FOUR LEAGUES OF THE PACIFIC: UNITED KINGDOM, UNITED STATES, CHINA, RUSSIA, WHERE TRUST IN TRADE MEETS DISTRUST IN SECURITY, A PACIFIC-INDIAN TREATY ORGANISATION (PINTO) IS NEEDED FOR A ‘COMMUNITY OF NATIONS’

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ABSTRACT

Rising tensions within the Western Pacific Rim region on land and along the seacoast waterways, have hurled into the spotlight the formation of “Leagues” involving four global powers, each with its regional alliances: the United Kingdom allied in the region with Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Singapore; the United States of America, allied in the region with Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea; People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation, at least visibly aligned with each other and Shanghai Cooperation Organization partner nations that include its six original members from 2003: China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan [five of them, excluding Uzbekistan, being members of the “Shanghai Five” also] expanded to eight with admission to full membership of India and Pakistan since 09 June 2017. It is likely to include as “dialogue partners” such diverse states as Iran, Israel, and Turkey. What this means is that of the four leagues, three consist of “right trusty” participants, whereas the fourth, led by China with Russia, can be said to consist of partners who distrust each other, beginning with China and Russia themselves, continuing on to India and Pakistan, then to Israel and Iran, finally to Turkey with all of the rest, China particularly, in the light of Turkey’s covert support for the separatist movement of Uighurs in China’s Northwest Xinjiang Province. As such, power transitions have become transparently unorthodox, even approaching the fanciful, likely to forecast drama as well as comedy in the foreseeable future, without any “Thucydides Trap.” Yet, leagues are alliances, and the Allies of the Pacific closed ranks to support the United States in its standoff with the D.P.R.K., proving simply once more that they are invincible when united. This is evidence that a Pacific-Indian Treaty Organization (PINTO) is needed immediately.

KEYWORDS: Asia, China, “Community of Nations,” “Pacific League & ” “P.I.N.T.O., U.K., U.S

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*“Someday, in the distant future perhaps—but some day,
it is certain—all of them will remember with the Master,
‘Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself’” (Roosevelt, 1943).*

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INTRODUCTION

Transitions in power and of power balance, both real and imaginary, involving the Western rim of the Pacific Ocean have marked alterations in alliances alongside predictable drama that must be expected under the circumstances. Comedy has followed, also, as some of the “alliances” seem doomed to failure *ab initio* because of obvious partner mismatches, ideological incongruity, with misplaced reliance upon investment promises or loans fraught with illegitimate expectations. To begin with, China is predicating its perception of its own global rise upon loyalty purchased by investments along its “One Belt, One Road” (OBOR), overland from Pakistan to Europe, maritime from Chinese ports to Africa “one infrastructure loan at a time” (Han, 2017a). China’s perception is false in fact, because neither investments (equity) nor loans (debt) purchase loyalty. Even more importantly, the question is not of any “Thucydides Trap” or of China heading to war with the United States, as Allison has warned repeatedly (2015, 2017). Four leagues or alliances are dominant in the Pacific rim, not only one, and the three that do not include China interface with each other in multiple ways across the world, constructively forming a global empire much larger and more formidable than the alliance of city states with islands Thucydides wished Melos had enjoyed in the period leading up to the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta. Each pertinent country trades with China and with each other extensively. Times are very different.

Allison reminds us that war has erupted 12 out of 16 times since the early 16th century whenever a “rising power” has challenged a “ruling power,” as Figure 1 below evidences. With a

	Period		Ruling Power	Rising Power		Result
1	First half of 16th century		France	Hapsburgs		War
2	16th–17th centuries		Hapsburgs	Ottoman Empire		War
3	17th century		Hapsburgs	Sweden		War
4	17th century		Dutch Republic	England		War
5	Late 17th–early 18th centuries		France	Great Britain		War
6	Late 18th–early 19th centuries		United Kingdom	France		War
7	Mid-19th century		United Kingdom, France	Russia		War
8	19th century		France	Germany		War
9	Late 19th–early 20th centuries		Russia, China	Japan		War
10	Early 20th century		United Kingdom	United States		No war
11	Early 20th century		Russia, U.K., France	Germany		War
12	Mid-20th century		Soviet Union, U.K.	Germany		War
13	Mid-20th century		United States	Japan		War
14	1970s–1980s		Soviet Union	Japan		No war
15	1940s–1980s		United States	Soviet Union		No war
16	1990s–present		United Kingdom, France	Germany		No war

