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WHAT ISLAND?

By Dick Bennett

What island is one of the “Seven Wonders of Nature,” and of the world’s 66 UNESCO Geoparks, nine are found there?

What island unique for its pristine coastal beauty is being militarized into an enormous naval base, threatening a farming and fishing culture and nine endangered species?

What island’s coral coast diversity, which enables the Indo-Pacific bottlenosed dolphins to spawn, is being permanently damaged by fifty-seven cement caissons each the size of a four-story house?

What island’s inhabitants have nonviolently and resolutely resisted these invasions, first by voting 94% against the base, and then blocking bulldozers and enduring beatings, fines, and prison?

Yes, Jeju Island, South Korea.
And the USA is helping to pay for the construction and of course will use the base, which you already knew and knew also that the US has the right to use all of S. Korea’s bases.

And for what? To encircle China with US Aegis anti-ballistic missiles on aircraft carriers, destroyers, and submarines, which China naturally perceives as a threat since anti-ballistic missiles could be intended for a first-strike.

What to do? Play cards? Take a trip?

Or visit the Save Jeju Island Campaign website, SaveJejuIsland.org, and support the island’s resisters, and by the way slow down the Empire that is threatening the planet, including China. (And contact the Chinese Embassy to tell them to stop loaning money to the US for Empire and Aegis!)

References

American flags were being sewn at a roadside shop in Yangon, Myanmar, on Friday before President Obama’s arrival.

By PETER BAKER and JANE PERLEZ

WASHINGTON — On the stump this fall, President Obama boasted that he had “brought more trade cases against China” than his predecessor had. In an ad, he asserted that his challenger “never stood up to China.” During a debate, Mr. Obama said he expanded trade with other Asian nations “so that China starts feeling more pressure” to play by the rules.

Multimedia

Myanmar’s Moment
Nicholas D. Kristof on Myanmar

Related

In Visit to Myanmar, Obama Will See a Nation That Shaped His Grandfather (November 18, 2012)

The contest with Mitt Romney is over, but the contest with China is only gathering
After a political campaign spent talking about how tough he was with Beijing, the newly re-elected president departed for Asia on Saturday for his first postelection overseas trip, a whirlwind swing through China’s backyard that is fraught with geopolitical implications.

Mr. Obama will make a historic visit to Myanmar to mark the emergence of the long-isolated country and encourage its migration from China’s orbit toward a more democratic future with the West. He will also stop in Thailand, America’s longtime ally in the region as well as a friend of China’s. And he will fly to Cambodia for a summit meeting of a Southeast Asian organization as the United States tries to increase its influence in that part of the region.

With the election over, the White House has softened its language, and presents the trip not as an explicit attempt to contain China but as the next stage of its so-called pivot to Asia, reorienting American foreign policy after a decade of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan toward the economic and political future of the Pacific. On the cusp of a second term, Mr. Obama sees such a shift as a mission for the next four years and a possible legacy.

“The president’s trip marks the beginning of the next phase of our rebalancing effort,” Thomas E. Donilon, the president’s national security adviser, said in a speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. “When the president says the United States will play a larger and long-term role in the region, we intend to execute on that commitment.”

But when the Obama team talks about “rebalancing,” Mr. Donilon said it meant “both toward the Asia-Pacific and within the Asia-Pacific,” meaning more engagement with nations like Myanmar, Thailand and Cambodia. As for China, he said, the relationship “has elements of both cooperation and competition.”

The political centerpiece of the trip is the scheduled six-hour visit to Myanmar, which is considered strategic in the reorientation to Asia not only because of its location bordering China, but because its leaders have signaled their pique with China’s relentless search for natural resources and their willingness to tilt toward the West as a way of counterbalancing their imposing neighbor.

Although the trip to Yangon was scheduled to coincide with the Asian summit meeting, the symbolism of Mr. Obama’s visit — the first by a sitting United States president — has not been lost on China, a longtime patron.

In Beijing, where Xi Jinping has just been installed as the new leader in a once-in-a-decade transition, the trip is seen as part of a continuing challenge to China’s rise. The government interprets America’s attention on the region, including the deployment of more troops and battleships, as an effort to encircle China.
“The pivot is a very stupid choice,” said Jin Canrong, a professor at the School of International Studies at Renmin University in Beijing. “The United States has achieved nothing and only annoyed China. China can’t be contained.”

