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FEMALE: Good afternoon. I have the pleasure of introducing the moderator and panelists for this afternoon’s session. The moderator, if you haven’t noticed, is Ted Koppel, who needs no introduction. You may applaud, that’s fine. He is really, as you know, the lodestar of American journalism, and I can say that because I worked for him 30 years ago, and the job of a producer is to butter up the anchorman, so I do that in all sincerity that he is one of the wonders of the American news media. Today, Ted has – hey, he might hire me!

TED KOPPEL: A little more enthusiasm!

FEMALE: Today, Ted is joined by four very distinguished guests. Two of them are currently resident at the Brookings institution, which we’ll consider a monopoly here today on this panel, and Jeff Bader, who worked for the administration and has just published a wonderful book about China is joined by Dr. Cheng Li, who is born in China, and also has a remarkable book out, and I will plug both of them. We are joined also by Carla Hills, the former head of the USTR, and a special guest today, I think the first time in our building, we welcome the former Director of National Intelligence, Admiral Denny Blair, and so with that, Ted, we’re live.

TED KOPPEL: Well, thank you, Tara, and I’m going to take advantage of a couple of minutes while the rest of you find your seats here, just to do something. I was a little nervous at doing this with members of the Nixon family here, but I’ve been doing it for so many years, and this being the 40th anniversary of President Nixon’s trip to China, if you will indulge me for a moment, one of the things that is rarely noted is that when President Nixon was taken out to the Great Wall, my colleague, Tom Jarrell walked up to the President with a microphone and said, Mr. President, what do you think of the Great Wall? President Nixon, as we all know, was an extraordinarily intelligent man, but sometimes, small talk eluded him, and on this particular
occasion, he looked at Tom and said, well, one can only say, and you’ll tell me, Mr. Nixon, if this is a legitimate Nixon impression, one can only say, upon looking at this wall, that this is truly a great wall. Now it struck me at the time that surely someone on his staff from the White House or the State Department could have anticipated this question and come up with a better answer. And so –

MALE: [INDISCERNIBLE]

TED KOPPEL: Huh?

MALE: [INDISCERNIBLE] that story.

TED KOPPEL: Well, there’s a lot more to the story, and you’ll tell me your part, and now I’m going to tell you my part. On the flight from Beijing to Shanghai, I imagined what the President might have done, and so I wrote a little song, and I’m going to sing it for you now as a way of transitioning you from whatever meeting you’ve come from into the meeting we’re going to have here today. It goes something like this. In fact, it goes exactly like this. "It’s a grand old wall/it’s a longstanding wall, wins the prize for its size and its age. It gave just rewards to the Mongol hordes, drove the Krulaks away in a rage. From Beijing to the seas, it has saved the Chinese/till the days of the Guo Min Dong. From Ming to Han and on and on with the Great Wall, you can’t go wrong." So much for the past! Now, we’re going to talk about the future in Sino-American relations, and it seems to me that one of my favorite words is fraught. The future is fraught.

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Fraught with what, though? Ambassador Hills, take it anywhere you want to go.

CARLA HILLS: When we think about the future, we have to think about the first step, and we are in the throes of an election, words are being said that probably ought not to have been said. China is in the throes of a leadership change, and we heard today that the danger that we face in the future is miscalculation. I think that if we were to adopt a lesson and to try to do as good a job as the President and Secretary Kissinger and General Scowcroft and those who accompanied, we ought to think about how we can best understand the government and economy, without which we will be unable to solve the issues of the 21st century, and my concern is that perhaps we are not well enough informed in terms of language, culture, and challenges on the other side of the table, and a good negotiator should be very much aware of the challenges that the other side faces, political and economic, so that you can find a bridge to not only achieve what you want to achieve, but to achieve it with the help of the other side because it’s in their interests too. And so I think it is extremely important in our government that we have persons who are knowledgeable in the White House, at the State Department, at the NSC, and who speak the language, know the culture, and can make a contribution so missteps are less likely, rather than more likely.
TED KOPPEL: May I infer from your saying that it is extremely important that we have such people, that you may feel that there’s a scarcity of such people at the moment?

CARLA HILLS: I think we could use more experience in the area, and I would spread it across the nation. Americans are woefully ignorant, as a general proposition, of cultures beyond our shores, and we live in a globalized economy. Our future requires us to understand how the global supply chain encircles the world. We don’t just sell down the street. If we are going to prosper, and our economy’s going to thrive, we’re going to have to be more knowledgeable beyond our shores, and certainly with the second, and perhaps soon the first largest economy, our fastest growing export market, and a country with which we will deal with, either successfully, when we look to the future, by finding those common bonds, or that we will have the statistics for missteps go up, and the latter we don’t want.