Figure 1: Thucydides Case Studies, 16th to 21st Centuries

Source: Harvard University, Kennedy School, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, in Allison, Graham. 2015. “The Thucydides Trap: Are the U.S. and China Headed for War?” *The Atlantic*. 24 Sep.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/09/united-states-china-war-thucydides-trap/406756/>

Detailed analysis of those 16 examples, however, it becomes evident that most were raising empires that bore an ambition to dislodge another empire in decline, notwithstanding personal feelings of leaders. Allison pointed out that when former President Theodore Roosevelt of the United States met casually with His Late Imperial Majesty, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, in Berlin on 09 May 1910, Roosevelt told the Kaiser than an impending outbreak of war between Great Britain and Germany would become “an unspeakable calamity,” prompting the Kaiser’s agreement that war would be “unthinkable,” remarking::

I was brought up in England, very largely; I feel myself partly an Englishman. Next to Germany I care more for England than for any other country”; then with intense emphasis Kaiser Wilhelm declared, “I ADORE ENGLAND” (Bishop, 1920, 253 (Emphasis in the original)).

That posture failed to prevent the outbreak of World War I hostilities. Parallel emotions between Americans and Chinese will prove to be insufficient by themselves to avert warfare in the 21st century, either. More deterrence is necessary, much more deterrence. That said, Allison’s national examples are inapposite to the 21st century for several reasons: the United States of America is neither an empire nor is it in decline, much as some prominent pundits seem to want (Johnson, 2004; Zakaria, 2009). Nor is the People’s Republic of China a rising empire, either. It is not an empire at all, with few to no vassal states upon which it can rely for homage, and if it is rising it is doing so only tenuously amidst economic predictors that easily can forecast a “bubble” in contrast to stable growth, driven by higher than advisable leveraging (debt to equity ratio) of State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and burgeoning corporate debt generally, together with delayed exit of unviable industries including some mining sectors and misplaced reliance on real estate (OECD, 2017, 134-135). Gains in Chinese home sales slowed during the first half of 2017, confirming weaker real estate markets, echoed by a construction slump accompanied by floor space reduction of new buildings, “ebbing” demand for fixed-asset infrastructure and industrial investment, corroborated by “decoration dent” in the form of slower appliance and furniture sales (Scott, Pi & Dong, 2017). Chinese economic growth is neither a certainty nor steady.

What is more, arguably very much more, is that China’s armed services on land, in the air, and on the seas do not nearly equal and far from exceed those of the United States and its Western Allies, as four separate Rand Corporation studies have documented recently supported by hard data. On overall balance China falls short of the United States (Heginbotham, Nixon, Morgan, Heim, Hagen, Li, Engstrom, Libicki, DeLuca, Shlapak, Frelinger, Laird, Brady & Morris, 2015a). In addition, the same team compared Chinese with American strength on capability of attacking or protecting United States bases in the Pacific rim area (Heginbotham, et al., 2015b), on relative air superiority (Heginbotham, et al., 2015c), and on relative surface naval warship strength (Heginbotham, et al., 2015d), in each instance concluding the United States vastly outdistances the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA), its PLA Air Force, and its PLA Navy. Although the United States is the world’s largest armaments supplier, Russia ranks second, and in Asia Russia is the largest supplier to developing countries, namely China and India (Grimmett & Kerr, 2012), with Japan bursting into the maritime armaments market within the ASEAN community (Pollmann, 2017).

