handling of the pandemic. You have to realize that the American actions shut down the economy, which created backlogs in the global supply chain in the developed and undeveloped worlds is also a borderline criminal act that caused untold trillions of dollars of expenditures and costs that the world is now just slowly, finally recovering from. So I think it would be wrong for you to assume that your veiled threat of reparations is just one way. These are, this is a multilateral type of situation. However, we look forward to a further discussion of this. After the Ru lab situation has been further disseminated and studied and analyzed by under the auspices of the who with American participation. I also find it a little bit ironic that you denigrate the who after you acted to defund the organization by declining to PR to fund America's contribution to their budget regarding the assets.

I want to be crystal clear on the ASX. My comrade Kirkland suggested that we will be deorbiting Arndt ASAP capability, which we will do. And this is a major concession to allowing your X 37 B to continue to orbit. However, we are not necessarily agreeing to destroy our ground-based ASAP capability unless America also under United nations weapons, inspector observation also destroys its ground-based ASAP capability, including those potential assets on your Arlie Burks and your Ticonderoga class cruisers. So it's not just ground-based, it's Naval based assets. If you do it, we'll do it. Regarding Taiwan, I wish to reiterate our offer to American military attache specifically Naval at Tasha is that they engage with our Naval at sachets to understand the timetable and the, and the precise implementation of our quarantine of our Renegade province. Taiwan. It's very important that you understand, how will you plan to implement this quarantine one last remark.

I mentioned some rounds ago that we are at the beginning of the spring fishing endeavor. And as you know, China has a merchant Marine that comprises 17,000 vessels. As a result, these vessels are going to be moving in great numbers into the Eastern China South, the South China and East China series. You previously mentioned ambassador Pryor that you have the resources to complicate our implementation of the quarantine of Taiwan. And we think that with a great number of vessels in what is actually a, quite a small body of water given the number of vessels, that there is the possibility of dangerous dangerous activities Oh, into the proximities of the vessels from each of our nations. So we would caution you to be very careful with our merchant Marine that concludes our remarks for now, and we're ready to engage on whatever format our distinguished moderator and Auckland suggests.

George Friedman:

Well, at this point, we've come down to one issue. It is Taiwan China's proposing that it be permitted, that it will say we'll quarantine Taiwan. The United States is saying that I won is a lie and under no circumstances was not in debate. So all of the prior discussion has boiled down to this discussion, the others being interesting, but this being crucial. So the question here is that if Taiwan carries out the action that it says it will, the U S will possibly regarded as an act of war. If the United States acts does make an act of war, it will be a war between China and the United States. So there is a war warning on the table. So the question is for my point of view, this is a high, dangerous position to be in to. Everyone should remember that you can also lose Wars and therefore consider whether or not some accommodation can be made here that doesn't make war such an extreme possibility. And I'd welcome anyone who's willing to shift his position sufficiently so that we don't leave here with a problem war.

Jacek Bartosiak:

How are we going to proceed now?

George Friedman:

Well, there's two people, two groups to try to use. And they're Americans, the Chinese considered very carefully where they were going and where they shifted to the Taiwan issue. United States has proposed the standard American position on Taiwan. If we leave on this basis and China will have the choice of doing nothing or carry out its threat, the United States will have the choice of doing nothing or carrying out its threats. If both do, as they say the possibility certainly of a conflict and limited conflict, is there a major conflict could grow out of it. So at this point, the question would become I would ask the Chinese to reconsider a quarantine or perhaps propose the other solution that would be helpful, but would not lead to this outcome. I proposed to the Americans some way to induce the Chinese to back away from this threat by conceding other issues, but regarding war as the least acceptable outcome of this meeting. In fact, the media was called to avoid war. So does either do other the Chinese or the UN, I'm sure you've discussed this and where it will go and everything. So we don't have to go with meat, but if you have to go with meat and think about it, that's also fine, but we've taken the game to the break point

Robert Kirkland:

Are I think what we've made the point of is that we are not, we do not plan to invade China. I mean, we do not plan to invade Taiwan at all. That was, that's not our intention,

George Friedman:

But you are, but you are going to place a blockade on it.

Robert Kirkland:

No, we w we all right. We are proposing as a quarantine where we have control over the ingress and egress of both air and sea assets going in. Yeah.

