
FOREIGN POLICY SUBARENA

What is herein referred to as the foreign policy (*duiwai zhengce*) subarena is usually termed simply foreign affairs (*waishi*) by most Chinese leaders and strategists. This subarena comprises the entire range of external strategies and activities undertaken by agencies of the State Council and the Chinese Communist Party in support of national security policy.¹ This includes all political and diplomatic relations with other nations as well as a wide range of other governmental or quasi-governmental interactions, such as unofficial multilateral discussions; international cultural and educational contacts; many types of foreign economic, scientific, and technological activities (e.g., trade negotiations, technology transfer agreements, some types of large equipment sales); foreign, nonmilitary information gathering and propaganda activities; and some types of international security activities that involve the military (e.g., the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), military exchange programs formally supervised by the Ministry of National Defense, and various arms control and nuclear disarmament negotiations).² Thus, foreign policy includes a wide spectrum of primarily civilian political, economic, technological, and cultural activities, as opposed to narrower defense concerns associ-

¹Hence, what is known in China as diplomatic policy (*waijiao zhengce*) constitutes only one component of this much larger (and rapidly expanding) foreign policy or foreign affairs subarena.

²External activities that include both civilian and military officials (e.g., the ARF and Sino-Japanese security dialogues) also fall within the defense policy subarena and hence are undoubtedly influenced by the military. Exactly how civilian and military leaders and organs interact to determine and implement policies concerning such activities remains unclear to the author, however.

ated with the military. Indeed, the number and variety of activities included in the foreign policy subarena have increased greatly over the past decade or so, as a result of China's expanding interaction with the international community.³

China's foreign policy line under the reforms has been *largely* cautious and pragmatic, keyed to the long-term need to establish and maintain a placid external environment conducive to continued economic growth and modernization. Such a policy is marked by the maintenance of positive diplomatic, political, and economic relations with virtually every foreign country, especially with nearby Asian states. It involves a recognition of the importance of a comprehensive security strategy that combines political, cultural, and economic means, not just military power, and a belief that China faces no pressing external military threat. China's foreign policy pragmatism also suggests the need to maintain continued good relations with the United States, for several reasons: (1) to assure the continued success of economic reform, which is heavily dependent on U.S. trade, technology, and investment; (2) to avoid excessive external pressures on China's military modernization program; (3) to prevent the possible emergence of a more militarily assertive Japan; (4) to minimize U.S. incentives for providing military assistance to Taiwan; and (5) to resolve critical issues of mutual concern such as arms proliferation in East Asia. China's foreign policy also involves limited support for multilateral initiatives, U.N. peacekeeping efforts, and other regional activities intended to promote more cooperative patterns of behavior in the region.

However, China's foreign policy is also designed to oppose hegemonic behavior by any major power and to preserve China's overall strategic independence. Thus, Beijing's diplomatic approach remains largely keyed to the search for political, economic, and strategic leverage and independence of action through the exploitation of

³As Carol Hamrin states, "As China opened its door wider, there was no single foreign policy, but a proliferation of policies . . . regarding such issues as military trade, science and technology, education and culture, foreign expertise, intelligence and information, foreign publicity, trade, technology transfer, and so on." See Hamrin (1995), p. 89. This article provides a superb analysis of the major changes in institutions and processes that took place within China's foreign policy system between 1949 and the early 1990s. Also see Lu Ning, *The Dynamics of Foreign-Policy Decisionmaking in China*, Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997.

rivalries and the balancing and manipulation of relations among both major and emerging powers. From this perspective, the United States is viewed with particular suspicion as the only remaining superpower in an emerging multipolar world, placed in a position of growing competition with major powers such as Germany and Japan, but constrained by its internal economic and political weaknesses. Hence, this viewpoint, when combined with the above factors militating toward the maintenance of positive U.S.-China relations, suggests that China's overall diplomatic and economic relations with the United States consist of a complex mixture of cooperation and competition. This can at times produce less cautious or unpragmatic Chinese foreign policy behavior.⁴

The leadership, structure, and processes of the foreign policy subarena are far more regularized and bureaucratic than those of the national strategic objectives subarena. However, the level of influence in the policy process exerted by any particular leading foreign policy agency or office still depends to a great extent on the overall personal political clout of its leader.

The organizational components and internal processes of the foreign policy subarena have been discussed in various scholarly sources and will not be recapitulated in detail here, except in those instances

⁴For further details on the major features of China's foreign policy line at present, see Swaine (1995), pp. 81-95, from which most material in the previous two paragraphs is drawn. In the past two to three years, China's foreign policy has taken a more competitive, or even antagonistic stance toward the United States. In late 1995 and early 1996, knowledgeable observers in Beijing informed the author that the United States is increasingly viewed, in internal policy circles, as China's primary strategic, long-term threat. This hardline viewpoint, which argues that the United States is intent on restraining or preventing China's emergence as a major power, has gained greater currency in Beijing as a result of a series of adverse developments in U.S.-China bilateral relations during the Clinton Administration. These include intensified disputes over human rights, trade, and proliferation, as well as perceived efforts by the United States to weaken China's position on critical territorial issues such as the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. The Taiwan crisis of June 1995-March 1996, precipitated by the issuance of a visa to Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui to visit the United States, seriously increased the level of tension between Washington and Beijing, resulting in PLA exercises and missile firings in the vicinity of Taiwan and the deployment of two U.S. carrier battle groups, to caution China against any direct use of force against the island. Although U.S.-China relations have improved considerably since the Taiwan crisis, as reflected in the successful state visit of Jiang Zemin to Washington, D.C. in October 1997, the hardline viewpoint remains influential in foreign (and defense) policy circles.