Reduced to its core, peace is law abiding behavior, unjustified warfare is deviancy. Borrowing from Sutherland’s theory of individual delinquency, then applying individual violence to collective violence because state violence is the collective violence of state actors, one might surmise that nations *choose* peace or war in their interactions with other states: wars erupt when “definitions favorable to violation of law” exceed “definitions unfavorable to violation of law”, as in

delinquent behavior of individuals (Sutherland, 1939, 4-8; Sutherland & Cressey, 1960, in Cullen & Agnew, 2006, 122-125). States decide with deliberation whether to attack other states, much as individuals decide purposefully whether to pull the trigger on a firearm or drive a vehicle into a crowd of people, or shooting into a crowd to hurt people at random as in the case of a “depraved heart” murderer.

In the context of international relations, “definitions” include consequences that invite or discourage state belligerence and that, in turn, require reflection about prospective defeat on the battlefield, retaliation by surviving adversaries, economic sanctions, travel restrictions, reduction or even cessation of trade volume with adversaries or adversarial alliances, domestic insurrection. In contrast, dispute settlement by mild and peaceful means spawns collaboration, friendship, harmony, respect, among sparring parties themselves, among the wider world watching audience. As Figure 2 below strongly evidences, most countries that support the United Nations Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling in the case captioned *Republic of the Philippines vs. People’s Republic of China*² are upstanding countries with lower scores on the corruption index published by Freedom House than most countries that oppose that international ruling (CSIS, 2016). Here one must address the character of countries as individual nations and as “leagues” or alliances of nations, according to their respective core values, witnessed historically and contemporaneously.

Figure 2

Source: “Who Is Taking Sides After the South China Sea Ruling?” Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative. Washington: Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). 16 August 2016. <https://amti.csis.org/sides-in-south-china-sea/>

Shortly following the Russian Federation’s occupation then “annexation” of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, President Vladimir V. Putin addressed the Russian Federal Assembly:

The USA prefers to follow the rule of the strongest and not by the international law. They are convinced that they have been chosen and they are exceptional, that they are allowed to shape the destiny of the world, that it is only them [SIC] that can be right. They act as they please. Here and there they use force against sovereign states, set up coalitions in accordance with the principle: who is not with us is against us (Putin, 2014, through DIA, 2017, v).

² In the Matter of the South China Sea Arbitration Between the Republic of the Philippines and the People’s Republic of China, Case No. PCA-2013-19. Transcript of the award is available at <https://pca-cpa.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/175/2016/07/PH-CN-20160712-Award.pdf>

He is correct, at least in part, but he prefers to ignore the fact that nations do this in general when they hold the power: the United States, the United Kingdom, do so presently, the Soviet Union used to do so and the Russian Federation desires to reincarnate that atavistic Soviet legacy, China did so for centuries, is trying to resurrect its imperial dynastic history at the present moment. Neither China nor Russia is up to that task.

Addressing the United States Pacific Fleet commander as the USS Andrew Sterett was docked at Guangdong, Zhanjiang on 15 June 2017, Chinese major general Xu Guangyu, former vice president of the Defence Institute of China, remarked of the irony of an Arleigh Burke class American destroyer docked at a Chinese naval base on the South China Sea amidst controversy: "There are actions that are provocative, yet this visit is just friendly. This reflects the internal contradiction in the U.S.-Sino relationship" (Meyers, 2017). Many contradictions abound in the Sino-American relationship much as they do in the Russo-American relationship and, less visibly, as they do in the Sino-Russian relationship also. Each is capable of peaceful resolution and each must be sorted out soon to preclude escalation accidentally or deliberately into armed hostilities. Such "contradictions" exist in more ways than merely between China and the United States. This is because at present four "leagues" are present from the Pacific rim Westward across Asia.

In his "Community of Nations" speech delivered at Warsaw, Poland on 06 July 2017, in the author's presence President Donald J. Trump remarked much as President Ronald W. Reagan remarked before both houses of the British Parliament on 08 June 1982, that nations must unite:

Through four decades of communist rule, Poland and the other captive nations of Europe endured a brutal campaign to demolish freedom, your faith, your laws, your history, your identity -- indeed the very essence of your culture and your humanity. Yet, through it all, you never lost that spirit. We must work together to confront forces, whether they come from inside or out, from the South or the East, that threaten over time to undermine these values and to erase the bonds of culture, faith and tradition that make us who we are. If left unchecked, these forces will undermine our courage, sap our spirit, and weaken our will to defend ourselves and our societies.