George Friedman:

Guaranteed not to interfere with traffic going legitimate traffic going through Taiwan. Okay.

Robert Kirkland:

That that's correct. But we, we, we want to have the say in, in what goes in and out a title.

George Friedman:

Well, there's a difference between having a say of what goes in and out of the country and not under any circumstance, interferring. So China needs to clarify his position. He doesn't want a neutral access to Taiwan or merely stand by as an observer checking [inaudible] that is perfectly inconvenient for the United States and the United States, which I'll talk to you at the moment has said that if this takes place, it would be a militarily. So I'm trying to do is avoid a military intervention. And so given to the Chinese have so far as I can see, not moved an inch, I go to the Americans. Is there some inducements you can give to the Chinese not to do this?

Lee Pryor:

Well, I think it's a little early to talk about inducements. I think that the logical next step for the U S would be to have more details in writing from the people's Republic of China, of exactly what does their limited quarantine mean? Okay. Why don't we, what does that do? And you know, allow the us to look at it and then respond

George Friedman:

Is China is trying to repair it, to put it in writing what its plans are?

Jacek Bartosiak:

Yeah. I may try out for my team allows me because yeah, because, because of the pandemic situation and some rumors about the illegal armaments shipments, we simply want to impose quarantine, which will be very selective and what will inform all that, you know, all nations Tenasia that prosper that they may be, feel free if they do not provide weapons to Taiwan, it any,

George Friedman:

It will be quite free. You will set the terms And those terms don't change

Jacek Bartosiak:

Flexibly. No, no. We in Beijing actually citing flexibly it's our province. So we will flexibly decide when we stop and we do not stop thinking.

Tom Fedyszyn:

That's the Chinese musician was the American, let me offer, offer a thought here, because there are positive inducements, as well as negative inducements and simply moving things in the general direction of Taiwan, ostensibly for training exercises, et cetera, we trust that their intelligence is good enough that they can read the handwriting on the wall. So at least they would know that should they choose to quarantine Taiwan to determine what goes in and out to control the airspace above them the Americans instead of a one or two ships floating around the South, China sea will have a formidable Armada out there just in case we see something we don't like. I think that message will go straight to Beijing. Thank you.

Evan Marks:

I'd like to pick up on some of Robin Conrad JASA ex remarks. You may recall that I forgot which number it was, but perhaps demand number three in our preliminary session is that we want all arm sales to Taiwan to stop. So you should interpret our goal by this quarantine, which I'm Admiral Tom. We will implement it. The next 30 days is designed to enter debt, interdict, new aircraft, new new ballistic missiles, other types of military equipment that can perpetuate Renegade, provinces operations to withstand our claims of legitimate claims of sovereignty. That is what we are after. And you're going to have to agree to this or else. There will be a correlation of forces that both sides may, you know, regret. We have made substantial concessions. We haven't yet discussed the issues of five G participation by Walway access to semi-conductors and other things, but you are infringing on our sovereignty in the same way that the British interfered with American sovereignty in the 18th century.

Fred Borowski:

Well, let's, let's be clear. Let's be clear here. Vice premier the United States is unwilling to abandon an ally to set a precedent in the neighborhood. Should you choose to do the same type of action to the Philippines, to Singapore, to Vietnam? So, you know, what's, you're asking us to preapprove is a pattern that you will likely implement going forward. And that is unacceptable to our allies with whom we have been in consultation the Japanese, the Koreans the, the, the Philippines and others in the area are expressing alarm at this intent because they feel it will be the next target. So at this point I need to seek additional guidance from our government at the highest levels in consultation with our allies to make sure that we are completely clear on what your intentions are now

George Friedman:

Before the Americans Leave I'd asked to try and each to can consider among yourselves whether or not there could be a modification of your position on Taiwan that the American position is clear of what would happen. We are in a very dangerous place. So the question is, is this the final position of China, or is there some modification possible?

Phillip Orchard:

I would just note that while there has been talk of negative and positive inducements to change our position there does have not been specified. We've made very clear what we're willing to do and planning to do. And there are reasons why.

Evan Marks:

May we talk in the real world for a moment, George, Meredith? Okay.

George Friedman:

I'm not sure what the real world is, but go ahead.