where recent developments or new information merit more extensive discussion. Major actors include a top tier of political leaders, a second tier of leaders of major party and state organs responsible for various aspects of foreign policy, and two critical coordinating and decisionmaking mechanisms: (1) the CCP Central Committee's Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group (FALSG) (and within the FALSG, the State Council Office of Foreign Affairs (OFA)) and (2) the CCP Central Committee General Office (CC GO). The most important actors of this subarena are depicted in Figure 3.

On the formal level, the PBSC as a body exercises ultimate decision-making authority over foreign policy, as it supposedly does over defense policy. However, in reality, most members of the PBSC do not wield decisive influence in this subarena.⁵ Many initiatives or elements of China's diplomatic or overall foreign policy strategy are either undertaken directly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) or, in the case of key policy actions, recommended by the MoFA and/or the FALSG (discussed below) and formally approved by the PBSC as a body, often with little deliberation.⁶ Among senior party leaders, primary leadership authority over foreign policy in general is exercised by a single PBSC member: Li Peng. As State Council Premier, Li is responsible for developing policy within the foreign policy subarena, overseeing the activities of the MoFA, coordinating the activities of the bureaucracies relevant to executing foreign policy, and resolving the differences that emerge among them. He exercises

⁵Some analysts of China's foreign affairs claim that each PBSC member is charged with overseeing foreign policy toward a particular country or region. This arrangement might have existed in the past. However, well-placed Chinese interviewees deny that such an informal distribution of leadership responsibilities exists today.

⁶Yet one should not conclude from this statement that the PBSC today serves merely as a rubber stamp in the foreign policy subarena, even though it arguably performed such a role during the Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping periods. As described below, PBSC members usually defer to FALSG Head Li Peng or Foreign Minister (and PB member) Qian Qichen on routine foreign policy issues. However, under China's post-Deng collective leadership structure, *individual* PBSC members could become far more assertive in the foreign policy subarena at certain times, either for political purposes (i.e., to gain an advantage over their political opponents in a power struggle), or because individual members hold strong views about a particular issue. As mentioned above, each PBSC member is responsible for an area of the party-state system, and some areas likely impinge on one or more foreign policy issues (e.g., Zhu Rongji's responsibility for economic issues). In extreme cases, a majority of PBSC members could seek to alter or reverse a key foreign policy decision. This has not yet occurred, however, according to knowledgeable interviewees.