On China’s periphery, where its rapid military modernization and territorial claims in resource-rich seas are viewed with nervousness, Mr. Obama’s pivot is mostly welcomed. Many in the region, however, worry about whether the United States has the money and will to follow through. There is also a question over how much impact the United States can have, no matter its commitment. China has the edge in trade; every country in the region except the Philippines does more business with China than with the United States.

“That’s happened over the last five years, faster than expected,” said Peter Drysdale, head of the East Asian Bureau of Economic Research at the Australian National University. “The disparity of the scale of what’s going on with China and the region compared to the United States will grow.”

Mr. Obama’s trip follows visits to the region in recent days by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta. . . .

Peter Baker reported from Washington, and Jane Perlez from Beijing. Thomas Fuller contributed reporting from Yangon, Myanmar, and Wai Moe from Naypyidaw, Myanmar.

A version of this article appeared in print on November 18, 2012, on page A14 of the New York edition with the headline: Obama’s Road to Myanmar Is Paved With New Asia Intentions.

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Panetta: US at 'turning point,' to refocus on Asia

* AP foreign, Monday October 24 2011

ROBERT BURNS

AP National Security Writer— TOKYO (AP) — The winding down of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan marks a pivot point for the U.S. military, which must now focus on looming threats such as the rising military might of China, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said Monday. [Why redirect our armed forces to China? It’s “looming threat”? Of what? Or rather the redirection is to grasp at yet another of endless threats for permanent war and to “keep the military busy” in order to fuel the militarized economy? Dick]
Panetta used his first visit to Japan as Pentagon chief to sound an emerging theme of the Obama administration: America will remain a global economic and military power despite coming budget reductions, and the Asia-Pacific region will be central to U.S. national security strategy.

In a question-and-answer session with U.S. and Japanese troops at Yokota Air Base, Panetta ticked off a list of threats that he said demand more U.S. attention as it completes its departure from Iraq this year and targets 2014 for the withdrawal of combat forces from Afghanistan. He mentioned cyberattacks, the nuclear ambitions of Iran and North Korea, Mideast turmoil and "rising powers" — an allusion to China.

"Today we are at a turning point after a decade of war," Panetta said. Al-Qaida is among a range of concerns that will keep the military busy, but as a traditional Pacific power the United States needs to invest more effort in building a wider and deeper network of alliances and partnerships in this region, he said. [“Rising powers” threaten us? Does nobody in the Pentagon or White House think of cooperating with other powers to benefit the world? Never mind we know the answer. Building alliances, that is, military alliances, to counter the China “threat.” The old way to war, to WWI, WWII. The new way after the second world slaughter was to unite nations, not build armed alliances, “balances” of threatening powers. Dick]

"Most importantly, we have the opportunity to strengthen our presence in the Pacific — and we will," he said. [Strengthen more? From Hawaii to Guam to Okinawa to S. Korea, we haven’t expanded our armed might enough? Does nobody in the Pentagon or White House think how the Chinese feel threatened by the "reckless and provocative" westward armed movement by the US—for those with a historical education really from Jamestown to Jeju? Dick]

He did not elaborate on whether that would mean adding ships or other forces, but he emphatically said budget cuts would not be a factor." We are not anticipating any cutbacks in this region," he said. . [Afghan troops were transferred to a base in Australia. SK’s Jeju Island is expanding as a naval base. D]

In an opinion piece published Monday in a Japanese newspaper, Panetta accused North Korea of "reckless and provocative" acts and criticized China for a secretive expansion of its military power. He wrote that Washington and Japan share common challenges in Asia and the Pacific.

"China is rapidly modernizing its military," he wrote, "but with a troubling lack of transparency, coupled with increasingly assertive activity in the East and South China Seas." [Does Panetta think people around the world will believe that China’s military development is any more secretive, any less transparent than that of the US?]

China's military budget of $95 billion this year is the world's second-highest after Washington's planned $650 billion. Beijing is developing weapons such as the "carrier killer" DF 21D missile that analysts say might threaten U.S. warships and alter the regional balance of power.

Panetta wrote that Japan and the U.S. would work together to "encourage China to play a responsible role in the international community."

A day earlier, in Bali, Indonesia, Panetta offered more positive remarks about China. He told reporters that Beijing deserved praise for a relatively mild response to a $5.8 billion U.S. arms sale to Taiwan announced in September.