But just as our adversaries and enemies of the past learned here in Poland, we know that these forces, too, are doomed to fail if we want them to fail. And we do, indeed, want them to fail. They are doomed not only because our alliance is strong, our countries are resilient, and our power is unmatched. Through all of that, you have to say everything is true. Our adversaries, however, are doomed because we will never forget who we are. And if we don't forget who are, we just can't be beaten. Americans will never forget. The nations of Europe will never forget. We are the fastest and the greatest community. There is nothing like our community of nations. The world has never known anything like our community of nations (Trump, 2017).

That nations must come together in East Asia just as in Eastern Europe should be self-evident.

Four Leagues of the Pacific

It may be more of a blessing than a curse that four "leagues" have formed across the Pacific rim, rather informally, extending Westward across Asia. Such a configuration is a blessing because in all likelihood it will preclude the "Thucydides Trap," although in the short to medium term it gives the facial appearance of being a curse, because the region is fraught with tensions, seemingly made more complicated by so many game players, some of which display conflicting loyalties as they extend tentacles across multiple leagues. This paradigm of "frenemies," countries that are

friends some of the time, at least potential enemies at other times, is a confounding variable. Each league requires membership and role delineation that extends beyond its nominal leadership.

United Kingdom. Arguably the oldest continuous league is that formed by the United Kingdom with its current or former British Commonwealth of Nations. In the Pacific region, including Oceania, Australia and New Zealand fall unambiguously into this league, that also tends to include Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, to a lesser extent Burma (Myanmar), India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, with Hong Kong lost but struggling to find its way back against China's opposition. Even today, with 17 percent (almost one-sixth) of the 21st century having come and gone, the sun never sets over what was once (and might be once more) the British Empire, and the Commonwealth remains the world's most important and most enduring league, particularly the developing world's. It is no longer the might of naval or of air power alone that rules the seas, but the tightly knit community held together by the British Sovereign. Whoever is to succeed Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, whether he be Charles, Wills, or George, or each for a moment in time, this tie will continue to bind together a diverse developing population globally, "As o'er each continent and island, The dawn leads on another day" (Ellerton, 1870).

United States. Probably the most powerful league is the one formed by the United States of America with Great Britain globally, with the Empire of Japan in Asia, sometimes including the Republic of Korea (ROK), Republic of China (ROC) [Taiwan], normally including also Australia and New Zealand, with the Philippines, long a trusted ally, threatening to change sides, with Vietnam peeking in the window ironically, seemingly hoping to join. United States interests in the Asia Pacific region and globally tends to hinge at once on mega-trading and military pacts. China is deeply involved in America's mega-trading, involved ore casually and much less visibly in America's military pacts.

China. Grasping to form its own league along the Western Pacific rim, Indo-China, South Asia, China is encouraging all Asian nations to join with it in bolstering its articulated ambitions that include especially dilution of United States and United Kingdom influences across East Asia, plus its unarticulated ambitions to dilute American and Russian Federation influences across the Caucasus and Central Asia, particularly within Ukraine, gigantic Kazakhstan, smaller Uzbekistan that has a population twice as large as Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, then Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia and Armenia that are tiny countries also along China's "New Silk Road." Russian Federation officials consider each of these countries, once Soviet Union provinces, to be properly aligned with the Russian Federation as successor to the Soviet Union, and are skeptical of China's motives in the region, illuminated by large financial investments.

Russia. If China is grasping its imagination of a future "Pacific league" with itself at the head, Russia bemoans its imperial and soviet past when, at least regionally, it was at the head. That time has gone something for which Russia appears to blame the United States and the West instead of itself. China's incursion into Eurasia jeopardises Russia's revival as a "post-Soviet" Union of socialist republics. Russia is a European country with a large "Asian tail," however. Russia must pretend to be a *friend* to China in order to be a *friend of* China, still a significant purchaser of Russian energy sources plus a neighbor across a long and potentially bellicose border as well as a source of balance with Japan, a maritime competitor. Russia is no friend to China at all, something Chinese leaders know full well but only whisper behind closed doors out of fear they will lose access to low cost Russian energy, worse yet drive Russia and Turkey together, potentially inflaming Xinjiang Province in China's Northwest Muslim area (Page & Peker, 2017).