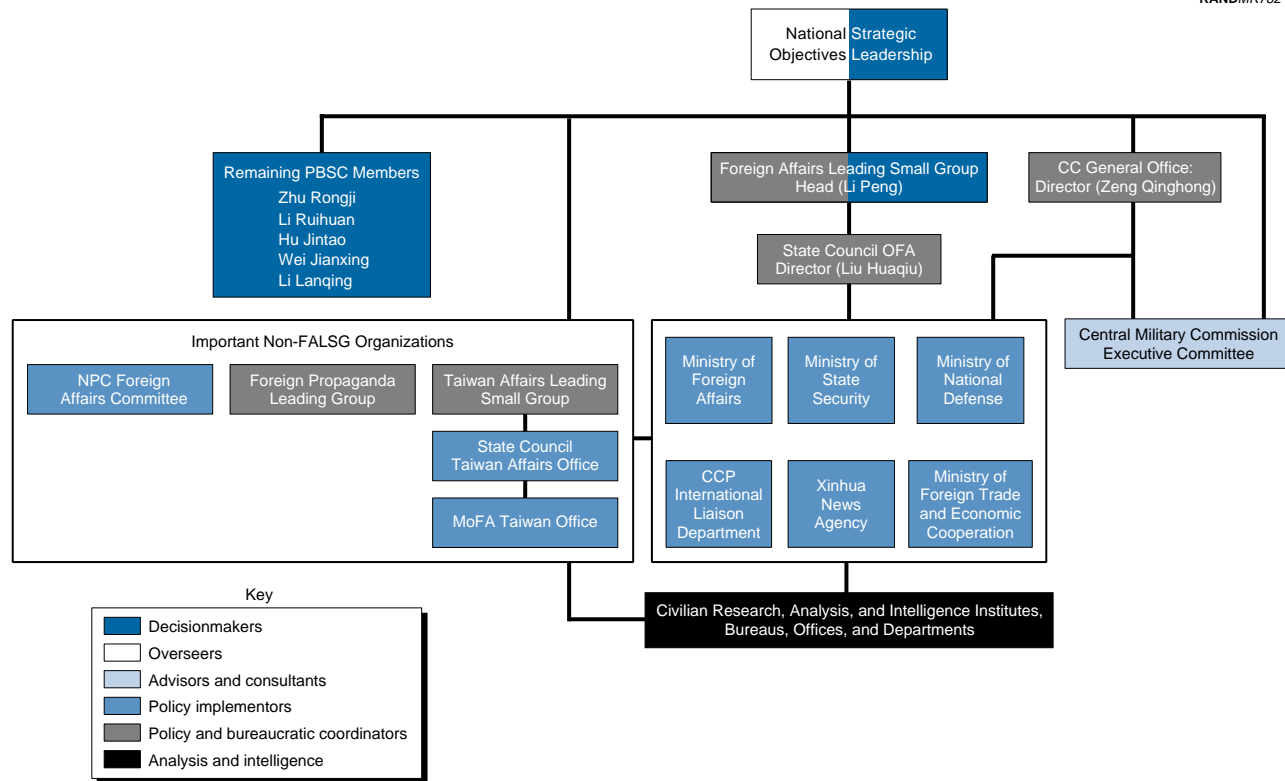


Figure 3—Foreign Policy Subarena

this authority primarily as head of the FALSG, the party leadership group responsible for foreign affairs.

The FALSG functions as the key policy coordination, communication, supervision, and consultation mechanism between the PBSC and the foreign affairs system (*xitong*) of associated state and party organs at the commission and ministry levels.⁷ Hence, although formally under the party, the FALSG, as in the case of other leading small groups, straddles the jurisdiction of both government and party structures. It is considered an example of a “squad (*banzi*)-level” leading small group, because it is led by one or more members of the top leadership “squad” consisting of PB members or key leaders. It has a regular membership composed of leading officials of relevant line departments responsible for foreign affairs, plus several ex-officio governmental advisors.⁸

The FALSG conveys policy decisions downward to the various organs of the foreign affairs *xitong* and transmits essential information and perspectives upward to the senior party leadership, primarily via its head. It also coordinates and supervises the implementation of key elements of foreign policy by both senior ministries such as the MoFA and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MoFTEC), as well as working-level leadership groups under the State Council and the Communist Party involved in foreign affairs, such as the Leading Group for Foreign Investment and the Party In-

⁷*Xitongs* are groupings of functionally related bureaucracies that deal with a broad policy area of critical importance to the senior party leadership. A leading small group usually exists for each *xitong*. For more details, see Lieberthal (1995), pp. 194–207.

⁸Wei Li (1994), pp. 32–34; Lieberthal (1995), pp. 193–194; and Hamrin (1992), pp. 104, 116. The formal membership of the FALSG normally includes the Premier (a PBSC member), the Foreign Minister (Vice Chairman of the FALSG), the director of the State Council Office of Foreign Affairs, the head of the CCP International Liaison Department, the Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, the Minister of State Security, a PLA representative, and the head of the Xinhua News Agency. In the past, the FALSG has also included a small number of advisors. In the late 1980s, these were Zhu Muzhi (head of the Association of Cultural Exchanges with Foreign Countries) and Ji Pengfei (head of both the party’s work group on Hong Kong and Macao and its counterpart office in the State Council), according to Hamrin (1995), pp. 111–112. Also see Lu Ning (1997), pp. 11–12.

ternational Liaison Department. Through such activities, the FALSG is thus able to influence and in some cases formulate policy.⁹

As head of the FALSG, Li Peng serves as the foreign policy “bridge leader” within the top leadership.¹⁰ In this capacity, he reportedly dominates the foreign policy subarena, directing the formulation and implementation of critical policy initiatives and thereby limiting the influence over foreign policy wielded by other PBSC members.¹¹ Li reportedly relies heavily on Liu Huaqiu, a Vice Foreign Minister and head of the State Council Office of Foreign Affairs (OFA), to perform a variety of critical administrative, secretarial, and even policy-making functions within the FALSG. Although technically only a governmental body under the State Council, Liu’s OFA also serves as the equivalent of a “supra-”general office (GO) to the FALSG. Specifically, the OFA prepares the agenda for all FALSG meetings (an extremely important function), supervises and coordinates many document flows and bureaucratic interactions among the components of the FALSG (and, to a lesser extent, between the foreign and defense policy subarenas),¹² and occasionally provides analysis and

⁹Leading small groups such as the FALSG are sometimes referred to by the leadership as “advisory bodies” for the PB or Party Secretariat, and their decisions are often issued in the name of those bodies. However, they can also bring finished policy packages to the party leading organs at times and can sometimes issue orders and instructions directly to line departments and units. See Wei Li (1994), pp. 33–34.

¹⁰A bridge leader heads a major functional coordination point or gateway (*kou*) between the PB and various relevant subordinate organs of a given *xitong*, coordinating relations between those bureaucracies and the top elite. Each bridge leader thus heads the leadership small group that directs a particular *xitong*. See Lieberthal (1995), p. 188.