TED KOPPEL: Dr. Cheng Li, what’s implicit in what Ambassador Hills has said is that there’s a concern about American miscalculation of Chinese intentions. I’d like you to give us a little insight into what you think Chinese miscalculations may be about American intentions.

CHENG LI: Sure, but before saying that, let me also share with you my personal experience, and I told Dr. Kissinger a few years ago that I met him first time in Shanghai 40 years ago, actually 41 years ago, when he had that secret trip, that I was in middle school, 15 years old, and the Shanghai government organized a group of people to walk along the street, pretend to be a family, so I was a middle school, there’s one person from elementary school, there’s one grandpa or grandma, I couldn’t remember, so three of us form a team to walk, again, again, during his secret trip [INDISCERNIBLE] Road in Shanghai, and again, I remember that because they provided like the meat buns. I still remember that vividly. Now also, I want to say, another story that 40 years ago, 41 years ago, there are so many Chinese who were born at that time, named after Dr. Kissinger. That is one of his Chinese names, either Chi or Zhing or Ger, including one of my nephews.

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So that was a remarkable past. So in a way, that word really changed so many people, not only just me, but a whole generation, and generations, including those who remain in China, and also, like our Ambassador of Foreign Affairs, [PH] Yang Jiechi. Now Americans speaking compare with United States, I think Chinese perceptions or understanding of the United States, a little bit better, largely because there’s leaders trained in the West, in UK, United States, and also some of them already emerge as very important leaders in foreign ministry, finance ministry, in about 15 to 20 years. It’s not difficult to imagine that we would have a leader who was maybe educated in the United States. So that can reduce some misunderstanding. In United States, probably maybe even sooner, if John Huntsman becomes President, but of course, this is another story. Now common misperceptions, I think there’s, we talk about Chinese right, but Chinese talk about American led conspiracy against China, and they think that the United States holds some evil
forces, what Chinese call evil forces, namely Taiwan independence, Tibet independence, [INDISCERNIBLE] independence, Falun Gong, and the dissidents. Of course, this is Chinese view. They all, relatively supported by the United States, and also, last year was a great year for United States in Asia Pacific, way from so many important friendship or consolidate our relationship. But that policy may have a cost, because it alienated Chinese elites, Chinese policy makers, Chinese intellectuals, to a certain extent, because they misperceive this American led encirclement of China. Not only Chinese believe that, probably ask Americans, many of them probably also believe that may be the case, but as Jeff Bader knows, it’s not true. We do not intend to encircle China. There’s no such plan. We just be, what we engage, and also, it’s not our interest to let other countries in Asia Pacific to be enemies of China. So this kind of view, but I think we should be more articulate first with the Chinese, and I think ultimately, it’s our value, it’s to express our values and attitude. Now one thing I learned through these years, particularly when I immigrated to the United States, become an American citizen, it’s a value system. It’s what you believe. I think that’s very important. I think to a certain extent, China is also changing, there’s no fundamental kind of clash of ideology in my view. The Chinese are more and more like, becoming like us, because particularly China, increasing to become a middle class China. So I think that misperception should be challenged. Someone said, history is a race between education and catastrophe. So I think those of us have an opportunity to work in the China field should educate both people and both leaders to a certain extent. So that’s very important thing. This is misperception along with the missteps or miscalculations.

TED KOPPEL: Dr. Bader, as we’ve heard on a number of occasions now, one of the factors inherent in the opening toward China was a sense of balancing the power and the potential of the Soviet Union. Is there any chance whatsoever that we might move in the opposite direction, or that we should? In other words, would it be possible to fend off whatever dangers we perceive in the growth of China as a world power by re-establishing, or establishing a better relationship with Russia?