Amorphous Leagues, Variable Boundaries, Precarious Loyalties

Very important to note is that the four leagues of the Pacific are not contoured rigidly, they bend to accommodate flux and flow, periodic changes in economic and political conditions. Some nations within each league have courted China, for instance, then turned on China or more aptly responded negatively when they perceived China turning on them. This scenario was captured in Davies' 1972 book, *Dragon by the Tail: American, British, Japanese, and Russian Encounters with China and One Another*. It has been repeated in the 45 years since then, as Blumenthal, Schreiber, Stokes, Hsiao and Mazza note in their 2011 book, *Asian Encounters in the 21st Century*. Part of the problem is the repeated tendency of Asian including Oceanic nations to play each other for what they can get at any moment, stomping away unhappily when they fail to get all they sought or feel compelled to give back more than they bargained for in return.. This has characterized India particularly, joining the "Shanghai Club" with Pakistan (Hillman, 2015), then becoming skeptical of Chinese motives in Pakistan (Farr, 2017), finally becoming more aggressive over land disputes with China in Kashmir (Chang, 2017; Shih & Naqvi, 2017) to the point of troops hurling stones at each other, reminiscent of the "Stone Age" (Hussein, 2017), followed by participation in joint naval exercises with Japan and the United States (George & Wu, 2017) in the wake of Chinese drills with Pakistan (O'Connor, 2017a).

British Royal Naval forces joined allies in Pacific maritime maneuvers also (WPNS, 2016) and has signaled it intends to deploy the H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth II, its new aircraft carrier, to the Pacific region within months (Packham, 2017). Part of this revived interest may be events in Hong Kong, where Mainland China has warned Hong Kong residents it may not be planning to honour all of its commitments made to the United Kingdom to facilitate the 1997 "hand over" (Denyer, 2017a, 2017b). Another element in the British League, Australia, has displayed similar foreign policy inconsistencies, at once seeming to be China's puppet state "down under" (Brown, et al., 2017), then strongly backing the United States in an escalating confrontation with the DPRK over Guam, proving the Australia New Zealand United States (ANZUS) Treaty to be "rock solid" (Murphy, 2017). On the contrary, Sino-Russian relations appear to be something less than entirely intrepid, with reports surfacing that Russia has deployed its Iskander-M missile system to check Chinese deployment of its Dongfeng-41 missile system, with both nations deploying troops along Russia's Southeast and China's Northeast borders respectively (Chow, 2017), signaling that each mistrusts the other at least as much as, possibly even more than, both mutually distrust the United States and the West. Chinese deployment of potentially nuclear armaments to its border with Russia tends to document the Pentagon's recent assessment that Russia poses a grave threat to world peace in general (DIA, 2017).

Trusting in Trade

Escaith & Inomata have observed in a major World Trade Organization (WTO) publication undertaken jointly with Japan's Institute of Developing Economies – Japan External Trade Organization (IDE-JETO), that economic diversity is very different when hard data is compared for China and the United States, using "skyline charts":

Comparing the chart of the United States with that of China, the difference is apparent. The US skyline is much flatter, showing very little over- or underproduction of the economy. Also, the output share of the service sector is remarkably large. These observations are rather straightforward illustrations of two famous classical statements:

Leontief's proposition on the structure of development, and the Law of Petty-Clark.³ Wassily Leontief, the founder of input-output economics, believed that the maturity of an economy can be observed in the form of a flat skyline, where full self-sufficiency is achieved without too much reliance on foreign markets for demand and supply of products.⁴ The Law of Petty-Clark, on the other hand, states that when the per capita income of an economy rises, the share of its industrial output shifts from primary to secondary, and then from secondary to tertiary industries. In this respect, the US economy certainly falls under the category of a "matured and advanced" industrial structure, while China's does not reflect the same development path. Japan, another advanced economy in the region, exhibits a similar pattern to that of the United States, although the predominance of the service sector is less salient (Escaith & Inomata, 2011, 60).