¹¹As with any high-level post in the Chinese bureaucracy, Li Peng’s authority in the foreign policy realm, and hence the importance of the FALSG that he chairs as premier, primarily derive from his personal stature and power as a senior party leader. It is also important to note that Li Peng exercises influence over foreign-policy-related issues that do not formally fall under the jurisdiction of the FALSG. For example, Li reportedly controls an informal PB-level group which deals with Hong Kong and Macao policy. This group presumably supervises the working-level Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, headed by Lu Ping.

¹²Although Liu’s OFA reportedly attempts to coordinate and supervise working-level policy interactions between the foreign and defense policy subarenas, usually by requesting strategic analysis from the military (in the form of oral or written reports), the effort has not met with much success, according to many interviewees. Also see the analysis below of the strategic research, analysis, and intelligence (SRAI) subarena.

position papers to senior FALSG members, especially Li Peng.¹³ Moreover, according to some interviewees, the OFA, with Li Peng's support, has in recent years taken over various functions of the full FALSG, sometimes convening policy meetings in its place, usually attended by several FALSG members. In many instances, policy positions developed through this OFA-led process are subsequently approved on a largely pro forma basis by the full FALSG, and then by the PBSC. These activities thus give Liu Huaqiu considerable influence over the actual formulation of Chinese foreign policy and have permitted him to greatly expand the authority and power of the OFA. The OFA reportedly now wields significant influence over the entire foreign policy bureaucracy, in some areas rivaling that of Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, who nonetheless remains a key advisor and implementor of the major elements of Chinese foreign policy.¹⁴

The expanded responsibilities of the OFA¹⁵ cause some observers to compare the OFA to the U.S. National Security Council (NSC) staff and hence to view Liu Huaqiu as roughly equivalent to the U.S. National Security Advisor in power and authority.¹⁶ Such a comparison is misleading, however. While the NSC staff serves the supreme executive leader of the U.S. government (i.e., the President), the OFA primarily serves the Chinese Premier (i.e., Li Peng, arguably only the second most powerful political leader in China), and not PRC Presi-

¹³OFA policy documents are largely drawn up on the basis of reports submitted by subordinate research institutes within the SRAI subarena, discussed below. Although involved in a wide range of governmental policy areas, the State Council Research Office also at times produces and commissions analysis relevant to the foreign policy subarena, for use by the FALSG and the PBSC. However, its role and influence are far less than those of the OFA.

¹⁴Given the increasing authority over foreign policy of the OFA, it is not surprising that Liu and Qian reportedly do not get along, and that the resulting struggle between the two figures has led to some confusion over lines of authority within the foreign policy subarena, according to interviewees.

¹⁵The enlarged role in foreign policy played by the OFA, originally and formally a government unit responsible for various administrative and secretarial tasks in the diplomatic realm, provides an excellent example of how personal positions of authority and interpersonal relations among key leaders (in this case Li Peng and Liu Huaqiu) can serve to redefine the power and authority exercised by individual offices within the Chinese bureaucracy.

¹⁶This impression was reinforced by the fact that Liu Huaqiu met for eight hours with his U.S. "counterpart," National Security Advisor Anthony Lake, when he traveled to Washington during the height of the tensions over Taiwan in spring 1996.

dent and Party Secretary General Jiang Zemin.¹⁷ Moreover, the OFA's duties are primarily, if not solely, limited to the civilian foreign policy realm, as a subordinate body to the FALSG. The latter differs in structure and function from the NSC proper, which includes the top figures in both the civilian and military wings of the U.S. national security apparatus.¹⁸

Jiang Zemin's direct involvement in the foreign policy subarena is reportedly limited largely to the enunciation of broad programmatic statements on China's external stance¹⁹ or important bilateral relationships and his participation in summits or meetings with foreign leaders. However, such activities are by no mean inconsequential. As president and formal party leader, Jiang's foreign policy statements and interactions can influence the tenor and direction of China's foreign policy line in significant ways. Jiang is also able to exert significant, albeit indirect, influence over specific foreign policy issues through his leadership of the CCP Taiwan Affairs Leading Small Group (TALSG), the senior coordinating mechanism for policy in this area.²⁰ Although technically considered part of the domestic policy

¹⁷However, some interviewees believe that Liu Huaqiu advises Jiang on an informal basis.

¹⁸The closest approximation to the NSC within the Chinese power structure is the PB, which includes the most senior-serving members of the PLA. Yet this organization's responsibilities obviously extend far beyond the national security arena. For a detailed discussion of the U.S. NSC and the NSC staff, see Lieutenant Colonel Christopher C. Shoemaker, *Structure, Function and the NSC Staff: An Officer's Guide to the National Security Council*, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1989. The OFA and the NSC staff also differ in size: The former contains less than twenty full-time members, but the latter has at times included more than fifty professionals. See Chapter Six for a discussion of Chinese proposals for establishing a full-blown, formal NSC-type structure to oversee the entire national security policy arena, at senior civilian and military levels.

¹⁹For recent examples, see Jiang Zemin's address to the United Nations delivered in New York City on October 24, 1995, at the special commemorative meeting of the 50th anniversary of the U.N., and his speech at the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, delivered on November 21, 1995.