JERRY BADER: Well, Richard Nixon, who of course was in the popular mind, the originator of the notion of sort of a three-way card game among the Soviet Union and China, in his final years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, was quite insistent that the basis for the U.S./China relationship did not require a common enemy in the Soviet Union. He spoke very strongly after the fall of the Soviet Union about the need to sustain this relationship in the absence of a common enemy, so I think the United States, we’re frequently in search of enemies abroad, it is said, but I think our search for enemies abroad usually is to challenge

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ourselves to do better, such as the way Sputnik was a challenge to the United States, and I think a lot of people see China in the same way today, as a challenge for us to do better. The United States has not traditionally looked for wars with great powers. The last time we had a war with a great power was with Japan, and that was not a war that we sought. So as Chung Li says, a lot of
Chinese seem to think that the United States is looking to constrain or contain China. I traveled with President Obama in meetings with Asian leaders where we talked about China. Every Asian leader we met wants to talk about China, and clearly, they had anxieties. Sometimes they spoke very directly about those anxieties, and one got the sense that they were almost, I won’t say baiting, but they were trying to encourage the president to echo those anxieties with them. And in fact, he did not. The President, in the meetings I was at with foreign leaders, Asian foreign leaders, consistently said, I’ve said publicly that we welcome the rise of China, I mean it. We welcome a strong, prosperous, successful China. We have some conditions. It’s critical that the successful rising China be a China that conforms to international law and conforms to international norms. It’s also critical that the stronger China that we foresee as inevitable be a stabilizing force, rather than destabilizing force in the region, but he pushed back at the notion that we should have this kind of polarity. Now in terms of relations with Russia, the last few administrations have worked hard to develop relations with Russia, and I think the experience with Russia demonstrates that just because a country sheds communism doesn’t mean that relations automatically become easy in terms of strategic cooperation. I don’t think that anyone in the China/Russia/U.S. triumvirate at the moment thinks in terms of using the other very substantially, or at least on our side. I mean, I must say that, in the United Nations, the Chinese and the Russians certainly do work closely together, and I have no doubt that they do that in part because of an attempt to balance the United States globally.

TED KOPPEL: Would you talk, Ambassador Blair, for a moment about the danger of cyber war? I think when we talk about hostilities, there is a tendency to think of hostilities in traditional terms, but cyber war really is a looming danger out there, and the Chinese have shown an extraordinary capacity to penetrate American secrets.

DENNY BLAIR: Let me talk a little bit about intelligence more broadly, because part of the, there are a lot of things that have “cyber” as their first name, and cyber intelligence is a part of that, both when I was the Pacific commander and when I was the Director of National Intelligence, I would have lively discussions with Chinese counterparts about spying on each other, whether it was across the internet or the airplanes that we would fly up and down China’s coast, or the agents that China would have in this country, and generally, I was on the receiving end of lectures about how the United States should alter its intelligence practices, because it showed we didn’t trust China, and I made the point strongly, which I believe, that having good intelligence on each other is good for the American/Chinese relationship. Intelligence is the way that a government officially informs itself of what the intentions, capabilities, and characteristics of another country is, and I firmly believe that the more the United States and China truly understand about one another at a very basic level, the less likely it is that we will blunder into some sort of confrontation, much less a conflict, and so I think that we need to, in addition to all of the informal contacts, and more people in this country speaking Chinese, and all of that, we do need to have a very strong, official intelligence understanding of one another, because I think
that from an absolute point of view, there are no good reasons for the United States and China to have more of a confrontative relationship than a cooperative relationship. But on cyber in particular, there is cyber spying, and there is cyber spying, and the Chinese effort is just to give some training to a whole bunch of people, both official and unofficial, and turn them loose on a wide range of both networks and servers in the United States, see what they can pull out, out of companies, out of government offices, out of think tank, I don’t know if U.S. IP has been hit, but probably so, and I think this is basically corrosive, and China needs to get a hold of them. The United States does not conduct official government industrial espionage, and China should not either if it is to benefit from the international system as well as if it is to have some ownership for it as well as benefiting from it. On the step from cyber espionage, cyber hacking and all, to cyber war is a very large one. In most people’s thinking, most people’s consideration of it, cyber war is an escalatory step on the grounds of moving war to space, moving it to the nuclear regime, it is just so potentially destructive, we know so little about it, the rules are so unclear that I think leaders, responsible leaders on both sides, and in the mature countries of the world recognize that this is something that you undertake at the peril to your own country. It’s probably not worth it. It’s very unpredictable, and it would be a large, large step, which there would be great resistance to responsible national leaders taking.

TED KOPPEL: Ambassador Hills, would you talk for a moment about the acquisition of raw materials around the world? Maybe I’m speaking out of ignorance here, but I just have a sense that the Chinese appear to be better at it these days than we are.