They go on to remark that the Japanese "skyline" contains "humps" above manufacturing sectors that obviate domestic production surplus; that Indonesia's "skyline" reflects a "standalone skyscraper" depicting crude petroleum and natural gas, and that Republic of Korea, Singapore, and Chinese Taiwan together with other ASEAN economies including Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand "all exhibit a similar pattern, with highly overshooting production surpluses in the computer and electronic equipment sector" although nevertheless they "slightly lag in terms of Petty-Clark's development scenario" (Ibid.), viewed as a single economic entity, however, notwithstanding their individual diversity, the Asia-United States region "presents quite a balanced and complete profile" (Escaith & Inomata, 2011, 60).

Increasing trust in trade has led to creation of a European Union – Japan Free Trade Agreement in 2017 that is touted as eliminating USD 1.14 Billion in Japanese customs duties on European food products including cheese, on chemicals, and on medical products, in return for which the European Community will drop import taxation on Japanese motor vehicles (Adamczyk, 2017). Europe moved forward with its first Asian Free Trade Agreement (FTA) on 01 July 2011 with the Republic of Korea (DeGucht, 2011), and this FTA with Japan followed in the wake of the collapse of the Trans-Pacific Partnership that became opposed by both American 2016 presidential candidates. Both the Korean and the Japanese FTAs with the European Union reflect burgeoning opportunities for Eurasian trade cooperation that do not involve either China or the United States and, in fact, bypass both behemoths. This trade is of dubious value to any of the trading partners without security: maritime security along the trading routes and security at home in Asia where products imported from Europe and elsewhere will be consumed.

Distrusting in Security

Notwithstanding their apparent trust in trade many members of the "Four Leagues" of the Pacific seem to mistrust one another on security matters. Countries that rank low on the corruption index assembled by Freedom House tend to support the Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling against China's marine grab in the South China Sea region as Figure 2 above depicts. More recently, it appears that China is extending its tentacles to the Western shores of the Indian Ocean by its deployment of troops to operate its first international naval base, this one at Obock in Djibouti on the Gulf of Aden along the Horn of Africa, as Figure 3 below depicts.

³ Petty, William. 1690. *The Law of Arithmetick*, as adapted by Clark, Colin. 1940. *The Conditions of Economic Progress*. London: Macmillan Co., Ltd. Also review Kawata, Yukichika. 2011. "Economic growth and trend changes in wildlife hunting," *ActaagriculturaeSlovenica*, Vol. 97, 115-123. 02 May. <http://aas.bf.uni-lj.si/maj2011/04kawata.pdf>

⁴ Leontief, WassilyWassilyevich. 1966. *Essays in Economics: Theories and Theorizing*. New York: Oxford University Press.

This was foreseen several years ago when Djibouti served the United States with an eviction notice to vacate its special forces base at Camp Lemonnier (Lee, 2015; Collins & Erickson, 2015), then confirmed in July 2017 to be occupied by Chinese military personnel as a “support base,” a *fait accompli* that could be interpreted as an overture toward the encirclement of India with a “string of pearls” on the Indian Ocean (Blanchard, 2017b). It could be interpreted more ominously as the commencement of a strategy to encircle Europe or at least to spearhead a perch from which to monitor maritime traffic to and from Europe, particularly raw materials including energy products. It is interpreted by India and other longtime national actors on the Indian Ocean as an effort to dominate that sea, from “Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Djibouti” (Woody, 2017), appearing to inspire India to seek a parallel presence with China in locations such as Sri Lanka, where India has demanded to take over an empty airport (Shepard, 2017). An asset-grabbing race seems to be getting underway as countries become wary of China’s “One Belt, One Road” in their neighbor’s yard.