²⁰Jiang's leadership of the TALSG reportedly derives in part from his military position as CMC chairman, and thus provides a point of contact between Taiwan policy and the defense policy subarena. The membership of the TALSG includes Jiang Zemin (as bridge leader), Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, Chen Yunlin, director of the State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office (and the parallel office within the CCP CC), Lieutenant General Xiong Guangkai, Minister of State Security Jia Chunwang, and Wang Daohan, chairman of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait. Jiang Zemin and Qian Qichen reportedly serve as the head and deputy head of the TALSG. For more

arena, this LSG obviously influences policy in areas that impinge upon China's diplomatic and political relations with Asia, Europe, and the United States. The TALSG is playing an increasingly important role in policy toward the United States in particular, given the problems between Washington and Beijing resulting from Taiwan's expanding international presence.²¹

In addition, Jiang might exert significant indirect influence over the foreign policy subarena through a very broad bureaucratic coordinating structure, the above-mentioned CC GO. This party organ serves both the PBSC and the most important leadership groups, including the FALSG. For example, it performs critical liaison and communication functions among the top tier of senior political leaders, between the top leadership as a whole and various bureaucratic *xitong* and constituent agencies, and between the senior executive leaders of these agencies and their subordinate working-level functionaries and analysts. Equally important, it exerts significant influence over daily decisions and processes and at times even takes positions on specific issues in a wide variety of policy areas.²² Although undoubtedly less central to the foreign policy

details, see *Sing Tao Jih Pao*, Hong Kong, February 7, 1996, p. A4, in *FBIS-CHI-96-026*, 2-7-96, p. 23. Jiang Zemin's influence over Taiwan policy is further enhanced by the fact that Wang Daohan, chairman of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait, is his long-time associate and confidant.

²¹Most observers believe that Jiang Zemin was the primary force behind the so-called "eight point" proposal for improved cross-strait relations (entitled, "Continue to Promote the Reunification of the Motherland") that he offered to Taiwan in January 1995. However, Jiang's control over Taiwan policy, and hence the level of indirect influence such control provides him in the foreign policy subarena, are by no means absolute. The Taiwan Affairs Office under the State Council and the subordinate Taiwan Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also play critical roles in analyzing Taiwan affairs and providing key policy recommendations to both the TALSG and the PBSC. Indeed, some Chinese observers assert that many TALSG policy decisions are made in a pro forma manner on the basis of proposals or recommendations submitted by these two offices. Moreover, since both bodies are formally under the State Council, which also directs the OFA under Liu Huaqiu, they are probably closely associated with the FALSG and hence with Li Peng. Exactly how these overlapping lines of authority between Li and Jiang over Taiwan policy play out in practice is unclear to the author.

²²Wei Li (1994), pp. 32-34. The CC GO has a policy research office that performs a small amount of analysis (primarily on domestic issues) and writes speeches for senior party leaders. According to Wei Li, a more important office within the CC GO is the Secretary (*mishu*) Bureau. This organ plays a key role in "processing information, conducting research, providing advice, drafting and editing Central documents, and

process than the State Council OFA under Liu Huaqiu, the CC GO can thus shape this, and other, policy subarenas in subtle yet decisive ways, affecting both bureaucratic and personal interactions.²³ Jiang probably exerts significant influence over the activities of the CC GO, and hence over aspects of foreign policy, because his close aide, Zeng Qinghong, heads that organ.²⁴

Even though Li Peng exercises predominant influence over the foreign policy subarena, the above suggests that he probably consults with Jiang Zemin on many foreign policy issues, to strengthen party control and coordination within the subarena and between the foreign policy, defense policy, and broader national strategic objectives subarenas. Jiang nevertheless defers to Li Peng on most foreign policy issues, according to interviewees. But the potential for competition or conflict within this subarena clearly exists between the two leaders.²⁵

supervising subordinate departments and units. Moreover, the bureau is responsible for providing and managing personal *mishu* for Central leaders” (p. 14). The State Council also contains a General Office. However, this body reportedly performs almost exclusively administrative or secretarial functions, primarily for governmental bureaucracies in the domestic policy arena. Although it occasionally coordinates and supervises document flows and other interactions among organizations responsible for implementing foreign economic policy, most of the relevant bureaucratic policy interactions in this area are conducted by the State Council OFA and the CC GO (or, to a far lesser extent, the State Council Research Office, mentioned above). Thus, although it performs some duties relevant to foreign policy, the State Council GO is not seen as a major player in this subarena.

²³The CC GO obviously has much broader responsibilities and powers than the OFA, performing duties affecting a wide range of domestic and external civilian and military policy arenas. Hence, it is unable to concentrate on any one policy arena. Yet its important “gatekeeper” and administrative roles in mediating contacts and document flows among senior leaders and top party and government organizations, along with its high bureaucratic status as a party organ, give it enormous potential access to and influence over any particular policy arena, including foreign policy.