[For three other reports of Panetta’s comments on China see the next entries. Panetta now turns to NK.]
Panetta is not visiting China on this trip, but the Obama administration has worked to improve historically weak military ties with China. Panetta's predecessor, Robert Gates, argued that both sides needed to better understand one another's capabilities and motives, the better to prevent miscalculations or misunderstandings. U.S. Navy ships have had run-ins with Chinese ships in disputed waters, for example, but China insists its military rise is peaceful and poses no threat to the U.S.

Panetta is focusing more directly during this trip on the threat posed by North Korea, which he said in his opinion piece "continues to engage in reckless and provocative behavior and is developing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, which pose a threat not just to Japan but to the entire region."

The problem of North Korea involves not only the historical weight of Japan's occupation of Korea from 1910 to the end of World War II, but also China's support for communist North Korea. China fought U.S. forces as a North Korean ally during the 1950-53 Korean War, which remains an unsettled issue.

Panetta's strong language coincided with the start of talks in Geneva between U.S. and North Korean officials in what Washington calls an effort to determine whether Pyongyang is serious about returning to nuclear disarmament talks. Japan also worries about North Korea and is one of five countries that have jointly tried to persuade the North Koreans to cap and reverse their nuclear arms program. The other four are the U.S., China, Russia and South Korea.

The U.S. has about 47,000 troops in Japan and about 28,000 in South Korea, and it is studying near-term possibilities for bolstering the U.S. position in Asia — not necessarily by adding more troops but by increasing U.S. Navy port calls and doing more regular exercises with Asian and Pacific nations.

President Barack Obama plans to visit Indonesia in November to attend an East Asia summit meeting, following a visit to Australia. He also will host a meeting of Asia-Pacific leaders in Hawaii in November.

Panetta arrived in Japan from Bali, where he met with defense ministers from the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations. On Tuesday, Panetta is scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda as well as Japan's defense and foreign ministers. On Wednesday, he is to meet with U.S. sailors aboard a ship at nearby Yokosuka Naval Base and then travel to South Korea for annual security consultations.

Robert Burns can be reached on Twitter at http://twitter.com/robertburnsAP

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1. **Pentagon Chief comes as a go-between? - China News - SINA**

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Hawaii: Head of the Tentacled Beast

Fri Nov 2, 2012 12:25 pm (PDT) . Posted by: "Global Network" brucekgag

http://www.fpif.org/articles/hawaii_head_of_the_tentacled_beast

Hawaii: Head of the Tentacled Beast
By Jon Letman, October 18, 2012

Foreign Policy in Focus

Fresh from hosting the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Honolulu last autumn, U.S. President Barack Obama recently told members of the Australian Parliament that America’s defense posture across the Asia-Pacific would be "more broadly distributed, more flexible--with new capabilities to ensure that our forces can operate freely."

The announcement of America’s "Asia-Pacific pivot" by its first Hawaiia-born president was highly fitting, since the Hawaiian Islands are at the piko ("navel" in Hawaiian) of this vast region.

A less flattering metaphor for Hawaii’s role in the Pacific is what Maui educator and native Hawaiian activist Kaleikoa Kaeo has called a giant octopus whose tentacles reach across the ocean clutching Japan, Okinawa, South Korea, Jeju island, Guam, at times, the Philippines, American Samoa, Wake Island, Bikini Atoll, and Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands.

The head of this beast is in Hawaii, which is home to U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM), with sonar, radar, and optical tracking stations as its eyes and ears. Its brain consists of the supercomputers on Maui and the command center on Oahu that connects PACOM to distant bases. This octopus excretes waste as toxic land, polluted waters, abandoned poisons, blown-up and sunken ships, and depleted uranium (DU). Like a real octopus that can
regenerate severed limbs, the military in the Pacific grows in new locations (Thailand, Australia) and returns to old ones (Philippines, Vietnam).

PACOM headquarters at Camp H.M. Smith on Oahu is a short drive from Waikiki Beach, but it's unlikely many tourists pause to consider that tensions between the United States and Russia over missile defense, the war in Afghanistan, the destruction of Iraq, the use of drones in Libya, Somalia, Yemen, Pakistan, and the Philippines—as well as growing opposition to military bases in Okinawa, Guam and Jeju—are all linked to Hawaii.

