

ION

December 3,

SCHEMING AGAINST U.S.

China's divided strategies

By MINEO NAKAJIMA

Pundits worldwide have expressed varied opinions about the terror blitz in the United States and the subsequent U.S. raids on Afghanistan. However, little light has been shed on the cunning, double-edged global strategies that China is pursuing, while the U.S. suffers from the fallout of the terror attacks. Some students in Beijing were reportedly elated over the news of the attacks. Chinese broadcast reporters visiting the U.S. at the time reportedly were ordered by the State Department to leave the country because they applauded while watching the news on television. Those reports, if true, reflect China's stance in global politics.

Some experts say that "the clash of civilizations" has led to the war, but this view is completely mistaken. Evil terrorism should not be promoted to the status of a "civilization."

"The clash of civilizations" is a term first used by Harvard University professor Samuel Huntington in his article published in a 1993 summer issue of *Foreign Affairs*. At home and abroad, there have been arguments for and against Huntington's theory. I support his theory — in particular, his warning that the Confucian-Islamic connection could ignite a "clash of civilizations."

Huntington warned about China's mili-



tary expansion and its exports of nuclear arms and nerve gas to Libya and Iraq. He also predicted that future conflicts would occur between Western countries on the one hand and Confucian and Islamic countries on the other — mainly the communist dictatorships of China and North Korea. Huntington did not include Japan and Taiwan among the Confucian countries, as he viewed Japan as an independent cultural sphere. His prediction is vindicated by China's new cunning strategies toward the U.S.

On the one hand, China has endorsed the U.S. war against terrorism to obtain international backing for its crackdown on separatist movements in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region and domestic activities by Islamic fundamentalists.

On the other hand, China objects to U.S.-led globalism and strategies against Islamic fundamentalists as it calls for the United Nations to play a central role in settling international disputes. This is a double-edged strategy aimed at mollifying Islamic countries.

China is also tied up with Afghanistan's neighbors in Central Asia through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. China is also promoting friendly relations with Turkmenistan, which is important to China's oil strategies for its oil concessions in the Caspian Sea.

For the word "Taliban," Chinese media use a Chinese phonetic reading (塔利般), while Taiwanese media use the Chinese word for "theologians (神學士)"

— the meaning of the word in the Pash-tun language. This is because China has yet to recognize religious freedom and is loath to call the Taliban "theologians" as it intends to crack down on fellow Islamic fundamentalists in its own country.

China, meanwhile, refuses to join the U.S. in the war against terrorism or join Japan in backing the U.S. This is clear from remarks by Chinese President Jiang Zemin at the November summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, plus Japan, China and South Korea. China opposes the single-nation hegemony of the U.S., and Chinese strategies in this regard are likely to become clearer in the coming years.

China has indicated its willingness to promote international cooperation at the summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum and at the summit with Japan. China is also moving to become a responsible member of the global community by joining the World Trade Organization.

At the same time, it is scheming to strengthen an anti-U.S. alliance by joining hands with Russia, North Korea, Mongolia and central Asian countries. These are China's new basic strategies as the world enters a new Cold War era. Japan should not waver in its policy of promoting cooperation with the U.S.

Mineo Nakajima is former president of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. This article was translated from the Sankei Shimbun's Seion column of Nov. 20.

ace