²⁴Zeng accompanies Jiang Zemin on all of his foreign travels. He is also the political commissar of the Central Guard Unit, responsible for the security of all senior party officials. You Kexi, Jiang’s personal chief bodyguard, also accompanies Jiang overseas and reportedly serves as an ex officio advisor on external policy issues. You was selected in fall 1995 to command the Central Guard Unit. A third key advisor who accompanies Jiang overseas is Teng Wensheng, his chief speech writer and the head of the Party Central Policy Research Center. Finally, Liu Huaqiu probably also provides Jiang Zemin with further access to the foreign policy subarena, by supplying him with occasional advice on foreign affairs, as mentioned above.

²⁵Some recent evidence suggests that Deng Xiaoping might have given oversight responsibility for U.S.-China relations to Jiang Zemin 2–3 years ago. This has not been

Two other civilian government organizations not formally represented in the FALSG reportedly play an increasingly important, and conservative, role in the foreign policy subarena: the Foreign Affairs Committee (FAC) (*waishi weiyuanhui*) of the National People's Congress and the Foreign Propaganda Leading Group (FPLG) (*duiwai xuanquan lingdao zu*) of the State Council. Historically, the former unit has not played a major role in foreign policy, serving instead primarily as a "talk shop" and retirement home for former diplomats and ministers.²⁶ However, well-placed observers in Beijing believe that the FAC is gaining influence within the foreign policy realm through the efforts of its director, Zhu Liang. Zhu, who served from 1985–1993 as head of the CCP International Liaison Department, reportedly holds very hardline views on many foreign policy issues, especially relations with the United States, and is attempting, with some success, to use the FAC to promote those views within the foreign policy subarena.²⁷ He is probably supported in these efforts by Li Peng, who is widely perceived as a proponent of a tougher stance toward the United States.²⁸

The FPLG was established in the early 1990s to strengthen central control over the media flow between China and the outside world.

confirmed by the author. If true, it would suggest that Jiang enjoys a significantly greater level of influence over Chinese foreign policy than is suggested above. It might also provide the basis for serious conflict between Li and Jiang, given the obvious encroachment upon the former's "turf" that such a responsibility represents.

²⁶For example, David Shambaugh has written that the FAC has no decisionmaking authority (1995a), p. 14. This point is also stressed by a former Chinese MoFA official. See Yang (1995), p. 91.

²⁷Some observers expect that the level of influence on foreign policy of the NPC FAC will continue to increase in the future, regardless of who leads it, as the overall role of the NPC continues to evolve from that of a rubber stamp body under party control to a more autonomous political actor in the policy process. This evolution, which largely began under Zhao Ziyang, experienced a setback after Zhao was removed from power during the Tiananmen incident but has resumed in recent years, albeit to a more limited extent.

²⁸Some well-placed Chinese observers believe that Li Peng uses his leadership of the foreign policy subarena to implement a more negative policy line toward the United States. For example, in the foreign economic policy realm, Li Peng reportedly played a key role in the 1995 and 1996 decisions to grant very lucrative economic contracts in the automobile and aircraft sectors to European companies, despite the often better deals offered by U.S. competitors. Li argues forcefully within party circles that China must reduce its level of dependence upon U.S. business, according to some interviewees.

This control is exerted in both directions, i.e., the FPLG oversees and influences both domestic reporting on international issues by Chinese open media organs such as the Xinhua News Agency and major newspapers, and Chinese press coverage of domestic events provided to foreign countries. Headed by Ma Yuzhen,²⁹ concurrently a deputy head of the State Council Information Office, the FPLG takes a very conservative position on many issues, and often directs Chinese journals and daily media to intensify criticisms of foreign (and particularly U.S.) proponents of allegedly anti-China viewpoints.

The conservative political positions taken by both the NPC FAC and the FPLG, combined with the above-mentioned views of Li Peng, suggest that the general movement toward a more hardline stance increasingly evident within Chinese foreign policy circles has a clear civilian component and is not necessarily led or dominated by the PLA, as some observers believe.³⁰

The PLA does not play a central role in the foreign policy subarena. As indicated above, most elements of Chinese foreign policy are carried out by party and state organs. In the past, this usually occurred without much, if any, regular or in-depth consultations with the PLA.³¹ Indeed, as suggested above, many foreign policy activities received only sporadic guidance from even the FALSG or the PBSC, operating largely on “automatic pilot,” under the control of various relevant subordinate ministries. This still holds true today. However, there is increasing evidence to suggest that the overall level of military involvement in the foreign policy subarena is growing, both formally and informally. Military views are increasingly expressed and military influence exerted on specific foreign policy issues.

Formal contacts between the PLA and the foreign policy subarena occur primarily through the FALSG. As noted above, the PLA has at

²⁹Although headed by Ma and formally under the State Council, the FPLG undoubtedly interacts with, and may receive some supervision from, the CCP’s Small Leading Group on Propaganda and Ideology led by PB member Ding Guan’gen. Ding is the senior party leader responsible for the propaganda and ideology *xitong* within the party-state system.

³⁰However, neither organization has a permanent member on the FALSG, although a FPLG representative reportedly attends FALSG meetings occasionally.