Thirty-six nations- and over half the world's population-live in PACOM's "Area of Responsibility" which spans from the Bering Strait to New Zealand, as far west as Pakistan and Siberia and east to the Galapagos. This behemoth's self-proclaimed duty is to defend "the territory of the United States, its people, and its interests," and to "enhance stability in the Asia-Pacific," "promote security cooperation, encourage peaceful development, respond to contingencies, deter aggression and, when necessary, fight to win."

Sovereignty violated

Hawaii's relationship with the U.S. military was cemented on January 16, 1893, when U.S. Marines overthrew what had been a sovereign kingdom recognized by the United States and dozens of countries around the world. Encouraged by Anglo-American subjects of the Hawaiian kingdom seeking tariff-free access to American markets for their sugar cane, the U.S. military-pursuing what was then already a mission of expansion in the Pacific-toppled Queen Liliuokalani, making way for the 1898 U.S. declaration of the Territory of Hawaii and, in 1959, statehood.

In 1900, President Theodore Roosevelt said, "I wish to see the United States the dominant power on the shores of the Pacific Ocean." He and every president since have understood the importance of Hawaii in fulfilling that goal. "Our future history will be more determined by our position on the Pacific facing China than by our position on the Atlantic facing Europe," Roosevelt said.

Since even before World War II, but especially since the 1947 establishment of PACOM, Hawaii has been at the center of testing, training, and deployment of U.S. military hardware and personnel around the region. Today Hawaii is home to 118 military sites, from the Pacific Missile Range Facility on Kauai to Kaena Point Satellite Tracking Station on Oahu, from the Air Force Maui Optical and Supercomputing observatory to the Pohakuloa Training Area on the Big Island (Hawaii Island).

Besides Hawaii's four largest islands, the military has used smaller Hawaiian islands and offshore islets for live-fire testing for decades. Best known is Kahooolawe, which was a bombing range from 1941 until 1990 when, after more than a dozen years of protests and legal challenges, President George H.W. Bush ordered a cessation to bombing and the removal of unexploded ordnances. Yet as of 2004, one-quarter of Kahooolawe still had unexploded ordnances and was considered "unsafe."

On Hawaii Island, at 133,000 acres, Pohakuloa Training Area (PTA) is over four times the size
of Kahoolawe. The high-altitude site between the volcanoes Mauna Loa and Mauna Kea has been used by all branches of the military for small arms training, mortar firing, and other live-fire tests.

In addition to being shelled with millions of rounds of ammunition annually-and on the receiving end of 2,000-pound inert bombs dropped from B-2 bombers-PTA is contaminated with an undetermined amount of depleted uranium (DU). In 2008, the Hawaii County Council voted 8-1 for a resolution calling for a halt to live-fire training until further assessments and clean-up can be conducted. The military, however, continues to exploit the site, according to Jim Albertini with the Malu Aina Center for Non-violent Education & Action.

Below PTA, in the sleepy town of Hilo, community advocate Lori Buchanan describes Pohakuloa today: "It's so disheartening to drive past and see the degradation to the land. What I see will bring tears to your eyes-not only animals with no place to go, but dust storms reminiscent of Kahoolawe because of the erosion and impact of military training." She says the bombing doesn't make sense. "Why would you bomb the hell out of the land when it's so limited? We live on an island and they're bombing a huge area, making it a wasteland."

Although a native Hawaiian, Buchanan says she isn't instinctively anti-military. "It's the whole patriotic [thing]. It's ingrained in us. We understand the importance of defense-no one is challenging that, but is all this really necessary? You cannot kill your own resources when you live on an island and have nowhere to go once you've killed everything off."

"It isn't just Pohakuloa. It's Kahoolawe, Makua, Barking Sands, the proposed training on Maui and it's Kalaupapa," says Buchanan, talking about Kalaupapa peninsula, on the island of Molokai. Kalaupapa is a quiet place, best known for its 19th-century leprosy colony at the bottom of Hawaii's highest sea cliffs. Less well known is that Kalaupapa and "topside" (upper) Molokai are used by the Navy for confined area and field carrier landing "touch-and-go" training by CH-53D helicopters, the type used in Afghanistan. In July 2012, activists on Molokai helped thwart plans to increase night training exercises for the controversial MV-22 Osprey and Huey attack helicopters from 112 takeoff and landings per year to 1,388.

The Navy plans to base two squadrons (12 aircraft each) of Osprey and one squadron of light attack H-1 Cobra and Huey attack helicopters in Hawaii. The Osprey, which takes off like a helicopter but can fly like an airplane, has been heavily criticized over safety concerns following at least seven fatal crashes-including two this year, in Florida and Morocco. Osprey helicopters have been used in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya, and they're being deployed in Japan and Okinawa despite fervent protests.