CARLA HILLS: The Chinese have 1.3 billion people, and they have enormous needs for raw materials. Their need for commodities have made South America prosperous, so that it’s not bad that they’re purchasing raw materials. What we object to is where, on minerals, and steel ore and those sorts of commodities, if there is a political agenda, oil in particular. Here is an area where I think that regular conversations with the Chinese, you’ve heard all day today, and Dennis just used the word trust, is highly important that we collaborate with the Chinese on a variety of issues across the board and try to build trust. Their interests are to have a stable growing economy. That serves U.S. interests. They cannot stay on the growth model that they’ve been on that have used the heavy commodities, relying on heavy industry and exports, with Europe and the United States economy being relatively fragile. They’re going to have to tap the consumer market. We can talk about that and how we work together. We wag our finger at the Chinese and say, why aren’t you tapping your consumer market? Well, they could wag their finger back at us and say, why aren’t you tackling your debt and your running deficit? You too have an external imbalance. By working together on things that are in our mutual interest, I think, for example, trying to help small and medium size enterprises in China, capital is not available. Anyone in this hall can go out and get a loan if you want to start a small business.
That’s not easy in China. Most of the credit goes to large and/or state owned enterprises. Some of the steps that we’re urging China to take are very much in their interest, and talking about them so that we have a mutual understanding and perhaps even a few ideas to share would be, I think, in our mutual interest, similarly so on things like protection of intellectual property. That’s one of our business concerns.

[topped last year’s survey, the protection of American intellectual property. The Chinese want to stimulate indigenous innovation. How many Chinese are going to go into their garage and stay for six years to develop something upscale only to know it’s going to be stolen? They’ve been filing patents in greater numbers in the last five years. Why not work together on the protection of intellectual property? Now we have made some progress on that area, but I could go through the list of things where we have a mutual interest that serve both of us, and that collaboration in exercising and extending that interest will start to build the trust that I think is absolutely essential for our two governments to tackle the problems that we face, whether they be in the security realm, or whether they be in the economic realm.

TED KOPPEL: We’re going to have to be flexible enough to keep going in the event that the Secretary is late or cut it off relatively briefly, but I’d like each of you to comment on our political season and the impact that a political, this quadrennial process that we go through which is helpful to paint devils on the walls sometimes. Dr. Li, why don’t you begin talking about the impact of domestic politics on international affairs, specifically Sino-American relations.

CHENG LI: Well, not only the political domain, but even the economic area that the Chinese economy will slow down. The Premier just announced that the next year, the target is 7.5 for GDP growth, which compared to Chinese standards is quite low, and China now faces some serious economic challenges, namely possible property bubble and the state monopoly and inflation and the local debts. Each of them is very, very serious, and if they come together, would be devastating. And also, in the social arena, you do see there’s more social unrest, protests, largely facilitated by social media, which is quite new. But at the same time that China will enter the political transition, 70% of senior leaders in the state party, military, will step down, largely because of age. So in my view, China in a period that we probably, I will use three phrases to characterize, which first is weak leaders, strong factions, leaders, not weak meaning that they’re not capable, but there’s institutional constraints, internal checks and balances within factions. Now this probably also explains what happened in Chun Ching, and despite all these very sensational stories that so far, they’re still stable, because there’s a need to maintain the system stable. The second is what I called weaker government but strong interest groups. The government, you can see, has difficulty to control localities, even control the gigantic state owned enterprises, the so-called [PH] Sassic companies, but the interest group was state owned enterprises or middle class or migrant workers and [INDISCERNIBLE] they just
start to emerge, become very, very important. They sometimes influence public opinions through middle class dominance of the media. And finally, probably it’s more debatable is what I call weak party, but a strong country. The Chinese Communist Party, despite it’s still very monopolize [INDISCERNIBLE] party, but has been challenged in different ways about their legitimacy, about its capacity, and etc, although the country is still on the dramatic rise, and I think these really constitute very important policy challenges for the United States, how to react to this rapidly changing country, to not miscalculate, to work with all the forces, particularly in my view, to work with local government, local meaning provincial government, is exactly what [INDISCERNIBLE] tried to achieve, I think there’s tremendous room for local level, our state, their provinces call for it together to form some kind of interest, shared interest, then the countries, the relationship move forward. So let me stop here.

TED KOPPEL: Dr. Bader, if you would talk a little bit about the impact of the political rhetoric that sometimes inflames political situations, and whether it has any real impact on actual relations between the two nations.