Evan Marks:

Okay. Real world here is at least I think our team believes is that China really has no intention of invading Taiwan for lots of different reasons. It's not the least of which is that it's expensive. It's hard to do difficult to game out the outcome, but a blockade, a quarantine that's much more feasible, not withstanding Admiral Tom's admonition that he's going to mass a lot of his surface than sub-surface combatants in the area. Tariff fishing fleet will go well, you know, be aware of the asymmetrical operations of that fishing, because we've thought this through and I'm sure Tom is concerned about that. And I just give you the USS Cole is a prime example. The, the, the issue of the issue of why it would, would occur. I mean, I think there are numerous issues, but what we're really not privy to because it's completely opaque is what's going on behind the scenes, in the polo Bureau.

George you've advanced for years that the communist party's hold over China is tenuous. And I think you still maintain that position. Of course, none of us really know if that's true, but it's not an unreasonable assumption given their crushing stranglehold over individual freedoms. And it's not just with the Wiggers it's with everyone. The real issue is if there are, there's the potential for a coup to remove Xi Jing ping, and he needs to propagate a wag, the tail operation in order to galvanize domestic

support for his regime and to thwart his competitors within the Politburo. And, you know, you know, while we're going to continue this more that this exercise to probably include some sort of conflict in game that out, and that'll be fascinating. The reality is, is that when we look at all of the political motivations to enforce a geopolitical outcome, that's favorable for one side to another, we are absolutely riding blind without any radar whatsoever about what Xi Jing ping and the pullet Bureau's motivations. So for you to ask us what our negotiating position is regarding compromising on the quarantine, it's this something we cannot do. We can't go any further than what we've gone.

George Friedman:

Let me, let me, it's time to wrap it up. And I'm going to take the Chinese are interested in Taiwan because the United States has an enormously powerful position as a Naval force and trying to, as nothing comparable to it did fear of the Chinese. And as the probably Bureau is that at some point on some other issue, the us is going to use this power to blockade China, not merely the ports, but especially the line of islands that we're talking about. China must have access to Naval sea lanes. It is an exporting power. It depends on those exports and imports and everything else. And China does not trust the United States not to be reckless. Okay. So if China's view is that the United States is unpredictable and has sufficient Naval power in its mind to act. What China has to do is make it much more difficult for the United States to close off the sea lanes. There are many points at which this could be done. There's choke points that are manageable by a Navy defensively. But if you take, for example, Taiwan, the distance between Japan and the Philippines as a wide distance, it reduces the ability to create a choke point.

So if you're the Chinese, and I don't know what goes on in port of Euro, but I do know if you're the Chinese, there are two things, unless you're idiotic, you know, one, you're facing a very powerful that to me. And two, it has a tendency to be reckless. And so in the position you are in now, okay, the possibility of creating an untenable situation is overwhelming. Will it do it well to do it? Both China can't live with that will it voltage, okay. And this reverses, the normal calculus in which China is the aggressive power, but says in sec, the United States is the one that tends to use quarantine on Cuba and so on and so forth. He tends to use its Navy. Perhaps China can solve that problem and a war, but this is not what China needs. It needs to have the access to free things.

So it turns the Taiwan, as it finally did, there was, here is a point at which it begins loosening the structure of the sea lanes and perhaps the entire structure fractures of the United States does nothing. Okay. So one, it is worried about the United States two, it needs an opening that's wider than it is. And three, it might unravel the entire American lens, like hate for the United States might decide not to contest the quarantine. It's not an invasion, it's a quarantine. It, it might well not contested. There is room for the Chinese tobacco for this position, depending on how they perceive the Americans to act. But at this point we don't know what the American public is going to be saying or Congress, or just as they don't, we don't know what the polo Bureau is saying. So I would argue, we've reached a point where we've gone to the heart of China's geopolitical problem. It must have maritime trade and the US Navy can make a very serious attempt at differing events. Okay.

Jacek Bartosiak:

It may, I may come up to comments on how we were approaching this as Chinese, so to speak. So, you know, as many conflict. Yeah. Very, very fast. We were just trying to identify the center of gravity. Yeah. So what is our theory of war? If there is a war, so we want to what we want to achieve. So it's not seizing Taiwan. It's about undermining the US credibility in East Asia. And by quarantine, we will achieve that. And there is the best chance to achieve it because we can selectively choose the moment of clash with whom, when, how, and against, in what circumstances we will have the escalation other control.