³¹Barnett (1985), pp. 102–104.

least one representative on that body. This individual has represented either the Ministry of Defense or the General Staff Department. The inclusion of a PLA representative on the FALSG reportedly began in the mid 1980s under Zhao Ziyang and was intended to strengthen civilian government oversight of the PLA on issues that impinged on foreign relations.³² Defense Minister Qin Jiwei apparently served on the FALSG at that time. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Generals Xu Xin and Xu Huizi served consecutively as PLA representatives to the FALSG, in their capacity as Deputy Chief of the GSD in charge of intelligence and foreign affairs.³³ Lieutenant General and Deputy GSD Chief Xiong Guangkai now holds the intelligence/foreign affairs portfolio and hence serves as the PLA representative to the FALSG.³⁴ Xiong is also reportedly a member of the CCP's TALSG.

It is unlikely, however, that the FALSG serves as the *primary* link between the PLA and the foreign policy subarena. Despite his impressive credentials as a deputy GSD head, Lieutenant General Xiong Guangkai does not hold a post senior enough to perform this function.³⁵ It is more likely, given the primary role of the FALSG as a communication and coordination mechanism for the foreign policy subarena, that PLA representation on that body is intended in large part to ensure a regular degree of information flow between the foreign policy subarena and the military and to ensure coordination between the foreign policy and defense policy subarenas regarding those relatively routine policy issues and areas that might overlap or produce conflict. In other words, the FALSG is not intended to serve as *the* forum for military input into critical foreign policy decisions.

³²Hamrin (1995), p. 90.

³³Currently there are five Deputy Chiefs of the GSD, each responsible for (1) regular troop and militia training and equipment, (2) operations, (3) administration, (4) intelligence and foreign affairs, and (5) political work. The author indebted to Tai Ming Cheung for this information.

³⁴Xiong's role on the FALSG suggests that the FALSG's proceedings are probably conveyed in some detail to Jiang Zemin, since Xiong is reportedly very close to the party secretary general.

³⁵Moreover, Xiong's relatively lower ranking within the senior military leadership contrasts significantly with the ranking of the military representative to the U.S. NSC, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, thus indicating another major area of difference between the FALSG and the NSC.

Such input is likely provided at the level of the PB, through contacts between Li Peng, Jiang Zemin (as CMC head), Zhang Wannian and Chi Haotian (as PB members with primary responsibility for defense policy), almost certainly with some ex-officio participation by Liu Huaqing and Zhang Zhen. Such decision-oriented contacts might occur on a purely informal and personal basis, through direct conversations among these leaders. It might also occur, however, on a more routine basis, through the party CC GO.

As noted above, the CC GO plays an important role in facilitating communication among members of the PBSC and the elders and between various bureaucratic *xitong* and party leading small groups, including the FALSG. Beyond these responsibilities, however, the CC GO also reportedly has responsibility for maintaining constant contact and continuously coordinating information between the leading civilian party organs and various party bodies within the military, including the party CMC, various subordinate CMC departments, and party committees within the PLA regional commands.³⁶ Thus, the CC GO probably coordinates and facilitates routine bureaucratic information flows between the defense and foreign policy sectors (i.e., through the CMC and the FALSG *xitong*), as well as higher-level contacts among senior members of both subarenas, in their capacity as PB members. The likely importance of the CC GO to the expression of military views on foreign policy is reinforced by the fact that General Wang Ruilin, deputy director of the General Political Department, member of the CMC, and former senior secretary to Deng Xiaoping, is a deputy head of the CC GO.³⁷

Finally, also on a purely informal level, PLA officers apparently express their views on foreign policy issues through irregular and informal communications with members of the PBSC. As the chief organization responsible for national defense and a strong exponent of a more assertive brand of nationalist views increasingly evident

³⁶See Wei Li (1994), p. 18.

³⁷However, it must again be stressed that, as with other important party, state, and military organs, the precise extent of influence exerted on policy issues by the CC GO will depend primarily upon the personal stature and influence of its top leader. Thus, Wang Ruilin's personal authority might not prove as important, in the workings of the CC GO, as that of Zeng Qinghong.

among both the elite and the populace,³⁸ the PLA is reportedly becoming more and more attentive to actions by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that impinge on its institutional interests and responsibilities or are in general judged to weaken or besmirch China's influence or reputation in the international arena. Many regional and global diplomatic and/or foreign policy issues fall within or affect these areas of concern. These include disputes over the Spratly Islands, the fate of Hong Kong and Taiwan,³⁹ nuclear testing and proliferation policies, certain trade disputes and technology transfer negotiations, multilateral security discussions, and critical bilateral relations that affect these policy issues or aspects of military modernization, such as relations with Russia (an increasingly important source of advanced weaponry) and with the United States and Japan.⁴⁰ The PLA is also reportedly very attentive to policy toward Inner Asia, given its sensitivity to ethnic instability in border areas.

PLA concerns in the above areas have at times produced strong oral or written protests by senior, usually retired, PLA officers over the handling of a particular foreign policy issue by the MoFA. Occasionally, such protests led to prolonged disputes between the PLA leadership and the MoFA; in the 1980s, some of these disputes reportedly became deadlocked and eventually had to be resolved at the most senior level, by Deng Xiaoping and/or Yang Shangkun.⁴¹ Ex-

³⁸For a summary of nationalist views expressed in both the military and society, see Swaine (1995), pp. 7–9, 32–33, and 52–53.