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JERRY BADER: Yeah, Ted, there is, in my view, an unhappy history of China being a presidential election issue in the United States. In 1980, candidate Reagan was very sharply critical of President Carter for breaking relations with Taiwan, for breaking the security treaty, for not providing high performance fighter aircraft to Taiwan. When he came into office, President Reagan realized, or focused on the Soviet Union as a principal foe and realized that he needed China’s support, and it took a year and a half before relations with China were back on a more stable basis, and it required the negotiation of the August 17, 1982 joint communiqué between the U.S. and China, which in my personal opinion, was not a great triumph in the history of U.S. diplomacy. Then in 1992, candidate Clinton attacked the butchers of Beijing at the Democratic convention, came into office demanding a conditional renewal of most favored nation status. It took the Clinton administration about two years, first to walk away from the executive order it had issued with damage to our credibility, and then to finally begin rebuilding relations with China, only to then have a crisis in the Taiwan strait, which set us back further. So there were consequences. Now in 2000, candidate George W. Bush spoke about China as a strategic competitor, rather than as a strategic partner, which he said was President Clinton’s strategy. That, I think, was less consequential than the earlier examples of rhetoric I gave, because it was not terribly specific. If you’re going to be political in the campaign about China, if you’re less specific, it’s better, but it still did cause problems, and if you remember in April, I’m sure Denny will remember this well, the EP3 episode, the [PH] Tainon Islands, our aviators being held for close to two weeks, and the difficulties in the U.S./China relationship, basically until September 11, 2001, when the President arbitrated between the two factions in his administration in favor of engagers rather than confronters. This is a long way of saying that when China becomes an issue in our presidential campaigns, it generally does not end well. It does damage to our relations in the interim. Presidents generally find, as eight presidents have
found, that their predecessors kind of knew what they were doing, and that our policy is fairly sound, and we shouldn’t be starting from scratch, and I hope that in the course of the next year, we do not see more statements that commit to doing specific actions that would be damaging to the relationship which will then have to be walked away from after damage is done.

TED KOPPEL: Admiral Blair, is it your perception that the Chinese are becoming more sophisticated in the stupidity that is sometimes exhibited by American political candidates? In other words, that they not take it as seriously as apparently they have in the past?

DENNY BLAIR: That is my impression. What strikes me on the Chinese side is the sharp contrast between their external confidence, sure-footedness, growing sense of power in the world, and there, on the domestic side, they’re extremely worried, high concern taking, dealing with all of these incidents of unrest, feeling that they must control every aspect of the life in their country just to keep it under control, and I think this playing out between external confidence and internal lack of confidence will be really important in the future. I think it ultimately plays to the advantage of a stable relationship, because however much China becomes exercised about some particular American action, I think at the end of the day, they have to have a conversation with themselves about, are they better off with the more peaceful, quiet world, which will allow their internal development to take place, or are they better off pushing hard against some perceived slight or transgression of their interests by the Americans, raising tension.

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and potentially affecting things like foreign domestic investment, the overall economic situation in the world, the price of oil, which would make harder their job internally. So I think this contrast that we see in China’s external confidence and domestic lack of confidence plays to the advantage of a stable relationship in the long term. That’s no substitute for the things that Carla and the others were talking about really understanding one another and working on common solutions, but I think it is a stabilizing factor over the, certainly the near term, which will help us work towards that better situation.

TED KOPPEL: Can you just quickly give us a sense of why, for example, would the Chinese be interested in avoiding any kind of international intervention in Syria? Is that purely a matter of the fear that what’s done in Syria might ultimately end up being done vis-à-vis Tibet or something in China in the Xinjiang province, or is it more complicated?

DENNY BLAIR: I think it’s more complicated than that. At the root, that is part of it. I think China’s abstention on the Libya UN amendment was potentially a step that perhaps they were taking a more sophisticated view of when the international community should act and when it wouldn’t but when it came to Syria, I think the fundamental idea that non-interference in other state matters, lest it hurt China, reasserted itself to a certain extent, but they also knew they had company with Russia, and that factored into it as well, and they, I think there was also a sense of, we did this once, but we don’t really want to create a pattern here, so let’s go with Russia, cast
the veto, not a great penalty, reaffirming this basic value and poking a stick in the eye of a bunch of people we’d like to poke a stick in the eye of, so I think it was a combination.

TED KOPPEL: Dr. Bader has something he wants to say, and then I’m going to suggest that we sort of fill this unknown period of time between now and the Secretary’s arrival by turning to you, and if any of you have any questions, now would be a good time to ask them. But first, Dr. Bader.

