



Discussion of “China Goes West”



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"Discussion of 'China Goes West'"

by Glyn Ford (MEP)

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CONTENTS

[I. Introduction](#)

[II. Comments on Essay by Glyn Ford \(MEP\)](#)

Comments by Kay Möller

Response by Glyn Ford (MEP)

[III. Nautilus invites your responses](#)

[Go to essay by Glyn Ford \(MEP\)](#) (April 5th, 2006)

[Go to Policy Forum Online index](#)

I. Introduction

The following are comments on the essay "China Goes West" by Glyn Ford, member of the European Parliament representing South West England, which appeared as [Policy Forum Online 06-24A: April 5th, 2005](#) .

This report includes comments by Dr. Kay Möller, Senior Research Associate at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Berlin, Germany.

II. Comments on Essay by Glyn Ford (MEP)

1. Comments by Kay Möller

Allow me to respond to Mr. Ford's essay:

(1) Europe would be entitled to pressure Taiwan over its policies vis-à-vis China if Europe would make a difference as far as security in the Taiwan Strait is concerned. This not being the case, any European criticism of Taiwan is arbitrary and cheap (the same would apply to EU mediation attempts.) In their criticisms made in 2004, President Chirac and Chancellor Schröder hardly disguised their commercial motives.

(2) Chinese peasants suffer less from "carrying America's middle class on their backs" than from a Chinese leadership that refuses them ownership of their land while earmarking ever more funds for internal and external security. If the PRC is unlikely to take over Taiwan, then precisely because it would lose a pretext for diverting this money from domestic development.

(3) Not only China but most of the Six Parties lack an interest in inviting the EU to the table.

(4) If Europe continues to substitute commercial interests and tactical games for world order policies, it will never become the united international actor it aspires to be.

2. Response by Glyn Ford (MEP)

First of all, I thank Dr. Möller for the constructive criticism and comments. I would like to respond to some of the issues raised by Dr. Möller.

(1) The European Union, now larger and richer than the US, is China's biggest trade partner. It would be impossible to imagine this has no influence on China. Europe is using 'soft' rather than 'hard' power. Having seen the tragic consequences to all sides of using hard power in Iraq, advocates of 'hard power' would do well to keep very quiet at the moment.

(2) A different Chinese regime would have done even better, but the present one has not done too badly, scaring most of the world to death with its economic dynamism. China has achieved double-digit growth for 29 consecutive years. While the bulk of benefits have been to urban residents, a rising tide floats all ships and several hundred million Chinese peasants have been lifted out of poverty. Additionally, China's recent new five-year plan shifts resources from the urban areas to the countryside. Ownership of land rather than long-term leasing may merely result in short-term profits for a few as so much privatisation has shown.

(3) All participating countries to the Six-party talk including North Korea, except for the US, have indicated interest in or willingness to accept the EU participation. Europe has contributed half a billion Euro to North Korea to date for humanitarian aid, development assistance, and KEDO. Last year, the European Parliament passed a clear resolution saying its future position on non-humanitarian assistance would be 'no say, no pay'. As the largest donor after the Republic of Korea and possibly China, one presumes the EU contribution would be sorely missed unless the US finally,

and for the first time, decides to make a serious and non-verbal contribution.

(4) I agree. I presume Dr. Möller, like myself, is fighting to ensure exactly that.

III. Nautilus Invites Your Responses

The Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network invites your responses to this essay. Please send responses to: napsnet-reply@nautilus.org . Responses will be considered for redistribution to the network only if they include the author's name, affiliation, and explicit consent.

Produced by The Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development

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[Return to top](#)

[back to top](#)

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Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org