In addition to concerns about some 2,000 new active-duty personnel and their dependents being transferred to Oahu, civic and cultural groups are worried about the impacts of the aircraft on local communities, wildlife, and historically and culturally sensitive areas on Kalaupapa, which is designated a U.S. National Historic Park. The military has said the increased training will have "no significant impact on noise levels for most communities," but local groups wedged between high cliffs, mountains, and the sea fear otherwise.

Under my thumb
An Asia-Pacific pivot will increase testing and training beyond what has taken place in Hawaii for years—from live-fire testing in Makua Valley on Oahu to missile defense, rocket, and drone testing at the Pacific Missile Range Facility on Kauai. Additionally, every two years, the U.S. military holds its **Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) training**—the "world's largest international maritime exercise," which was most recently held this summer across the islands.

**RIMPAC 2012 included 22 regional allies** (including Canada, Japan, Australia, South Korea) and more distant nations like Colombia, Netherlands, Tonga, India, and Russia. Notably absent was China, but in September 2012, U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta announced that Beijing would be invited to participate in a limited capacity in the 2014 exercise.

Retired **U.S. Army Colonel Ann Wright** sees RIMPAC and the growing number of multinational joint military "exercises and engagements" in the region as an opportunity for the United States to test (and show off) its next generation of weaponry: laser-fueled, computerized, and submarine-launched drones. It's also a chance to closely assess regional capabilities while positioning the United States to more effectively "push around" other countries and persuade them to do the foreign policy and military operational bidding of the United States, Wright says.

Wright, who resigned in protest of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, points to the South Korean naval base on Jeju which, when finished, will house AEGIS-equipped destroyers linked to U.S. missile defense as an example of how the United States pressures its allies to follow certain paths.

Speaking at a **Pentagon** news briefing last June, PACOM commander Admiral Samuel J. Locklear basically said the same thing: "We're not really interested in building any more U.S. bases in the Asia-Pacific," he said. "We shouldn't have to at this point in time. We have reliable partners and reliable allies, and together we should be able to find ways to—not only bilaterally, but in some cases to multilaterally—to be able to find these locations where we can put security forces that respond to a broad range of security issues."

"It's complicated"

**Much has been made of the Asia-Pacific pivot, but Oahu activist Kyle Kajihiro of Hawaii Peace & Justice says this is just the most recent wave in a series of endless waves.**

"Every pivot needs a fulcrum in order to turn. Hawaii was the first fulcrum for U.S. in the Pacific and has allowed it to leverage their power to greater effect," he says. Kajihiro points out that questions of land use and the military's social, cultural, and environmental impacts on Hawaii are frequently overlooked or sidelined by the notion that seemingly endless infusions of money and military-based employment always trump the needs of people and the environment.

For decades the military has enjoyed solid backing from Hawaii's congressional delegation in Washington, the Hawaii Chamber of Commerce, and unions with construction interests.
Hawaii's own population, which overwhelmingly votes Democratic, has largely accepted what Kajihiro calls "the dominant myth" that a large military presence is organic, inevitable, and naturally beneficial. He refers to events like "Military Appreciation" month and the USS Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor, where he says militarism and war are monumentalized as forms of "redemptive violence"--that is, as a source of goodness, honor, and valor from which the United States always emerges "stronger and better."

In Hawaii, the military has widespread local support, even from some native Hawaiians (whose kingdom was overthrown), people of Japanese descent (who have suffered discrimination and internment) and others whose ancestral homelands have borne the brunt of the U.S. military (Koreans, Okinawans, Chamorro, Pacific Islanders).

"When you're severely addicted to something like the military," asks Kajihiro, "how do you transition away without causing trauma?" He says Hawaii would face serious economic hemorrhaging if it turned away from the military cold turkey. "How do we plan for and invest in an alternate course that will take us off an addictive substance that deteriorates the body to a more diversified, healthy economic sustenance?"

Hawaii is a remote archipelago almost wholly dependent on imported oil, commodities and manufactured goods, but increasingly its people are recognizing the need to become more self-reliant, especially in terms of local food production.