JERRY BADER: Just, I agree with Denny’s explanation. I think with multiple factors, and the first one being what you said, Ted, namely that I think they look themselves in the mirror, and the Chinese Communist Party remembers how they retained power in 1989, and the idea of that an international body should be condemning another country for doing something, albeit over 11 months rather than one day, is a difficult bridge for them to cross, but I think fundamentally, this was a mistake by China. Normally, China pays great deference to regional bodies, whether it’s the African Union, the Arab league, whomever. In this case, the Arab league was the one who was pushing for this resolution, and it was a 13-2 vote with the Arab League doing the mobilizing and the lobbying, and for China to decide to buck the Arab League, and I think even equally importantly, Saudi Arabia, which cared deeply about this resolution, Saudi Arabia is China’s most important partner in the Middle East in numerous ways, and I think that the Saudis, and much of the Arab League sees what’s going on in Syria right now as a non-Sunni regime that’s killing Sunnis, and that is highly offensive to many Arabs, and to the Saudis in particular, so I think China was sort of heavy and clumsy in this instance. We’re all having difficulty figuring out how to react to the Arab Spring. It’s not easy, but I think that the Chinese show that they’re some distance behind us in figuring it out.

TED KOPPEL: All right. Yes sir, go ahead.

MALE: Is there any prospect of the Yuan replacing the dollar as the world’s reserve currency?

TED KOPPEL: Ambassador Hills?

CARLA HILLS: I don’t believe so in the near term. The Chinese financial system has not liberalized sufficiently, and I think that the Chinese know that. Certainly the governor of the state bank of China, Governor Jo, knows what needs to be done, but some of the things that he would encourage, liberalization of interest rates, and liberalization of the currency cannot be done quickly and confront very large political opposition.

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So that it will have to be done diplomatically and quietly, and again, it’s an area where we might work. Some of my friends sometimes ask me this question, and I analogize to our situation. We know that we are now paying subsidies to five commodities that are drawing down stratospheric market prices. Does this make sense? Everybody would say no. Why then don’t we do away
with them? And why, when we’re at the Dohau Round trying to get, don’t we put that on the table, since we’re going to have to do away with them because of our relatively fragile fiscal circumstance? Because of the power of special interests. China’s not devoid of those, and the state owned enterprises that primarily export do not want either an appreciation of the currency, do want subsidized credit, water, and land, so it’s a challenge for the leaders, and we should be talking about these things in a way that we could help move them forward at the same time, perhaps, we could take a step forward as well.

TED KOPPEL: Just to move things along a little more quickly, we’ve got a question down here, and then if, while the answer is being given, if you would just raise your hands so we can get a microphone to you. That way, we could move things along. Please.

MALE: There’s been a lot of mention today of the need to build trust and to intensify communication between the U.S. and China. I’m interested particularly in what Admiral Bader and Jeff have to say about China’s apparent reluctance to really do anything meaningful in terms of military to military communication. They seem, even when it’s happened, it’s been very limited. They seem very resistant to expanding it, and yet one of the things that I worry about is that if you had a crisis, that crisis communications with the Chinese, episode in the South China Sea or something similar, another EP3 incident, would be very hard to manage without that kind of communication. So how does that jibe with the talk in the Chinese side about the need for greater trust and communication, and what’s your sense, a) of why the Chinese are so reluctant, and how worrisome it is if it doesn’t change? Thanks.

DENNY BLAIR: I think that’s a good news/bad news answer. The good news is that the Chinese armed forces are not thinking globally, not thinking in terms of large and expansive role in the world. Else they would be much more engaged on these common military enterprises that the United States and almost all of the armed forces that have that sort of worldwide reach participate in freedom of the seas, countering piracy, and international search and rescue, and so on. But the Chinese, the PLA is very focused on their short term mission around their shores, primarily having to do with using force against Taiwan should they be ordered to do so and potentially backing up claims in the South China Sea, so I think they simply see no reason that it’s to their advantage to talk with American military officers, since 90% of the time they spend thinking about Americans, they think about trying to figure out new and exciting ways to sink our ships and shoot down our airplanes should it come to that. They just don’t see it. They have not taken the step as an institution to taking part in the larger common chores that international armed forces have to do in order to keep the whole system running. There certainly is a commitment at the leadership level, at the higher level, and when the orders come down to the PLA, talk to the Americans, they’ll make the list and we’ll have the talks, but in my personal participation with them, and in what I’ve read about more widely, we’re talking past each other on those topics.
TED KOPPEL: I have a near pavlovian response to people going like this to me. It means we need to wrap up this section, and I infer from that that the Secretary of State is not far away, so would you join me please in thanking…

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