George Friedman:

And you're assuming that the United States will give you that option.

Jacek Bartosiak:

You know, theoretically, we can, even, if you send the Armada, we can say, we'll let you in. That's fine. But in the next month, we will not let you in.

George Friedman:

Well, we have a lot of options. Okay. So interestingly enough, the second was going to be about an Dasia to Taiwan. So the second meeting, so we will discuss this Jacek and I have had long intensive discussions about China strengthened credibility on which he's completely wrong, but he says, son, are you with me? This is the heart of the matter. The Politburo issue comes down to this to Paula Bureau, sees the world. It understands weaknesses. And in understanding weaknesses, it has to assume that is playing with a power that in the Chinese mind is reckless dangerous. So now we come down, we end this with that understanding. I thank all the players here who were extraordinary, really captured in negotiation, including the head fake. The reverse of everything came out in this until finally it comes down to it. The one thing the two countries can agree on, and even the prime minister of New Zealand, a woman, me in fact can't get them out of it, which takes us to the question of all right, when you threaten the war, you have to talk war.

Okay. So now we have to turn to the question of what a war like that would look like, which by the way, each side is constantly doing in math, a hundred venues playing out this game. Okay. But yeah Taiwan is the logical point for the Chinese to break out. It is legally part of China preferred promise. It opens up a threat towards Japan to the North Philippines, to the South. And more important than that, it opens up a sea lane that can't easily be closed. So if you're at that point, the polo Bureau says, Hey, gee, why don't you get off your and do something. Okay. And she knows that if he loses this, pardon me, his is grass. So he doesn't really want to take this risk personally. So you know, where we talked about here was absolutely valid. Now the question is, okay, will they do it?

Well, the answer is that rests in modeling the war of thinking about what a war would look like, who, what risks are being taken, where they aren't. So we move on to the next session, very neatly done. And I did not plan this or asked for this, but we got here. Okay. we go on to the next one, which is a model of award between China and the United States, focusing on a move on Taiwan. Okay. That's what we're going to do. And here he start asking questions about rain, you know, capabilities, summaries, and things like that, which are much more fun than this, but I want to thank the rest of everybody here.

Meredith Friedman:

George, before we leave are we going to model in invasion or should we talk about the point counterpoint in the next session of enforcing or breaking a quarantine?

George Friedman:

Well, if you want to hold Taiwan, you really don't want a Naval cordon that the United States has the opportunity to engage. If you're gonna was, was it Stalin said, if you're going to live like a Wolf, how like a Wolf, the political cost is the same and as much safer holding it and having coordinate then leave you in unchanged. But I don't know yet, because the question really comes down is trying to capable of invading Taiwan. And I'll emphasize six amphibious assault ships, each canoe, 20 thoughts as a hundred miles across the sea. So there's five hours for missiles to take them out. Now they may have other counters to those missiles. They may have, we don't know the shape of those war. We don't know if the war for Taiwan is in Taiwan or in Guam, for example, that's, that's where they have to go to rage This war. We don't know how the U S waves to war, but we do know that this is the question. It boils down to it. To me, it boils down to how does it guarantee its access to the sea lanes against the us Navy. Second, I can't tell you that the U S will never try to block the Chinese. And the second question is where does it go? Taiwan is the logical place. So we would have to examine, can they invade? That'd be one of the things in the war game. Okay. Can they lend a force? Whereas it only submarines circling, but again, I want to through press the point. I really want to thank all the guys who've really worked ridiculously, you know, I'm putting this together and I want to thank Meredith for making this happen because I sure as hell couldn't organize this or put up with this stuff. She did set those quite something, but everybody there thank you very much. We will rest. And they will think of war, death, and misery, the business of geopolitics.

Meredith Friedman:

Actually for joining. And we will get notices out about the next session. Very soon, probably in June and to our team members. Those we didn't hear from, I hope we'll hear from you next time. And you all did a great job and I hope our members come members enjoyed it. Thank you all. Take care. Bye bye.

George Friedman:

Thank you everybody.

Lee Pryor:

It was a pleasure.