In the last decade Hawaii has seen a mushrooming of businesses and educational efforts to pursue alternative energy based on sun, wind, waves and waste. Author Richard Heinberg, a senior fellow in residence at the Post Carbon Institute, has suggested Hawaii should move in a direction like New Zealand, which places very little emphasis on military strength but has become a global leader in environmental conservation.

Under the banner of an "Asia-Pacific pivot," the United States is positioning its military to secure access to remaining resources and drive the economic and political winds of the region, but it also demonstrates that it understands the importance of finding alternatives to building large, new bases that rely on increasingly hard-to-obtain money and oil.

In order to successfully secure a place for its people in a more crowded, resource-strained world, Hawaii would do well to pursue its own pivot away from militarism and instead shift its efforts to food and energy self-reliance, environmental protection, and planning for survival in a world beset by climate change.

The sooner Hawaii recognizes that it would be better off with a drastically reduced dependency on the military, the sooner it can begin to move toward a healthier, safer, and more secure future.

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Pakistan allows transfer of strategic port to China

Takeover of Gwadar port may raise concerns in US

Dick’s comment 9-12-12: China’s business expansion is immediately feared by this commentator as Chinese military expansion, a familiar mind-set for US. We are extending our military into Jeju Island and Australia, so China’s navy must be planning a base in Pakistan. A Chinese naval base in the Indian Ocean would be destabilizing? But US can destabilize with our existing, enormous base on Diego Garcia? (The US Navy operates Naval Support Facility (NSF) Diego Garcia, a large naval ship and submarine support base, military air base, communications and space-tracking facility, and an anchorage for pre-positioned military supplies for regional operations aboard Military Sealift Command ships in the lagoon.) Stinks of US double-standards? But of course since the US is blessed with exceptionalism, it’s ok. China should be transparent about its military plans? Like the US?

Islamabad: Pakistan will allow Singapore’s PSA International Pte to transfer control of a strategically important port to a Chinese company, a switch that may spark concerns in the US over China’s naval expansion plans.

The Gwadar port in Pakistan’s western province of Baluchistan was built in 2007 with funding from the government in Beijing, and is envisioned as the Arabian Gulf terminus of a transport corridor that would carry Middle Eastern oil and other goods to western China.

“We have given PSA a no-objection certificate to sell its shares,” Babar Khan Ghauri, federal minister for ports and shipping, said in a phone interview from Karachi. “They are in discussions with a Chinese company. I hope this transfer of operations will be good for the development of this port,” Ghauri said without giving further details. “This is just a commercial decision, and we don’t have any role in it.”

The takeover of the port by a company from China may raise concerns in the US which sees China’s increasing naval capability in the Indian Ocean as potentially destabilizing. China must be “open and transparent” about its plans for Gwadar, Michael Schiffer, the then US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia, told a congressional commission in 2009, adding that China may
view the port as an anchor for its own naval expansion into the Indian Ocean.

Chinese engineers have carried out a feasibility study for a railroad and pipeline from Gwadar to the western Chinese city of Kashgar. It would follow the route of the China-built Karakoram Highway, a Chinese specialist on Pakistan, Li Xiguang, wrote in December 2010 in the Global Times, an English-language website controlled by the ruling Communist Party’s official newspaper.

A transport corridor to Gwadar “will provide China with the shortest possible route to the oil-rich Middle East, replacing the dangerous maritime route” around Southeast Asia, Li wrote.

Pakistan has in the past suggested the port could be upgraded to a naval base for Chinese use, Harsh Pant, an international relations specialist at King’s College in London, said in a report this year. China rejected the offer as it was unwilling to antagonize the US and India, Pant said.

WESTERN IMPERIALISM IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

"André Vltchek has compiled a stunning record in evoking the reality of the contemporary world, not as perceived through the distorting prisms of power and privilege, but as lived by the myriad victims. He has also not failed to trace the painful - and particularly for the West, shameful - realities to their historical roots. In this work, Vltchek extends his penetrating gaze to a lovely, desecrated, almost forgotten vast area of the world,
Oceania, which he shows to be "a microcosm of almost all major problems faced by our planet. He brings to light the strength and courage of the people, and their achievements, and explores the hopes for decent recovery and survival if the powerful can allow themselves to comprehend what they have done, and to accept the responsibility of actually protecting their victims instead of mouthing comforting and self-serving slogans." - Noam Chomsky

(His provocative book about post-Suharto Indonesia and market-fundamentalist model is called *Indonesia – The Archipelago of Fear*, pub. by Pluto).