³⁹The Spratlys, Hong Kong, and Taiwan are all viewed by the military as internal issues with external components, and hence combine elements of domestic security, territorial defense, and foreign policy. PLA sentiments toward Taiwan expressed in the CMC would likely exert a particularly strong effect on party leadership views because of Jiang Zemin's concurrent duties as CMC Chair and head of the TALSG.

⁴⁰For a similar listing of such areas of PLA concern, see Shambaugh (1995a), p. 15.

⁴¹Foreign policy organs usually handle an external policy issue if it is defined as being within the foreign affairs (*waishi*) realm, as opposed to the military affairs (*junshi*) (i.e., defense policy) realm. Many of the above issues probably fall within a gray area (i.e., neither purely *waishi* nor *junshi*) and thus require intervention and a formal "ruling" from higher leadership levels. Friction between the foreign and defense policy subarenas is to a great extent unavoidable, however, stemming from the differing priorities and approaches to foreign affairs adopted by MoFA and the PLA. The former is chiefly concerned with maintaining friendly or amicable diplomatic relations with most Asian countries and the major global powers, for the purpose of preserving an external environment conducive to continued economic growth and political stability. The latter wishes, of course, to support such a strategy, which is rooted in China's

actly how many of these bureaucratic disputes occurred, which PLA leaders were involved, and how each dispute was eventually resolved is largely unknown.⁴² As noted above, most knowledgeable observers with whom the author has spoken insist that a relatively small number of such incidents took place, despite contrary impressions conveyed by the Hong Kong media.⁴³ Policy discussions associated with these organizational disputes were probably conducted between the CMC and the PBSC or the FALSG.

Military “positions” on specific foreign policy issues were not determined by the CMC as a body, however, much less by PLA organs below the CMC. In recent years, such “positions” were almost certainly taken informally by Liu Huaqing, Zhang Zhen, and perhaps a few retired PLA elders.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the PLA did not dictate for-

national strategic objectives. However, as indicated above, the PLA’s primary responsibility is to ensure an effective defense against potential enemies by building a more modern military force and generally to prevent the emergence of threatening behavior among major regional or global powers.

⁴²However, Deng Xiaoping’s role in resolving the most serious disputes was by all accounts absolutely critical. Indeed, many of the protest letters written by elder PLA leaders were usually sent to Deng. Given his extensive and distinguished service as a senior officer of the Red Army before 1949, Deng was regarded by the military as “one of us,” and they would thus generally abide by his decisions (especially after the mid 1980s, when Deng had removed his PLA opponents from power). For an interesting discussion of Deng’s prestige among the senior PLA leadership, see Frederick C. Teiwes, “The Paradoxical Post-Mao Transition: From Obeying the Leader to ‘Normal Politics,’” *China Journal*, No. 34, July 1995, pp. 67–68. Less critical disputes between the military and foreign policy leaderships are probably resolved (or at least kept under control) through a variety of bureaucratic mechanisms, e.g., special interagency committees. Such a committee was formed to handle arms exports, for example, a major gray area of dispute. The author is indebted to Alastair I. Johnston for this information.

⁴³The most recent and highly notable example of PLA criticism of MoFA policy was occasioned by Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui’s visit to Cornell University in June 1995, which precipitated a crisis in U.S.-China relations, as mentioned above. Many in the PLA blamed this event—and the ensuing crisis—on MoFA’s previous overly conciliatory stance toward Washington on Taiwan-related issues.

⁴⁴Moreover, virtually every Chinese interviewee with whom the author has spoken insists that senior *servant* officers of the PLA did not and still do not write letters or otherwise circumvent the chain of command to voice any form of policy dissent. However, PLA strategists have at times criticized elements of China’s foreign policy in their writings, as well as the specific views of civilian strategists. In addition, military analysts and experts probably express their views on foreign policy issues directly to their counterparts within the MoFA during various expert discussions on external policy issues attended by both civilian and military personnel. These meetings are discussed in Chapter Five.

eign policy views to Deng Xiaoping or the designated successor leadership as a result of such senior contacts.

The same almost certainly holds true today. However, the overall ability of the civilian party leadership to resist military encroachment on the foreign policy subarena, or to decisively resolve disputes between the foreign and defense policy leaderships is almost certainly declining. As suggested above, now that Deng Xiaoping, the last powerful “arbiter” of power at the top of the system, has passed from the political scene and as PLA interest in issues relevant to the foreign policy subarena increases, we might see future policy disputes between the defense and foreign policy leaderships resulting in prolonged stalemates or increasingly resolved in favor of the military.⁴⁵

⁴⁵Deng’s absence arguably will reduce the “access” of remaining PLA elders to the foreign policy arena, yet at the same time will raise questions about the ability of a less respected civilian successor leadership to resolve future disputes with the PLA. This issue is addressed further in Chapter Six. For a useful discussion of the general importance of elder links to Deng Xiaoping for the expression of their views on a wide range of issues, see Teiwes (1995), pp. 78–80.