Arms sales are mounting also across Asia (Grimmett & Kerr, 2012) with Japan aiming to become a principal supplier of armaments to ASEAN bloc countries (Yamaguchi, 2017), potentially an explanation for China’s militarization of the South China Sea region. Japanese sale of maritime armaments across the ASIAN community undoubtedly causes consternation for China, although recent increases in Chinese militarization of that region explain the burgeoning demand for such arms (Pollmann, 2017). Russian Federation interests also have entered the ASEAN arms market (Otto, 2016), posing trepidations upon which China, the United States, Japan, and many other Asia actors seem to be in agreement, and may explain at least part of the willingness of China to fortify its Manchurian region with Dongfeng-41 missiles, the latter being a warning to the Russian Federation not to crawl too far South in East Asia.

Members of the United States Congress and scholars have urged the administration of President Donald J. Trump to resume Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPS) in the South China Sea region (Rapp-Hooper & Edel, 2017). This is the right of any sovereign state to do, but it should not be the burden of the United States to do unilaterally. An author has urged that America clarify its objectives: “Washington should make clear that it can live with an uneasy stalemate in Asia – but not with Chinese hegemony” (Ratner, 2017). This recommended posture presumes that the South China Sea region belongs either to China or to the United States, when in fact it belongs to neither. That is the point precisely: American intervention to cheque Chinese hegemony will be interpreted merely as an American opportunity to install or upgrade its own hegemony. More nations must join in this effort, collectively, as a “community of nations” and do so soon before either the South China Sea or the Indian Ocean becomes a Chinese lake. An international organization capable of policing the Pacific watershed must be formed swiftly to become parallel with NATO, the organization formed in 1949 to police the Atlantic watershed. It will work only if all or almost all of China’s nemeses in East Asia, South Asia, particularly India, Japan, Republic of Korea, and the ASEAN bloc, Australia, New Zealand, together with both the United Kingdom and the United States.

Figure 3: Location of China's First Overseas Naval Base, Obock, Djibouti, Northeast Africa

Source: Collins, Gabriel B., and Andrew S. Erickson. 2015. "Djibouti Likely to Become China's First Indian Ocean Outpost," China Sign Post™ (洞察中国) 91. 11 Jul. <http://www.andrewerickson.com/2015/07/china-signpost-91-djibouti-likely-to-become-chinas-first-indian-ocean-outpost/>

Pacific-Indian Treaty Organization (P.I.N.T.O.)

Leagues are informal clusters of nations that serve multiple purposes, formal and informal. They come and go, catalyzed by diplomatic and economic changes. Absent and conspicuously so from the Indian and Pacific Ocean region is a counterpart to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that has exerted such a continuing peacekeeping impact on Europe since its formation on 04 April 1949 in the immediate aftermath of World War II. This void should be corrected with agreement of the major global powers on a Pacific-Indian Treaty, together with formation of a NATO counterpart for Asia that might be called a Pacific-Indian Treaty Organization (P.I.N.T.O.). It should have its headquarters somewhere in Asia much as NATO is headquartered in Brussels, Belgium, in heart of Western Europe, probably Singapore would be the best option. It must contain a *casus foederis* or alliance commitment clause, as does the North Atlantic Treaty in its Article Five, pledging that an armed attack against any one member is an armed attack against all members, requiring collective response.

That a PINTO alliance would be indispensable is evident from the result of Australia's pledge to exercise a similar clause in its ANZUS Treaty (Murphy, 2017), no small action because that meant that the DPRK could expect to receive firepower from the hypotenuse of the triangle in addition to that it expected to receive from United States Pacific forces on or near Guam and elsewhere. Should most of China's neighbors in the Pacific and Indian theatres join in a PINTO alliance, one could envision that soon thereafter "all quiet on the Western (Pacific) front" would become the watchword (book title from Remarque, 1929).

CONCLUSIONS

Four leagues of nations dominate the Western Pacific Rim and across the Indian Ocean from China to Africa. They hold loyalties that change from time to time with economic and diplomatic alliances yielding way to military alliances with different partners on occasion. Some leagues are cemented historically, such as Australia, New Zealand, and India having British Empire roots, whereas other leagues such as that of Japan with the United States have formed in the aftermath of World War II, nurtured by the Cold War and the rise of China as the superpower of Asia. Most of these Asian neighbours trust the West more than any trust each other, and that exactly is why the West needs to permanently intervene with a Pacific-Indian Treaty Organization (PINTO) as soon as possible.

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